

THE CUSP BULLETIN

4th Edition

DIGITAL HORIZONS: EMPOWERING UGANDA'S GOVERNANCE



Participants work on their ideas. ©Kampala Analytica

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List of Abbreviations

AI Artificial intelligence

BMZ German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

CCG Center for Constitutional Governance

CMS Contract Monitoring System

CUSP Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme

CSO(s) Civil society organisation(s)

FORCE Foundation for Resilience and Community Empowerment

GIZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

NGO Non-governmental organisation

PICOT Partners in Development and Center for Holistic Transformation

PPDA Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority

Teso Sub-region in Eastern Uganda

WACSO Western Ankole Civil Society Forum

A note from the Head of the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP):



AI created picture using the prompt: 'Create a picture of the Head of the Programme, Tassilo Droste zu Huelshoff, of the GLZ Strengthening Governance and Civil Society (GCSP) Uganda as a cartoon.' ©ChatGPT

Dear Reader,

Our smartphones are often the first thing we reach for when we wake up in the morning, and the last thing we hold in our hands before we fall asleep. In the past decade our screentime has exploded and our dependency on these devices increased. We have myriads of apps on them, and in many ways digital solutions have made our lives simpler while also opening up a number of new risks and ethical dilemmas.

Whether the future will be utopian and dystopian may very much depend on our ability to use digital solutions, and in particular artificial intelligence (AI), for social good. Digital tools should strengthen equality and cooperation and not lead to inequality or abuse of power by those that control digital platforms. They need to be transparent. Citizens need to be able to be informed on what happens with their data, have the right to consent. If a human rights-based approach is followed, then digitalisation can make our lives more enjoyable.

When I first travelled to Uganda, I requested my visa online. When my sister visited, we bought our permits for wildlife tracking online. It was fast and convenient. The digital divide is apparent here. While a lot of services for tourists are run digitally, Ugandan citizens are often not benefitting. Most citizens living in remote areas cannot access services online. Either because they have no smartphone or computer, or because crucial services they rely on are not offered. NGOs for example cannot apply for their permits online, which delays the process and requires them to regularly travel to Kampala. This has a disproportionate impact on grassroots organisations who cannot afford regularly travelling to the capital.

Currently the pace of digitalisation is leaving many citizens behind. While digitalisation considerably reduces the costs of communication, of data collection, storage, and processing, it also creates new risks and inequalities. Digitalisation can allow for more data-driven decisions, which are particularly crucial for government. However, not everyone's data is captured. Or sometimes data is not adequately disaggregated.

Recently, in a training session with CUSP partners, we discussed gender and racial bias in AI. We looked at what image would appear when we ask AI to generate an image of a doctor. Does it always have to be a white man or could it not for example be a black woman? AI does not have to reinforce stereotypes. But if we are not shaping its trajectory, it might. This is why CUSP is taking a proactive approach towards supporting CSOs to learn about digitalisation and AI, to understand its risks, leverage on its benefits and shape the discourse.

This newsletter highlights some projects we have been working on with Ugandan CSOs. Their common goal: To use digitalisation for social good, to improve service delivery through social audits, to tackle waste or to create innovative solutions for CSOs. We hope that this edition of the CUSP Bulletin will inspire you and contributes to a discussion on how digitalisation can be a catalyst for social good.

Tassilo von Droste

Head of Programme, Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP)

Glossary of key terms

CUSP stands for the Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme. It is an initiative aimed at strengthening civil society organizations in Uganda through various capacity development measures, organisational support, and promoting cooperation between civil society and governmental actors. The programme focuses on enhancing the effectiveness of civil society's contributions to policy processes and development initiatives across different sectors.

The **BMZ** stands for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development in Germany. It is responsible for formulating and implementing the German government's development policy. The ministry focuses on global sustainable development, poverty reduction, and cooperation with developing countries to address global challenges such as climate change, education, health, and economic development.

The **European Union (EU)** in Uganda engages in various development partnerships and projects aimed at supporting the country's growth and addressing key challenges. The EU's involvement includes co-financing contracts and initiatives that align with Uganda's national development goals. Additionally, the EU's Multi-Annual Indicative Programme for Uganda guides its strategic focus and collaborative efforts with local and international partners to enhance development outcomes in the country.

The Strengthening Governance and Civil Society Programme (**GCSP**) in Uganda, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, implements two programmes co-financed by the European Union to bolster governance and civil society engagement: the **Civil Society in Uganda Support Programme (CUSP)** and the **Strengthening and Advancing Governance and Accountability (SAGA)** Programme.

GCSP strengthens inclusive governance, human rights, and civic engagement in Uganda. On behalf of the German Government, co-funded by the EU, it supports collaboration between state institutions and civil society, empowering citizens, especially youth, women, and marginalised groups, to participate meaningfully in decision-making. Through accountability tools, rights-based planning, and CSO capacity building, GCSP ensures that governance works *for people, with people and by people*.

The **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH** is a German development agency that provides services in the field of international development cooperation. GIZ works with partners in national governments, international organisations, private sector entities, and civil society to design and implement projects that promote sustainable development around the world. The agency operates in various sectors, including economic development and employment, energy and the environment, and peace and security, among others.

Civil societies, also known as civil society organisations (CSOs), encompass a wide range of non-governmental actors and groups that operate independently of state institutions. These include non-profit organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), charitable foundations, social movements, community groups, faith-based organisations, professional associations, advocacy groups, and coalitions.

