UGANDA

	2012	2013
INTERNET FREEDOM STATUS	PARTLY FREE	PARTLY FREE
Obstacles to Access (0-25)	11	11
Limits on Content (0-35)	8	8
Violations of User Rights (0-40)	15	15
Total (0-100)	**34**	**34**

* 0=most free, 100=least free

POPULATION: 35.6 million
INTERNET PENETRATION 2012: 15 percent
SOCIAL MEDIA/ICT APPS BLOCKED: No
POLITICAL/SOCIAL CONTENT BLOCKED: No
BLOGGERS/ICT USERS ARRESTED: No
PRESS FREEDOM 2013 STATUS: Partly Free

KEY DEVELOPMENTS: MAY 2012 – APRIL 2013

- There were no reports of internet content being blocked or filtered during the coverage period, though various government officials publicly expressed the "need" to police online discussions (see **LIMITS ON CONTENT**).
- The Uganda Communications Act 2012 was passed in September, creating a new media regulatory body that has been criticized for its lack of independence from the government (see **LIMITS ON CONTENT**).
- SIM card and mobile internet registrations continued through early 2013 amid concerns that the registration requirements infringe on the right to privacy given the lack of a necessary data protection law (see **VIOLATIONS OF USER RIGHTS**).
- Government harassment for online writing was documented, while suspicions of proactive government surveillance of online communications increased in the past year (see **VIOLATIONS OF USER RIGHTS**).

INTRODUCTION

Internet penetration has continued to grow in Uganda, and access is now estimated at 15 percent of the population, with a growing number of Ugandans accessing the internet from their mobile phones. Nevertheless, accessibility is still hindered by poor infrastructure, prohibitive costs, and poor quality of service. Moreover, recent measures have exacerbated the rural-urban divide in access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as a ban on counterfeit mobile phones and compulsory SIM card registration. Overall, however, freedom to access the internet via computer-based applications and mobile devices remains generally unfettered.

There were no reported incidents of government interference with ICTs in 2012 or early 2013, though there have been increasing indications that the government intends to monitor online discussions, as demonstrated by various statements made by government officials in 2012 calling for the policing of social media platforms. The main threat to Uganda's internet freedom in 2012 involved the passage of the Uganda Communications Act 2012 in September, which created a new regulatory body for all print, broadcast, and electronic media in Uganda—the Uganda Communications Regulatory Authority. Awaiting presidential assent as of mid-2013, the new law vests an undue amount of power in the ICT minister to determine the regulatory body's membership, budget, and policy guidelines.

OBSTACLES TO ACCESS

ICTs continued to expand across Uganda over the past year, resulting in increasing access to both internet and mobile phone services. By the end of 2012, there were an estimated five million internet users in the country for a penetration rate of nearly 15 percent, up from 13 percent in 2011 and just 4 percent in 2007, according to the International Telecommunications Union.[1] Broadband internet is available mostly in urban areas, with only 0.11 percent of the population estimated to have fixed-line broadband subscriptions in 2012.[2] As such, many Ugandans access the internet at cybercafés where it costs less than $1 for an hour of browsing. Meanwhile, mobile phone penetration stood at 46 percent at the end of 2012[3] with a reported 17 million subscribers, up from 4.2 million in 2007, though multiple SIM card ownership remains common.

Internet access via mobile devices is becoming increasingly popular due to the growing availability of cheap mobile internet bundles, with mobile broadband penetration estimated at 7.6 percent at the end of 2012.[4] An hour of mobile web browsing (equating to approximately 20Mb of data) costs KGX 500 ($0.20), while a limited monthly bundle of 1Gb costs between KGX 30,000 and 41,000

[1] International Telecommunication Union, "Percentage of Individuals Using the Internet, 2000-2012," http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx.
[2] International Telecommunication Union, "Fixed (Wired)-Broadband Subscriptions, 2000-2012."
[3] International Telecommunication Union, "Mobile-Cellular Telephone Subscriptions, 2000-2012."
[4] International Telecommunication Union, "Uganda Profile 2012," ICT-Eye, http://www.itu.int/net4/itu-d/icteye/CountryProfile.aspx.

