# WOMEN OF UGANDA NETWORK

**Women ICT Advocacy Group**

**FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION (FGD)ON INTERNET ACESS REPORT**



**19ᵀᴴ APRIL 2018.**

**BWAISE COMMUNITY, KAMPALA SUBURB, UGANDA**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Gender and ICT Policy Advocacy Program of Women of Uganda network(WOUGNET) advocates for gender sensitive policies and practices as one of its key activities.

On Thursday 19th April the program conducted a Focused Group Discussion in Bwaise community a Kampala city suburb in Uganda under her caucus Women ICT Advocacy Group (WIAG).

WOUGNET carries out much of its advocacy work through a caucus called Women ICT Advocacy Group(WIAG) based at WOUGNET secretariat. The caucus changed its name from Uganda Women's Caucus on ICT(UWCI) to WIAG to enable inclusivity. The caucus is a coalition of organizations and individuals interested in gender and ICT issues. To strengthen the skills of other gender activists, WIAG highlights the main issues during meetings with policy makers and promote the need to integrate gender into ICT Policies. WIAG is a coalition of primarily women organizations interested in issues of women's access to the internet, ICTs and ICT policy related issues.

WIAG's ultimate goal is to **Advocate for internet Access for all.** It is therefore inevitable that we involve as many individuals and organizations. WIAG through the caucus planned this interactive discussion with a few women &men in Bwaise community to find out the challenges faced and come up with recommendation to close the gap in internet access issues raised.

## 1.2 OVERALL OBJECTIVE OF THE DISCUSSION

To establish how much women and girls in Bwaise community know about the internet, the challenges they have faced due to lack of internet access in the area and suggest way forward.

## 1.3 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

By the end of the focused group discussion, we expected to achieve the following outcomes;

- Increased awareness/knowledge on using internet and ICTs for development among women and girls.

- Increased number of women and girls using the internet and ICTs for development

- A plan of action to engage policy makers in addressing the selected action points from the discussion

- Issues discussed forwarded to the policy makers for action.

- Expand policy research and other technical support to enhance implementation of programs and projects aimed at including women in internet access processes and structures.

- Create a critical mass for women and men and share information for development and connect online and offline.

## 1.4 ACTIVITY

On Thursday 19th April at 3:00pm, a team from WOUGNET and Kweeta Uganda met in Bwaise on behalf of the Women ICT Advocacy Group (WIAG) to have a community dialogue on internet access with a few Bwaise community members who were led by their Local Council Chairperson Mr. Kaswabuli Steven. The participants were 10 entrepreneurs who comprised of shoe makers, liquid soap makers, restaurant owners, hair dressers, drink vendors, tailors and drivers. Of the participants Seven (7) where female and three (3) male.

In order to find out how much women and girls in Bwaise community know about the internet, their challenges and to suggest remedies, the interaction rotated around questions like;

1. Have you ever heard about the internet?

2. Do you use Internet?

4. What do you use the internet for?

5. What is your source of news?

6. Is the internet affordable to you?

7. Any recommendation to close internet access gaps?

8. What makes you not to access internet?

9. How is the language online? is it easy for you to understand?

10. How often do you use the internet in a day, week, month?

All the 10 participants agreed to having used the internet for a variety of things including; communicating on social media platforms mainly (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Viber) for job searching and application, you tube videos to learn business skills, watching movie, news, Fashion and hair styles, sports betting to mention but a few.

They all use the internet everyday however for the women, it is usually when they have completed all their household chores usually at around 10:00pm. They therefore opt for entertainment and gossip on the internet to relieve stress.

One of the complaints was the language on the internet which is a little complex especially to ordinary Ugandans who have not attained high levels of education. They recommended the internet to be localized so that it is inclusive for every one and not only those that can understand "Dictionary English".

On the issue of online safety, most participants expressed fear on where the information they post on the internet goes. They related this complaint to the recent news on kidnaps in Kampala and mobile money fraud. One of the participants, Shamim Naluyima said; "We are not sure who to trust so the only protective measure we can take is extreme vigilance and not exposing our entire lives on social media". Online Violence especially on women through revenge pornography is wrong and cannot be condoned in the kind of society we leave where culture detects what is right and what is wrong. Privacy of persons both online and offline should stay private and not put out for the world to see. They suggested that people that leak such images and videos should be arrested and punished.

Many of our children access the internet and we as parents cannot regulate what they do therefore, we need to raise our children with religious values to grow morally upright. They can therefore ignore the bad things online. Parents also need to be extremely careful with what they keep on their phones and make utmost use of password.

The strongest constraint to accessing the internet was the high internet costs and the fact that the Government of Uganda is planning to impose taxes on social media only adds salt to injury. "Most of these policies affect we ordinary Ugandans, we do not feel considered, never consulted and it's frustrating" said Ssendi Hassan. They urged civil society organizations to keep communities close, include them in consultations and share their views to the Government.