Civil societies play a crucial role in promoting democracy, human rights, social justice, and sustainable development. They often act as intermediaries between the public and the government, advocating for better policies, increased transparency, and greater civic engagement. By representing the interests of citizens, civil societies work to ensure that government actions are accountable and responsive to the needs of the community.

Shaping Uganda's digital future: Insights from a transformation leader

Interview with Mrs. Lucrezia Biteete, Digitalisation Expert in the GIZ Uganda Portfolio

Could you tell us a little about yourself and your role in driving digital transformation in Uganda?

My journey into the digital field was quite a happy accident. I started in water and sanitation but took on a project to help a Nordic IT company establish a presence in Uganda. That led to me being hired as their managing director, and from there, I built the company from the ground up to a team of 30, focusing on software for the financial sector. It was a steep but thrilling learning curve, where I took on every role from software architecture to sales. This experience also sparked the creation of the coding academy [Refactory](#), which is still making a significant impact on Uganda's tech talent pipeline today.

This hands-on experience, including a complex project with the Bank of Uganda to integrate the national ID database, exposed me to the intricate technical, legal, and political challenges of digital transformation. After that, I started supporting GIZ, where I have spent the last four years working on digital policy across Africa. This gave me a broader, regional perspective on the diverse digital ecosystems and governance structures across the continent. Now, as the Senior Digital Policy Advisor at GIZ Uganda, my role is to ensure our digital projects are sustainable, solve real problems, and are built on best practices.

What originally sparked your passion for working in the digital field?

I discovered my passion for digital work by doing it. I found I thrived in the role of a business analyst or product owner, bridging the gap between technical teams and real-world needs. The process of understanding a challenge and then finding a digital solution to solve was incredibly rewarding. My time with the software company, and especially with the coding academy, showed me the power of technology to not just build a product, but to empower people with skills that can change their lives.



©GIZ / Malik Muhangi

In which areas of digitalisation do you see Uganda leading the way—perhaps even ahead of countries like Germany?

One area where Uganda is arguably ahead of some European countries, like Germany, is digital payments. In Germany, cash is still king, and many places don't even accept card payments. In Uganda, mobile money has made digital transactions accessible to almost everyone, from a large supermarket to a small kiosk selling a bottle of water. This is an incredible example of leapfrogging traditional banking infrastructure.

Uganda's establishment of a centralised national ID system is another area of strength. While some developed countries, lack a unified ID database, Uganda's system is becoming the foundation for a range of services, including SIM card and bank account registration. This creates a more secure and efficient environment for online businesses and services.

From your perspective, what are the most pressing challenges Uganda is facing in its digital journey?

While Uganda has a decent foundation of digital infrastructure, like the national ID and data-sharing platforms, the biggest long-term challenge is the education system. It is not preparing young people with the skills they need to

thrive in a technology-driven world. We need to foster a generation of lifelong learners who are curious, self-driven, and know how to find, evaluate, and apply information. Without these foundational skills, we will not be able to see tangible benefits with the infrastructure still in development.

Another key challenge is governance. While the private sector is creating countless innovative solutions in fintech, health, and agriculture, they often lack the underlying digital public infrastructure (DPI)—such as a reliable ID system, payment systems, and business registries—to run affordably and efficiently at scale.

Can you share an example of a digital initiative in Uganda that has made a real difference?

A project I was personally involved in, which later became the fintech company [Emata](#), aimed to provide smallholder farmers with access to credit. Most farmers lack a credit history, making it nearly impossible for them to get loans from formal institutions. Our solution was to use data from agricultural cooperatives—like the amount of crops or milk a farmer supplies—to establish a credit score. While the idea is not new, few have managed to scale it on the ground in an environment facing limited access to devices, power, connectivity and skills.

This initiative proved to be a game-changer. By partnering with local cooperatives, we were able to reach farmers in rural areas without direct access to smartphones and connectivity. It also created a system where loan repayments could be deducted directly from crop payments, significantly reducing the risk of default. This is a powerful example of a digital solution that solves a very real problem and makes a tangible difference in people's lives.

What practical advice would you give to civil society organisations (CSOs) seeking to strengthen their digital capacity and skills?

My advice is to embrace peer-to-peer learning. The information you need is already on the internet, from courses on AI to video editing. The challenge is often knowing what you don't know. By connecting with and learning from other CSOs that are more digitally advanced, you can see how they applied tools in practice and what works.

Additionally, fostering a culture of curiosity is essential. Encourage your team to research, try new things, and not be afraid to fail. With the advent of generative AI, finding answers is easier than ever, but the key is to cultivate the underlying skills of critical thinking, research, and collaboration.

How can digitalisation ensure no one is left behind—especially in rural or marginalised communities?

The digital divide is growing and we need to actively address it. We must continue to expand connectivity, but that is just the first step. The bigger challenge is ensuring people have the skills to use the technology and demand digital services. I believe the most effective way to do this is to invest in teachers. If we can provide intensive, hands-on training for primary and secondary school teachers, especially in rural districts, they will pass those skills and attitudes on to the next generation.

Finally—when it comes to artificial intelligence (AI), should we be more cautious or more excited about its potential?

The potential for AI to transform sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and education in Uganda is immense. But the risks are equally real. AI models are predominantly trained on data from the Western world, which can introduce cultural, racial, and gender biases. There is also the risk of misuse of personal data.

