Gilbert Kigen

Network Engineer and AWS Elastic Load Balancing SME

7+ years across carrier IP/MPLS, DWDM transport and cloud networking, from Safaricom's 400G optical backbone to high-severity AWS incidents. Based in Nairobi.

Summary

I'm a network engineer with experience across carrier IP/MPLS, DWDM transport and cloud networking. At AWS I'm a Cloud Support Engineer II and the on-call escalation SME for Elastic Load Balancing: I own high-severity cases and lead customer communications during critical incidents, on problems that span Direct Connect, Transit Gateway, VPN, VPC and Route 53. Before AWS, I spent five years at Huawei and Nokia building and running optical, IPRAN and IP/MPLS networks for Safaricom, Airtel and MTN.

Experience

Amazon Web Services — 2024 – now

Nairobi, Kenya

Cloud Support Engineer II — Apr 2026 – Present

- Primary on-call escalation point and Subject Matter Expert for Elastic Load Balancing, owning high-severity cases.
- Resolve critical problems spanning Global Accelerator, Site-to-Site and Client VPN, Direct Connect, Transit Gateway, Cloud WAN, VPC and Route 53, including hybrid and multi-cloud connectivity.
- Lead customer communications and coordination during critical incidents, working with service teams to reproduce failures and find root cause.
- Mentor new engineers and emerging SMEs, write troubleshooting guides and knowledge articles, and lead projects to improve support processes.

Cloud Support Engineer I — Jul 2024 – Apr 2026

- Resolved customer connectivity and performance failures across Elastic Load Balancing, Global Accelerator, VPC Lattice and Auto Scaling through root cause analysis.
- Built monitoring and alerting with CloudWatch and EventBridge to detect anomalies earlier and shorten resolution.

Nokia — 2022 – 2024

Nairobi, Kenya

Contact

Nairobi, Kenya

kigengil@gmail.com

linkedin.com/in/kigengil (https://www.linkedin.com/in/kigengil)

Credly badges (https://www.credly.com/users/gilbert-kigen/badges)

Skills

Routing

BGP · **IS-IS** · **OSPF** · **MPLS** · L3VPN · L2VPN · Inter-AS Options A/B/C · IPRAN · Junos

Cloud networking

Elastic Load Balancing · **Direct Connect** · **Transit Gateway** · **VPC** · Global Accelerator · Site-to-Site & Client VPN · Cloud WAN · Route 53 · VPC Lattice · CloudWatch · EventBridge

Optical

DWDM 10G – 400G · OTN · ASON · Coherent & non-coherent · SDH · Microwave

Operations

Fault management · **Incident management** · Root cause analysis · NMS / EMS / OSS · Software upgrades · Cutovers & traffic migration

Automation

FM L2, IP/MPLS

May 2023 – Jul 2024

- Led fault troubleshooting and resolution on the Airtel Africa international inter-operator IP/MPLS network.
- Integrated new services and routing changes into the live backbone to improve cross-border connectivity.
- Analysed traffic patterns and utilisation to guide capacity decisions and improve QoS.
- Ran preventive maintenance on routers and monitoring tools to reduce repeat incidents, and coordinated upgrades, patches and fault fixes with vendors and cross-functional teams.

IPRAN SME

Jun 2022 – Apr 2023

- Maintained multivendor Huawei and Nokia IPRAN and IP/MPLS networks across regional and core layers.
- Led fault handling across Huawei and Nokia optical transport platforms.
- Integrated third-party OSS and NMS into live devices, and maintained DCN integration into the IP core.
- Delivered capacity upgrades, service optimisations and software upgrades across OTN, IPRAN and microwave.

Huawei

2019 – 2022

Nairobi, Kenya

Product Technology Engineer, IP + DWDM

Dec 2019 – May 2022

- Delivered the Safaricom 400G DWDM project, the first delivery of its kind for a carrier globally.
- Delivered DWDM expansions for MTN and Airtel, plus Safaricom OLT over DWDM.
- Led IPRAN expansion and modernisation for Airtel, including site cutovers and traffic migration.
- Deployed new NMS platforms for DWDM, IPRAN/IP core and FTTx for Safaricom and Airtel Kenya.
- Technical lead for IP and DWDM projects: low-level design, BOQ review, RFP responses and customer support.

Graduate Management Trainee

Jul 2019 – Dec 2019

Implemented and maintained SDH, DWDM and microwave transmission networks, tested fibre for degradation and breaks, compiled network performance reports, and trained subcontractors and customers.

Intel student programmes

2016 – 2019

University of Nairobi

Intel AI Student Ambassador

Mar 2017 – May 2019

Ran training introducing fellow students to machine learning and deep learning with Intel-optimised TensorFlow and Caffe. Named Top AI Ambassador.

Intel Student Partner

Mar 2016 – Mar 2017

Liaison between Intel's East Africa office and the University of Nairobi; trained students on IoT with Intel Galileo and Edison boards and signed up 500+ students to the Intel Developer Zone.

Python for service data analysis

Certifications

AWS Certified Advanced Networking – Specialty
Amazon Web Services, valid to Oct 2028

AWS Certified Solutions Architect – Associate
Amazon Web Services, valid to Jan 2028

Juniper Networks Certified Associate, Junos (JNCIA-Junos)
Juniper / HPE Networking, valid to Jun 2029

AWS Certified AI Practitioner
Amazon Web Services, valid to Jun 2028

Microsoft Certified: Azure Fundamentals
Microsoft, 2021

Elastic Load Balancing Single-Tenant Subject Matter Expert
AWS Support Engineering, Dec 2025

Awards

Top AI Ambassador
Intel

Most Valuable Player Award
AWS Support Engineering

1st place
FBB Network Skills Competition

1st runner-up, Political Pillar
School of Engineering project competition

2nd place
Data Science Hackathon

Education

B.Sc. Electrical & Electronics Engineering
University of Nairobi, 2014 – 2019

KCSE
Maseno School, 2009 – 2012