## 1.5 CHALLENGES

During the FGD, the participants shared a number of challenges faced while accessing the internet and these include;

- Expensive internet bundles which cause many people to forego buying data bundles and view it as a luxury.
- Network instability in some areas and certain hours.
- Cyber crime especially stealing passwords, mobile money pin codes

- Online Violence Against Women and Girls which affects their esteem and many times affect their social livelihoods.
- Uncomplimentary government policies that discriminate some groups of people in the society.
- Complex language used on the internet which is quite difficult to comprehend especially by the ordinary people.
- Internet shut downs especially during political campaigns and events.


## 1.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The key recommendations of the FGD included;

- Participants requested ICT stakeholders and other government agencies to advocate for women's inclusion in policy formulation and implementation.
- Government needs to consult citizens before implementing policies in order to address their needs amicably instead of imposing policies on them even when they ae not necessary or needed. For instance, imposing taxes on Facebook, WhatsApp ad mobile money services.
- ICT advocacy groups should share digital skills with young people in the various Kampala suburbs, through community trainings &capacity building. These skills are very helpful in enhancing business skills and preparing for better opportunities.
- Participants requested that the free WIFI coverage offered by government be made wider and inclusive i.e. hours that are convenient for both men and women.
- Internet content needs to be localized to enable most ordinary Ugandans find less difficulty in using the internet to surf the web for information.
- More sensitization needs to be done in communities on the importance of the internet, how to use it and understand the various ICT and internet policies.
- Participants urged parents to be responsible and restrict their children's access to mobile phones and other ICT gadgets because they are most likely to view immoral content such as pornographic movies and drugs that endanger their health &social welfare.

## Appendix

**Women of Uganda Netw** @wougnet · Apr 19

Shamim from the bukasa zone bwaise community prefers watching entertainment online, since it relaxes her from her day's stress #hernetrights #internetaccess4dev

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**Samwise Gamgee** @Sambannz · Apr 19

Even if we start paying for Internet,it is their thing (Kintu kyabwe) we will pay and they will switch it off whenever they feel like(Internet shutdowns)~ Shamim Naluyima #InternetAccess4Dev #HerNetRights

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Naluyima #InternetAccess4Dev #HerNetRights

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**Kweeta** @KweetaUganda · Apr 19

Residents of Bokasa-Bwaise(Kawempe Division) who are with us to discuss internet access and barriers to internet access. #InternetAccess4Dev #HerNetRights



jes    🐦    #internetaccess4dev    🔍    Tweet

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⟲ CIPESA and 1 other Retweeted

**Women ICT Advocacy G** @ICTWomenUganda · Apr 19

Today @wougnet and @KweetaUganda will hold a FGD in Bwaise community on Internet Access from 3-5pm. Join the conversation online on #HerNetRights #InternetAccess4Dev by liking, retweeting and commenting on the tweets @ZimbaWomen @webfoundation @UnwantedWitness @cipesaug



**Community Meetup on Internet Access in Bwaise**

3PM | Thur 19th Apr 2018

#InternetAccess4Dev
#HerNetRights

**BAREFOOT POET** @EmorutbrianEmo · Apr 19

#InternetAccess4Dev Ugandans pay more for internet than any east African countries and our telecom companies are thugs

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🖤 Zimba Women and 2 others liked

**Pru Nyamishana** @nyapru1 · Apr 19

"Most of us do not easily access the internet because of the language barrier. I wish the platforms were in local languages." Partcipant  #InternetAccess4Dev



💬 2    🔁 14    16    ✉

**Elvis Ogwang** @ElvisOgwang · Apr 20

the government is trying to create more tax avenues in order to reduce on borrowing thou the minister xplained that they r taxing the calls not texts. #InternetAccess4Dev

**Kafkas Caprazli** @caprazli · Apr 20

Replying to @JaanaRemes @byJuliaLove

Free #InternetAccess4Dev should be a basic human right! Comparable with free access to roads. Congrats to @Google and @Mexico for this smart investment. #Donors and #governments should work for free Internet in a prosperous #Africa! Their ROI will be more than you can imagine.

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**Trailblazers Uganda** @TMFUganda · Apr 20

We have embraced the use of Internet in our day-to-day work such as use of social media to raise awareness about the dangers and effects of #ChildMarriage and #TeenagePregnancy we reach out to the young people and parents to put an end to these vices #InternetAccess4Dev

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**Arrow Security Systems** @arrowsecurityUG · Apr 20

#InternetAccess4Dev

Have a 24/7 full control over your assets and fleet with @arrowsecurityUG tracking system, backed by our Quick Response Team located in strategic locations around the city and country
#YourSecurityOurConcern
#Security

**FGD Participants**

| No. | Name | Gender | Designation |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Nabukeera Rashida | F | Hair dresser |
| 2. | Namugenyi Esther | F | Hair dresser |
| 3. | Nansimbi Joan | F | Hair dresser |
| 4. | Naluyima Shamin | F | Drinks vendor |
| 5. | Kyesswa Thomas | M | Driver |
| 6. | Sendi Hasan | M | Driver |
| 7. | Ndagire Rehema | F | Shoe maker |
| 8. | Naswabuli Steven | M | Chairperson/ Tailor |
| 9. | Nakiganda Aisha | F | Liquid Soap production |
| 10. | Nagawa Joanita | F | Restaurant |
| 11. | WOUGNET Team | | |
| 12. | KWEETA Uganda Team | | |