($12-16). Meanwhile, an unlimited mobile broadband connection[5] can cost KGX 299,000 ($115) for one month and over $600 for six months. Two service providers offer their subscribers free access to Facebook,[6] and to promote local content, Airtel Uganda began offering its customers in early 2013 free access to Uganda Goes Online—an online portal that provides information and local content ranging from news, entertainment, sports, technology and much more.[7]

The number of industry players has grown over the years, and many now offer comparable prices and technologies. Currently, there are 34 telecommunications service providers that offer both voice and data services.[8] Aside from the state-owned Uganda Electricity Transmission Company Ltd, which is a licensed public infrastructure provider that has part ownership of Uganda Telecom, all the licensed service providers are privately-owned entities.

There are no known obstacles or licensing restrictions placed by the government on entry into the ICT sector, and new players continued to enter the market in 2012 and 2013. For example, YahClick, a satellite broadband services provider was launched in February 2013,[9] while K2 mobile was launched only a monthly earlier.[10] The two joined a competitive market dominated by bigger, well-established telecommunications brands, such as MTN Uganda, Airtel and Warid Telecom. Three 4G LTE network licenses were issued in mid-2012, though the firms have yet to deploy the high-speed data transmission technology as of mid-2013.[11] Meanwhile, the quality of both voice and data services remains very low.[12]

While increasing market competition has continued to drive down internet access rates,[13] particularly on mobile phones, the cost of internet-enabled devices is still high for the majority of Ugandans who make an average monthly income of $117, according to the latest data from the Uganda Bureau of Statistics.[14] Prohibitive tax regimes remain in place despite successful moves by

[5] On the Orange Uganda network.
[6] MTN, "MTN Launches Facebook Zero, a Free Way to Access Facebook on your Mobile Phone," press release, May 18, 2010, http://mtn.co.ug/About-MTN/News-Room/2010/May/MTN-launches-Facebook®-ZERO,-a.aspx; Orange, "Get Facebook Free on Your Mobile Phone," accessed August 8, 2013, http://www.orange.ug/mobile-plans/facebook-for-free.php.
[7] "Airtel to Offer Free Access to Uganda Going Online," CIO East Africa via *AllAfrica*, February 7, 2013, http://allafrica.com/stories/201302071503.html; David Mugabe, "Airtel-UGO Deal to Shape Uganda's Online Image," *New Vision*, February 7, 2013, http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/639617-airtel-ugo-deal-to-shape-uganda-s-online-image.html.
[8] Uganda Communications Commission, List of Licencees in Uganda, available at http://www.ucc.co.ug/files/downloads/licensedProviders.pdf.
[9] Nicholas Kalungi, "New Player Joins Internet Market," *Daily Monitor*, February 4, 2013, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/New-player-joins-Internet-market/-/688612/1683212/-/yethtoz/-/index.html.
[10] "K2 Telecom Launches Mobile Phone Services in Uganda," *Telecompaper*, January 2, 2013, http://www.telecompaper.com/news/k2-telecom-launches-mobile-phone-services-in-uganda--916578.
[11] Elias Biryabarema, "Uganda Internet Users Seen Up 15-20 Pct in 2012," Reuters, May 31, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/31/ozabs-uganda-telecoms-idAFJOE84U09020120531.
[12] Dorothy Nakaweesi, "Major Telecom Operators on Spot Over Poor Service Quality," *Daily Monitor*, January 24, 2013, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/Major-telecom-operators-on--spot-over-poor-service-quality/-/688612/1673500/-/4f1eakz/-/index.html.
[13] Nicholas Kalungi, "Competition Bringing Internet Rates Down," *Daily Monitor*, November 9, 2012, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/Competition-bringing-Internet-rates-down/-/688612/1616104/-/38omqaz/-/index.html.
[14] Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "Chapter 7: Household Incomes, Loans and Credit," *Uganda National Household Surveys Report 2009/2010*, accessed July 31, 2013, http://www.ubos.org/UNHS0910/chapter7.Average%20Monthly%20Household%20Income.html.

