WEIGHING THE IMPACT OF NETWORK SHUTDOWNS AND SERVICE RESTRICTIONS

SHUTDOWNS...

**VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS.**
Access to information, freedom of expression and association are internationally recognized rights that states are obligated to protect.

**RISK THE SAFETY OF CITIZENS.**
Disrupting the operations of emergency services risks lives. A 2015 shutdown in an Asian country affected a hospital and the airport.

**SEPARATE FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES.**
Families and loved ones cut off from each other add to distress, anger and social unrest.

**IMPEDE THE MEDIA.**
Blocking access to news can fuel public unrest and undermine accurate reporting.

**CONFLICT WITH THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS.**
The SDGs require countries to “significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet.”

**DISRUPT FINANCIAL SERVICES.**
Without online and mobile payments, the digital economy grinds to a halt, preventing payments for salaries, utilities, health, and education.

**CAUSE GDP LOSS.**
High connectivity-countries lose at least 1.9% of daily GDP each day that services are blocked. A 2011 shutdown in an African country that lasted five days cost an estimated USD $90M.

**HARM TOURISM.**
Governments are beginning to include network shutdowns in travel warnings they provide to their citizens.

**RISK FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT.**
Companies use anti-corruption indices when deciding how to allocate foreign direct investment. These tools use “access to information” as an indicator.

**CREATE TRADE BARRIERS.**
Disruptions interfere with the ability of local businesses to competitively export goods and services to global markets. Shutdowns may also trigger sanctions from trading partners.

**HURT LOCAL BUSINESSES.**
Businesses of all sizes use communications technologies for market information, online stores, transactions, and customer relations.

**INTERFERE WITH GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.**
Cutting communications access can adversely affect the ability of officials to communicate with one another, with the public and impede critical government functions such as tax collection.

**DRAW GLOBAL AND LOCAL SCRUTINY.**
Shutdowns receive widespread media attention, which can increase attention to issues the shutdown may have aimed to obscure.

**TRIGGER WIDESPREAD CONDEMNATION.**
A growing coalition of civil society organizations (#KeepItOn), industry associations, multi-stakeholder initiatives, and governments have spoken out against shutdowns, including a joint statement by the 30 Freedom Online Coalition governments.

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