Uganda

Uganda is undertaking its second Voluntary National Review of progress towards achieving the SDGs in 2020. With a focus this year on development accelerators and transformative action, it is a key moment to consider activities and tools which can unlock progress, for all, across the board.

Access to information – understood as the physical possibility and right for all to seek and find information, and the skills to use it – can make just such a contribution. This access can help at all levels. It supports individuals to take better decisions about how to farm, where to look for work or how to look after their own and their families' health. It gives governments the possibility to define better policies. It allows researchers to understand the world around us, establish new insights and innovate. Libraries are a key part of the infrastructure for ensuring that this is the case.

But where does Uganda stand today as concerns its libraries and access to information? This data sheet provides background based on data from the Development and Access to Information report produced by IFLA in partnership with the Technology and Social Change Group at the University of Washington, as well as IFLA's own Library Map of the World.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- *Uganda has 231 libraries recorded in the IFLA Library Map of the World, not including school libraries. This means Ugandans have less access to public and community libraries than others in the region, although the third of them which offer internet access are able to support their communities. Given positive links between numbers of public/community and academic libraries and development, investing in the library system could bring useful benefits.*
- *Across the pillars of the Development and Access to Information (DA2I) framework, Uganda scores above the regional average on skills and equality. The picture is more mixed on household connectivity and computer access, and rights. To improve meaningful access to information, giving people access to computers and reliable internet in libraries, as well as steps to improve political rights, civil liberties and freedom of discussion would be priorities.*

LIBRARIES IN UGANDA

According to data on the IFLA Library Map of the World, Uganda has a total of 231 libraries, not including school libraries. Of these, 45 are public libraries and 132 are community libraries. This represents 0.4 public or community libraries per 100 000 people, just below the average for Sub-Saharan Africa of 0.5, and some way below the global average of 6.8. There are 302 recorded staff members, representing 0.7 per 100 000, compared to a regional average of 1.7. Around a third of public libraries offer internet access, and around 15% of community libraries, compared to an average of 2/3 globally. In each of these figures, there may be under-counting.

Uganda has 53 academic libraries, 0.12 for every 100 000 people. Only 30 academic library workers are recorded – again a likely under-estimate – 0.07 per 100 000 people. These compare to regional averages of 0.3 academic libraries and 1.3 academic library workers per 100 000. All academic libraries do offer internet access.

Overall, the picture is of a library field that would benefit from greater investment, in order to offer a range of services to communities, going from connectivity and access to culture to learning and community activities in the case of public libraries, and support for students and researchers in the case of academic libraries.

DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN UGANDA

The Development and Access to Information report draws on a range of indicators highlighting where countries stand on four key pillars of access to information: connectivity, equality, skills and rights. For meaningful access to information to be a reality for all, performance needs to be strong across all of these categories.

On **connectivity**, Uganda scores better on measures relative to mobile access than on household access. There is wider coverage by 3G networks, and more mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 people than in the region as a whole, but household computer and internet access is weaker. As such, the country does have a higher share of the population using the internet than across the region (21.88% in 2016 compared to 20%). Nonetheless, these figures are all some way below global averages.

Concerning **equality**, Uganda performs well compared to the region, with higher scores on gender equality, and lower shares of the population living below the national poverty line and of young adults not in employment, education or training (NEETs). Notably, Uganda scores better than the global average on its share of NEETs, although below the global average on the other two indicators.

On **skills**, Uganda again does better than the average for Sub-Saharan Africa on both the literate population (87%), and its score on the skills pillar of the ICT development index. Uganda nonetheless performs worse than the global average. Finally, on **rights**, Uganda's scores are varied, doing better than the global and regional averages on net freedom and around the regional average on civil liberties, but far worse on freedom of discussion and political rights.