Uganda's neighbors to remove duties on the importation of hardware and software. Most recently in 2013, the government launched an effort to curb the importation of counterfeit mobile phones, which may further limit access to mobile technologies. All inactive counterfeit phones were rendered unusable as of January 31, 2013, while fake phones with preexisting subscriptions were to be disconnected beginning July 1, 2013.[15] There are no figures to indicate how many users have been and will be affected by this initiative, but it is conceivable that the number may be in the millions. In addition, a 2009 government ban on the importation of used computers remains in place.

Another impediment to increased internet usage is limited access to electricity. The national electricity distributor reports a customer base of just 458,000, most of whom are located in urban areas,[16] and alternative power sources, such as fuel-powered generators and solar energy, are very costly. Furthermore, with only about 15 percent of Ugandans living in urban areas,[17] the divide between rural and urban access to the internet is very high due to low literacy rates, including computer literacy.[18]

Uganda's national fiber backbone is connected to the EASSy international submarine fiber optic cable system that runs along the east and southern coasts of Africa. Telecommunications providers are also hooked to the TEAMs (The East African Marine System) and SEACOM marine fibers through Kenya. Connection to these fibers has led to an exponential growth in Uganda's international bandwidth, which has decreased the costs of internet access alongside an increasing demand for data services and high speed internet. Service disruptions and slow internet speeds are common, however, due to frequent repairs.[19]

Over the past few years, the government has embarked on initiatives to improve rural connectivity, and a national ICT policy was finalized in 2010 to facilitate the proliferation of ICTs across the country in both rural and urban areas.[20] Nonetheless, the national ICT sector budget allocation comprises less than one percent of the national budget.[21] Since 2007, Uganda's ICT ministry has

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[15] Uganda Communications Commission,, "Elimination of Counterfeit Mobile Phones," December 19, 2012, http://www.ucc.co.ug/data/mreports/18/0/ELIMINATION%20OF%20COUNTERFEIT%20MOBILE%20PHONES%20.html; Nicholas Kalungi, "Blocking of Inactive Fake Phones Starts Today," *Daily Monitor*, February 1, 2013, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Blocking-inactive-fake-phones-starts-today--UCC-says/-/688322/1680796/-/rdjdqez/-/index.html.

[16] Umeme "Annual Report 2011," http://www.umeme.co.ug/resources/files/Umeme%20Annual%202011%20b.pdf.

[17] Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "2012 Statistical Abstract," June 2012, http://www.ubos.org/onlinefiles/uploads/ubos/pdf%20documents/2012StatisticalAbstract.pdf.

[18] Uganda's national literacy rate stands at 73 percent among persons aged 10 years and above. See: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, "2012 Statistical Abstract."

[19] Nicolas Kalungi, "Internet Speed Slows Down Due to Repairs at Mombasa," *Daily Monitor*, January 10, 2013, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Internet-speed-slows-down-due-to-repairs-at-Mombasa/-/688322/1661636/-/jntm8y/-/index.html; "Massive Internet outage in Uganda as Under Sea Cable is Chopped," *Guide2Uganda*, February 29, 2012, http://www.guide2uganda.com/news/415/Massive-Internet-outage-in-Uganda-as-undersea-cable-is-chopped.

[20] Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, "Information Technology Policy for Uganda," Republic of Uganda, February 2010, http://ict.go.ug/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_details&gid=48&Itemid=61.

