
ANNUAL REPORT

2015



Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA)



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Message from the Board

Civic participation, access to information and freedom of expression through the use of various Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) tools was at the forefront of our work in 2015. Research, policy reviews, engagements at community, national and regional levels, capacity building and advocacy for increased use of ICT to enable civic participation, democratic governance and respect for human rights are at the core of our work. These activities also made strong reference to the need for a free, open and secure internet, data protection and privacy, as well as the protection of civic spaces as fundamental enablers of socio-economic development.

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), an estimated 3.2 billion people were expected to be using the internet by the end 2015. Of this, two billion would be from developing countries. Yet of the 940 million people living in least developed countries (LDCs), only 89 million use the Internet, representing a 9.5% penetration rate. In Africa, internet penetration stands at only 20%. Those with access can reap numerous benefits, as ICT is variously being used to support communication, health, education, agriculture and business.

At the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), we work to see that more people get access to digital technologies and utilise them in a safe and meaningful way. While monitoring ICT policy developments is central to our work, we conduct research, digital security training, and advocacy for ICT that supports improved livelihoods, good governance and the realisation of individual rights. However, we continue to see some states encumber how citizens access and utilise digital technologies. Going against their national constitutions and international instruments they signed to, some states continue to deny citizens their fundamental rights to access information, freedom of expression and association, and a free press. Meanwhile, non-state actors remain complicit in privacy infringements, gender-based violence, and hate speech, which are also deterring many citizens from joining the online community.

Through our thematic areas which explore the various aspects of the information society, we continue to engage with ordinary citizens, civil society, the media, government bodies, the private sector and the international community primarily through training and dialogue. We also consistently pursue multi-track research which forms the basis of these interactions as well as our contributions to policy developments in our focus countries. We pride ourselves in ensuring that our research is publically accessible and can be easily understood.

Among others, we showcase our research at our annual Forum on Internet Freedom which is becoming a key event on the African ICT calendar. During this event, we assemble internet policy thought leaders, academics, government representatives, technologists and civil society members from a diversity of backgrounds to explore the path that internet freedom in Africa should follow. We are particularly proud of the turnout at the 2015 Forum which saw a doubling in the number of attendees from the inaugural event we hosted in 2014. In 2016, we look forward to another edition of the Forum which will see new insights on the shared challenges and opportunities for the realisation of online rights in Africa.

We salute the dedicated efforts of the CIPESA team, together with an extended network of consultants and implementation partners at grassroots, national and international levels. As always, we are grateful to our development partners who remain supportive of our work and share in our successes.



Hon. Vincent Waiswa Bagiire,
Chairperson, Board of Directors



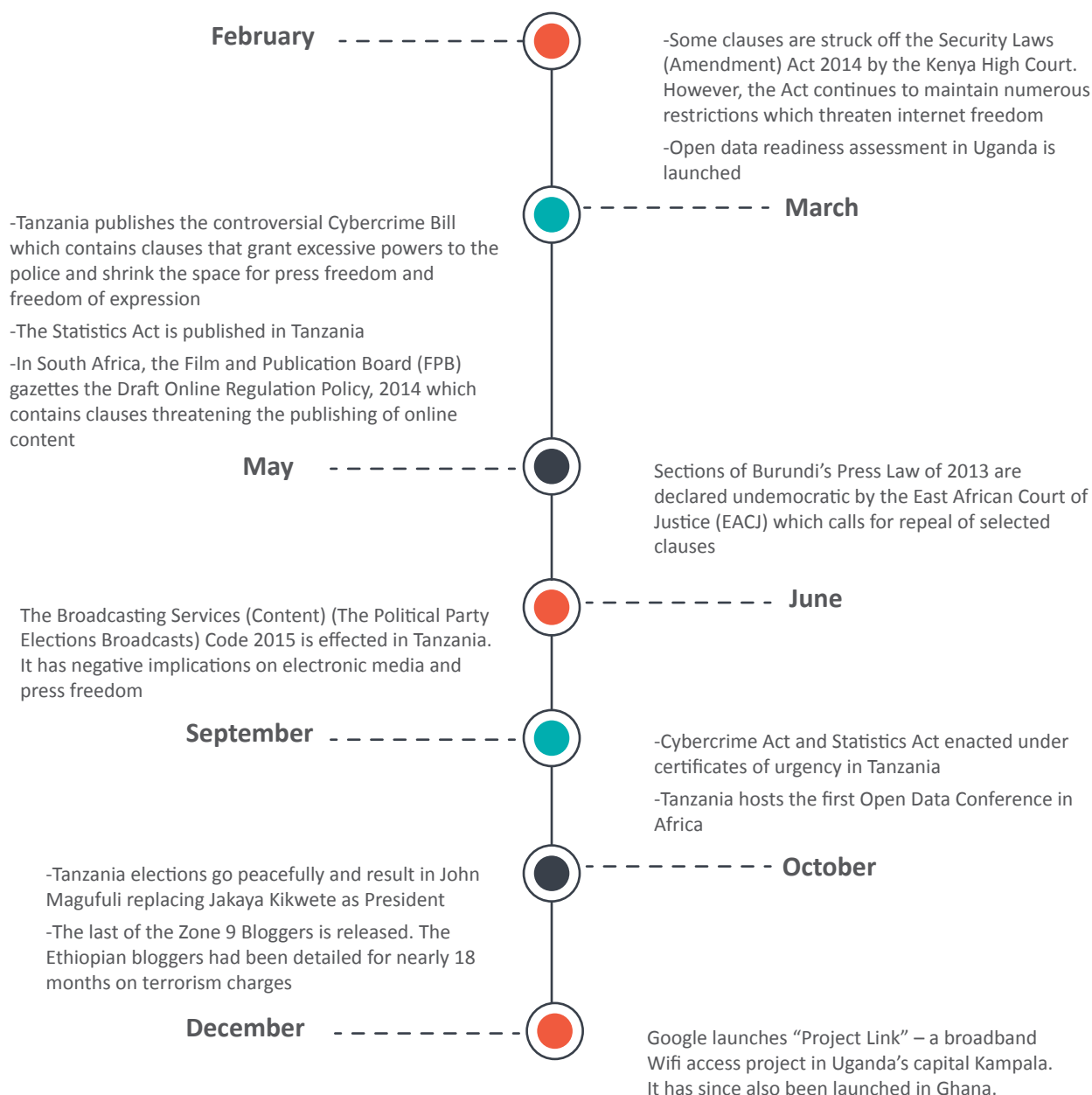
Dr. Wairagala Wakabi,
Executive Director

Working in a changing landscape

Since inception in 2004, CIPESA has been a leading centre for research into ICT policy and application in Africa. Our work is aimed at enabling decision makers in the region understand ICT policy issues in order to make informed decisions based on current research findings and trends, and for various stakeholders to better use ICT to improve livelihoods, engage in democratic processes, and promote human rights.

We currently approach our work through four different but inter-related thematic areas namely: Online Freedoms, Internet Governance, ICT for Democracy and Civic Participation, Open Data and the Right to Information (RTI). Our membership to several African and international initiatives that promote ICT for the public good and improve the inclusiveness of the Information society includes the Association for Progressive Communications (APC), the ICT for Democracy in East Africa Network, and the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4I).

Key developments in the focus countries we work in



Highlights in 2015

Our work is responsive to the constantly evolving ICT political and legislative environment of the countries we work in, but also recognises trends that threaten freedom of expression and access to information, and works to mitigate these threats among human rights defenders, the media and other stakeholders.

