

Digital divides or dividends? Including basic services in Africa's digitalization agenda: Evidence from Uganda

This document is part of a larger research project into the digitalisation of basic services in Africa. It concerns one of five case studies that assess, on a country-level, what interventions exist, which of these are inclusive of poor and vulnerable groups, and to what extent governments are facilitating the enabling conditions for digital transformation.

Context

The Ugandan government developed a Digital Uganda Vision for universal inclusion, sustainable development, economic progress and poverty eradication through digital innovation by 2040. But insufficient access to electricity and the internet (only half of Ugandan households are served by the electricity grid, and only 9% of people living in rural areas have access to the internet), as well as a lack of digital knowledge and skills amongst citizens, results in under usage of digital services and threatens the 2040 vision.

Key findings

How can internet usage be increased so that both urban and rural citizens benefit from Uganda's digital innovations?



There is a need for infrastructure investment in electricity connections, especially in rural areas, and expansion of 4G networks to cover a larger part of the country and reduce user charges.



Awareness campaigns and sensitization to the public are necessary to spur and improve uptake and use of digital services.



Deliberate effort is required to enhance the ability of Ugandans to acquire knowledge, skills and confidence to safely use digital products and services.

Governments need to develop strategies - and ensure regional interoperability of these strategies - to act on these recommendations and keep the Digital Uganda Vision in sight.



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Digital services in Uganda include services for:

E-passport and ID; Driving permits and insurance; E-procurement for government and inter-governmental communication; Digital system for agricultural inputs; E-learning; E-tax; E-health (mostly information)

Timeline

