

01 Trust rises, but inequality remains embedded.

Overall institutional trust in Kenya has improved, but the gap between income groups persists. The Trust Index for high-income stands at 73-compared to 66 among low-income groups, maintaining a 7-point divide even as both segments record gains, pointing to uneven distribution of trust despite broader progress.

02 Optimism remains strong and outpaces global sentiment.

In Kenya, 59% believe the next generation will be better off compared to today, well above the global average of 32%, signalling a local confidence in future outlook despite broader global decline.

03 Trade-related job fears surge sharply.

Employee concern about international trade and tariff conflicts hurting the company they work for has risen significantly in Kenya, up 16 points since 2020 to 74%, reflecting growing anxiety about external economic pressures on employers.

04 Recession fears intensify across the workforce.

In Kenya, worry about job loss due to a potential recession has climbed 14 points among employees since 2020 to 78%, signalling heightened sensitivity to economic instability.

05 Fear of foreign-driven disinformation rises sharply.

Concern that foreign actors are spreading disinformation to deepen domestic divisions has increased by 17 points since 2021 to 71%, placing Kenya among the highest globally and signalling rising anxiety about external influence on social cohesion.

06 Exposure to differing views is declining.

Exposure to sources that hold different political perspectives than my own is falling, down 7 points since 2025 to 49% now saying they do this weekly or more. This reflects a broader pullback in engagement with diverse viewpoints, as fewer people report regularly consuming information from sources with a different political leaning than their own.

07 Insularity shapes how trust is formed.

Two-thirds of Kenyans (66%) are hesitant or unwilling to trust people who are different from them, indicating that trust is increasingly defined by shared values, beliefs, and identity rather than broader social cohesion.

08 Workplace tensions are beginning to weigh on productivity.

In Kenya, a notable share of employees report behaviours that undermine performance, with 29% saying they would rather switch departments than work under a manager with different values, and 26% admitting they would put less effort into helping a team leader succeed if they disagreed with their political beliefs.

09 Trust is concentrated in a few familiar figures.

Among those with an insular mindset, journalists and their own CEO (among employees) are the most trusted (both 67%). Trust is lower for neighbours (58%) and much lower for government leaders (28%).

10 Institutional trust brokering is widely expected

When it comes to bridging divides and facilitating trust building between groups who distrust each other, expectations are consistently high across all institutions. Employers (87% among employees) and the media (86%) are the top institutions seen as responsible, followed by NGOs and government (both 84%), and business (82%). The pattern suggests this is not concentrated on a single actor, but shared across the system.