18 Research Reports and Policy Briefs with Over 20,000 downloads



- Our work is informed by the insights garnered through research using wide-ranging research methodology.
- The research captures perspectives of stakeholders in the ICT arena including rural and remote communities, development workers, sexual minorities, government, academia and tech enthusiasts.
- The themes covered in the research and policy briefs include civic and government use of ICT, the right to information, online data protection and privacy, surveillance and social media use. We refer extensively to existing laws and regulations as well as international internet governance and human rights instruments.
- The reports are a key reference on trends in ICT use and internet freedom in Africa for a global audience including researchers, human rights defenders, government, media, and app developers.

5 Digital Safety Tools Tested

In May, the OpenNetAfrica Digital Safety Tools Testing Challenge was launched in partnership with Outbox. The challenge saw 5 teams of Ugandan techies test Cryptocat, Mailvelope, Martus, TextSecure and Redphone for their applicability in an East African context. Consideration was given to the nature of digital rights threats, infrastructure and cost of access in the region. The challenge was won by Tech4Dev, a team comprised of student developers and human rights activists.



5 Digital Security training workshops reaching over 50 organisations and media houses



- The workshops were aimed at women's rights activists, sexual minorities, editors, content managers, bloggers and journalists in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with at least 20 individuals in each session
- These workshops were accompanied with in-depth discussions on the existing laws in the relevant countries and how these affect access to information, freedom of expression, privacy and even open data.

CIPESA in 2015

Media Engagements in Numbers

Over the course of 2015, the Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA) continued to work in : Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) policy and practice for improved governance and livelihoods in Africa.

Throughout the year, media was a key target stakeholder in engagements aimed at promoting human rights, freedom of expression, access to information, civic participation, transparency, accountability and empowerment through ICT. We engaged with print, online and broadcast media across different African countries through capacity building, and policy dialogue in a bid to build capacity in ICT policy knowledge and reporting, digital safety skills, and monitoring practice.

The engagements were facilitated by partnerships at grassroots and national level in the region. In some cases, the engagements coincided with specific events such as presidential elections in Tanzania and Uganda, and commemoration of World Press Freedom Day and Right to Know day. Others were motivated by emerging threats to freedom of expression and access to information such as legislative developments, and an increase in incidents of violations of these rights.



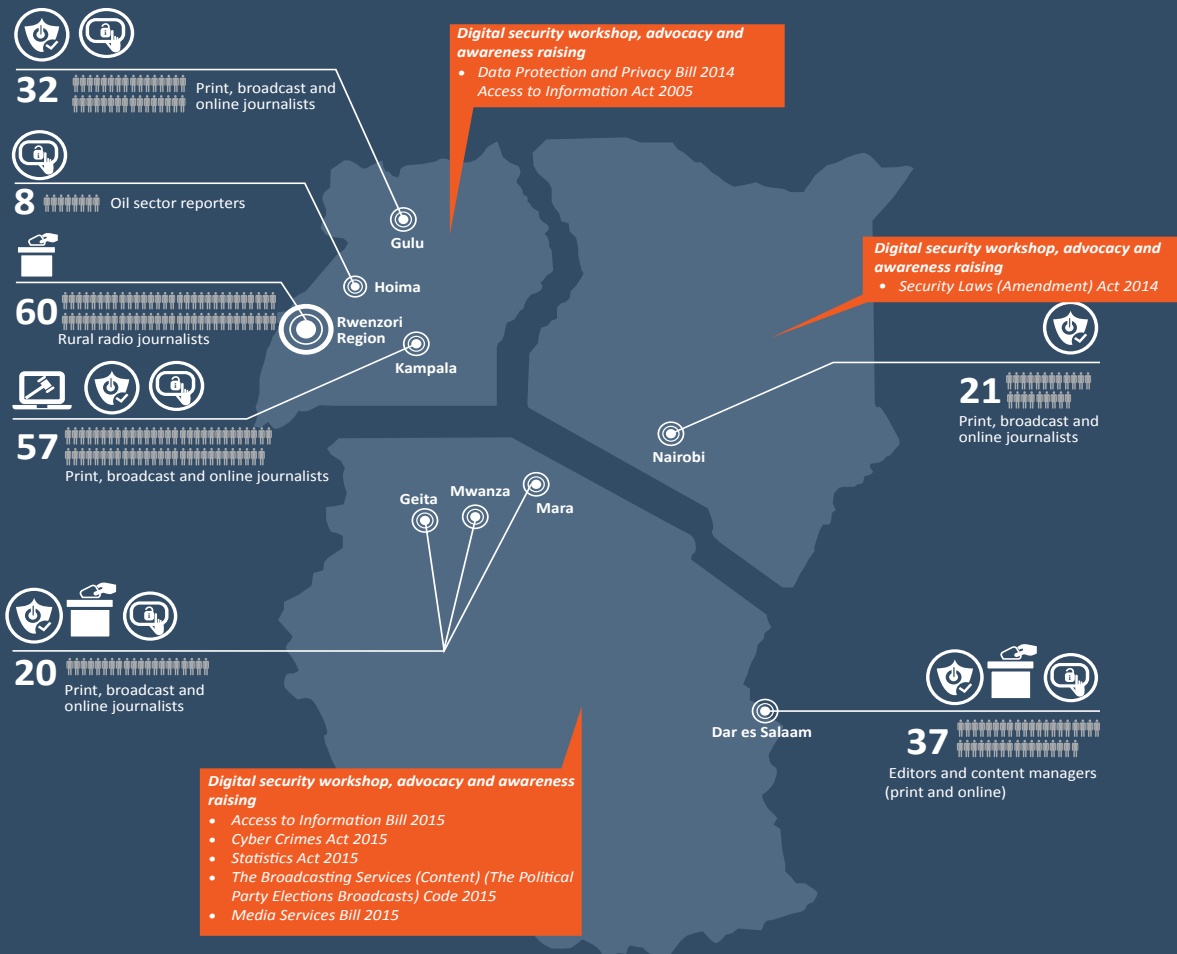
12 events



175 journalists and media practitioners reached



Across 8 African countries



Digital safety training



Access to information and story ideas development training

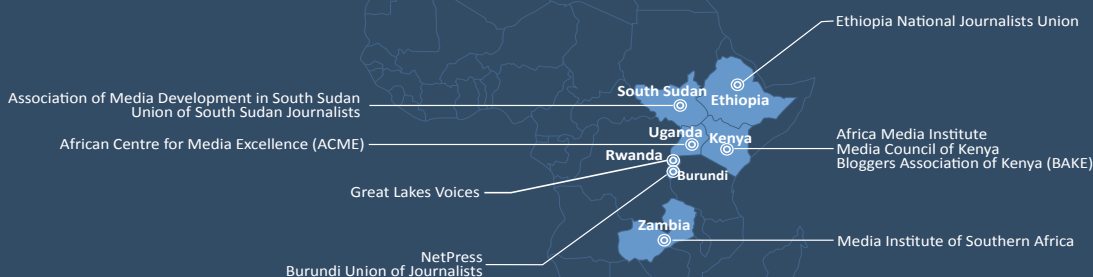


Election reporting training



ICT policy reporting training

Towards learning and knowledge development, journalists and media practitioners were convened at the 2015 Forum on Internet Freedom in Africa in a session to explore ways of advancing the media role in promoting online freedom. Eleven media associations and development organisations from seven African countries were involved in discussions that made recommendations for security, accurate reporting, and ethics among others



ICT4Democracy in East Africa

The ICT4Democracy in East Africa network which CIPESA coordinates was established in 2011 with the aim of leveraging ICT to turn more East Africans, including side-lined and detached communities such as women, the rural poor and youth, into active citizens that connect and engage with other citizens and with leaders, and play a role in local decision-making. Core to the network is the development of relationships which enable the transfer and development of skills to promote increased civic participation in democratic processes. These include building the capacity of citizens to utilise various ICT tools to demand accountability from leaders and to exercise their rights to freedom of expression and to access information.

