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AI for Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Heritage

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Co-building the Accelerator Labs as a joint venture with:

Action Partner:



UNDP
Core
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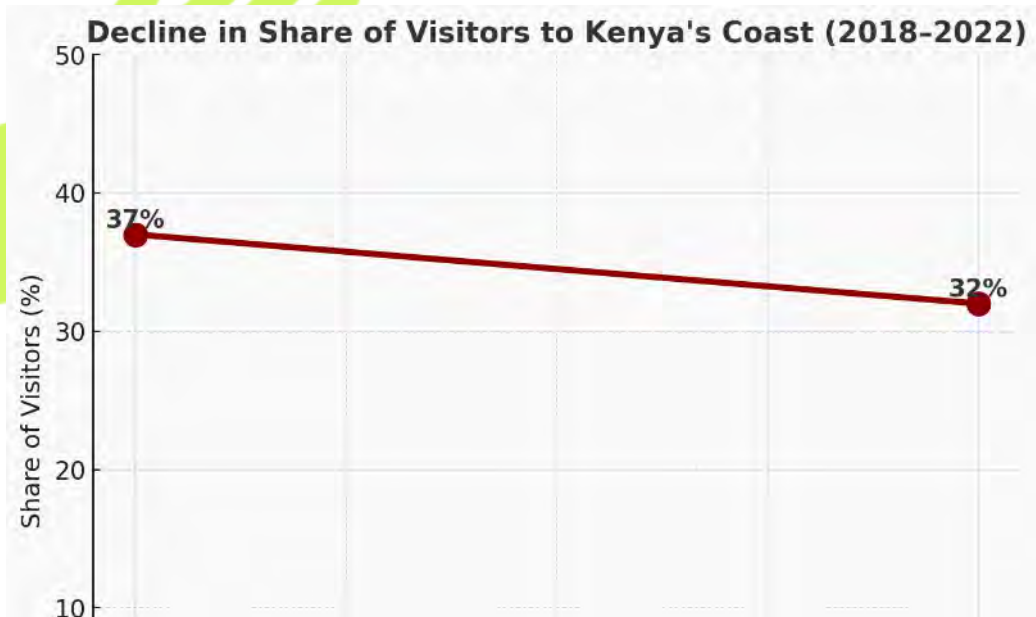


The Challenge

- Coastal tourism in Kenya is in the decline.
- Cultural heritage is being lost faster than it can be documented.
- Tourism content increasingly rewards what is searchable, “shareable”, and easy to package.

Risks:

- Erosion of indigenous knowledge
- Weak community benefit from tourism value chains
- Under-visibility of authentic experiences vs. generic beach tourism



