

GNI Statement on Network Disruptions in Uganda

The Global Network Initiative (GNI) is deeply concerned with the complete Internet shutdown ordered and enforced by the Government of Uganda, as well as the reported crackdown against civil society organizations in the country, around last week's Ugandan elections, which were held on January 15, 2026. New Vision, a major Ugandan news outlet [reported](#) that internet services were disrupted in Uganda on January 13 and were partially restored late on January 17, at approximately 11 pm local time. We call on the Government of Uganda to fully restore and maintain network connectivity across the country, including on social media and messaging platforms, many of which remain [inaccessible](#) as of January 23, 2026. It is essential that the Government ensures that human rights, including privacy, as well as freedom of [the](#) press, expression, association, and peaceful assembly, are protected in the post-election period, in line with its international and constitutional commitments, as well as the [Uganda National ICT policy](#), which seeks to promote access, innovation, and digital inclusion.

GNI has called out similar restrictions in [many other contexts](#) and noted the particular concerns about network disruptions around elections. GNI has consistently emphasized that the indiscriminate reach and broad negative impacts of Internet shutdowns directly contribute to [human rights violations](#), while also limiting transparency around, documentation of, and accountability for those impacts. As we have set out in our Network Disruptions [one-pager](#) and other [relevant resources](#), and as others have also explained in various [statements, reports](#), and [UN resolutions](#), network disruptions can have deep and disproportionate impacts on a variety of human rights, including by disrupting access to public interest information and reporting, emergency services, healthcare, education, and financial systems, and by causing lasting economic harm even when shutdowns are imposed for short periods.

About GNI

As a multistakeholder organization comprising many of the world's leading tech companies, academics, civil society organizations, and investors, GNI works to protect and advance freedom of expression and privacy rights in the technology ecosystem. Based on the diverse experiences and expertise of our membership, our approach generates collaboration towards a more rights-respecting legal environment for technology users around the world.