The network is composed of seven partners: Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET), Transparency International Uganda, CIPESA, iHub Research (Kenya), the Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance (CHRAGG, Tanzania), and Toro Development Network (ToroDev).

Many citizens still lack access to ICT or the skills to use it effectively to claim their rights or to improve their livelihoods. However, access to ICT is growing in all three countries, including among the youths, low income earners and in rural areas. Moreover, many public officials and government institutions have an online presence, and online conversations often find their way into mainstream media such as newspapers and radio that are influential. Digital technologies are also changing the ways in which local, regional and national government authorities communicate within themselves, with each other and with citizens.

The ICT4Democracy network partners recognise that ICT can enable ordinary citizens and intermediaries such as civic society groups to access duty bearers who may not have been reached by other means. In addition, the use of ICT often enables speedier and cheaper reporting of human rights abuses or service delivery failures, the elevation of issues to duty bearers, and dissemination of information on democratic practices to dispersed actors – both state and non-state.



Highlights of the ICT4Democracy in East Africa Network

Gender Mainstreaming in Skills and Knowledge



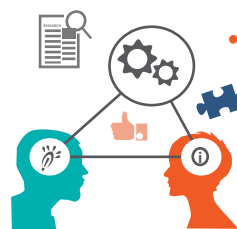
- In the Northern Uganda districts of Apac, Kole, Oyam, Amuru, Lira and Gulu more women are using ICT and engaging leaders to demand for improved service delivery through Voluntary Social Accountability Committees (VSACs) supported by WOUGNET and TIU. Female VSAC members are also increasingly taking up leadership positions that were originally dominated by males such as chairperson of Local Councils, Area Member of Parliament, Council speakers, among others. Nonetheless, there remains a gap due to high illiteracy levels, domestic burdens, and other socially defined gender roles for women.
- In Tanzania, human rights engagements recorded the highest level of women participation, averaging 53%.
- Similarly, there was high women's participation and inclusion in activities including building skills in citizen journalism, geo-coding data, media training in access to information and social media use.
- Overall, in 2015, women participation in project activities averaged at 46% up from 43% in 2014.



Reporting Human Rights Violations and Service Delivery Failures Through ICT

- **Tanzania:** 2,159 verified human rights violation reports received through the SMS for Human Rights System in 2015 out of a total of 28,307 complaints sent via SMS. This comes after the reporting system operated by CHRAGG was upgraded for efficient filtering of repeat reports and junk promotional or unsolicited messages.
- **Kenya:** 775 cases were reported through a mix of online and offline platforms.
- **Uganda:** A toll free call centre for reporting gaps in public health systems in Northern Uganda registered 394 calls in 2015 up from 226 in 2014. Grassroots partners in Northern Uganda made 71 posts to the Ushahidi crowdsourcing platform on poor service delivery.

Information and Knowledge Sharing Through Evidence-Based Research



- 26,000 copies of various IEC materials on human rights, citizen participation and mechanisms for reporting violations and service delivery concerns distributed by network partners.
- 7 research reports published by the network:
 - ICT in Civic Participation and Democracy in Uganda: Citizens' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
 - The state of Right to Information in East Africa
 - ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Tanzania)
 - ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Kenya)
 - ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Uganda)
 - Monitoring Good governance using ICTs in Northern Uganda with a Gender lens
 - A Step by Step Guide to using E-governance and Community Participation to Address Pertinent Issues in Rural Communities

Skills building



- 4,000 citizen journalists, media, rural monitors and social accountability committee members have been trained in using ICT to monitor public services delivery, demand accountability, access relevant information, report factually, and monitor and advocate for human rights.
- Nearly 2,000 individuals comprising mainly voluntary accountability committees (VSACs and VACs), rural monitors, local government officials, Human Rights Networks (HURINETs) and civil society organisations participated in physical dialogue and community outreach meetings on human rights and service delivery monitoring in the three focus countries. Women made up 33% of participants in these engagements.

Traditional and New Media Interactions



Partners maintained relationships with 9 national television stations and 21 radio stations. The network has 7 main Facebook accounts maintained by each partner and a further 12 Facebook accounts created by grassroots level communities, in addition to online hashtag campaigns and blog posts. Further, over 2,400 SMS were sent on the topic of human rights. Combined, these interventions reached an audience of over 20 million through both traditional and new media forms.

NB: A full ICT4democracy In East Africa annual report for 2015 is also available in our Resources page on www.cipesa.org/Resources

iParticipate Uganda

Over the course of 2015, CIPESA’s iParticipate Uganda project sought to understand citizens’ online behaviour in their use of ICT tools for civic engagement. A report on research conducted during 2014 on Uganda Citizens’ Knowledge and Practices of ICT Use in Governance was published, with insightful findings on what influences citizens’ decisions in civic participation and democratic processes. Some of the findings on what limits citizens from utilising ICT to engage with duty bearers included security concerns, mistrust of duty bearers and therefore low confidence on the outcomes of engaging. The research resulted in a series of recommendations to help policy makers, civil society and tech developers make informed decisions in their interventions.

In separate studies on government and non-government ICT initiatives, and how ICT-related policies and other legislation affected citizen participation and democratic governance in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, almost similar findings were recorded. These reports indicate that a number of ICT initiatives both government and citizen-led are being implemented to enable social accountability and citizen participation in monitoring transparency and accountability in government operations. The initiatives are supported by a number of laws and policy frameworks such as the Access to information law in Uganda, National ICT policies, e-government strategies and universal service funds in all three countries.

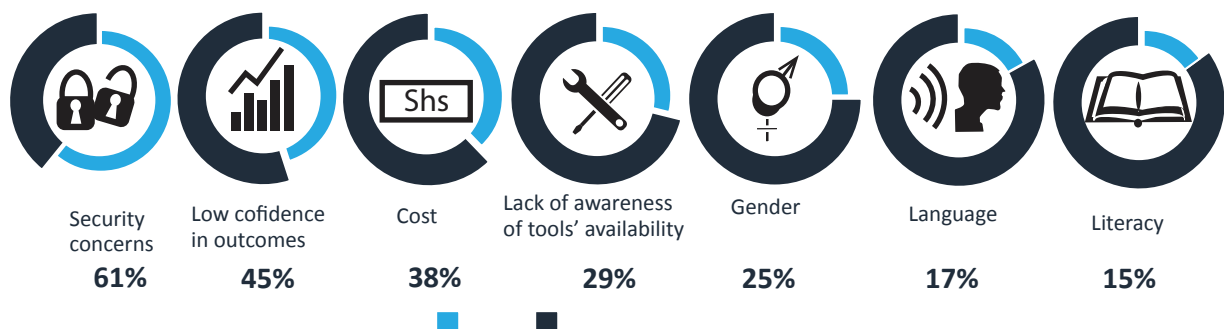
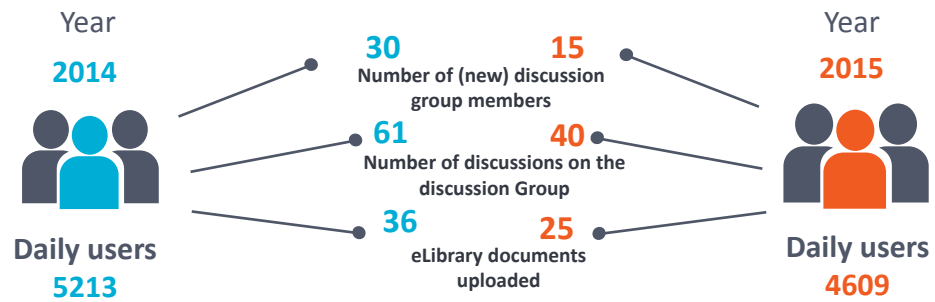


