

# **THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: SOCIAL MEDIA AND NEWS CONVEYANCE IN UGANDA**

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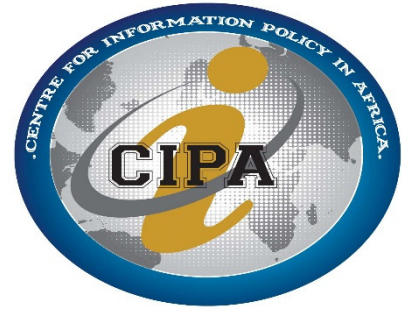
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# Presentation Outline



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Introduction

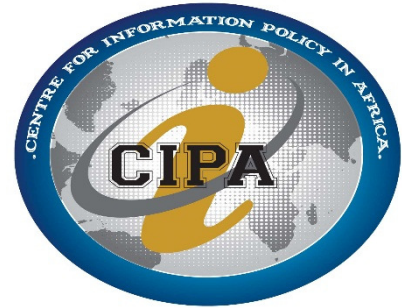
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# Presenters Profile

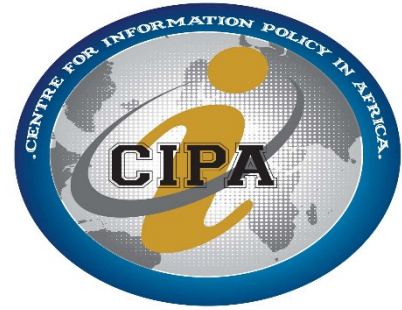


Bibuli Joachim is an Information Science professional with a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS Hons) and a Master's of Science in Information Science of Makerere University.

Gained experience in Knowledge Management, Information literacy, Records and Archives Management , Research and Documentation , Human Rights and Advocacy among others.

Coordinator at Center for Information Policy in Africa an indigenous NGO in Uganda that seeks to empower communities to access information and effectively participate in the development process.

# Country Profile



Uganda is a landlocked country

Situated at the equator in the eastern part of Africa west of Kenya

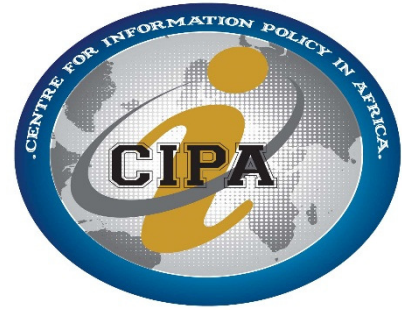
It covers 241000km (squared), with a population of approximately 35 million

Uganda has a decentralized system of governance and several functions have been ceded to the local governments. However, the central

Government retains the role of formulating policy, setting and supervising standards, and providing national security.

Uganda has a favourable climate because of its relatively high altitude. The Central, Eastern, and Western regions of the country have two rainy seasons per year, with relatively heavy rains from March through May and light rains from September through December.

# Country Profile



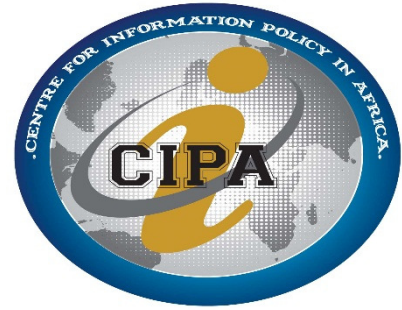
The level of rainfall decreases as one travels northward, turning into just one rainy season a year.

The soil fertility varies accordingly, being generally fertile in the Central and Western regions and becoming less fertile as one moves to the east and the north.

Because climate varies, Uganda's topography ranges from tropical rain forest vegetation in the south to savannah woodlands and semi-arid vegetation in the north.

Climate determines the agricultural potential and thus the land's capacity to sustain human population; population densities are high in the Central and Western regions and decline towards the north.

# Introduction



Internet penetration stands at 15% which translates to 5 million users

Access to internet mainly by mobile phones.

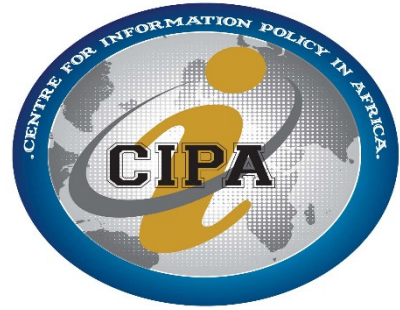
Access is still hindered by poor infrastructure, prohibitive costs and poor quality of service.

Unlike in the past technology has provided a rich menu of emails, Facebook, twitter, YouTube, Myspace and whatsapp among others.

Today's society is driven by information.

Social Media make its dissemination and sharing possible

# Social media in Uganda



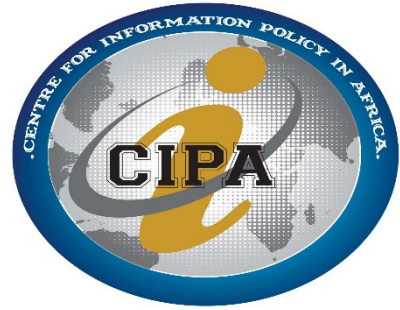
Social media platforms, blogging platforms are freely available in Uganda with Facebook, Twitter, linkedn and blogger ranking among the top 15 websites in Uganda

Two telecom service providers namely MTN and Orange telecom offer their subscribers free access to Facebook

Blogging is on the rise among young Ugandans who are less fearful in their use of the internet as an open space to push the boundaries and comment on controversial issues such as good governance and corruption.

Taboo topics are military; presidents' family; oil; land grabbing and presidential terms

# Social media in Uganda



Uganda Communications Commission, quietly asked Internet service providers to block communication on Facebook and Twitter messaging platforms for 24 hours in 2011.

