

LONDA

DIGITAL RIGHTS AND INCLUSION IN AFRICA REPORT

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC



2022

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Digital Rights and Inclusion in Africa Report 2022

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Central African Republic



► Executive Summary

The Central African Republic is one of the least populated countries in Africa, with internet and mobile phone penetration rates among the lowest in the region, 9.8 per cent and 48 per cent respectively as of 2020. The country is party to several international and regional conventions that promote human rights in general as well as the rights to privacy, privacy of correspondence and free access to information; the same provisions are present in national laws.

Officially, the government has never authorised an Internet shutdown, but some other forms of restrictions on the freedom to communicate and inform oneself on the Internet have already taken place, such as blocking the SMS service. The government has yet to ensure free speech and media freedoms, journalists are still threatened, despite the 2020 Law on Communication Freedom.

In terms of development of ICTs and their use in citizen's daily lives, the country is still behind since no public services as of now are delivered using technology. Yet in 2022, the country embarked on an ambitious project of introducing bitcoins to support its economy, but the project did not last as it was declared unconstitutional by the highest court in the country.

It is recommended to the government to leverage digital technologies which can open up new avenues for development in CAR, support poverty reduction, increase economic activity, and expand public service delivery, in a country under constant conflict.



Introduction

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a French-speaking country in the central region of Africa with Bangui as its capital. With a surface area of 622,980 km² and a population estimated by the World Bank at 5.4 million in 2020,⁴⁹ it is one of the least populated countries in the world.

Independent for the last 65 years, since December 1958, the country has faced political and security instability for more than two decades despite the remarkable efforts of CAR citizens and the international community. The crisis escalated around 2013 and was marked by the coup d'état orchestrated by Michel Djotodia. President Faustin-Archange Touadera, of the political party Mouvement des Cœurs Unis (MCU), was sworn in on March 30, 2016 for his first mandate as President and was re-elected for a second term contested by the opposition in December 2020, manages a country plagued by threats of rebellion and armed groups that try to overthrow him.⁵⁰ The presence of the Russian private security company, Wagner, that he called to help restore stability to the country, a presence decried by local authorities, is one of the signs of the political instability in the country.

CAR is party to several international and regional conventions that promote human rights in general as well as the rights to privacy, privacy of correspondence and free access to information. The most important of these are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, etc.

The national legislation on telecommunications and the internet is not extensive enough. To date, the country has only one law to regulate electronic communications. This is Law 18.002 of January 17, 2018, governing electronic communications in the Central African Republic,⁵¹ which we will refer to in this report as the Electronic Communications Law of 2018.

The electronic communications and internet sector is monitored, with the authority to enforce applicable regulations, by the Autorité de Régulation des Communications Électroniques et de la Poste, or ARCEP Centrafrique. This body was created by Law 17.020 of May 17, 2017 establishing ARCEP.⁵² Under the supervision of the Ministry in charge of electronic communications, this body has the authority to be informed of all violations of laws in this area before the seizure of the courts according to Article 102 of the Electronic Communications Law of 2018.

The first section of this report provides a country analysis that first touches on internet freedom issues such as internet access and disruptions, free speech and media freedoms, privacy and surveillance practices, as well as data protection. Further, the country analysis presents the state of CAR's Universal Service Fund.

The second section is about developments in the ICT field, which have occurred in the country in recent years; these include a crypto currency project and efforts to promote digital literacy and skills so as to help with ICT adoption and appropriation in the daily lives of CAR citizens. The report ends with conclusion with recommendations.

49 Banque Mondiale, République Centrafricaine - Vue d'ensemble, <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/country/centralafricanrepublic/overview#1> (accessed on December 27, 2022).

50 Banque Mondiale, République Centrafricaine - Vue d'ensemble, <https://www.banquemondiale.org/fr/country/centralafricanrepublic/overview#1> (accessed on December 27, 2022).

51 Electronic Communications Act of 2018, https://arcep.cf/images/textes/lois/Loi_18_002_regissant_les_communications_electroniques_en_RCA.pdf (accessed on December 27, 2022).

52 Law 17.020 of May 17, 2017 establishing ARCEP, https://arcep.cf/images/textes/lois/Loi_17_020_portant_creation_ARCEP.PDF (accessed on December 27, 2022).