Image extracted from the *ICT in Civic Participation and Democracy in Uganda: Citizens Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices report*

The reports also note the low level of awareness and implementation of the enabling laws within ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) and among citizens, as well as a lack of interactivity of several government websites. The reports recommend for governments to create awareness of the laws among citizens and MDAs, the repeal and amendment of repressive laws that negate free speech and right to information, the immediate enactment of data protection and privacy laws, and the enactment of right to information law in Kenya and Tanzania.¹

CIPESA also continued supporting its grassroots partners through technical skills capacity and knowledge development around use of ICT for governance in Uganda. The Kasese-based eSociety Resource Centre recorded an average of 1,000 monthly users (half of them female), including local government officials, students and the general public. The local government ICT platforms maintained by the centre including the district website, discussion group and e-library remained crucial in availing citizens with information and enabling engagement between local leaders and citizens.

¹ CIPESA ICT Research Series, ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice, Tanzania, http://www.cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=205, Kenya, http://www.cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=200, Uganda, http://www.cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=199



Kasese eSociety usage statistics

Two trainings on the use of geocoded data for service delivery planning and monitoring, and on the use of ICT to promote right to information in Uganda were conducted at the Northern Uganda Media Club (NUMEC) in Gulu and the e-society resource centre in Kasese. In Kasese, the training exercise attended by 38 participants (32 men and six women) with representatives including the Assistant District Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), district planning unit, sub-county officials, media, civil society organisations and students, involved presentation and discussion on a series of geo-coded maps reflecting budget analysis for both the education and health sector with data extracted from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS).

For the health sector analysis, focus was on mapping health clinics, Health Centres and general hospitals to identify the populations with limited access to health facilities. Similarly, hospital beds available in the health facilities in each sub-county were mapped to identify the sub-counties without hospital beds. This mapped data was compared against the budgetary allocations to the sub-counties for education and health sectors.

The maps illustrated that areas with large populations had limited facilities for public health and education, while some areas received limited funding aimed at improving public health and education facilities. This highlighted the need for more cross-sectional sharing of information at all levels to enable more evidence-based decision making at both local and national level particularly as the number of sub-counties in the country has increased. "If we can embark upon sharing information at the local level, we can reduce these challenges at District planning," said Lillian Kiseembo, the Kasese Assistant Town Clerk.



Kasese District Information Officer John Thawite listens attentively as geo-coded maps are presented to an audience of local council members, media and students of Kasese District

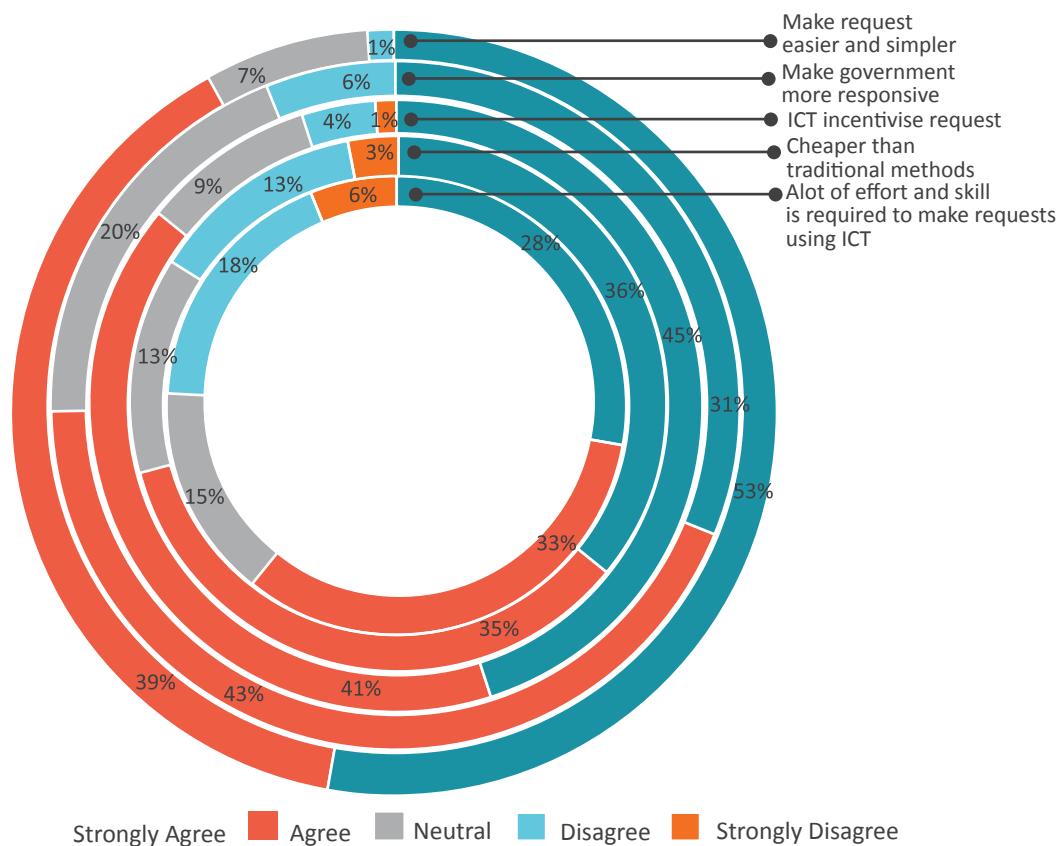
Advocating for the Right to Information in East Africa

Access to information is essential for the functioning of a democracy and is a pre-requisite for transparency and accountability, as well as for citizens’ participation in governance. In recent years, there has been a shift by governments towards releasing open data in a bid to provide citizens with information. However, this is not enough as the information is often outdated, in unusable formats or does not always meet the needs of potential users.

The enactment of a legal framework that guarantees citizens’ access to government information is a critical step in the attainment of constitutional rights to information and the quest for more accountable governments. Indeed, laws which support access to public information held by the state shift the balance on information control from a presumption of secrecy to a presumption of disclosure. Uganda has had a poorly utilised Access to Information Act (ATIA) since 2005, while Kenya and Tanzania still have draft laws yet to be passed by parliament.

Proactive disclosures of information by public agencies and an overall change in the transparency and accountability stance of governments is needed, as is actual implementation of laws that support access to information. The presence of ICT provides for simpler, quicker request and release of public information, however, its utilisation by both citizens and the state remains low.