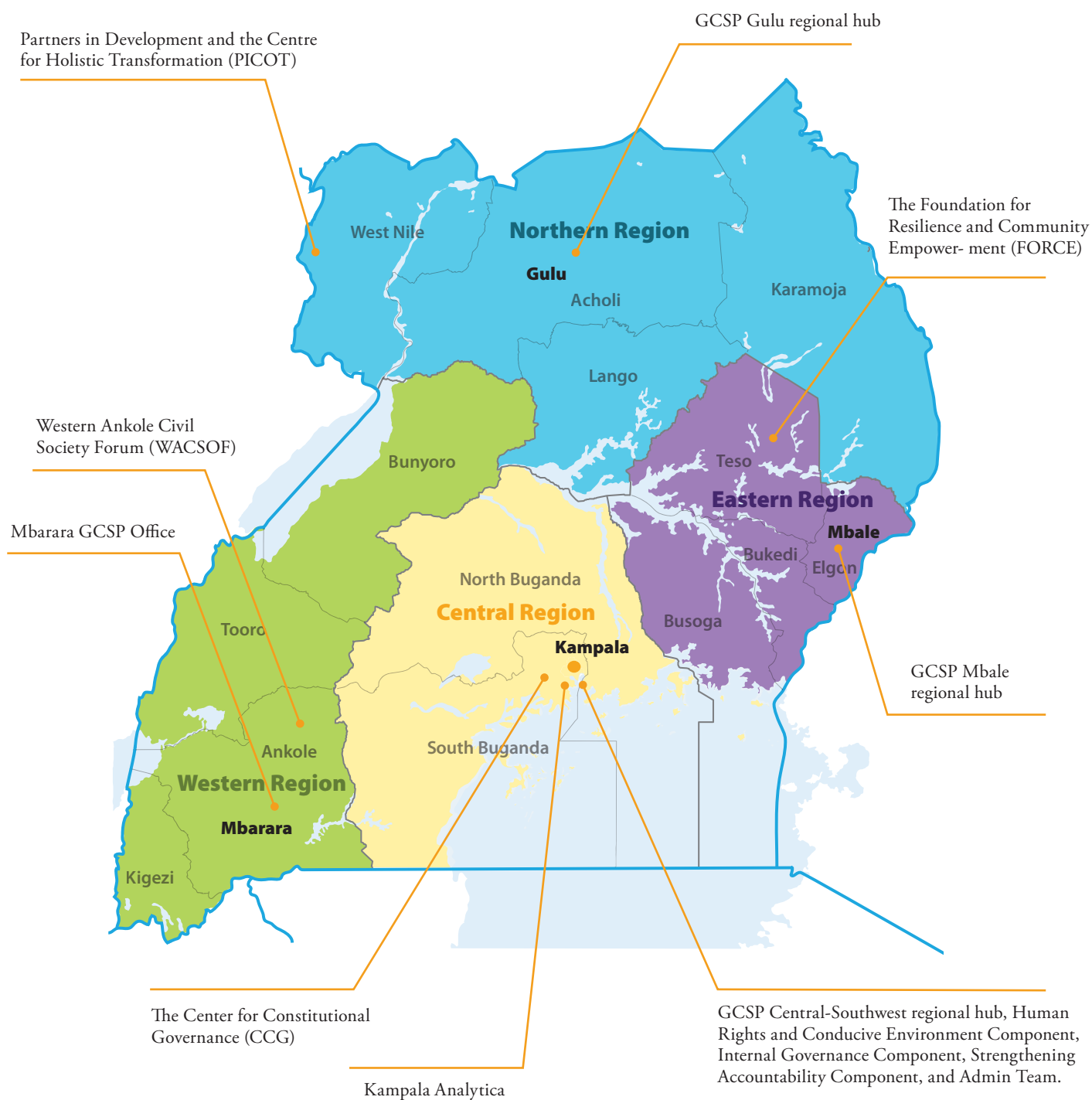
My personal view is that the benefits of AI in a place like Uganda largely outweigh the risks, but it is critical to be a conscious and aware user. Everyone needs to learn foundational digital literacy, like how to protect their personal data and how to critically evaluate information from an AI tool. The key is to see AI not as a magical solution, but as a powerful tool that we must learn to use wisely.

If you could fast-forward ten years, what would your ideal 'digital Uganda' look like?

One where digital access is a basic utility, and every citizen is empowered to use it. I'd love to see a country where young people are connected to the regional and global digital economies. I envision a future with seamless digital public infrastructure that allows the private sector to innovate, reducing costs and bureaucracy for everyone.

Ultimately, I see a future where Uganda harnesses its immense natural resources such as agriculture, critical minerals, tourism, and renewable energy with top-tier digital technology. Creating a society that is not only more efficient and prosperous but also more connected and equitable for all.

MAP OF UGANDA SHOWING WHERE THE DIFFERENT PROJECTS ARE LOCATED



Legal disclaimer: Country borders or names do not necessarily reflect the GIZ official position. This map is for illustrative purposes and does not imply any opinion on the part of the GIZ, concerning the legal status of any country or territory or concerning the delimitation of frontiers or boundaries.