While Ugandans will benefit from progress across the pillars of the DA2I framework, it appears that particular priorities should be to offer people wider opportunities to connect, especially using computers rather than phones, in order to make full use of the internet. This will also be helped by stronger protections of fundamental rights.
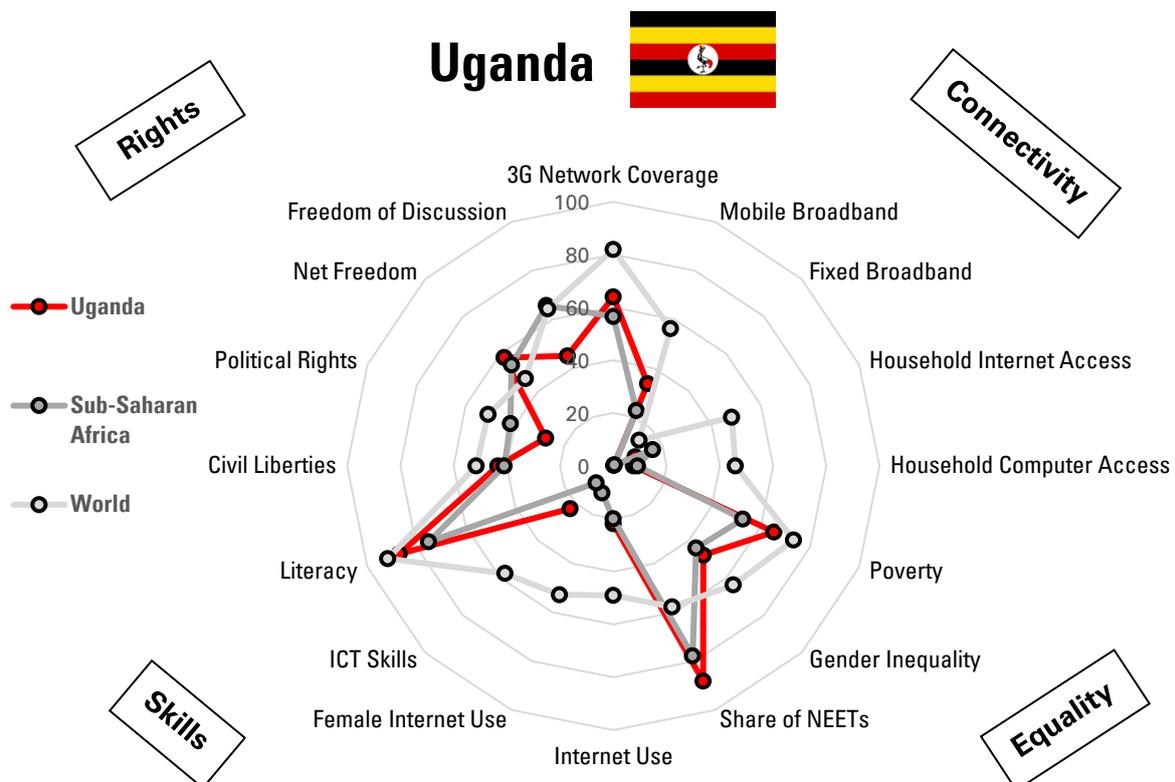
How to read the graph: this graph displays a range of indicators used within the DA2I framework, adjusted to fit on a scale of 0-100, where 100 is the most positive outcome in terms of access to information.

TABLE OF DATA

See below for explanations. * = or latest available year. To note, averages are calculated on the basis of available data.

PILLAR	INDICATOR	UGANDA	Year	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA	Year	WORLD	Year
CONNECTIVITY	3G Network Coverage	64.00%	2016	56.54%	2016	81.92%	2016
	Mobile Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	33.69	2016	22.70	2016	56.22	2016
	Fixed Broadband (Subscriptions per 100 People)	0.26	2016	0.54	2016	13.71	2016
	Household Internet Access	8.90%	2016	16.04%	2016	48.16%	2016
	Household Computer Access	7.60%	2016	9.11%	2016	45.88%	2016
EQUALITY	Poverty (Share of pop'n below national poverty line)	34.64%	2012	47.34%	2015*	26.69%	2015*
	Gender Inequality (0 = More equal, 1 = Less equal)	0.52	2015	0.56	2015	0.36*	2015*
	Share of NEETs	5.91%	2013	11.07%	2015*	21.12%	2015*
	Internet Use	21.88%	2016	20.00%	2016*	49%	2016*
	Female Internet Use			11.07%	2016*	52.79%	2016*
SKILLS	ICT Skills	2.29	2017	0.91	2017	5.76	2017
	Literacy	87.00%	2015	75.09%	2015	91.75	2015
RIGHTS	Civil Liberties (0 = least free, 60 = most free)	26.00	2018	24.59	2018	30.9	2018
	Political Rights (0 = least free, 40 = most free)	11.00	2018	16.73	2018	20.37	2018
	Net Freedom (0 = most free, 100 = least free)	42.00	2016	45.95	2016	53.29	2016
	Freedom of Discussion	0.45	2016	0.66	2016	0.64	2016