Country Analysis

INTERNET FREEDOM



INTERNET ACCESS AND DISRUPTIONS

The landscape of new information and communication technologies is a bit unusual. The cell phone and internet sectors are not that developed. According to a Quarter Three 2020 report from the Central African Regulatory Authority for Electronic Communications and the Post Office (not including figures from one operator who did not submit theirs), less than 2.6 million Central African citizens use a cell phone as of end of September 2020, bringing the cell phone penetration rate to 48 per cent, and only about 503,800 have access to the internet, for an estimated internet penetration rate on mobile phone of 9.8 per cent.⁵³

The cell phone and internet market are dominated by four main operators that are also internet service providers. These are Telecel (48 per cent of the market), Orange France (37 per cent of the market), Moov (15 per cent of the market) and Azur Nationlink Télécoms (which did not report their figures for this quarter) according to data from the Regulator. The company, Black Millenium, is only involved in the provision of wireless internet, with an average of 0.094 per cent of customers per 1,000 inhabitants according to the same report.

Fibre optic cables are not yet in use in CAR, but the country is part of the Central African Backbone project that was approved in December 2017, signed in January 2018 and planned to complete in March 2023.⁵⁴ This project has four components, namely fibre-optic infrastructure; ICT applications and services; institutional support and capacity building; and project management; with the objective to “lead to an increase in tax revenue and a reduction in the cost of economic and social transactions, digital open access for rural areas coupled with regional integration through the establishment of fibre-optic infrastructure that will facilitate access to the neighbouring countries (Cameroon and Congo) and renewal of the social contract through the creation of job opportunities for young people in particular”.

According to another report by ARCEP Central Africa on the evolution of indicators of telecom markets by the first quarter of 2020, these telecoms companies cover only 51 per cent of the national territory.⁵⁵ Alongside other factors, such as illiteracy (eight out of 10 adults are

⁵³ ARCEP Centrafrique, L'évolution des Indicateurs des marchés de télécommunications en Centrafrique, https://arcep.cf/images/documents_divers/observatoires/2020/TABLEAU_DE_BORD_MARCHES_TELECOM_RCA_Q3_2020.pdf (accessed on 27 December 2022).

⁵⁴ Central African Republic -CAB – CAR component: <https://projectsportal.afdb.org/dataportal/VProject/show/P-CF-GB0-002> (accessed on 26 December 2022).

⁵⁵ IFRI, Les réseaux sociaux centrafricains à l'aube des élections : symptôme avancé d'une crise politique à venir, <https://www.ifri.org/fr/publications/etudes-de-lifri/reseaux-sociaux-centrafricains-laube-elections-symptome-avance-dune>, (accessed on December 27, 2022).

illiterate according to a UNICEF official quoted in a report by the French Institute of International Relations, IFRI) and low purchasing power, this would justify the low penetration rate of mobile telephony and internet.⁵⁶

Officially, the government has never authorised a shutdown of the internet, but some other forms of restrictions on the freedom to communicate and inform oneself on the Internet have already taken place, such as blocking the SMS service,⁵⁷ or websites that are too critical of the regime in place. Local civil society suspects that the government is behind some of the internet disruptions that occur during periods of political tension.

FREE SPEECH AND MEDIA FREEDOMS

CAR's National Assembly passed a law on November 30, 2020 which was promulgated on December 21, 2020, the Law on Communication Freedom, which supports the media development in the country. This law replaces the Ordinance of February 22, 2005 dealing with press organs in the country.

"The importance of this law is that it will give the press and those involved in communication much more freedom to work without being worried by immediate legal action, but rather by being managed by administrative and other sanctions that may be given. But at the same time, it gives the press a responsibility; that of avoiding harming others by allegations, lies", says Ange Maxime Kazagui, Minister of Communication and Media who presented the Bill.⁵⁸

According to Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF),⁵⁹

the new law does not allow for independent and quality journalism in practice. But the President of the High Council for Communication (HCC) notes⁶⁰ the new provisions that it has, taking into account social media which was not covered in the old law. Another merit of this new law is that it decriminalised press offenses.