Waste – a physical problem handled digitally: Empowering women and youth through civic-tech

In Uganda's Teso sub-region, a growing environmental challenge has become the entry point for innovation in local governance. With support from CUSP, a local youth-led organisation is transforming how citizens—particularly women and youth—engage in environmental protection and decision-making.



Polluted streets in Soroti City. ©FORCE

A city under pressure

Nestled between vibrant markets, fruit trees and the Soroti Rock, Soroti City paints a sharp contrast to its surroundings. Home to roughly 150,000 residents, its streets are increasingly overwhelmed by piles of waste – polluting the environment, contaminating water, and threatening public health.

Recent data from the Uganda National Service Delivery Survey 2021¹ reveals that households in the Teso sub-region primarily rely on informal and unregulated waste disposal methods with an estimated 48.9 per cent of households disposing of waste in pits, while 44.2 per cent use home gardens. 4.3 per cent burn their waste, and a mere 0.4 per cent utilise formal waste vendors.

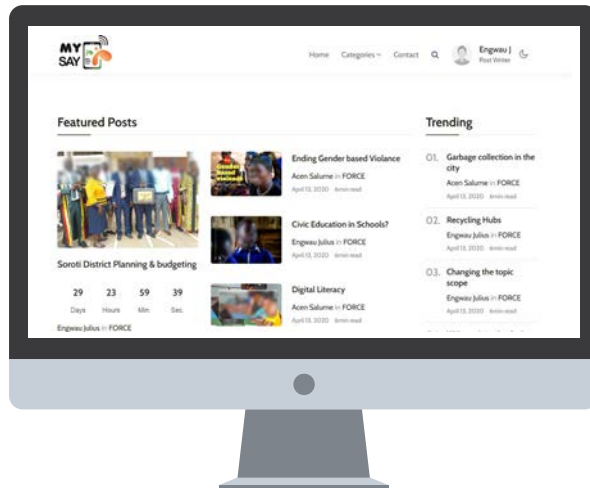
Addressing this crisis requires civic innovation.

A civic-tech response: The 'MySay' app

The Foundation for Resilience and Community Empowerment ([FORCE](#)), a youth-focused organisation committed to building resilient, informed, and active communities, has set out to tackle the problem at its roots. FORCE envisions two simultaneous approaches to freeing the city and surrounding districts in the Teso sub-region of their waste management problem.

For one, FORCE noticed the limited opportunities for structured dialogue between citizens and local authorities on how waste and garbage should be managed and disposed of. Women and youth in the Teso sub-region remain excluded from meaningful participation in local governance, including development planning and budgeting, policy formulation, monitoring of service delivery, and sustainability of the environment.

1 National Delivery Survey 2021 https://www.ubos.org/wp-content/uploads/publications/12_2022NSDS_2021_Final_Report_2022.pdf



Prototype of the MySay app. ©FORCE

In early 2025, FORCE introduced their solution to this lack of a civic platform to the CUSP team - a mobile application through which women and youth can virtually participate in planning and budgeting consultations and decision-making meetings, submit position papers, and monitor waste dumping areas online.

After this first project pitch between CUSP and FORCE, the app has been upgraded with a citizen-authority feedback dashboard and real-time notifications to local authorities on sites needing urgent waste removal.

By transforming smartphones into civic tools, MySay promotes inclusive e-governance and encourages meaningful participation in service delivery and environmental management. MySay aims to enable at least 1,000 youth and women in the region to take an active role in environmental protection and local governance, holding their authorities accountable.

A second pillar: Recycling as a social enterprise

To ensure long-term sustainability and reduce dependency on donor funding, FORCE is also setting up recycling hubs that process up to 400 kg of waste daily. These hubs generate revenue through the sale of shredded materials, transforming FORCE into a social enterprise. The model tackles environmental degradation while strengthening the CSO's financial independence.

Navigating the digital divide

Despite growing smartphone use², challenges such as limited internet connectivity in rural areas³ and digital

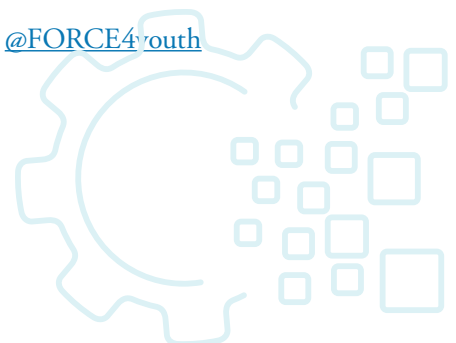
literacy gaps among both local officials and youth may hinder uptake of the app. To address this, FORCE plans to train 120 women and youth in digital skills, entrepreneurship, and environmental advocacy. The app itself will be regularly updated based on user feedback and evolving local needs.

The initiative goes beyond developing an app – it represents a grassroots movement for inclusive governance and environmental justice. In the heart of Soroti, FORCE is showing that digital transformation can be

FORCE focuses on equipping, informing, and empowering marginalised and vulnerable persons with sustainable community-based models that propel the attainment of self-reliance and prosperity among the women, youth, and the community at large.

locally led, community owned, and socially impactful. With each tap on a screen, a young woman or man steps into a leadership role – raising their voice, influencing decisions, and building a cleaner, more accountable future.

