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MEET THE
FELLOWS

Meet the Next Generation
of Journalists Covering Africa's Digital Public Infrastructure

The Collaboration on International ICT Policy for East and Southern Africa (CIPESA), in partnership with Co-Develop, is pleased to announce the inaugural cohort of Fellows selected for the Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Journalism Fellowship for Eastern Africa following an *open call* in April 2025.

This six-month regional fellowship aims to cultivate a new generation of journalists with the knowledge and skills to investigate and report on DPI and Digital Public Goods (DPGs). Fellows will take part in specialised training sessions, mentorship, and receive financial support to develop and produce impactful stories in diverse formats and languages. The stories will interrogate the development and deployment of DPI and DPGs with a focus on their implications for governance, inclusion and equity, and citizens' everyday lives.

The fellowship brings together 20 journalists from nine countries (Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda) who work across online, broadcast, and print platforms.

The call in April attracted 214 applications, which were assessed through a rigorous selection process to identify fellows who demonstrated a strong interest and capacity to report on emerging digital public infrastructure issues with clarity, depth, and integrity.

"This fellowship is about more than capacity building. It is about empowering African journalists to shape the public narrative around digital transformation in ways that reflect citizens; rights, challenges, and aspirations," said Dr. Wairagala Wakabi, CIPESA's Executive Director. "We are thrilled to support these pioneering journalists as they lead the charge in demystifying digital infrastructure and holding power to account."

The launch of this fellowship is significant as the digital transformation agenda of many African countries is evolving. Yet, media coverage of DPI and DPGs remains limited. The fellowship aims to close that gap by building the capacity of the media to cover DPI and DPG in ways that create awareness and informed public discourse on digital governance.

The fellowship is inspired by a similar Co-Develop-funded initiative implemented by the *Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA)*, which supported fellows to produce over 100 impactful stories that spurred public debate and influenced policy.

Sofia Ali, *Kenya*

Sofia Ali is an award-winning multimedia journalist with over 17 years of experience in the industry. She has built a dynamic career at the intersection of media, economics, and audience engagement delivering insightful business news and economic analysis across TV, print, radio, and digital platforms. Her expertise spans content development, strategic communication, crisis management, and audience engagement.

She has led editorial teams, anchored influential business shows, and developed robust business news coverage. She currently serves as the Senior Business Reporter and Presenter at The Standard Group, working across television, The Standard newspaper, its digital platforms, and hosting business programs on radio.

Kampire Nadine Temba,

DR Congo

Kampire Nadine Temba is a feminist, lawyer and Journalist. She is also the co-founder and the coordinator at Afia-Amani Grands-Lacs, a community based online media outlet which focusses on content pertaining to health, peace, natural disaster management. The media outlet also pushes back against misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech online in the Great Lakes region. Before founding Afia-Amani Grands-Lacs, she served as media consultant for various regional and international organisations such as Internews which have been operating in Eastern DRC.

