



UGANDA INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM (UIGF) 2025 REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Internet Governance Forum (UIGF) 2025 was held on April 30, 2025, in Kampala, Uganda. Hosted under the theme of “Building Uganda’s Digital Governance Together” the Forum was a culmination of week-long activities under the Uganda Internet Governance Week that included learning, building a consensus about Internet governance issues relevant to Uganda and its digital future, while acting under the main principles of the global Internet Governance Forum.

The forum highlighted the progress so far made in establishing laws and regulations governing the internet in terms of protecting users and improving access to internet.

The Uganda Internet Governance Forum has since 2006 been a platform for deliberation on internet governance matters in the country. Debates at this annual forum focused on understanding current global, regional and national trends on the Internet governance agenda. The UIGF followed a bottom-up approach, which included soliciting for topics from interested organisations and individuals interested in the governance of the Internet. The call for topics was shared on different social media channels, mailing lists and the forum website and lasted over a month. The topics were then selected by a multi-stakeholder organizing committee comprising representatives from government, civil society and the private sector to form the main theme and subthemes for the forum.

UIGF 2025 Main Objectives

1. Bring together the Ugandan stakeholders to evaluate our progress towards a building a safe and secure internet in Uganda.
2. Exhibit the impact of the knowledge and skills obtained by the alumni of School of Internet Governance in internet governance.
3. Provide opportunities to share experiences from individuals and organisation involved in internet governance activities.
4. Provide a deeper understanding of the global and local internet Ecosystem

FORUM PROCEEDINGS

OPENING REMARKS: Speakers: *Joshua Mpairwe, President, Internet Society Uganda Chapter; Ms. Anja Gengo, NRI Initiative Coordinator, UN Internet Governance Forum; Lillian Nalwoga, UIGF Coordinator*

This UIGF forum serves as a vital platform for inclusive dialogue on digital issues, bringing together diverse voices to shape the future of the digital landscape. It addresses key topics such as digital inclusion, cybersecurity, AI, and youth engagement, guided by principles of openness and shared responsibility. Marking 20 years of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF), the event reflects on achieved progress and emphasizes the need for continued stakeholder engagement. Uganda is committed to this cause, preparing stakeholders to foster active participation. The Uganda IGF has contributed significantly to digital policy discussions, showcasing the effectiveness of the multistakeholder model, which will be reviewed at WSIS+20. The meeting underscores the importance of participation, collaboration, and inclusive governance, with a focus on emerging technologies and ongoing global digital governance discussions.

“The Uganda IGF, has played a pivotal role in shaping discussions and policies on digital governance. Over the past two decades, the UN and key stakeholders have convened global and regional IGFs to address emerging internet issues fundamentally. This meeting exemplifies the power of participation and collaboration in building an inclusive and secure digital community. The involvement of parliamentarians is not only essential but also welcomed to advance education, promote policy development, and foster coordinated actions.” **Ms. Anja Gengo, NRI Initiative Coordinator, UN Internet Governance Forum.**

PARLIAMENTARY IGF LAUNCH

Speakers: *Hon. Sarah Opendi, Hon. Rose Obiga; Right. Hon. Thomas Tayebwa, Deputy Speaker of Parliament; Dr. Chris Baryomunsi, Minister of ICT and National Guidance*

In 2018, African Members of Parliament met in Malawi and established the Parliamentary IGF, headquartered in Tanzania. The internet has profoundly impacted our interactions and services, supporting modern rights, but many, including lawmakers, need deeper knowledge to foster progress. Parliamentarians must advocate for affordable internet, adequate ICT funding, and a secure IGF community that upholds access to information and promotes global dialogue. Enhanced collaboration among legislators, government, and tech companies is essential, particularly to address issues like online sexism and the need for updated laws on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. The formal registration of the Uganda Parliament IGF highlights the importance of parliamentary involvement in internet governance. Leaders emphasize active engagement in data privacy, cybersecurity, and digital safety, advocating for research, education, and digital rights rooted in equity and transparency. A multistakeholder approach involving partnerships and expertise is crucial, encouraging Uganda to align with global internet governance efforts. This initiative aims to strengthen digital cooperation and safeguard connected communities.

