

CHAPTER FOUR MEDIA SERIES

ANALOGUE POLITICS IN UGANDA'S DIGITAL ELECTIONS

23rd July 2020 | 11:00 AM - EAT (East African Time)





About Chapter Four Media Series

The Chapter Four media series is designed to bring together civil society organisations, democracy and human rights thought leaders, activists, and policymakers to deliberate on critical human rights and democracy issues. The first conversation covered the broad implications of the COVID19 pandemic and the new Electoral Commission guidelines on the upcoming election in Uganda, and the challenges likely to be faced by opposition candidates.

Context

Uganda is scheduled to hold Presidential, Parliamentary, and local government elections early next year. In June 2020, the Electoral Commission considered and approved a revised plan announcing mass rallies would not be allowed and encouraging contestants to use digital and electronic media including radios, television, print and social media to reach the electorate. Aspiring politicians have opposed this, describing the measures as another ploy by the incumbent to extend his tenure as president of Uganda .

During the 2016 General elections, the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) directed internet service providers to block access to social media. This prompted the widespread use of Virtual Private Networks (VPN's), a strategy that was later adopted by many users when the government put in place a social media tax commonly known as OTT (over the top tax). The World Bank recently asked the Ugandan government to abolish the tax, saying it has not achieved its intended objective, but rather has had the effect of reducing the proportion of internet users and widening digital and income inequality.

"Analogue" Politics and the Internet

In the second instalment of this series, the conversation will focus on the relationship between "analogue" politics and the internet, how the internet can be leveraged to advance democracy, and broader digital rights. Given technology exists as a new frontier between the forces that favour democracy and those that favour autocracy, the conversation will highlight elements Uganda can leverage in the race to make technology a tool for democracy and not a tool for its opponents seeking to undermine internet freedoms.



Contact Us

Plot 2 Wampewo Avenue, Kampala, Uganda
Phone: +256 (790) 916 614, Email: info@chapterfouruganda.org