Research conducted over the course of the year revealed that there remains a mistrust on the use of ICT by both government officials and citizens including the media. Despite this, it is widely believed that ICT will enable the realisation of the right to information in a more cost efficient and timely manner.



Graph reflecting perceived usefulness of ICT for making RTI request extracted from the Citizens Perceptions Of Using ICT To Make Right To Information Requests In Uganda report

In September 2015, the Tanzania Government working in partnership with the World Bank hosted the inaugural Africa Open Data Conference. The conference was billed as a highpoint in advocating for increased release of data by African states. While giving the opening remarks at the event, then President, Jakaya Kikwete said: “Much as data does not in itself change the world, it is also true however that it makes change possible. Information technology has revolutionised the way we collect, use and make sense of data. It has made data open.” However, only a few months earlier in March, the Statistics Act had been published by the Tanzania Parliament. The Act drew criticism for restricting access to information and freedom of expression by containing clauses which require media, researchers and academicians to gain permission for publishing data other than that obtained from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS).

Access to information limitations are longstanding, dating as far back as the 1960s during which state secrecy laws were passed. Although in 2015 Uganda marked a decade of the Access to Information Act, there is little to show of its impact save for a few recent landmark rulings which have mostly gone under-reported by the media and unnoticed by the wider public.

Over the course of 2015, we held a series of interactions with the media and with human rights defenders on the right to information as a foundation for state transparency and accountability. In addition, access to information laws and the changing climate of freedom of expression were explored with media practitioners from across East Africa with reference made to elections in Tanzania in October 2015 and Uganda in February 2016.

In 2014, CIPESA alongside Uganda’s Ministry of Information and National Guidance (MING) and the Africa Freedom of Information Center (AFIC) launched the AskYourGov.Ug online information request portal. Use of the portal has been promoted through workshops with journalists and with information officers in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The uptake of the AskYourGov.Ug portal has been closely monitored to explore how to bridge the gap between the use of ICT by both citizens and the state for information requests and responsiveness, respectively.

The portal registered 197 requests, of which 42 were categorised as successful with their corresponding responses also publically available on the website. As of November 2015, only five requests had been out rightly declined. Many unanswered requests remain due to being directed to the wrong ministries with no action taken by the public body to direct the query to the relevant public body. More than 70% of requests have yet to receive a response beyond the mandatory 21 days’ period, reflecting many MDA’s poor responsiveness to requests.

However, the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development (MLHUD) responded to almost all queries submitted. Further, the Ministry had independently developed a handbook with information citizens are likely to request from it to cut down on the amount of time taken responding to repeated queries.



Dennis Obbo (centre), Principal Information Scientist at MLHUD, receives the AskYourGov.ug award for Most Responsive MDA on behalf of the Ministry. With him are Gilbert Sendugwa of AFIC (left) and Simon Mayende Office of the Prime Minister (right).

2015 in Pictures



Ebele Okobi (Facebook) being interviewed during the Forum on Internet Freedom in East Africa 2015



The ToroDev team : ICT4Democracy in East Africa network partner



Victor Kapiyo (ICJ-Kenya), Lillian Nalwoga (CIPESA) and Anna Karefelt (SIDA) during the UNESCO Connecting the Dots Conference in Paris, France



A shared moment with fellow attendees of the Mozilla Festival East Africa



A group photo following a training session with members of the the Uganda Journalists Union



A moment of recognition of long term partner, the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) who turned 25 years old



Haleform Hailu of Information Network Security Agency (INSA) presents on Cybersecurity in Ethiopia during the African Internet Governance Forum which was also held in Ethiopia

Forum on Internet Freedom in East Africa

A key highlight on our calendar is the annual Forum on Internet Freedom in East Africa. This gathering of thought leaders from East Africa and beyond serves as a platform for the launch of our flagship report on the State of Internet Freedom In East Africa. The 2015 report which explored the themes of Access, Privacy and Security Online is the product of qualitative and quantitative research.

It is essential to maintain the internet and other digital technologies as spaces where citizens can enjoy their anonymity, speak out to authorities without fear of retribution, organise around common interests, take part in discussions, engage in community building, and claim their rights to seek, receive and impart information and ideas. However, repeated trumping of these rights by the state and fellow citizens is common in the region and threatens the realisation of a free and open internet - vital for advancing good governance and a democratic culture, as well as respect for rights in Africa.

The Forum thus serves as a platform to create awareness and explore areas of intervention to ensure citizens enjoy their rights to online communication, assembly and engagement, and a free flow of information online.

The 2015 Forum brought together 200 human rights defenders, journalists, government officials, bloggers, developers, and representatives from academia, the arts community, law enforcement agencies, and communication regulators from 18 countries. This more than doubled the number of those who attended the inaugural 2014 forum, which hosted 85 participants from six countries.

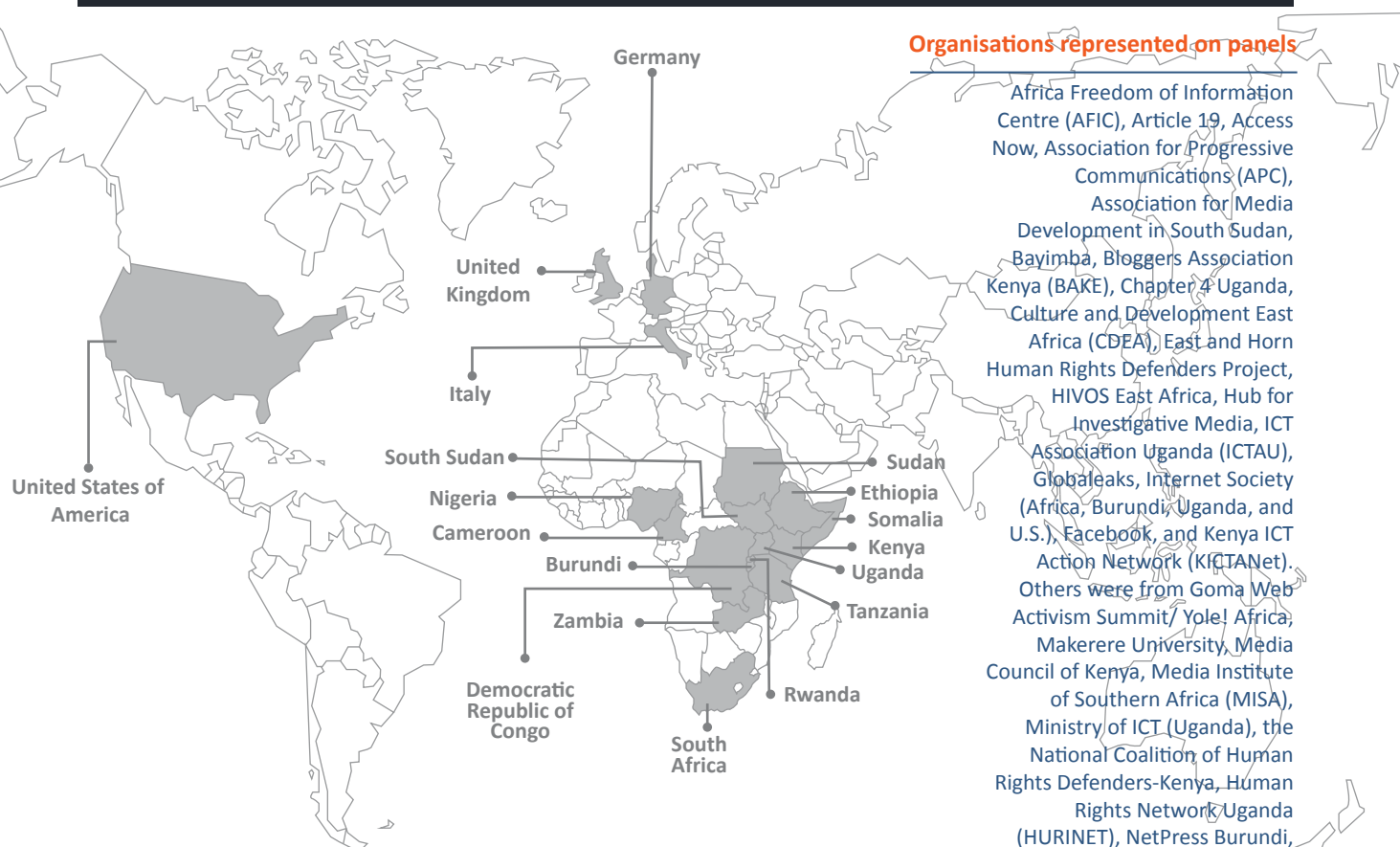
The Forum was supported by the Ford Foundation, Hivos, the Open Technology Fund, Web We Want, the African Centre for Media Excellence (ACME), and UNESCO East Africa Sub-Regional Office. The Forum also served as the platform for the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Access to Information Act (2005) in Uganda, for which we partnered with the Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC).