EXPLANATION OF INDICATORS

3G Network Coverage: this provides a measure of whether one part of the basic infrastructure for connectivity exists, although in itself is not enough to guarantee access (users need a device and a relevant subscription to be able to get online). Source: ITU

Mobile Broadband (Mobile Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how many people can use mobile internet, opening up many – if not all – of the possibilities that internet access brings. One person may have more than one subscription. Source: ITU

Fixed Broadband (Fixed Broadband Subscriptions per 100 people): this provides an idea of how widespread home or business internet access is. Fixed access is often associated with the possibility to connect computers to make more advanced uses of the internet. Source: ITU

Household Internet Access (Share of Households with Internet Access): access to the internet at home allows for access to information at any time without having to go outside, but may be controlled by some members of the family. Source: ITU

Household Computer Access (Share of Households with a Computer): this focuses on access to computers. This is crucial for people to be able to carry out more advanced activities on the internet that might be impossible on a phone, such as writing resumes or analysing data. Source: ITU

Poverty: this indicator measures the number of people living below the national poverty line, which varies from country to country. It is a measure of economic inequality in a country. The indicator is inversed in the chart (i.e. the share of people not under the poverty line). Source: World Bank

Gender Inequality: this is calculated using the Gender Inequality Index. This index uses a basket of indicators in different areas of social development including: reproductive health, proportion of women in parliament, relative shares of men and women with at least some secondary education, and labour market participation in order to provide a broad idea of the extent of gender inequality in a country. The indicator runs from 0 (most equal) to 1 (least equal) and is inversed and adapted in the chart above. Source: UNDP

Share of NEETS (People aged 15-24 Not in Education, Employment or Training): this measures the share of young people cut off from education or the job market. Being 'NEET' can bring long-term scarring effects, and so reducing numbers is a key priority. The indicator is inversed and adapted in the chart (i.e. the share of young people who are not NEET). Source: ILO.

Internet Use (Share of People Using the Internet): looking beyond household access data (which will be affected by the structure of households in general), this gives a figure for the number of people using the internet. Source: ITU

Female Internet Use: this measure, in conjunction with the share of the overall population using the internet, allows us to understand to what extent there is a gender digital divide. Source: ITU

ICT Skills: there are relatively few global metrics of ICT skills, with those that exist only focusing on certain regions. The Skills Sub-Index of the ICT Development Index created by the ITU aims to work in this direction using levels of secondary and tertiary education enrolment, plus mean years of schooling, as proxies. Source: ITU

Literacy: this measures literacy among 15-24 year olds – i.e. people who have finished formal education. While there are online resources available for people with low literacy, being able to read, type, and understand information remains a fundamental skill. Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Civil Liberties: this provides an indication of the degree to which citizens of a country enjoy fundamental civic rights, including freedom of expression and association, as well as the strength of the rule of law, based on expert judgements. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 60 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Political Rights: this provides a measure of the rights people have to participate in the political process, including fair and free elections, political pluralism, and the functioning of government in general. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 40 (most free) and have been adapted to fit the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Net Freedom: this metric assesses the level of restrictions on rights online by both public and private actors. It draws on assessments of obstacles to access (legal, economic and practical), limits on content, and violations of rights. Scores run from 100 (least free) to 0 (most free) and so are inverted in the graphic above. Source: Freedom House.

Freedom of Discussion: this indicator looks at whether people are able to hold private discussions without fear of repercussions either from the authorities or society in general due to cultural restrictions or norms. Scores run from 0 (least free) to 1 (most free), and so are adapted to fit int the graphic above. Source: V-Dem dataset codebook.