“ The internet is a key driver of development, and the Ministry is committed to providing tools and technologies to regulate ICT use and social media in Uganda. The launch of the Uganda Parliamentary IGF marks an important step in shaping internet governance policies, with big data and technology companies encouraged to participate in these challenges.” **Dr. Chris Baryomunsi, Minister of ICT and National Guidance**

MAIN SESSION: BUILDING UGANDA'S DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

Panelists: *Mr. Julius Peter Torach, Commissioner for IT, Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP); Ms. Julian Rweju, Acting Director E-Government, NITA-U; Dr. Joyce Nakatumba-Nabende, Head Makerere Artificial Intelligence Lab; Mr. Ben Kyemba, RENU*

Session highlights:

NITA-U is prioritizing expansion of the national digital backbone to serve public sites—especially schools—and to provide USSD access. The government has waived phone taxes and partnered with telecom companies to subsidize internet and lower costs, while promoting e-services through digital literacy and financial-inclusion programs like Emyooga. Last-mile connectivity and increased Wi-Fi hotspots in markets, schools, and universities are central to bringing government services closer to citizens.

RENU supports research and education in remote areas with subsidized internet and is rolling out EDUROM (Education Roaming). To address unreliable power, RENU developed solar-powered routers that cover wider areas and can run up to three weeks on a full charge. Zero-rated internet for students has been achieved through telco partnerships, but much connectivity still depends on private sector support and many schools lack ICT infrastructure due to limited funding.

Uganda has growing AI innovation and accountability mechanisms, but AI regulation must address bias, ethics, and technical challenges. Policymakers should work with tech communities and organizations to craft comprehensive AI policies, using agile governance tools—such as codes of ethics and regulatory sandboxes—to test models before deployment. Intellectual property and laws like the Access to Information Act are important, though approaches vary by country.

NITA’s Uganda Digital Infrastructure Monitoring Framework tracks service provision, technology adoption, and use of World Bank-financed infrastructure, helping benchmark ICT delivery. NITA also promotes digital transformation through UG Hub and UG Pass, which integrate government services across agencies. Going forward, NITA will advocate for open data, improve online accessibility and device compatibility across government sites, and enforce data-protection rules that prohibit processing, collecting, or sharing personal data without consent.

BREAKOUT SESSION 1: ADVANCING EDUCATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Speakers: *Michael Bitatule Rujumba*, Nakawa Vocational Training College; *Joseph Twinomujuni*, Canon Apolo CPTC; *Kojo Suzan*, YARID; *Veronica Faith Nuwamanya*, Mondo *Joshua Mpairwe*, President, Internet Society Uganda Chapter

Session highlights:

Uganda has taken important steps to manage electronic waste (e-waste). The government adopted a National E-Waste Management Policy with detailed guidelines on standards, technology deployment, capacity building, and environmental compliance, and enacted an e-waste regulation under the National Environment Act (2019). The policy treats e-waste as a shared responsibility: the private sector is encouraged to invest in collection, recycling, and refurbishment to support a circular economy. The government is establishing four national e-waste management centers for recycling, refurbishment, and community training in electronic repair and maintenance.

The Personal Data Protection Office (PDPO) is running awareness campaigns on data security and responsible device disposal to protect sensitive information. This effort is timely: the Global E-Waste Monitor (2024) reports Africa generated about 2.9 million metric tons of e-waste in 2022, with under 1% formally collected and recycled.

Critical barriers to digital education remain, especially for marginalized learners: high device costs, lack of functional gadgets, inconsistent learner engagement, insufficient physical ICT training spaces, and poor internet connectivity.

Recommendations

- Mapping regional Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to optimize network coverage and ensure underserved schools can benefit from improved access.
- Map regional ISPs to optimize coverage so underserved and rural schools — including those in refugee-hosting areas — can gain reliable access. Increase investment from funding agencies and partners to bridge Uganda's digital divide.
- Support innovations from the UICT Innovation Hub and donor-funded, youth-led digital solutions, while addressing community mistrust that sometimes discourages innovators. Greater community engagement and recognition of local innovation will help create an enabling environment for youth-driven digital transformation.
- Conduct comprehensive needs assessments before installing digital infrastructure in schools to verify basic prerequisites (electricity, ICT staff, administrative support). While the government encourages classroom device integration, schools should adopt digital-safety training and internal policies to guide responsible use.
- Enforce government-led content filtering and site blocking to ensure learners access constructive, educational online material.

BREAKOUT SESSION 2: FAIR DIGITAL KAZI: ADVANCING RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS FOR UGANDA'S PLATFORM WORKERS.