She is a 2023 CIPESA fellow and has a particular interest in human rights and digital rights with a special focus on freedom of expression, internet governance, regulation and policy, as well as digital transformation.
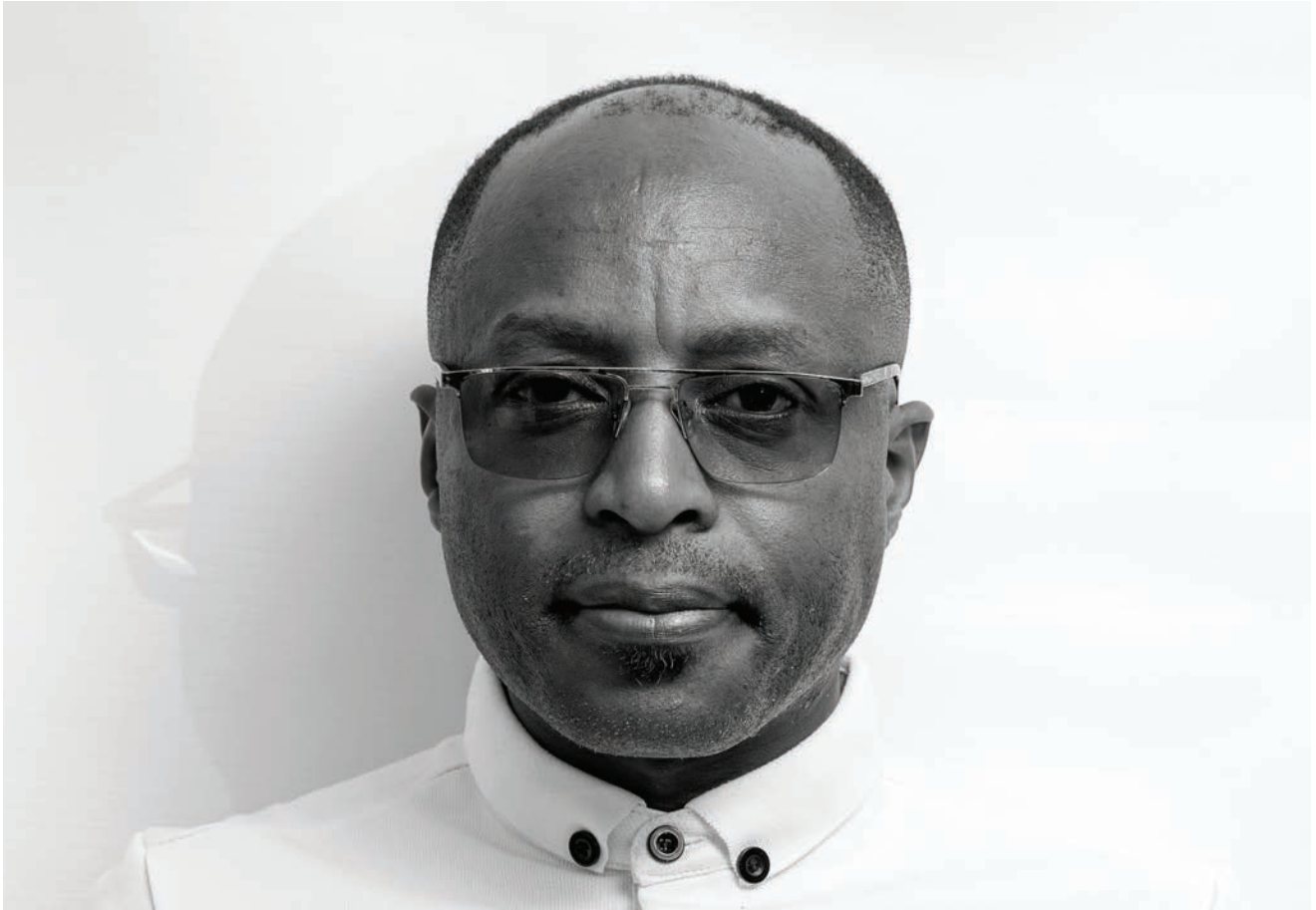
Samuel Abate,

Ethiopia

Samuel Abate has six years of experience in journalism and currently works at Ethio Negari. He has previously worked with various media institutions, including the Ethiopian News Agency, Ethio FM 107.8 Radio, and Al-AIN News.

Over the course of his career, Samuel has produced numerous news reports and related content focused on digital infrastructure, innovation, and technology. He is particularly interested in specialising in technology and innovation, as these areas are essential for enhancing transparency, minimising corruption, and improving service delivery. He holds an MA in Journalism and Communication from Addis Ababa University.

Telesphore Kaberuka, *Rwanda*

Telesphore Kaberuka has over 15 years of experience in multimedia reporting, investigative journalism, and editorial leadership. A bachelor's degree holder in Journalism and Communication from Institut Catholique de Kabgayi, he serves as Editor-in- Chief at Family Magazine, heza.rw and Renaissance Info, where he mentors young reporters and leads impactful storytelling. Fluent in Kinyarwanda, English, French and Kiswahili, Kaberuke has contributed extensively to numerous radio, online and print platforms across the region.