Panelists and attendees at the Forum of Internet Freedom in East Africa 2015



Countries represented at the 2015 forum



18
Countries



13
Panel Discussions



41
Organisations

Over the course of two days, discussions explored increasing cases of violence against women online; hate speech online; promoting access to information; the nexus between human rights defenders, activists and technology developers; freedom of artistic and creative expression; violations of freedom of expression and free media especially during election periods; proliferation of repressive laws with limited and judicial oversight over surveillance and interception of communications, among others.

The Forum culminated in participants recognising the need for increased awareness of digital safety tools in Africa and called for continued capacity building around use of these tools and general awareness on Internet Freedom in the region. Other recommendations included;- the call for increased transparency by government and service providers in addressing online crimes such as hate speech, fraud and defamatory cases; need for the media to play an active role in advocating for Internet freedom; and the need to address gaps in existing laws that do not adequately protect citizens from mass surveillance and privacy infringements.

NB: The Full Conference report is available on our website

Research and Analysis

Core to our work is the collection of insights on how ICT is used and the perceptions associated with its use. These insights culminate in reports which tackle issues such as the right to information, ICT in social accountability and service delivery, ICT and elections as well as online rights and how existing laws and practice affect them.

The reports are aimed at government, civil society, the tech community, private sector and online use behaviour enthusiasts. The reports add to a growing area of African research into ICT use by governments and citizens, civic participation, access to information and the applicability of tools built to enable this.

- **The Right to Information in Tanzania: Insights on the Laws, Policies and Practices**
An analysis of how existing laws, policies and practice contribute to the current state of RTI in Tanzania both positively and negatively.
- **Ugandan Public Officials' Perceptions of using ICT to Advance Right to Information**
An in-depth report based on engagement with Uganda Government officials on what influences their RTI decisions including technology, existing information release platforms, security, bureaucracy and knowledge of the law.
- **Citizen's Perceptions of Using ICT to Make Right to Information Requests in Uganda**
An in-depth report based on engagement with Uganda citizens on what influences their decision to request or not, public information held by the state. It includes an analysis of the level of familiarity with the RTI law, use of technology, existing information release platforms, and experience with bureaucracy.
- **Hunting Down Social Media 'Abusers' in Uganda as Elections Near**
As elections drew closer in Uganda, there appeared to be a sense of unease by the state resulting in a series of unwarranted arrests. This brief investigated the reported cases and how freedom of expression was affected under the guise of promoting public order and unity as well as preventing the spread of false information.
- **ICT in Civic Participation and Democracy in Uganda**
The research sought to fill the knowledge gap in the use of ICT in democratic processes and what needs to be done for more citizens, the media, civil society and government departments to embrace the use of ICT for participatory democracy in Uganda.
- **State of Internet Freedom in Burundi**
This report assessed threats to access, privacy and security online, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of citizens on internet freedom in Burundi, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods conducted amongst various stakeholders, as well as policy and literature reviews.
- **State of Internet Freedom in Kenya**
This report assessed threats to access, privacy and security online, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of citizens on internet freedom in Kenya, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods conducted amongst various stakeholders, as well as policy and literature reviews.
- **State of Internet Freedom in Tanzania**
This report assessed threats to access, privacy and security online, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of citizens on internet freedom in Tanzania, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods conducted amongst various stakeholders, as well as policy and literature reviews.
- **State of Internet Freedom in Rwanda**
This report assessed threats to access, privacy and security online, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of citizens on internet freedom in Rwanda, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods conducted amongst various stakeholders, as well as policy and literature reviews.
- **State of Internet Freedom in Uganda**
This report assessed threats to access, privacy and security online, as well as the knowledge, attitudes and practices of citizens on internet freedom in Uganda, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods conducted amongst various stakeholders, as well as policy and literature reviews.

- State of Internet Freedom in East Africa 2015**
Following the insights gathered from national reports on the State of Internet Freedom, this report compiles emerging themes from the countries, including challenges faced by users in each country relating to surveillance and information controls, and how their communications behaviour was consequently influenced with regards to protect their privacy and security online.
- State of Right to Information in East Africa**
An overview of the laws and policies which have shaped the Right to information in East Africa from the 1960s through to the present in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.
- ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Tanzania)**
This report reviews government and non-government Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives in Tanzania, and examines how ICT-related policies and other legislation affect citizen participation and democratic governance.
- ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Kenya)**
This report reviews government and non-government Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives in Kenya, and examines how ICT-related policies and other legislation affect citizen participation and democratic governance.
- ICT in Governance – Policies and Practice (Uganda)**
This report reviews government and non-government Information and Communication Technology (ICT) initiatives in Uganda, and examines how ICT-related policies and other legislation affect citizen participation and democratic governance.
- Online Privacy and Data Protection in Uganda**
This is an overview of how existing ICT policies infringe or uphold Ugandan citizens' online privacy and data. Various ICT-related laws are analysed and the results are grouped under various privacy or internet rights issues and how they are affected by the country's laws.
- Policy Changes in Tanzania (Analysis Article)**
The Cybercrime Bill released in early 2015 granted excessive powers to police while limited protections were afforded to ordinary citizens. This brief which took on the form of an article highlighted the gaps in the bill which included an overt disregard for press freedom and freedom of expression
- Reflections On Uganda's Draft Data Protection And Privacy Bill February 2014**
In late 2014, the Uganda Government released the first draft of the Data Protection and Privacy Bill and called for comments on it. In this analysis of the bill we highlighted areas of concern and gaps in the bill that need to be addressed.