FORCE on  [@FORCE4youth](https://twitter.com/FORCE4youth)



2 30 years later, feature phones still outstrip smartphones | Monitor
3 30 years later, feature phones still outstrip smartphones | Monitor

Katiba Virtual Museum – A destination for Uganda’s constitutional education

The Center for Constitutional Governance (CCG) created the Katiba Virtual Museum, a pioneer digital platform dedicated to promoting constitutional education in Uganda. The innovative tool harnesses technology to preserve and share the rich history of constitutionalism.



National and regional stakeholders pose for a photo at a ceremony to launch the Katiba Virtual Museum during the ‘constitutional conference’ held in Kampala. © CCG / Ritah Asimire Kase

The Center for Constitutional Governance (CCG) is a ‘regional constitutional watchdog’ based in Kampala, Uganda, working across the East and Horn of Africa. CCG aims to bridge the gaps between policy and practice in the given regulatory framework by promoting constitutional literacy, civic education, and citizen participation.

The [CCG](#), committed to promoting constitutional awareness, has launched the [Katiba Virtual Museum](#) - Uganda’s pioneering digital platform dedicated to constitutional education. Supported by CUSP, the virtual museum was officially unveiled at the first-ever ‘Conference on the Constitution’ held in Kampala in November 2024. It provides curated exhibits, rare artefacts, historical documents, landmark court rulings, and profiles of key leaders, aiming to deepen public understanding of Uganda’s constitutional history, governance, and rule of law.

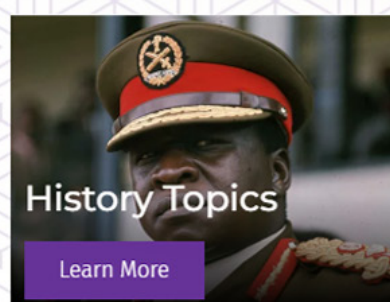
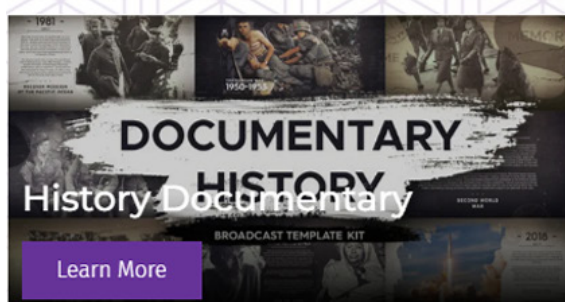
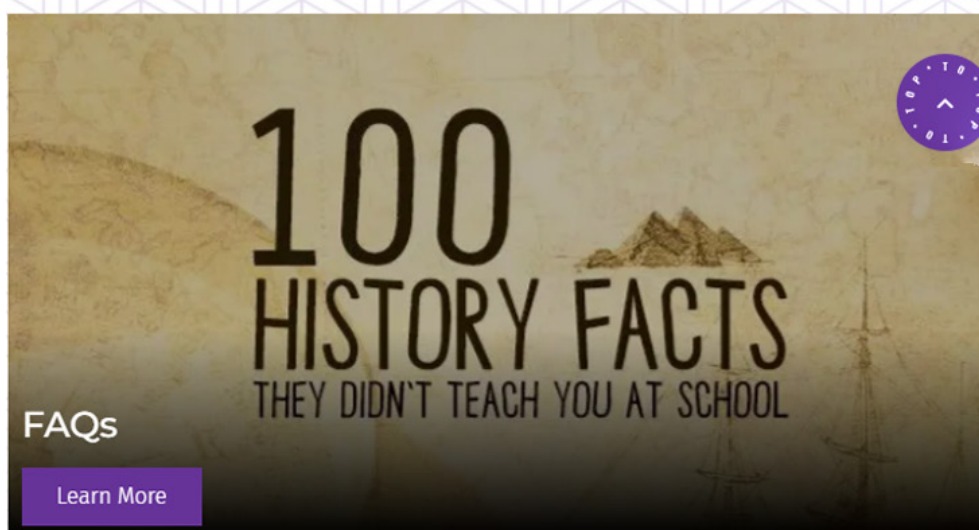
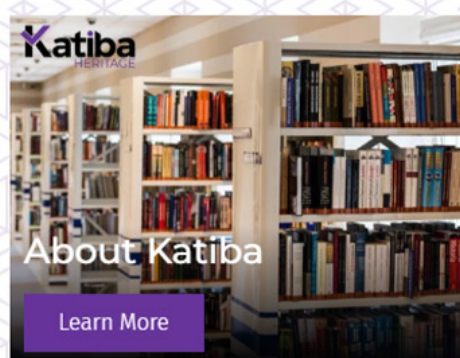
Tracing Uganda’s constitutional evolution from pre-1894 through to the present day, the Katiba Virtual Museum also highlights broader East African and continental narratives. Despite the challenge of sourcing rare and diverse historical materials, CCG capitalised on strong partnerships with government bodies, the judiciary, academic institutions, cultural organisations, researchers, and subject matter experts to develop a comprehensive and dynamic digital archive. Its interactive design enhances accessibility, enabling a wide range of users - from students and educators to legal professionals and civil society actors - to engage with Uganda’s constitutional heritage.

CUSP has partnered with CCG to enhance State and Non-State Actors’ understanding of the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Legal Framework. CCG undertakes analyses of Uganda’s NGO legal and policy framework, constitutionalism and the rule of law in East Africa and supports active citizen engagement in these areas.