His investigative work spans climate change, health, corruption, judicial transparency, and environmental hazards, earning him multiple journalism grants, including from Pax Press, the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, the Legal Aid Forum, and the Thomson Foundation. He is also a freelance contributor for different media outlets. Through the CIPESA fellowship, Kaberuka aims to get skills to explore and amplify stories on equitable access to Digital Public Infrastructure in Rwanda and the region.

Ian Katusiime,
Uganda

Ian Katusiime is a journalist covering politics, technology, security, health and international affairs. He is interested in the intersection between emerging technologies and governance. Ian was crowned the best political reporter at the 2025 Uganda National Journalism Awards organised by the African Centre for Media Excellence. In 2024, he took part in a DW Fellowship on Digital Threats for an investigation on how female activists in Uganda counter online harassment.

He has written a paper on Uganda's foreign policy titled Foreign Policy by Troop Deployment and a follow up paper on the troop drawdown in the African peacekeeping mission in Somalia. Ian has contributed to a book on the global arms trade titled Monstrous Anger of the Guns. In 2022, he took part in a Youth for Policy Migration Fellowship organised by Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. He is a Senior Reporter at The Independent.

John Tor Madira Machier,

South Sudan

John Tor Madira Machier is the Editor-in-Chief of Sudan's Post, an independent digital-only news outlet covering the Sudans (Sudan and South Sudan) in English and Arabic. He has over eight years of experience in conflict reporting, political affairs, and investigative journalism. John also contributes to Sudan War Monitor, where he specializes in open-source conflict verification and military analysis. He has reported extensively on digital governance, media freedom, and displacement in the region. A graduate of Cairo University's Faculty of Mass Communication, he is fluent in English, Arabic, and Nuer. As a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Journalism Fellow, John is focused on documenting the digital divide, mobile money access, and state-citizen digital interactions in South Sudan.

Mercy Chelangat,

Kenya

Mercy Chelangat is a multi-award-winning journalist and fact-checker. She has five years of experience across print, digital, and broadcast media. Mercy has a proven ability to produce exclusive and impactful stories, particularly in the areas of health, climate, and governance. She possesses specialised skills in open-source investigations, climate fact-checking, and investigating disinformation and malign influence operations. Her achievements include winning in governance reporting at the Annual Journalism Excellence Awards in 2024 and being a two-time runner-up in Health Reporting. She is currently pursuing a Master's in Mass Communication at Liverpool John Moores University.

Jenifer Gilla,
Tanzania

Jenifer Gilla is an experienced environmental journalist known for her in-depth reporting on climate change, biodiversity, water scarcity, and sustainable development. She has a Post Graduate Diploma in Mass Communication and is currently pursuing Msc in Climate Change and Sustainable Development at University of Dar es Salaam. With notable bylines in The Guardian Tanzania, she has investigated gender equity in media, critiquing newsroom biases and advocating for greater inclusion of women efforts that reflect her commitment to amplifying underrepresented perspectives in Tanzanian journalism.

Further, Jenifer has covered major events like the UN LDC's Summit in Doha, COP 27 and 28, and the 8th Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. She has pursued grants to enhance her impact including The Earth Journalism Network (EJN) grant and DW Academy.

Ronald Musoke,

Uganda

Ronald is a multi-award-winning journalist with over a decade of journalism experience. He is an African Union Media Fellow (2023/24), and primarily reports for The Independent, Uganda's premier political and business magazine. Ronald's diverse work has also been published by several international publications including; The Independent (UK), Infonile, The Niles, Climate Tracker and Kulturaustausch Magazine (Germany). He has deep interest in development journalism and particularly focuses on politics and public policy, business and economics, public health, the environment (climate change and conservation), the extractives industry, regional integration, all forms of human rights, the humanitarian crisis, diplomacy and international affairs, among several other beats. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Arts (English & Communication Skills) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Environmental Journalism & Communication (both from Makerere University, Kampala). He is concluding his Master's degree in Diplomacy and International Studies at Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi.