In 2012 Government introduced Sim card registration

On May 30, 2013 the Government announced that it had established a Social media monitoring unit in its Media center to “to weed out those who use it to damage the government and people’s reputations.”

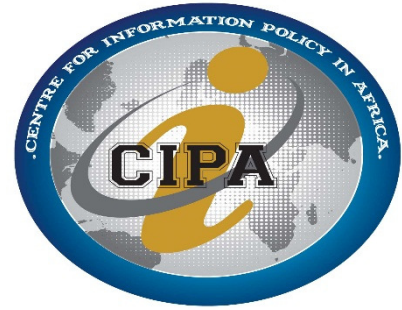
Social media is instrumental in reporting on ;

Whistleblowing

Unearthing police brutality



# Social media in Uganda



Budget monitoring

Reporting human rights violations

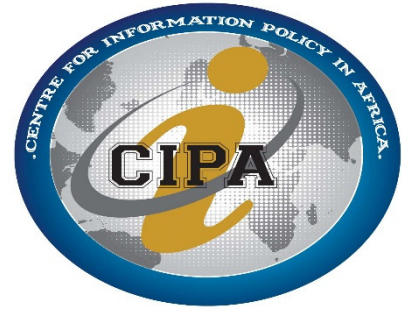
Giving voice to the voiceless

Promoting the right to know

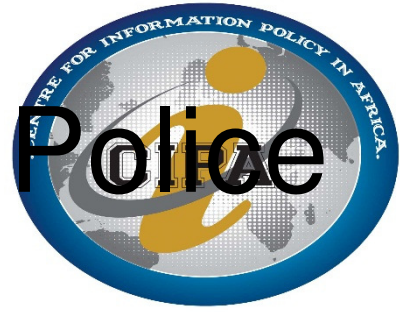
Advocacy and public campaigning

Natural resource management

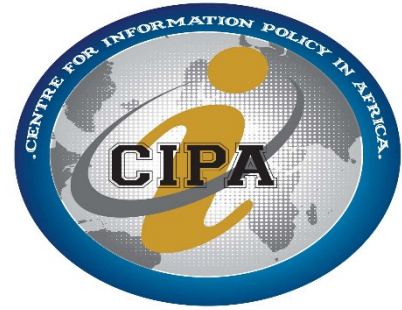
# Police batter a demonstrator



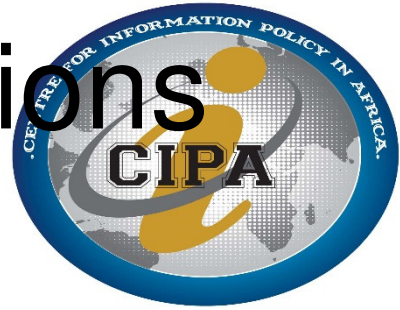
# Opposition politician besieged by Police



# Paramilitary force raids High Court in Nampala

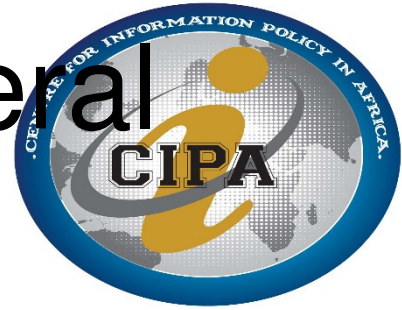


# Police cordon off Monitor publications

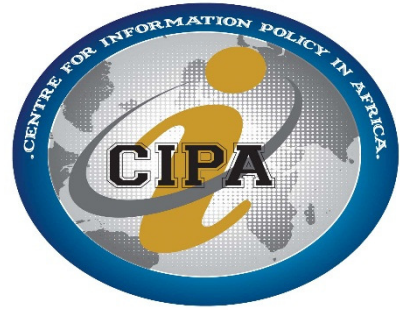




# Voting counting during 2011 General Elections

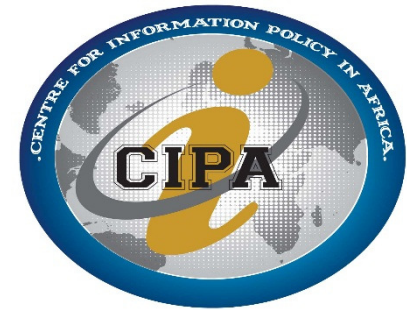


# Demonstrators arrested by police



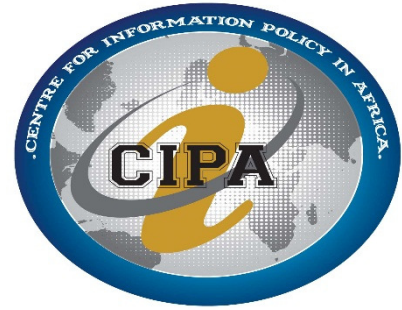


# Children studying in a dilapidated structure

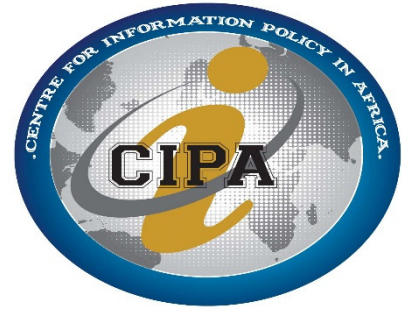




# Trade and Agriculture



# Conclusion



Social media has given voice to news and opinions that are often ignored by mainstream media that is largely state controlled. Social media has also been instrumental in highlighting human rights violations by state machinery especially the police and in helping citizens and media actors to circumvent state control, interference and intimidation.

For as long social media maintains the features of openness, interactivity, participatory and user-centered activities it will remain a place of freedom and a force to reckon with