

Ian Kamau Mahia

Lead Software Engineer

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PROFILE

Lead Software Engineer who owns products end to end — architecture, delivery, the team, and the infrastructure it all runs on. Four years building production mobile and web platforms for the East African market at StartAppz Limited, where I now set technical direction across multi-tenant SaaS products, run code review and engineering standards for a cross-functional team, and take work from requirements through to production. Flutter and Dart on mobile, PHP Laravel and Go on the backend, Docker and Linux underneath. Apps live on both stores; payment integrations running against real money.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Lead Software Engineer

StartAppz Limited · Nairobi, Kenya · Jan 2026 – Present

- Lead a cross-functional engineering team, setting engineering standards, running code review, and unblocking engineers on complex technical problems
- Own end-to-end architecture across Flutter mobile and Laravel backend systems — scalability, security, and long-term maintainability
- Drive product delivery from requirements through production deployment, coordinating directly between client stakeholders and the engineering team
- Set technical direction: introduced Go and containerised microservices for throughput-sensitive workloads, including automated identity verification supporting regulated KYC onboarding
- Own third-party integration strategy across messaging, calendar OAuth, and cloud infrastructure providers
- Balance feature delivery against reliability and technical debt across several client-facing platforms running in parallel
- Mentor junior engineers and lead UI/UX redesign initiatives across the product portfolio

Software Engineer

StartAppz Limited · Nairobi, Kenya · Feb 2022 – Dec 2025

- Built and launched **Jipay**, a fintech app for automated savings, goal-based investment, and micro-medical insurance — concept to Play Store in under four months
- Rebuilt a major East African insurer's customer mobile application, enabling in-app quoting and purchase across five product lines
- Designed and maintained REST APIs in PHP Laravel powering mobile-backend communication
- Implemented M-PESA and card payment gateway integrations to PCI-DSS requirements
- Managed Linux deployment workflows end to end — Nginx, Git-based release, automated TLS
- Contributed to a 35% increase in user adoption through mobile UX improvements

ICT Network & Infrastructure Intern

Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral & Research Hospital · Nairobi · May 2022 – Aug 2022

- Built internal tooling in PHP Laravel that cut manual data entry by 30%
- Improved hospital website responsiveness by 20% using HTML5, CSS3, and JavaScript
- Optimised MySQL schemas and queries during hospital system upgrades

SELECTED PROJECTS

Jipay — Fintech · Mobile · Sep – Dec 2024

Consumer fintech app helping Kenyans automate savings, invest toward personal goals, and access micro-medical insurance from their phone. Features JiPay Now (automated money market fund investment), JiPay Later (goal-based savings wallet), and JiPay Afya (micro-medical insurance funded by daily savings). Concept to Play Store in under four months.

Flutter · Dart · Firebase · PHP Laravel · MySQL · M-PESA API · REST APIs

play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.jipay.android

AAR Insurance Mobile App — Insurtech · Mobile · 2025

Customer-facing mobile application for one of East Africa's leading insurers, giving policyholders a modern self-service experience to browse, purchase, and manage cover across travel, personal accident, and professional indemnity products.

Flutter · Dart · PHP Laravel · Firebase · MySQL · REST APIs

apps.apple.com/us/app/aar-insurance/id1561522021

AAR Insurance Digital Platform — *Insurtech · Web · 2023 – Present*

Digitisation programme converting a full insurance product catalogue into self-service online experiences — customers quote and purchase Travel, Motor, Medical, Personal Accident, Marine, Junior Medical, and Professional Indemnity cover without visiting a branch.

PHP Laravel · MySQL · REST APIs · Payment Integration · System Architecture
new.aar-insurance.com

Chatway SMS — *Business Communication · SaaS · 2024*

Business messaging platform letting companies reach and communicate with customers via SMS at scale, centralising outbound communication for SMEs and enterprises in a single multi-tenant dashboard.

PHP Laravel · MySQL · SMS APIs · Multi-tenant SaaS
sms.chat-way.co.ke

Adequate Safaris Booking System — *Travel Tech · Web · Dec 2024*

End-to-end booking platform for a Kenyan tour operator — destination browsing, hotel booking, and full vacation package planning in a single digital journey.

PHP Laravel · MySQL · Flutter · REST APIs · Payment Integration

EDUCATION

BSc Information Technology

[Kenyatta University · Nairobi, Kenya](#) · Sep 2018 – Dec 2022

- Second Class Honours
- Coursework: Software Development, Object-Oriented Programming, Android Development, Database Systems, Networking

CERTIFICATIONS

- API Security Fundamentals — APIsec University
- Go (Golang) — Udemy (in progress)

SKILLS

Leadership: Technical direction · code review · engineering standards · mentoring · stakeholder management

Mobile: Flutter · Dart · React Native

Backend: PHP Laravel · Go (Golang) · Node.js · REST API design

Database: MySQL · Firebase · Redis

DevOps & Cloud: Docker · Linux · Nginx · Git · CI/CD · managed cloud infrastructure

Architecture: Multi-tenant SaaS · microservices · system design · Agile

REFERENCES

Available on request.