The Katiba Virtual Museum stands as a powerful example of how digital innovation can preserve historical knowledge while fostering ongoing civic engagement. By making constitutional education more accessible, it contributes to the promotion of democracy, human rights, and good governance – a core ambition of CUSP. The platform aspires to be the definitive resource for

constitutional education not only in Uganda but throughout the East African region, encouraging informed participation and dialogue for generations to come.

CCG on  [@ccgeal](https://twitter.com/ccgeal)



The digital pulse of Uganda's public procurement

The Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority's (PPDA) Contract Monitoring System (CMS) continues to revolutionise state and non-state cooperation on public procurement in Uganda. GCSP supports both PPDA and CSOs to track public spending and improve service delivery. A case from Bushenyi shows how digital tools and citizen oversight can drive real accountability in procurement.

Digital tools are powerful enablers. Their accessibility and ease of use allow them to empower citizens to monitor and report on public services. When combined with the principles of social accountability - such as participation, transparency, and responsiveness - they can meaningfully shift power dynamics and promote inclusive governance.

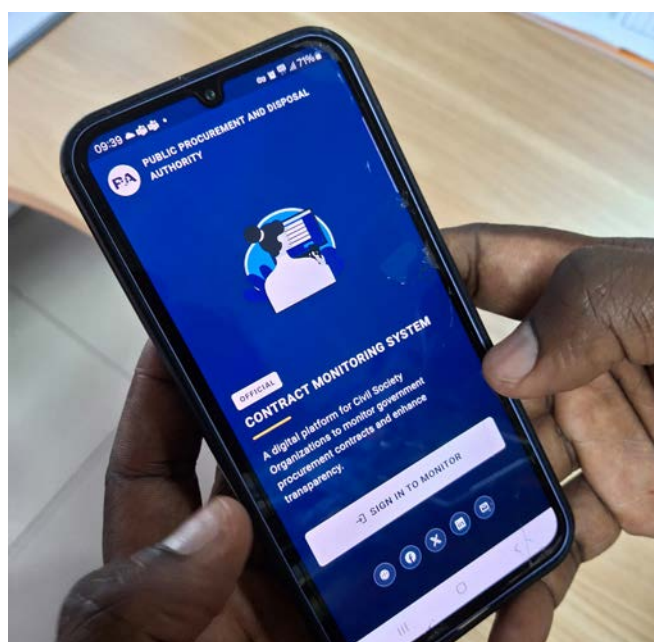
By 2021, GCSP had been working with CSOs, that monitor public spending in Uganda, for several years. The analogue documentation CSOs were using back then was complex. To simplify and strengthen contract monitoring across the country, GCSP supported the development of a digital solution to replace paper forms. GCSP coordinated with CSOs to define the specifications and facilitated the tool's development with technical experts and PPDA.

In 2022, PPDA launched the digital [CMS](#), thus substantially transforming public procurement and service delivery in Uganda. Following CUSP's recommendations for partner CSOs, the CMS is operated through CSOs like the Western Ankole Civil Society Forum ([WACSO](#)). PPDA gives these CSOs unprecedented access to procurement data which allows them to monitor and identify irregularities at public project sites. This is where the CMS comes into play. WACSO trains volunteers who are willing to monitor public contracts in their communities. They set out to the project site, where the CMS enables them to easily document and report discrepancies and instantly escalate them to local government or the PPDA – providing them with real-time reports on any issues with contract implementation, complete with pictures, GPS data, and other essential documentation.

PPDA regularly organises review meetings to collect user feedback from CSOs, leading to further improvements. One key outcome was an upgrade to the CMS's interface, making it more interactive and user-friendly.