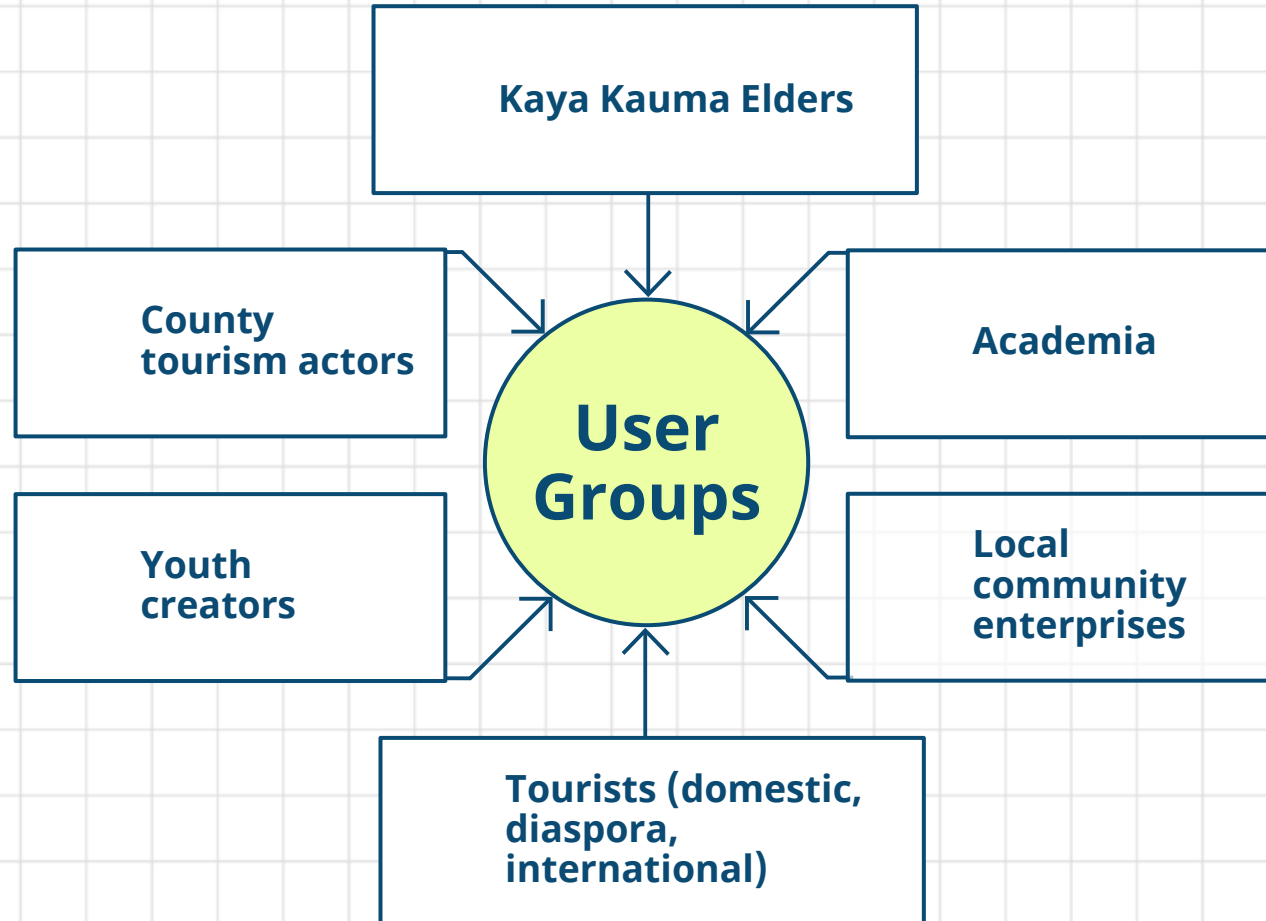
OUR HYPOTHESIS

If youth, elders, and partners co-create digital cultural content with AI tools, then:

- Kaya Kauma cultural heritage will be preserved
- Cultural tourists will be attracted
- Communities will generate new income streams



Stakeholders



Our AI Prototype

A community-owned “AI co-creation studio” that turns Kaya Kauma knowledge into ethical digital tourism content.

Core technology:

Speech-to-text + translation
Generative AI for story drafts
Human-in-the-loop cultural review

What it does:

- Records audio stories (audio/video) and local practices.
- Transcribes + translates (local languages -> English/Swahili).
- Generates draft narratives, itineraries, micro-stories.
- Curates with elders to ensure accuracy + consent
- Outputs: web tours, short video, podcasts, craft catalogues

AI Workflow Case Study – From Story to Digital Experience

Story Collection

- Elders share indigenous knowledge; youth record stories

Story Refinement with AI

- Convert audio to text using TurboScribe; Refine narratives using **ChatGPT** summarize, translate, and structure stories.

Website Design Prompting

- Use prompts on **Vercel v0** to auto-generate a website documenting medicinal plants.

Output: Digital Repository of Indigenous Medicine

- A community co-created platform showcasing stories, plants, and rituals. Accessible via **QR codes** at heritage sites.





Quantifiable pilot outputs (prototype stage)



 **Kileafy Tours** – a functional tourism website built by a student using AI tools.



 **My Lugha** – a prototype promoting preservation of local languages through digital storytelling.

 **Podcasts, videos, and slides** narrating six cultural themes — justice system, traditional medicine, arts, foods, and environment.

Lessons learned

- **Youth engagement works.** Students became active creators, not just learners.
- **Elders' wisdom grounds innovation.** Their stories gave cultural depth and legitimacy.
- Simple, off-the-shelf AI technologies can generate meaningful prototypes.
- **Community validation matters.** Human-in-the-loop is non-negotiable: Outputs were well received during *World Tourism Day* and community feedback sessions.
- **Distribution is the growth engine.** Partners matter more than “better content”.



What didn't work (yet) - Distribution is the bottleneck: content needs partner channels to reach audiences and convert to revenue



Business Intelligence & Market Opportunity: Cultural Regional Revitalization

Heritage → Digital IP → Experiences → Commerce → Community benefit



Unique value proposition

- Tested in a high-trust / low-resource setting → strong “last mile” learnings
- Governance-first: content is co-owned and curated with custodians
- Frugal stack: reduces cost to scale across other heritage communities
- Produces both ESG impact + investable digital assets (content/IP)

Opportunities for scale

Beyond one site: the same model can be applied to other Kenyan heritage and coastal tourism destinations.

Key growth lever: distribution partnerships (travel platforms, telecoms, media, hospitality brands).

From Digital Demand-> Physical Readiness-> Cultural Products



If digital storytelling increases visits, we must upgrade the “real-world experience” and expand community income streams

Heritage Hospitality & Site Readiness Fund (Physical Infrastructure)



What it supports

- Restoration/repair of homesteads in the holy village, meeting spaces, **traditional court areas**, visitor pathways, signage, basic amenities (shade, seating, sanitation, water points), safety and accessibility.

“Kaya Experience Standard” (Service + quality assurance)



What it supports

- A lightweight service design + quality standard for Kaya Kauma visits: visitor flow, etiquette, interpretation, guide training, customer care, environmental protection

Cultural Product & Design Lab (Fashion -> crafts value addition)



What it supports

- A community-owned design lab that translates traditional attire motifs/colors into modern products:
- Basketry + beadwork + textiles + accessories
- Limited editions for diaspora and export markets
- Packaging, labeling, provenance and storytelling that protects authenticity

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Partner with us to co-
design, co-produce,
and co-distribute
“living heritage”
digital tourism -
responsibly.





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~~Best~~ Next practices for a more sustainable future

Get in touch

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