WORLD WIDE WEB
FOUNDATION

REPORT CARD

UGANDA

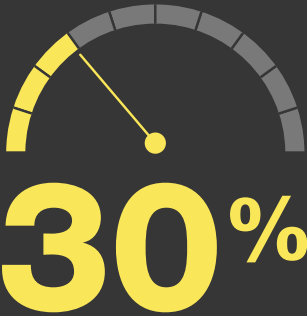**Measuring Progress,
Driving Action**

WORLD WIDE WEB FOUNDATION

UGANDA

OVERALL SCORE:

30%

INTERNET ACCESS & WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

SCORE: 2

A survey by the Uganda Communications Commission found that only 6% of women are online. Kampala has the largest gender gap in Internet access across 10 cities we surveyed globally. Only 21% of women reported having used the Internet, versus 61% of men.

AFFORDABILITY

SCORE: 3

Affordability is a major reason for low Internet uptake in Uganda. 1GB of data costs more than 22% of average monthly incomes, though prices have been dropping recently. Kampala's free wi-fi pledge is a promising step for affordable access.

DIGITAL SKILLS & EDUCATION

SCORE: 3

A third of women surveyed in poor areas in Kampala say lack of digital know-how stops them from using the Internet. Uganda does have a policy to expand ICTs in education and some teacher training programmes have been introduced. However there is no data available on the number of schools connected to the Internet.

RELEVANT CONTENT & SERVICES

SCORE: 7

Almost a third of women in Uganda report using mobile financial services. Relevant content, for example, about reproductive and sexual health rights and services is available online, but the information is not comprehensive, and is often only available in English.

ONLINE SAFETY

SCORE: 2

A shocking 45% of female Internet users in Kampala report having experienced online threats. Women's online expression is also being restricted by frequent Internet shutdowns and mass surveillance. The draft Data Protection and Privacy Bill needs stronger privacy safeguards.

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP: A 5 POINT ACTION PLAN

1. **IMPROVE ACCESS AND AFFORDABILITY.** Ensure government policies make the Internet more accessible for all by lowering Internet and mobile service costs, and prioritising public access programmes.

2. **FOCUS ON DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT TRAINING FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS.** Put in place a structured programme to use ICTs to help female entrepreneurs secure finance, receive mentoring and access other resources needed for success. This should help grow women's enterprises, increase ICT use, and create job opportunities for others.

3. **PRIORITISE RELEVANT ONLINE CONTENT FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.** Ensure that public information is easily accessible, well disseminated and open for citizens' access and use.

4. **PROTECT WOMEN'S DIGITAL RIGHTS.** Laws should be passed that uphold women's online rights, and protect citizens from bulk surveillance, Internet shut-downs and censorship. Government should also review and enact the Data Protection and Privacy Bill, ensuring that it upholds online freedoms and privacy of communications.

5. **STOP GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ONLINE AND OFFLINE.** The police and judiciary's ability to address online gender-based violence needs to be strengthened through training and capacity building. ICTs should be harnessed to fight GBV offline as well online, including by rallying partners to develop relevant applications and services.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

5 GENDER EQUALITY

The United Nations recently made gender-equitable access to information and communications technologies (ICTs) central to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which set the global development agenda until 2030. Why? ICTs are powerful. They can help to deliver improved healthcare, quality education for all, financial inclusion, more accountable government, and much more. In adopting the SDGs, all countries have pledged to prioritise universal Internet access, and to use ICTs to empower women.

But much hard work lies ahead if we are to translate this vision into reality. A formidable gender gap in Internet access, digital skills and online rights exists - our Women's Rights Online research shows that in many communities, women are 50% less likely than men to be online and 30-50% less likely to use the Internet for economic and political empowerment. Women face many barriers - including high costs, lack of know-how, and a scarcity of relevant and empowering content - as well as social and legal obstacles to speaking freely and privately online.

The Web Foundation and partners have prepared these gender audits to help countries assess what they need to do to overcome the gender digital divide. Women of Uganda Network (WOUGNET) has taken the lead, in consultation with other national stakeholders, on identifying concrete steps that government can take in the next year to address the challenges and gaps identified. We hope that this report card and action plan will spark debate and galvanise policy change.

A NOTE ON METHODOLOGY:

We based our scores on 14 simple indicators for which reliable empirical evidence exists, and grading was done in the second quarter of 2016. See the accompanying overview for a description of the indicators and sources used. A full methodology is available on our website.

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