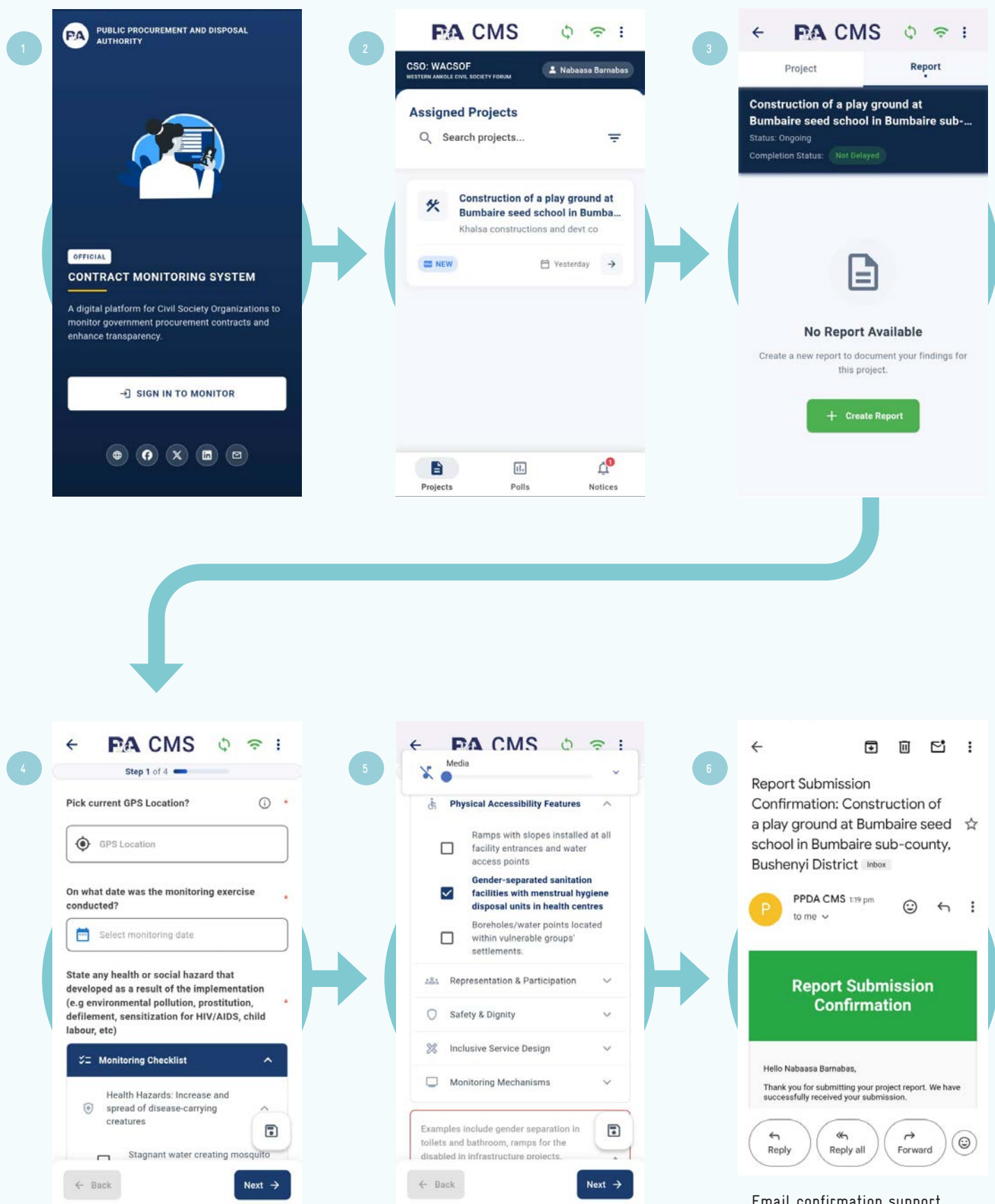
The Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority (PPDA) is the principal regulatory body for public procurement and disposal of public assets in Uganda.

Western Ankole Civil Society Forum (WACSO) provides a platform for citizens in the Ankole region to defend democratic values and advance social justice. Within their network of members, they develop consensus on critical governance and development issues.



CMS Log-in screen. ©GIZ/Martin Waiswa

Run through CMS reporting. ©WACSO



Email confirmation support submission. ©WACSO

Impact in action: Bushenyi District

In Bushenyi District, the local government allocated UGX 252,201,400 (~€61,530) to tarmac the Kalinzu Eco Tourism Road, an access road within Kalinzu forest. The contract was awarded to Rock and Dirt Solutions Limited, with a completion date set for April 2023.

Monitors from WACSOFF raised a query through the CMS for PPDA intervention, noting construction delays and poor workmanship, despite a previously granted two-month extension. GCSP then facilitated PPDA's five-day field verification and engineering audit. PPDA concluded that major problems emanated from inadequate materials, poor working methodology, drainage, and contract supervision. PPDA therefore recommended the district to engage the contractor to address the defects noted.

In April 2025, the Bushenyi local government convened a joint inspection with the contractor. Following this joint effort, the contractor completed the road works to all stakeholders' satisfaction in July 2025.

This case demonstrates how a digital tool and an effective collaboration between state and non-state actors can become a lever for accountability, ensuring that public funds are used efficiently. CUSP continues to support capacity building for CSOs and enhance the collaboration between oversight institutions and civil society, reinforcing Uganda's path towards more accountable and inclusive public service delivery.

PPDA on  [@PPDA_Uganda](#)

WACSOFF on  [@WACSOFF](#)

Learn more about the CMS here: https://youtu.be/LENs4dQwIMA?si=E-RA3EQ_JVL7XUi



Kalinzu Eco Tourism Road before intervention. © PPDA



Kalinzu Eco Tourism Road after intervention. © PPDA



Empowering civil society through AI innovation in Central and Southwestern Uganda

AI for CSOs in Uganda - from information on sexual and reproductive health, to funding opportunities and digital campaigning. Learn how CUSP supports CSOs to tap into this transformative force – for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.



Participants work on their ideas. ©Kampala Analytica

Imagine winning 10,000 Euro to develop your groundbreaking AI-focused idea. Sounds like Shark Tank, the American business reality show, where people can pitch their business ideas? Well, now make it Ugandan and non-profit!

Together with [Kampala Analytica](#), CUSP organised a civic hackathon and bootcamp for CSOs, with the aim to localise the use of AI for grassroots impact.

Kampala Analytica is an independent policy think tank focusing on business and civic engagement in the context of industry 4.0 and 5.0.



Participants work on their ideas. ©Kampala Analytica

Following a call for proposals, Kampala Analytica and CUSP selected five CSOs with very different thematic foci to equip them with the skills, tools, and knowledge to harness the transformative potential of AI for social good. During the three-day event, the CSOs engaged in design thinking, solution ideation, and prototype development for AI-driven interventions tackling the issues the CSOs work on. At the end, each presented their prototype, and the ideas and work that was done were evaluated based on creativity, feasibility, and potential social impact. The best three won the before mentioned 10,000 Euro, earmarked for the development of their AI solution.