Imani Henrick Luvanga,

Tanzania

Imani is a multi-award-winning journalist, digital content creator, and media professional with over five years of experience in broadcasting, digital advocacy, and leadership. She is currently the Programs Manager for Crown TV and a Multimedia Journalist at Crown Media Tanzania, where she leads content development and audience engagement projects. At just 25, she became the youngest Station Manager at Kings FM Radio, transforming it into the leading media house in Tanzania's Southern Highlands. Imani is also the Co-founder of Mwanga Hub, an NGO focused on empowering youth, women, and marginalized groups through digital rights and inclusion. She hosts Dig It with Imani: The Podcast, tackling issues such as digital rights and online gender-based violence. As a certified digital rights trainer with DW Akademie, she mentors journalists and collaborates with global organizations like the Thomson Reuters Foundation. Her work has earned her national recognition and multiple journalism awards.
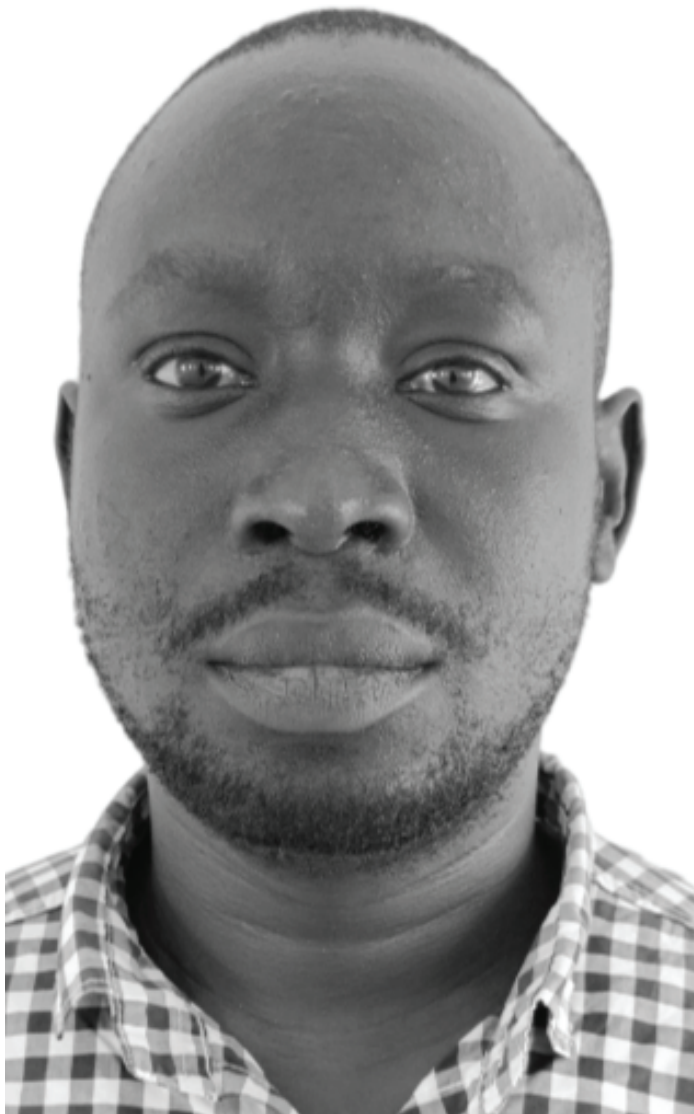
Milliam Murigi,