[21] "A Peek into the East African ICT Sector Budget Allocations and Priorities for 2012/2013," Collaboration on International ICT Policy in East and Southern Africa, ICT Policy Briefing Series, June 2012, http://www.cipesa.org/?wpfb_dl=41; Edris Kisambira, "East African Countries Put IT Spending On Back Burner," *Computer World*, July 16, 2012, http://news.idg.no/cw/art.cfm?id=A95D59B0-CC4C-DC2F-8368A85290AEE888.

been developing the National Data Transmission Backbone Infrastructure, which aims to ensure the availability of high bandwidth data connection in all major towns at reasonable prices.[22] The project, now under the provision of the National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U), involves the installation of over 1,500km of fiber optic cable and related equipment.[23] However, the $106 million project has been dogged by contractual problems, government red tape, delayed funds, and unverified allegations of inferior equipment and work as of mid-2012.[24] The Chinese company, Huawei Technologies, contracted for the installation has been accused of using substandard cables, and in some cases, the wrong cables.[25]

The government has also embarked on a project to establish computer centers in all of its educational institutions across the country, with a plan to cover at least 1,000 institutions by the end of 2012.[26] In addition, the Rural Communications Development Fund was established in 2001 with the aim of providing access to basic communications services within a reasonable distance to all Ugandans, leveraging investments for rural communications, and promoting overall ICT usage.[27] The fund further supports the establishment of internet cafes, internet points of presence (rural wireless connectivity networks with a 5-10km radius with costs, speeds and types of services comparable to those in the capital city, Kampala), ICT training centers, and web portals for local government districts.

The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC), Uganda's telecommunications sector regulator, is mandated to independently coordinate, facilitate and promote the sustainable growth and development of ICTs in the country. The UCC also provides information about the regulatory process and quality of service, and it issues licenses for ICT infrastructure and service providers.[28] The commission's funds come mainly from operator license fees and a 1 percent annual levy on operator profits. There is a general perception, however, that comprehensive and coherent information about the commission's operations is not always accessible, and that the body is not entirely independent from the executive arm of the government. In addition, the UCC's current

[22] Ministry of Information and Communications Technology, "National Data Transmission Backbone and e-Government Infrastructure Project," Republic of Uganda, accessed June 29, 2012, http://www.ict.go.ug/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=69:national-data-transmission-backbone-and-e-government-infrastructure-project&catid=25:the-project&Itemid=93.

[23] Such as switches, optical transmission, data communication, fixed network, and video equipment, as well as computers and servers. See: "NBI/EGI Project," National Information Technology Authority – Uganda, accessed June 29, 2012, http://www.nita.go.ug/index.php/projects/nbiegi-project.

[24] Flavia Nalubega, "Govt Bureaucracy Delays Fibre Internet Backbone," *Daily Monitor*, April 20, 2012, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/-/688322/1390242/-/50js39/-/index.html.

[25] John Njoroge, "Forensics Dispute Quality of Uganda's Internet Cables," *Daily Monitor*, April 14, 2012, http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/-/688334/1385826/-/aw3qrvz/-/index.html.

[26] Elias Biryabarema, "Uganda Internet Users Seen up 15-20 Pct." Reuters, May 31, 2012, http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/31/ozabs-uganda-telecoms-idAFJOE84U09020120531.

[27] Uganda Communications Commission, "Rural Communications Development Policy for Uganda," January 2009, http://www.researchictafrica.net/countries/uganda/Uganda%20Rural%20Communication%202009.pdf.

[28] Uganda Communications Commission, "UCC Licensing Regime," accessed July 31, 2013, http://www.ucc.co.ug/data/qmenu/11/Licensing.html; Pursuant to the telecommunications (licensing) regulations 2005, UCC issues two types of licences: Public Service Provider (PSP) and Public Infrastructure Provider (PIP). The application fee for both license types is $2,500 dollars (a PIP license requires a one-off initial fee of $100,000), and annual fees range from $3,000-$10,000. These licenses allow holders to either set up telecommunications infrastructure or provide telecommunications services. The UCC levies a 1 percent charge on providers' annual revenue.

executive director has been regarded as overzealous in his efforts to police and rein in operators, illustrating how the personal character of the regulatory authority's leadership can in large measure determine its activities and regulations.