Speakers. Bernad Nakireza, Legal Officer, Barefoot Law; Robinah Kagoye, Executive Director, Voices for Labour; Mayanja Hope, Platform Worker Representative; **Moderator:** Phillip Ayazika, Director of Programs, Pollicy

The session sought to showcase Fair Digital Kazi, project highlights while exploring the future of fair and inclusive digital work in the country. In January 2025, Pollicy, in collaboration with the Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association (UWOPA), convened a pivotal workshop titled "Fair Digital Kazi" to address the pressing challenges faced by platform workers in Uganda's burgeoning digital economy.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- **Legal Gaps:** Existing labor laws do not adequately address the unique nature of platform work, leaving workers without clear rights or recourse. there're legal ambiguities surrounding platform workers' classification in Uganda. The current Employment Act of 2006 does not adequately protect platform workers, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation and devoid of essential benefits like social security and health insurance.
- **Lack of Social Protections:** Platform workers often lack access to social security, health insurance, job security and unpredictable income. Thus, need to reform current labor policies to address the plight of gig economy.
- **Algorithmic Management:** The use of opaque algorithms to assign tasks and evaluate performance raises concerns about fairness and accountability. Hence the need to address the role AI plays in the management of platform workers. Companies are encouraged to ensure transparency and accountability in algorithms deployment.
- **Worker Misclassification:** Many platform workers are labeled as independent contractors, excluding them from labor protections and benefits.

SESSION RECOMMENDATIONS

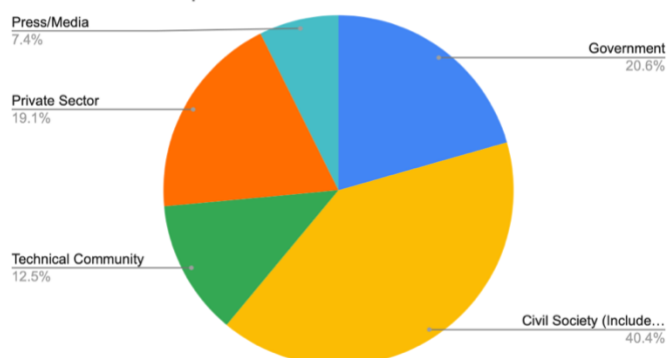
Participants proposed several measures to enhance protections for platform workers:

- **Legislative Reform:** There is need to extend labor rights and protections to platform workers by adapting legislative reforms that grant workers the right to unionize and engage in collective bargaining, ensuring their voices are heard in policy-making processes.
- **Social Dialogue:** Foster collaboration between workers, employers, and government entities to address challenges in the digital economy.
- **Digital Literacy:** Invest in training programs to enhance workers' understanding of their rights and the digital tools they use.
- **Fair Contracts:** Ensure that platform workers have access to clear, understandable contracts that outline their rights and responsibilities.

UIGF 2025 Participants

The one-day event had an overall total of 136 (81 male and 55 female) representatives from government, media, private sector, civil society and technical community interested in shaping the discussion on how the Internet can be used as a tool for growth and development in Uganda.

Number of Participants



UIGF SPONSORS

The UIGF 2025 was sponsored by the Internet Society Foundation, The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance Uganda, Internet Governance Support Association (IGFSA), Internet Society Foundation, CADE, CIPESA, RENU, ACME.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Uganda Launches First Parliamentary Internet Governance Forum,
<https://nilepost.co.ug/news/256140/uganda-launches-first-parliamentary-internet-governance-forum->

Internet schools, forums face new rules for safer web,
<https://www.monitor.co.ug/uganda/news/education/internet-schools-forums-face-new-rules-for-safer-web-5038280>

CONTACTS

Website: <https://uigf.ug>

Email: info@uigf.ug/info@isoc.ug

Social media: #UIGF2025; #UIGFWeek2025; #ugSIG2025; #UYIGF2025; #UPIGF2025

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

JOSHUA MPAIRWE	Private sector	BEATRICE KAYAGA	Civil Society
LILLIAN NALWOGA	Civil Society	INNOCENT ADRIKO	Civil society
JESSE KALENGE	Private Sector	AMOS MPUNGU	Government
NEBERT ASABA	Private Sector	GLORIA KATUUKU	Government

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS.

Emmanuel Oruk, Nandutu Doreen Nabuzale, Beatrice Kayaga, Jesse Nathan Kalange; Lillian Nalwoga