



## **Report on the Women Speaking Show on Civic Space TV: The Digital Gender Divide and Its Impact on Women in Uganda on 15th October 2023.**

- **Host:** Danita Turiho
- **Guests:**
  - Sandra Kwikiriza, Executive Director of Her Internet Uganda.
  - Beatrice Kayaga, Internet Society Uganda.
  - Yasmin Ahmed, Co-Founder of FemtechXLaw..

### **Introduction:**

The digital gender divide in Uganda represents a critical barrier to women's full participation in the digital economy, civic life, and the broader social fabric. In Uganda, while there has been significant progress in enhancing digital infrastructure and mobile connectivity, women, especially in rural areas, continue to face substantial obstacles. These include limited digital literacy, high costs of data and devices, societal gendered norms, and inadequate access to technology. As a result, women are often excluded from opportunities in education, employment, health services, and civic engagement.

The “Recenter the Civic Internet Through Partner Engagement” project, implemented by Oxfam Uganda and the Center for Constitutional Governance (CCG), seeks to address these challenges by promoting digital inclusion, women’s empowerment, and their active participation in digital spaces. The roundtable discussion hosted on Civic Space TV aimed to explore the challenges posed by the digital gender divide in Uganda and identify the pathways to bridging this gap.

### **Objectives of the Show:**

1. To examine the digital gender divide in Uganda
2. To explore the impact on women’s empowerment
3. To discuss policy and institutional responses.
4. To propose solutions and opportunities



### **Target Audience:**

The roundtable discussion was designed to reach a broad audience with a particular focus on:

- Women and Girls in Uganda
- Policymakers
- NGOs and Civil Society Organizations
- Tech Industry Stakeholders
- The general public

### **Key themes discussed:**

1. Barriers to digital access for women.
2. The impact on women's empowerment and rights.
3. Policy and institutional responses:
4. Promoting digital literacy and capacity building:

### **Expected Outcomes:**

The discussion aimed to achieved the following outcomes:

1. Raised awareness about the gender disparities in digital access and their broader implications for women's rights, livelihoods, and participation in governance.
2. Provided actionable recommendations for the Ugandan government, international donors, and the tech sector on addressing the digital gender divide and fostering greater inclusion for women.
3. Identified practical steps for closing the digital gender gap, particularly in rural Uganda, through digital literacy programs, improved infrastructure, and gender-sensitive policies.



4. Encouraged the formation of strategic partnerships between governments, civil society, the private sector, and international organizations to ensure that women had the opportunity to access digital tools and spaces.
5. Built a network of empowered stakeholders who were committed to advocating for women's digital rights and promoting the adoption of inclusive digital policies.

### **Actionable Steps to Bridge the Digital Gender Divide in Uganda**

- Implement programs that educate women on digital safety, helping them recognize and protect themselves from online violence and harassment.
- Encourage and support women's political participation through digital advocacy platforms that allow women to engage in campaigns, petitions, and activism.
- Develop or promote platforms where women can voice their opinions, engage in civic discourse, and influence policy discussions through online voting, petitions, or discussions.
- Work with policymakers to design and implement digital policies that specifically address the needs of women and girls, ensuring equal access to technology and digital services.
- Provide training and resources to civil society organizations and stakeholders on how to advocate for women's digital rights at local, national, and international levels.
- Create and support networks of women's rights organizations, tech advocates, and policymakers to collaborate on advocating for policies that advance digital inclusion for women.
- Launch public campaigns that highlight women's digital rights, encouraging more women to join the digital conversation and claim their right to access and benefit from technology.

**Conclusion:**

The roundtable discussion on the digital gender divide provided an essential platform for examining the barriers women in Uganda face in accessing and benefiting from digital technologies. By bringing together key stakeholders from government, civil society, the tech industry, and advocacy groups, the session fostered meaningful conversations on solutions and strategies for bridging the digital divide. The discussions, conclusions, and actionable steps will serve as an important reference for policymakers, tech companies, and civil society organizations in Uganda and beyond, to take bold steps toward digital inclusion and gender equality.