NB: All analysis articles, research and policy briefs are available on our website in the Resources page

Our knowledge exchange and learning

- We shared our experiences on digital safety for journalists at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day global celebrations held in Riga, Latvia
- During the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) Fair, we moderated a session on Open Data in Uganda
- Shared cross-regional social accountability experiences at the ICT in service delivery and participation reflection conference, Rwenzori region, Uganda
- Attended a Blogger Association of Kenya (BAKE) dialogue on Internet Rights and Freedom
- Participated in a panel on freedom of expression online at the Doa Doa East African Performing Arts Market which was held in Jinja, Uganda. During this time we also participated at the Amani Institutes Hatchery Programme on Social Innovation
- Made a presentation on data protection, privacy and the absence of legal frameworks in Africa which can guide the use of data and user privacy at the Instituto de Tecnologia & Sociedade do Rio de Janeiro in Brazil
- During the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) held in Joao Pessoa, Brazil, we supported workshops alongside the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) on Local Actions to Secure Internet Rights (LASIR) and Africa Internet Rights
- Also at the IGF, in partnership with Paradigm Initiative Nigeria and Facebook Africa, among others, we co-hosted the State of Internet in Africa side event
- Attended the “UNESCO Connect the Dots” meeting in Paris, France during which a report titled ‘Keystones to Foster Inclusive Knowledge Societies’ was launched. It explored how access to information and knowledge, freedom of expression, ethics and privacy are shaping use of the internet
- Presented a session on Internet Freedom at the Mozilla Festival East Africa which was hosted in Kampala, Uganda
- During the Uganda Internet Governance Forum (UIGF), our work on internet rights in Uganda was shared
- At the African Internet Governance Forum which was held in Ethiopia, we contributed to discussions on Human Rights and National Security
- Attended the first ever ICT4Social Innovation conference hosted by iHub and Spider in Kigali, Rwanda
- Commemorated a decade of the Access to Information Act in Uganda in partnership with the Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC) and the Office of the Prime Minister (Uganda)
- Hosted the Forum on Internet Freedom in East Africa which drew 200 attendees from across the region to discuss the threats to digital rights in Africa
- Attended the Open Technology Fund (OTF) Summit which convenes OTF supported projects for knowledge sharing, networking, project collaboration, and strategic planning
- Presented the OpenNet Africa project to some members of the Senate and House staff in Washington DC, United States
- Attended the 10 year celebration of the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project
- Participated at the Stockholm Internet Freedom Forum including giving welcome remarks and speaking on the panel on the link between policy and practice for equal access to the internet

Global Collaborations

- Submitted a letter to the Nigeria Senate in partnership with other civil society organisations condemning the Frivolous Petitions Bill (also known as the Social Media Bill)
- Contributed to civil society statement to be shared at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) +10
- The Right to Privacy in Uganda – Stakeholder Report Universal Periodic Review 2015 (A joint report of the state of online privacy in Uganda prepared by Unwanted Witness Uganda, CIPESA, the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project and Privacy International)



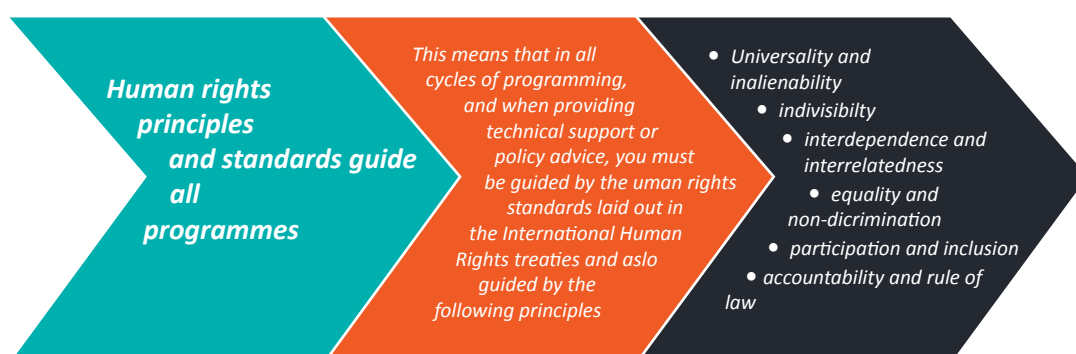
Capacity Building

Human Rights Programme Management for the ICT4Democracy Network in East Africa

Across the three East African countries, we work to augment the ICT4Democracy in East Africa network's work, leveraging on partners' expertise and experience and facilitating the development of a borderless network of civil society organisations, media, citizen groups and local governments that use ICT. As a network we seek out opportunities for enhanced co-operation and learning for our members.

In October, two training workshops were conducted for the network's partners. The first focused on enhancing knowledge on the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in programming and how partners could integrate it in their work. The two-day workshop held in Kampala, Uganda revisited the basics of human rights and made reference to the context in which each of the partners work in and with reference to international human rights instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

At the heart of the course was to encourage the network partners to seek sustainable results which are built upon a thorough understanding of the root causes of problems they are addressing - with a particular focus on the empowerment and participation of marginalised and vulnerable members of the communities in which they work.



The guiding principles which were shared during the workshop

The workshop was facilitated by Alice Nassaka, Director of the Capacity Development at the Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) and Sheila Muwanga, Deputy Executive Director at the FHRI.

The second workshop focused on the Results Based Management (RBM) framework which the network partners were encouraged to utilise in their internal project design, implementation, monitoring and reporting. Network partners were encouraged to utilise the framework to achieve clear and measurable results that can aid future planning and responsive interventions. This workshop was facilitated by InDevelop consultant Anna Liljelund.



Understanding Online Rights in Africa

For most parts of the continent, online rights remain something to be fully understood and appreciated at both civic and government level. This is a gap that some civil society organisations including CIPESA are trying to address including through ongoing research into internet freedom across the continent.

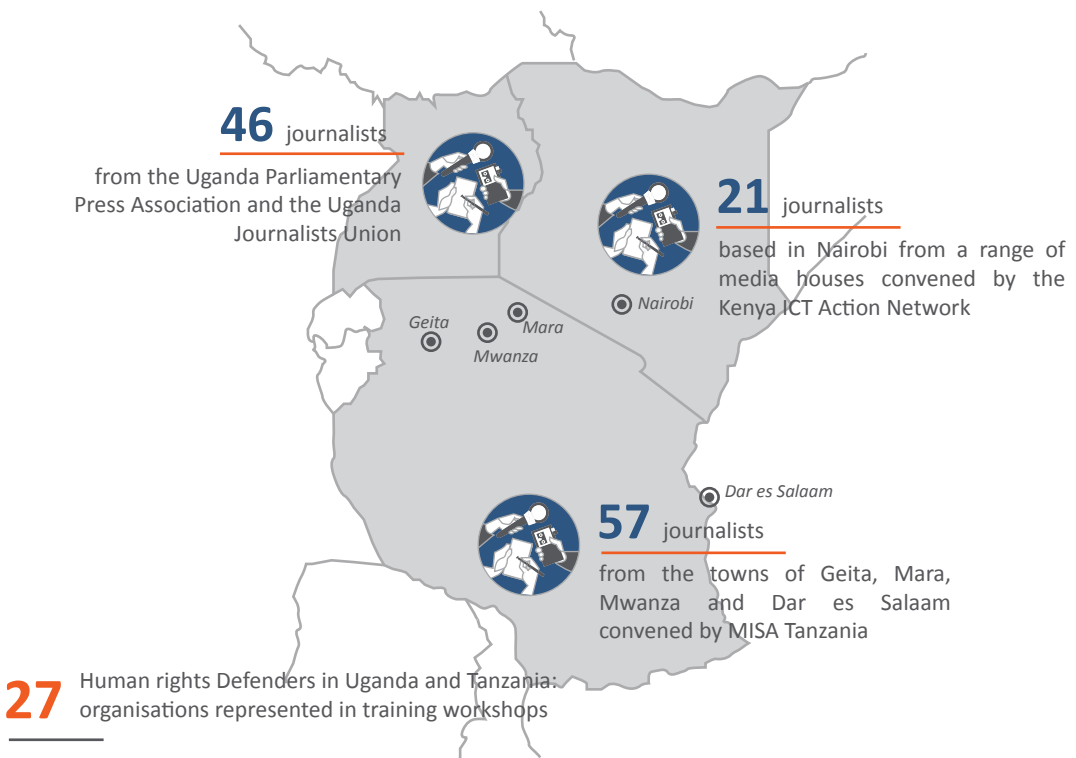
Creating avenues for the discussion of online rights and the development of the skills which promote and protect these rights particularly among human rights defenders and activists, as well as the media, has also been core to capacity building activities we have undertaken. These skills come at a time when freedom of expression is regularly threatened by the state as is access to information.

