AI GOVERNANCE · FIELD NOTES

AI Governance in Kenya: What Boards and Founders Need to Know

> *“Governance is not a compliance checkbox bolted on after deployment. It is the decision process that determines whether an AI system should exist in production at all.”*

Boards and founders adopting AI often skip straight to procurement and deployment. This dossier is a plain-language oversight framing for the decision-makers approving that adoption, not a technical implementation guide.

Scope	Board/founder-level AI oversight and approval process
Audience	Founders, boards, non-technical decision-makers
Approach	Staged approval gate, not a one-time policy document
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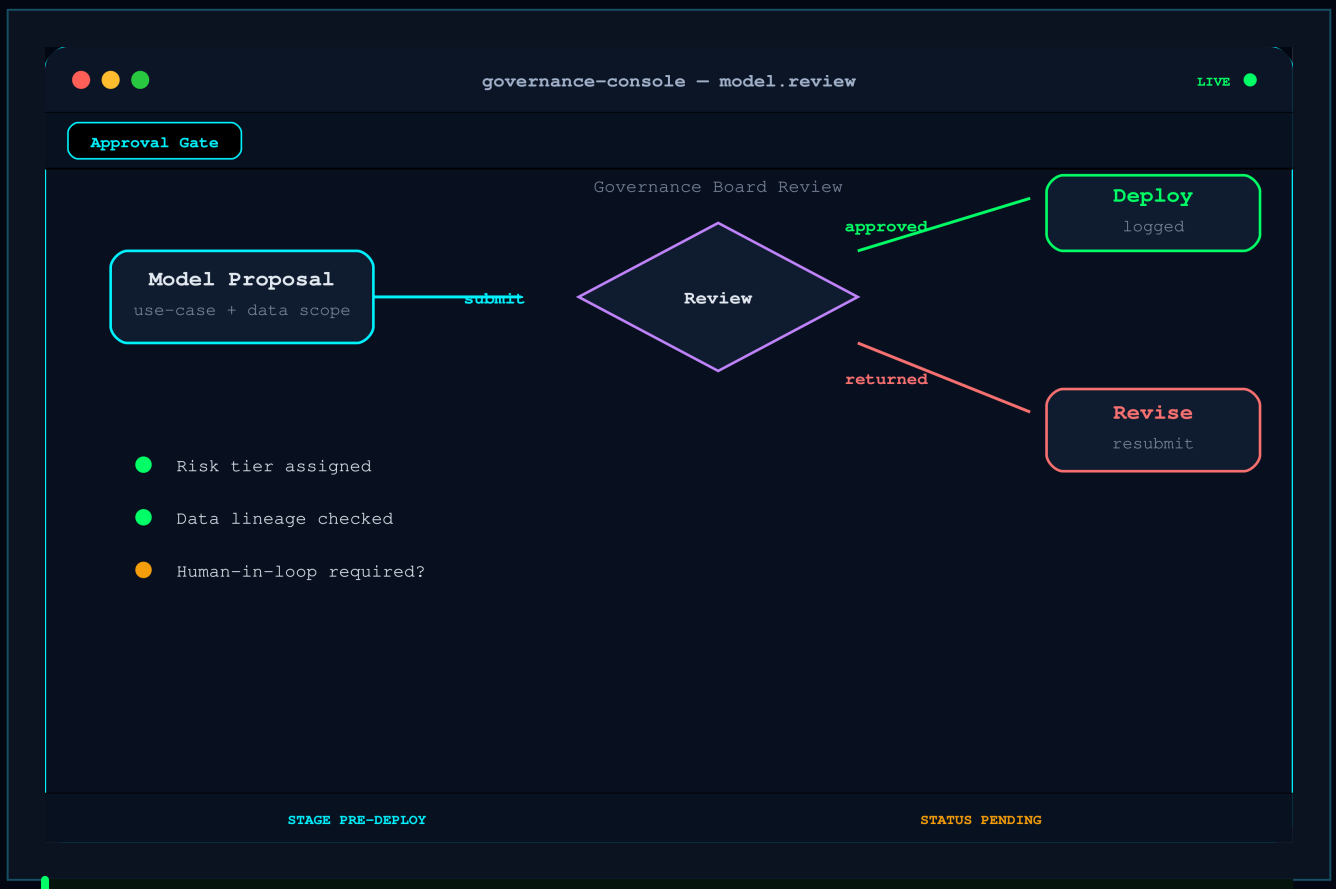
1. Why Governance Is a Board-Level Question

An AI system making decisions about customers, credit, hiring, or sensitive data carries reputational and regulatory exposure the same way a financial control does. Treating it as a purely technical rollout, decided entirely inside engineering, is how organizations end up explaining an incident after the fact instead of preventing it beforehand.



Governance Principle

No AI system reaches production without an explicit, logged approval decision.

2. What an Approval Gate Actually Checks

Risk tier: what happens if this system is wrong, biased, or manipulated — and who is affected?

Data lineage: what data trained or feeds this system, and was it lawfully obtained and used?

Human-in-the-loop requirement: does a consequential decision need a human sign-off before it takes effect?

3. A Practical Board-Level Checklist

Question	Why it matters
Who owns this system's risk?	Without a named owner, incidents get discovered, not managed
What is the worst plausible failure?	Sets the review depth the system actually needs
Can a decision be appealed or reversed?	Determines whether human oversight is load-bearing or cosmetic
Is there a kill switch?	A system without a disable path is a system you can't actually govern
Who reviews this again, and when?	Governance is a recurring gate, not a one-time approval

4. What This Is Not

It is not a vendor's AI ethics statement pasted into a policy PDF. It is not a one-time review at launch with no re-review as the system or its data changes. Governance that doesn't recur isn't governance — it's a launch memo.

Related Service

This dossier supports AI Security advisory work — translating governance questions into an operational approval process a small team can actually run.

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