In September 2012, the Ugandan parliament passed the Uganda Communications Act 2012 (introduced by the ICT ministry in March 2012 as the Uganda Communications Regulatory Authority Bill), which consolidated the provisions of the 1996 Electronic Media Act and 2000 Uganda Communications Act and merged the UCC and Uganda Broadcasting Council into a new body, the Uganda Communications Regulatory Authority.[29] Awaiting presidential assent as of mid-2013, the new regulatory body has been criticized for its lack of independence from the government. In particular, the law places disproportionate power in the hands of the ICT minister, who will have the authority to approve the new regulator's budget and appoint members of its board with the approval from the Cabinet. There are no independent mechanisms in place to hold the regulator accountable to the public. While the new law provides for the creation of the Uganda Communications Tribunal, which is an appeals body with powers of the High Court, its membership and advisors are appointed by the president and ICT minister.

LIMITS ON CONTENT

There have been no reported incidents of government interference with the internet since the 2011 elections, during which the national regulator issued a directive to ISPs to temporarily block citizens' access to Facebook and Twitter. The order came in response to the mobilization of activists and opposition groups, which were largely organized through the two social media platforms. That same year, in the wake of demonstrations inspired by the Arab Spring events in North Africa, there were unconfirmed allegations that the Ugandan government had ordered telecoms to block and regulate the use of some keywords such as "bullet," "Mubarak," and "Ben Ali" in SMS texting services.[30]

There have also been no known instances of take-down notices issued for the removal of online content, and there are no issues of intermediary liability for service or content providers.[31] In the meantime, social media and blogging platforms are freely available in Uganda, with Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogger ranking among the top 15 websites in the country, according to Alexa. The government has also begun to embrace social media platforms as a channel for public engagement, as illustrated by Uganda's Prime Minister, Amama Mbabazi, who interacts with citizens on Twitter using the hashtag #AskthePM.[32]

[29] Sheila Naturinda and Mercy Nalugo, "Parliament Adopts Media Regulatory Law," *Daily Monitor*, September 7, 2012, http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Parliament-adopts-media-regulatory-law/-/688334/1498374/-/gnthq4/-/index.html.
[30] Hosni Mubarak was the embattled president of Egypt at the time, while Ben Ali was the deposed Tunisian leader.
[31] Ashnah Kalemera, Lillian Nalwoga and Wairagala Wakabi, "Intermediary Liability in Uganda," Intermediary Liability Africa Research Papers 5, Association for Progressive Communications, http://www.apc.org/en/system/files/Intermediary_Liability_in_Uganda.pdf.
[32] Amana Mbabazi's Twitter page, accessed August 8, 2013, https://twitter.com/AmamaMbabazi.

While there is no evidence of government efforts to influence or manipulate online content, previous shut downs of media houses seen as too critical of the government, in addition to reports of attacks on journalists by the national police,[33] and other routine threats by the government have engendered a culture of self-censorship among journalists both off and online. Taboo topics include the military, the president's family, issues of oil, land-grabbing, and presidential terms. In addition, there have been increasing indications that the government intends to monitor online discussions, as demonstrated in October 2012 when the Ugandan police chief called for the policing of social media networks to ensure that the platforms are not spreading "dangerous" information or are "misused for crime, worse still terrorism."[34]

The Google Uganda domain is available in five local languages, making the popular browser available to about five million Ugandans.[35] Nevertheless, Ugandans can only access news websites in three local languages (out of 40 languages and 56 native dialects) provided by the Vision Group, a media company that is partly owned by the government. The web versions of the newspapers include *Bukedde*, *Etop* and *Orumuri*. Other news sites of major privately-owned newspapers are only accessible in English, which is not widely spoken in Uganda. Moreover, the diversity of online content and the economic viability of independent outlets is constrained by advertising revenue from both government and private sources, which is generally withheld from news outlets that publish critical content.[36]