Kenya

Milliam Murigi is an accomplished science journalist recognised for her contributions to science, health, environment, agriculture, and technology reporting. With a career spanning more than a decade, she has built a reputation for delivering well-researched, solution-oriented stories that inform and inspire change. Her accolades include IGAD-ICPAC Reporting Competition on Transboundary Pests, GenBio-Africa Promotional Awards, the OFAB Media Awards (OMAs) Kenya Winner 2024, OMAs Africa Finalist, NCD Alliance Kenya Media Awards; Best Environment Cover Story Winner 2024, and Renewable Energy Awards 2018. Her work has been featured various Kenyan publications in Kenya such as People Daily Newspaper, Sayansi Magazine, Science Africa and Alliance for Science, where she continues to shed light on critical issues affecting communities in Kenya and beyond. Beyond her writing, Milliam is actively involved in training and mentoring fellow journalists, advocating for solutions journalism, and participating in global conversations on science communication. Her passion for bridging the gap between science and society drives her to explore new ways of making complex topics relatable and actionable.

Kei Emmanuel Duku,

South Sudan

Kei Emmanuel Duku is a dynamic and motivated multimedia and data journalist from South Sudan with over five years of experience. His expertise lies in reporting on critical issues, including natural resources (with a focus on gold smuggling), wildlife trafficking, environmental crimes, and climate change. He possesses a robust background in technology, fact-checking, health, gender-based violence, human rights, and sports reporting, showcasing a diverse array of journalistic interests and a dedication to impactful storytelling. Over the last five years, he has been awarded 10 regional and global reporting grants with different organisations. His work has received various awards including from the Media Development Institute for health reporting, the Union of Journalists of South Sudan where he won the 2024 award for reporting on sports, and earning the title of Second Runner-Up in the 2024 African Media Development Foundation-Nigeria competition in the Climate Change reporting category.

Hassan Istiila, *Somalia*

Hassan Istiila is a Mogadishu-based journalist with over a decade of experience reporting forlocal and international media. His work focuses on migration, governance, digital divides, climate change, environmental issues, fact-checking, and the rights of marginalised communities. As Somalia undergoes a digital transformation amid deep-rooted infrastructure and information access challenges, Hassan sees journalism as a tool to promote transparency and inclusion. He is particularly interested in how Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) can transform fragile states like Somalia, where systems such as national digital ID and e-governance are emerging but underreported—especially from the perspective of equity and accountability.

Through this fellowship, Hassan aims to deepen his reporting on how these digital shifts impact public service delivery and the daily lives of ordinary citizens, especially women, youth, and internally displaced people.

Lebon Kasamira,

DR Congo

Lebon Kasamira is a journalist, Internet governance researcher, and consultant in Digital Communications based in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He previously worked at Ebuteli Research Institute, Congo Research Group, UNICEF in DRC, Human Rights Watch, and Amani Festival. He collaborates with media outlets such as Equal Times, Al Jazeera, RFI, Congo Check, Habari RDC, Music In Africa, and The New Humanitarian, among others. He has written several feature articles, including on digital censorship and democracy in Africa, published in December 2023, for Equal Times. He holds a degree in communication for development from Lumière University of Bujumbura, is a PAYAIG (Pan-African Youth Action for Innovation and Governance) program fellow, and is a former scholarship holder in public management at the Yali Regional Leadership Centre in Dakar, Senegal.

Mukanyandwi Marie Louise,
Rwanda

Mukanyandwi Marie Louise is an experienced multimedia journalist with an extensive background in television production, photography, and reporting. She worked with Goodrich TV and Authentic TV, and currently serves as an editor and reporter at UbumweNews.com where she covers a range of social, economic, and development issues. She holds an advanced diploma in Information Management. Over the years, she has completed specialised training in gender and media, sexual and reproductive health reporting, and business journalism, among others, through programs supported by institutions such as the University of Rwanda, Media High Council, and UNDP. Marie Louise is passionate about telling impactful, inclusive stories that inform and empower local communities. She brings a dynamic, cross-platform approach to journalism. As a DPI Journalism Fellow, she is committed to exploring how digital public infrastructure can enhance transparency and civic engagement.