Working with partners including Defend Defenders, Parliamentary Press Association (Uganda), Uganda Journalists Union, Jamii Forums, Media Institute of Southern Africa and the Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTAnet), we held conversations on the value of online rights including press freedom, freedom of expression, data protection and privacy. We worked to understand the gray areas and gaps in laws and regulations, and to equip bloggers and journalists with the skills to formulate strong public arguments in support of online rights. Up to 75 bloggers, journalists, tech developers and human rights defenders were equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to protect their digital information and communication, and to respond to various digital threats.

A trend that was worrying over the course 2015 was the crackdown on voices critical of the state in Tanzania and in Uganda. This could be attributed to the anxiety the two governments had as elections drew closer (October 2015 for Tanzania and February 2016 for Uganda). There were arrests of social media users in Uganda, while Tanzania witnessed the accelerated passing of laws such as the Cybercrime Act and the Statistics Act that contained clauses which threatened free expression.

The government through the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority (TCRA) introduced the Subsidiary Legislation known as the Political Broadcasting Services Code of 2015 which was gazetted in June and communicated to media owners in a seminar organised by TCRA. The code had serious implications on electronic media (Radio, TV and Social Media) during reporting of election issues.

“I didn’t not know about this Broadcasting Code. TCRA summoned us bloggers to a meeting and made us sign a document that we were told was just guidelines for media and online users. They never told us we were signing our own jail warrants,” Geoffrey Adroph, a photographer and blogger who participated at a training workshop held in Tanzania



Digital Security and Awareness workshops conducted in East Africa

While these trainings focused on up-skilling human rights defenders and media practitioners, the infringement of other online rights including children's and women's rights - particularly online violence and cyber bullying are becoming common occurrences. In many instances, there are few legal safeguards for victims and almost no action taken against perpetrators.

Parallel to promoting the use of digital safety tools is the ongoing investigation into tools suited for the circumstances in which many potential users operate. This includes acknowledging the use of feature phones, high data costs, and limited access to personal devices. In partnership with Outbox, a Ugandan tech hub, we hosted the first OpenNet Africa Tools Testing Challenge during which five digital security tools were tested by students and established developers. The tested tools were Cryptocat, Mailvelope, Martus, TextSecure and Redphone. The scope of testing included how the tools enabled anonymisation, circumvention, and privacy of communications and took into consideration different user communities, including women, bloggers, journalists, human rights defenders, and sexual minorities with reference to the nature of threats to internet freedom in the East African region. The winning team, Tech4Dev, presented the strongest case of recommendations and localisation possibilities of the tools.



The audience looks on during a presentation at the OpenNet Africa Tools Testing Challenge in May 2015



The panel of judges during the OpenNet Africa Tools Testing Challenge

Our Work In 2016

We believe in the immense opportunities held by ICT and the role that digital technologies can play in catalysing development and democratic governance. The use of ICT to promote state transparency and accountability, increased citizens' participation in democratic processes, and the enjoyment of human rights such as the right to free expression and association, is vital as more users gain access to the internet and other ICT.

However, the pace at which ICT adoption is happening is still slow for, even as more citizens have come online, many have been met with challenges particularly the constant threat that citizens' freedom of expression faces from the state. As more citizens go online, this threat takes on new forms such as the addition of repressive laws and increasing arrests of journalists and social media users over content they share. Freedom of expression is, however, fuelled by these repressive actions as more citizens realise their rights through the borderless interactions afforded by ICT particularly social media and are able to compare notes internationally.

We foresee that these challenges including censorship, infringements to press freedom, limitations to accessing public data, online violence against women (VAW), privacy infringements and the high cost of internet access will continue into the coming years. However, we remain steadfast in our goal of promoting ICT use that encourages civic participation, demands state accountability and advocates for progressive policy in Africa. We have seen rural communities turn to ICT to advocate for human rights and better service delivery – a plight that, offline, they struggled to address. Indeed, we continue endeavouring to make more meaningful connections between offline communities in rural areas such as through our ICT4Democracy in East Africa work.

Through the ICT4Democracy in East Africa network, we will continue working towards increasing citizens'

capacity and mainstreaming gender in participation in governance, social accountability and human rights monitoring through the use of ICT. In addition to this is creating a culture of openness amongst duty bearers to enable the flow of information between them, the media and ordinary citizens. The vibrant use of a mixture of ICT and traditional media in rural and remote areas can enable more citizens to contribute to and participate in the information society.

For our OpenNet Africa initiative, in uncovering the State of Internet Freedom in East Africa (Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda), we have seen the need to expand our reach by adding more countries in the southern and central parts of Africa to our research focus. Accordingly, we are excited to feature more countries in our annual research and these will include the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, South Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This research will serve to enrich the dialogue on advocating for internet freedom in Africa at local, regional and global level.

We will also continue to contribute towards advocating for digital safety in Africa by addressing emerging challenges such as gender-based violence online, hate speech, increasing privacy violations and mushrooming laws that negate free expression and privacy. We thus continue to engage with internet freedom actors such as in the creative sector, human rights defenders, traditional human rights CSOs, journalists and bloggers in advocating for a free, accessible and secure internet in Africa.

The right to information is still undervalued by citizens and many states, but is steadily gaining recognition as a developmental and economic pillar. This year we will continue promoting RTI by creating awareness among lawmakers on regressive policies and practices which undermine proactive disclosures, and we will promote the use of ICT to implement RTI laws where they exist, and support the adoption of RTI laws in countries where they are lacking.



Thanks and Acknowledgements

CIPESA is grateful to our donors and supporters who make our work possible. In 2015, CIPESA's work was supported by the following organisations:



We are also grateful to our implementation partners who included Africa Freedom of Information Centre (AFIC), Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance in Tanzania, the Kenya Human Rights Commission, Internet Society Uganda, iHub Research Kenya, Toro Development Network, Women of Uganda Network, Media Institute of Southern Africa Tanzania Chapter, Jamii Media Tanzania, ACME, Transparency International Uganda, Uganda Journalists Union, Uganda Parliamentary Press Association, Kenya ICT Action Network (KICTANet), Northern Uganda Media Club (NUMEC), Kasese eSociety Resource Center and Defend Defenders.

During the course of 2015, CIPESA had a budget of US\$ 949,000. Our books of accounts are independently audited annually in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standards.



CIPESA TEAM

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