There are only two television stations in CAR and radio remains the dominant means to access information, with several dozen stations throughout the country. *Radio Ndeke Luka*, one of the few media outlets to broadcast information that respects facts and sources, like the Network of Journalists for Human Rights (RJDH) and a few associations of bloggers and journalists doing fact-checking, is regularly subjected to pressure.

RSF further argues that despite their state of disrepair in terms of investment and resources, which has lasted for years, the public media remain influential and take orders from the Executive. The High Council for Communication is accused by the profession of carrying out arbitrary sanctions, when these are not taken directly by the government, as was the case in 2021 for two news websites. The *Corbeau News* and *Le Tsunami* were given no warning when the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications instructed internet operators on February 16, to cut access to their websites "until further notice" on the grounds that they had spread "hate speech" and fake news amid a "security crisis." The ministry mentioned no specific article or post.⁶¹

Clearly, there is no media freedom since RSF reports that in CAR, the authorities are finding it increasingly difficult to tolerate

56 IFRI, Les réseaux sociaux centrafricains à l'aube des élections : symptôme avancé d'une crise politique à venir, <https://www.ifri.org/fr/publications/etudes-de-lifri/reseaux-sociaux-centrafricains-laube-elections-symptome-avance-dune>, (accessed on December 27, 2022).

57 SMS bloqués en Centrafrique : "Une décision digne d'une dictature", available at <https://www.france24.com/fr/20140604-centrafrique-sms-bloques-decision-dictature-bangui-revolte>, (accessed on December 27, 2022).

58 Centrafrique : une nouvelle loi sur la liberté de la presse : <https://www.radiondekeluka.org/actualites/politique/36294-centrafrique-une-nouvelle-loi-sur-la-liberte-de-la-presse.html> (accessed on December 20, 2022).

59 République Centrafricaine: <https://rsf.org/fr/pays/r%C3%A9publique-centrafricaine>

60 Le HCC présente la nouvelle loi relative à la liberté de communication en Centrafrique : <https://oubanguimedias.com/2021/04/23/le-hcc-presente-la-nouvelle-loi-relative-a-la-liberte-de-communication-en-centrafrique/> (accessed on December 27, 2022).

61 RSF decries arbitrary blocking of two CAR news websites: <https://rsf.org/en/rsf-decries-arbitrary-blocking-two-car-news-websites> (accessed on December 20, 2022).

criticism; journalists who interview the various protagonists of the conflict are regularly treated as spies or accomplices of the armed groups.

PRIVACY AND SURVEILLANCE

The rights to privacy, access to information as well as the right to inform are protected by the Constitution of the Central African Republic. Important references can be found on Article 16⁶² of the Constitution⁶³ on March 30, 2016. Freedom of the press is recognised and guaranteed. It is exercised under the conditions set by the law according to Article 15 of the same Constitution.

As in most African countries, there are vague provisions in the laws that set limits on the secrecy of correspondence by authorising forms of surveillance in specific cases. In the Central African Republic, these are in the *Electronic Communications Law of 2018 (The Law of 2018)*.

One of the elements likely to facilitate surveillance in this day and age is the mandatory registration of users of telecommunications or electronic communications services. Operators are obliged to identify all their subscribers according to the provisions of Article 61⁶⁴ of the Law.

The same law establishes four regimes in the field of electronic communications, including the licensing, authorisation, declaration and free regimes to which all service providers, each according to its sector/case, are subject.

Operators in the telecommunications sector



are subject to one of these regimes and in case of misconduct, the Minister, on the proposal of ARCEP may decide to withdraw the license or other type of authorisation as stated in Article 16.1⁶⁵ of the *Law of 2018*.

Operators are called upon to respect the secrecy of correspondence as provided for by the *Law of 2018* in its Article 112⁶⁶ except in certain cases provided for by law such as for the protection of public safety or for national defence.

Article 113 of the same law takes up, with details, all the lines not to be crossed as for the secrecy of the correspondences. It insists in paragraph 1⁶⁷ on the prohibition throughout the Central African territory of interception, listening, transcription and disclosure of

62 Article 16: The secrecy of correspondence as well as that of electronic postal, telegraphic and telephone communications are inviolable. Restrictions to the above provisions can only be ordered by law.

63 Constitution of March 30, 2016, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Central_African_Republic_2016.pdf?lang=en (accessed on December 20, 2022).