Jean de Dieu Ndikumasabo,

Burundi

Jean de Dieu Ndikumasabo is a bilingual (French-English) news reporter, fact-checker, photographer, editor, and community manager at the Burundi News Agency (ABP). He specializes in investigative journalism, focusing on underreported issues related to climate change, public health, digital transformation, and community-driven stories. He has covered key topics at the intersection of climate and health through prestigious fellowships, including the Excellence in Health Journalism Fellowship (National Press Foundation) and the African Disease Reporting Fellowship (ADRAP). His international reporting experience includes major events such as the Forum for Young African Entrepreneurs (Tony Elumelu Foundation Forum, 2019, Lagos) and the 5th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5, 2024, Doha). In June 2025, he covered the Internet Governance Forum (IGF 25) held in Lillestrøm, Norway. Jean de Dieu has received advanced training in journalism and fact-checking from several renowned institutions, including the National Press Foundation, The World Bank, Lille School of Journalism, Radio Netherland Training Center (RNTC), Code for Africa, and PesaCheck. He is the recipient of the Pro Economic Liberty Award from CDE-Great Lakes and is an active member of the Africa Fact-checking Alliance (AFCA).

Avit Ndayiziga,

Burundi

Avit Ndayiziga, is a data-driven investigative journalist whose work has focused on digital-related and other stories in Burundi and in various other African countries. Currently, he is the editor-in-chief at Community Voice, a media outlet that tells in-depth stories and sheds light on the most pressing issues affecting the community. These include digital-related topics, the internet, and other community-interest topics. In 2025, he participated in the Digital Rights and Inclusion Forum as a Paradigm Initiative Digital Rights and Inclusion Learning Lab (DRILL) Fellow 2024, and spoke on information access in the digital era. In 2023, he collaborated with the Africa-China Reporting Project to investigate how the digital divide prevents young Burundians from benefiting from digital advantages. Before this, in 2022, he had covered and reported on the Internet Governance Forum (IGF22) in Ethiopia.

Canary Mugume

Uganda

Canary Mugume is an investigative journalist, and prime time news anchor at NBS Television whose work sits at the intersection of journalism, technology, and public accountability. With over a decade of experience, he has used digital media to shape public discourse on governance, online freedoms, and access to public services. Through his platforms including NBS Television, Canary leverages storytelling to make complex digital policy issues accessible and impactful. His investigative reporting and online influence as the most followed active media personality online in Uganda today, have driven national conversations around public policy, civic technology, governance and inclusive digital transformation.

Ayele Addis Ambelu,

Ethiopia

Ayele Addis Ambelu is an award-winning journalist, investigative reporter, and digital rights advocate with over five years of experience in public interest journalism. He works with Africa News Channel and Ethiopian Mass Media Action (EMMA NEWS), producing in-depth stories on digital governance, human rights, technology, and environmental justice. Ayele's reporting focuses on the impact of digital public infrastructure—such as digital ID systems, open data, and internet access—on marginalized communities in Ethiopia and across Africa. He holds an MA in Media and Communication and has published over 100 investigative pieces spanning radio, online, and academic platforms. As a media literacy trainer and program editor, Ayele also mentors emerging journalists on fact-checking, digital safety, and AI in the newsroom. His work has been recognised by the Nile Media Awards, the Festove investigative Media Award in Switzerland, the African Continental Re media award in South Africa, and WHO Africa. He is passionate about using journalism to expose inequality and drive inclusive digital transformation.

Naima Arabow,

Somalia

Naima Arabow is a Mogadishu based journalist with over seven years of professional experience in reporting and documentary production. Her work focuses on humanitarian issues, particularly those affecting marginalised and vulnerable communities in conflict-affected areas. Naima has produced in-depth stories that shed light on topics such as displacement, gender inequality, access to healthcare and education, and the impact of insecurity on civilians. She has worked with local and international media outlets, and collaborated with civil society actors to document stories that drive awareness and change. Through compelling storytelling, she not only informs but also inspires dialogue, empathy, and action especially in fragile contexts like Somalia.

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