In recent years, government critics and opposition political parties have taken to the internet as a platform for political debate and an informal means of disseminating information to society. Crowdsourcing and crowd-mapping tools have given citizens the ability to monitor elections, and a diversity of civil society groups are increasingly using SMS platforms and social media for advocacy and to call for protests. In addition, 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.[37]

VIOLATIONS OF USER RIGHTS

SIM card and mobile internet registrations continued through early 2013 amid concerns that the registration requirements infringe on the right to privacy given the lack of a necessary data protection law. Government harassment for online writing was documented, while suspicions of proactive government surveillance of online communications increased in the past year, with one unconfirmed case involving the interception of a private e-mail reported by an LGBT rights group in early 2013.

[33] Freedom House, "Uganda," *Freedom of the Press 2013*, http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2013/uganda.
[34] "Uganda Police Chief Urges Increased Social Media Policing," BBC News, October 19, 2012, http://bbc.in/Qwj8yh.
[35] Tabitha Wambui, "Google Uganda Launches Two New Local Language Domains," *Daily Monitor*, August 4, 2010, http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Technology/-/688612/970404/-/uithj9/-/index.html.
[36] "Uganda 2012," *African Media Barometer* (Windhoek: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2012).
[37] Joseph Elunya, "Controversial Ugandan Blogger Won't Budge," Radio Netherlands Worldwide, August 26, 2012, http://allafrica.com/stories/201208260215.html.

The Ugandan Constitution provides for freedom of expression and speech, in addition to the right to access information.[38] However, several laws—including the Press and Journalist Act, the Anti-Terrorism Act, and sections of the penal code—appear to negate these constitutional guarantees for freedom of expression. For example, the Press and Journalist Act of 2000 requires journalists to register with the statutory Media Council, whose independence is believed to be compromised by the government's hand in its composition. Meanwhile, the Anti-Terrorism Act criminalizes the publication and dissemination of content that promotes terrorism, vaguely defined, and guilty convictions can carry up to the death sentence. In addition, the penal code contains provisions on criminal libel and the promotion of sectarianism, imposing penalties that entail lengthy jail terms. While none of these laws contain specific provisions on online modes of expression, they could arguably be invoked for online communications and generally create a "chilling effect" on freedom of expression.

In the meantime, the Ugandan judiciary has been known to rule progressively in cases involving press freedom and freedom of expression. In 2004, for example, the Supreme Court struck down a penal code provision that criminalized the publication of false news, while the Constitutional Court quashed the law on sedition in 2010. Nevertheless, judicial rulings protecting constitutional guarantees for free expression have not stopped the government from taking action against fundamental rights, though prosecutions against journalists and citizens for online expression remain rare.

While there are no website registration requirements in Uganda, registration for mobile phone SIM cards and mobile internet subscriptions was instituted in March 2012 and involves the collection of personal data, including photographs and address details. The deadline to register existing SIM cards was extended through March 2013, after which point unregistered cards were deactivated. Civil society groups criticized the program for infringing on the right to privacy given the lack of a necessary data protection law,[39] and an injunction filed by the Human Rights Network for Journalists-Uganda to stop the registration exercise was thrown out by the High Court on February 25, 2013.[40]

Government monitoring and surveillance of electronic communications has become a worrisome issue in Uganda since 2010, when parliament hurriedly passed the Regulation of Interception of Communications (RIC) Act following the terrorist attacks by Al Shabab militants in Kampala in July 2010. Allowing for the interception of communications, the RIC act requires telecommunication companies to install equipment that enables the real-time electronic surveillance of suspected terrorists and gives the government permission to tap into personal communications based on

[38] The Access to Information Act provides for the right to access information pursuant to Article 41 of the constitution, the right to prescribe the classes of information referred to in that article, the procedure for obtaining access to that information, and for related matters.