Girl Potential Care Centre pitching their idea. ©Kampala Analytica

Who will localise AI – and how?

Among the winners is the team from the [Girl Potential Care Centre](#). Through deep and candid conversations, their AI chatbot, working title 'Katutu AI', is envisioned to provide information on sexual and reproductive health, they could otherwise not access due to culturally rooted communication barriers.



Girl Potential Care Centre presenting their prize. ©Kampala Analytica



Girl Potential Care Centre receive their participation certificate from Kampala Analytica and CUSP. ©Kampala Analytica



Hackathon winners present their prizes. ©Kampala Analytica

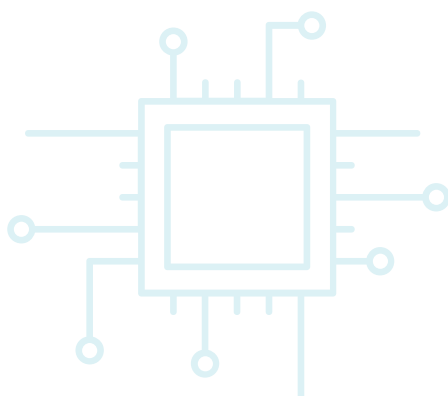
Another idea, developed by [APEX Tech Solutions](#), aims to optimise the funding process for CSOs in Uganda. Enhanced by AI, the TEXORA platform will scan the internet for funding opportunities. Using the information the organisations provide when signing up to the platform, the AI then proposes suitable programmes to them.

The third one is the Empower Youth in Technology's media app, which is an AI-powered mobile and web-based application designed to enable CSOs to create and manage social media and email marketing campaigns. The app connects these organisations to active social media users, primarily educated youth, who act as influencers to enhance the reach and visibility of their activities.

CUSP contracted an AI specialist to support the three teams. The aim is to guide and supervise them to transform their prototypes into viable, deployable solutions with tangible social impact. The process is also ensuring sustainability, knowledge transfer, and compliance with AI ethics, data governance regulations, and legal standards.

This initiative marks an important step in fostering a local AI innovation ecosystem within the Ugandan civil society sector - ensuring that technology serves as a driver of inclusive, equitable, and sustainable development.

Kampala Analytica on  [@KLA_Analytica](#)



Koboko on KoboCollect: Driving digital transformation in local planning

In Koboko District, Northern Uganda, the dual responsibility of serving a large refugee population and host communities has put considerable pressure on local governments. As a result, ensuring effective source allocation, efficient service delivery, and meaningful citizen participation in decision-making has become a priority.



A dialogue meeting involving local leaders and refugee representatives happening in Bidi sub county, Koboko district. © PICOT

With support from CUSP, Partners in Development and the Centre for Holistic Transformation ([PICOT](#)) launched a project in August 2023 titled 'Enhancing Refugee and Host Community Participation in Governance and Accountability Processes in Koboko District'. The initiative aimed at promoting local government transparency and community participation to improve service delivery through neighbourhood assemblies, community dialogues, community radio programmes, leadership capacity building, and - most notably - the digitalisation of the district's planning tool.

Partners in Development and the Centre for Holistic Transformation ([PICOT](#)) is an indigenous non-profit organisation founded in 2005, dedicated to fostering sustainable development and uplifting communities across Northern Uganda. PICOT focuses on addressing the critical needs of marginalised groups through integrated programmes in agriculture, health, education, environment, and governance.



A training for selected leaders from Koboko district local government on data collection, facilitated by PICOT with support from CUSP, July 2024. © PICOT

Koboko District Senior Planner, Edward Dhata, describes the digital shift as transformative. Previously, community involvement in the planning cycle was limited, opportunities for public feedback were scarce, and paper-based systems slowed data collection and decision-making.

‘Before this project, grassroots involvement in the planning cycle, especially the village meetings to discuss priorities, was minimal. We were also constrained to provide feedback to communities regarding the priorities funded and those which remained unfunded when budgets were passed’,

Edward Dhata explains.

A revolutionary tool is birthed

The introduction of the ‘Village Inventory Tool’, a structured system for capturing community proposals and priorities, has significantly improved planning efficiency. Now, Parish Chiefs and Refugee Welfare Councils collect planning data through the [KoboCollect](#) application and upload it to a central server in real time. This shift has enhanced data quality, streamlined storage

and retrieval, and enabled faster reporting through digital dashboards.

Koboko District is among the first local governments in Uganda to digitalise its planning tools, thanks to the technical and financial support of PICOT and CUSP. According to Senior Planner Edward Dhata, the new system has strengthened the district development planning process, supported more informed decision-making and enhanced service delivery to all residents.

By embracing digital solutions in local planning, Koboko has taken an important step towards more inclusive, transparent, and responsive governance – and inspired others! In 2025, Nebbi district local government invited PICOT to build the capacity of the District Statistical Committee to digitally collect, analyse and visualise data using KoboCollect and Microsoft Power BI. Nebbi district local government has since used this knowledge and their newly obtained skills to customise and distribute the data collection and visualisation tools to their sub-counties.

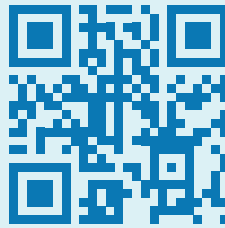
The digital revolution is rolling through Uganda’s local governments one by one – bringing government and citizens closer.



Learn more about CUSP here:



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