[39] "Law Requiring Registration of SIM Cards in Uganda a Threat to Privacy," Human Rights Network for Journalist Uganda, September 24, 2012, http://www.ifex.org/uganda/2012/09/24/sim_card_registration/.

[40] Juliet Kigongo and Dorothy Nakaweesi, "Bid to Stop SIM Card Registration Thrown Out," *Daily Monitor*, February 26, 2013, http://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Court-refuses-to-block-SIM-card-registration/-/688334/1704590/-/u4hc7h/-/index.html.

national security concerns.[41] This action can be requested by the security minister and granted after an order by a High Court judge. Telecommunications service providers are further required to disclose the personal information of individuals suspected of terrorism to the authorities upon issue of a court warrant or notice from the minister on matters related to national security, national economic interests, and public safety.[42] Failure to comply with the provisions in the RIC act can entail penalties of up to five years in prison for intermediaries, in addition to license revocations.[43] Meanwhile, clauses in the Anti-Terrorism Act also give security officers the power to intercept the communications of individuals suspected of terrorism and to keep them under surveillance. This includes journalists who are suspected to have been in touch with individuals designated as terrorists by the state.

As of April 2013, it is not clear the extent to which the provisions of the 2010 RIC act have been implemented or operationalized. For instance, it is unknown whether service providers have installed monitoring equipment as required by law. It is also unclear whether the government has asked service providers to monitor communications without a court warrant. Meanwhile, telecom industry observers argue that competition between service providers makes it harder for them to readily hand over information to the government without going through legal channels, though the observers also do not rule out the possibility that some companies may cooperate quietly with government requests.

Nevertheless, a private interview conducted by Freedom House with an LBGT rights group in early 2013 uncovered a case in which an e-mail attachment sent among a private group of individuals was possibly intercepted by an unknown actor. According to a member of the LGBT group, the attachment, which included information about different groups in Uganda's LGBT community, was later published in a local tabloid, outing certain organizations involved in LGBT activism in Uganda. While details of this account could not be corroborated, the incident falls in line with Uganda's history of discrimination against the country's LGBT community that has manifested in similar cases of public naming and shaming campaigns against LGBT individuals and groups.

Journalists in the traditional media face harassment and occasional violence for their reporting in print outlets, and these types of violations are slowly beginning to seep into the online sphere. One young blogger, Racey Carlton Mujuni, reportedly received warnings from the government about his blogging activities in 2012, particularly after he wrote about the civil conflict in the ethnic Acholi region of the country.[44]

Meanwhile, politically-motivated hacking attacks are not significant in Uganda, though there was one case reported in early 2013 involving a hacking and vandalism attack against the website of the same LGBT rights group discussed above. The perpetrator behind the attack remains unknown.

[41] Amnesty International, "Uganda: Amnesty International Memorandum on the Regulation of Interception of Communications Act, 2010," December 14, 2010, http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR59/016/2010/en/4144d548-bd2a-4fed-b5c6-993138c7e496/afr590162010en.pdf.
[42] Ashnah Kalemera et al., "Intermediary Liability in Uganda."
[43] Ashnah Kalemera et al., "Intermediary Liability in Uganda."
[44] Joseph Elunya, "Controversial Ugandan Blogger Won't Budge."

Ugandan government websites have also been hacked from actors outside the country a number of times this past year. For example, the international hacker group "Anonymous" hacked into the office of the prime minister's website in protest against the Anti-Homosexuality Bill in August 2012.[45]

[45] Ndesanjo Macha, "Uganda: Anonymous Backs Gay Pride, Hacks Government Website," *Global Voices*, August 16, 2012, http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/08/16/uganda-anonymous-backs-gay-pride-hacks-government-websites/.