64 Article 61: Operators are obliged to identify all subscribers of their services. The obligation to identify the subscriber extends to the entire distribution circuit of the operator. The methods and criteria for identifying users and customers of electronic communications services are defined by regulation.

65 Article 16.1: Licenses are granted, transferred, modified, renewed, suspended or withdrawn by order of the Minister, on the basis of a reasoned proposal by the Regulatory Authority.

66 Article 112: Operators and their employees are required to respect the secrecy of correspondence by means of electronic communications and the conditions for the protection of the privacy and personal data of users, subject to the obligations relating to the requirements of national defence and public security and the prerogatives of the judicial authority.

67 Article 113.1: The interception, listening, recording, transcription and disclosure of correspondence sent by electronic means, except with the prior authorisation of the Public Prosecutor or an investigating judge, in accordance with national legislation, in the context of a judicial investigation or by an authorised person in the context of an administrative investigation whose purpose is the protection of national defence and public security.

correspondence sent by electronic means. This would only be possible with the prior authorisation of the State Prosecutor or an investigating judge.

The interception of communications, violation of the secrecy of correspondence and surveillance are still prohibited, except for cases provided for in Article 136.2⁶⁸ of the *Law of 2018*. These exceptions relate to cases of judicial investigation with the authorisation of the Attorney General of the Republic, administrative investigations with the aim of protecting public security, national defence, the fight against terrorism and cases where the authors of the communications or correspondence give their consent. Since CAR does not have a law on cybersecurity or on the fight against cybercrime, there is still concern that these exceptional cases are vague and ambiguous.

There are no public CCTV cameras in the country. "For a country with issues with electricity, where there are no proper roads, nor traffic lights, how will the government bother to install CCTV cameras in the streets? For what purpose?" commented my source.

DATA PROTECTION

The country has no law or regulations that specifically deals with issues related to

biometric databases and data localisation.⁶⁹

The *Law of 2018* insists on the respect of privacy and the protection of customers' personal data, except for the cases provided for by the law in article 112.⁷⁰ This law briefly covers the important points such as the collection of data, the processing of data, the duration of their storage and their anonymisation and deletion except for cases provided for by the law. These provisions on anonymity and deletion are introduced by Article 116.⁷¹

The *Law of 2018* once again imposes on intermediaries of online communications services the protection of personal data of their customers in Article 117⁷² referring to Article 116. They are only allowed to process traffic data to market their services or else for the provision of value-added services. This loophole is opened by Article 121.⁷³

The duration of the retention of personal data of users of telecommunications services is set by a decree of the Minister according to the type of data. However, for purposes of research, ascertainment and prosecution of criminal offences, certain data may be kept for a maximum period of one year without being erased or made anonymous as provided for in Article 119⁷⁴ of the *Law of 2018*.

The law also prohibits the processing of

68 Article 136. 2 a) The person has obtained the consent, either of the author of the private communication or of the person to whom the author draws it, to take cognisance of the private communication and to reveal its contents. b) The person intercepting a private communication in accordance with an authorisation issued by the Public Prosecutor or by an investigating judge, in accordance with national legislation, in the framework of a judicial investigation or by an authorised person in the framework of an administrative investigation that has as its object the protection of public security, national defence or the prevention of acts of terrorism; c) Staff members of the Regulatory Authority intercepting a private communication with a view to identifying, isolating or preventing the unauthorised use of a frequency or transmission.

69 CIPESA: Privacy Imperiled: Analysis of Surveillance, Encryption and Data Localisation Laws in Africa: http://104.152.168.205/~cipesa/old/?wpfb_dl=492 (accessed on December 26, 2022)

70 Article 112 of the Electronic Telecommunications Act of 2018 calls on Operators and their employees to respect the secrecy of correspondence by electronic means, to protect the privacy and personal data of their users. Except for the requirements required by national defence and public security and the prerogatives of public authority.

71 Article 116: This chapter applies to the processing of personal data in the context of the provision of electronic communications services to the public. It applies in particular to networks that support data collection and identification devices. Operators, in particular those whose activity is to provide access to online public communication services, shall erase or render anonymous any data relating to: traffic, subject to the provisions relating to persons; the need to investigate, establish and prosecute criminal offences; and the need for billing.

72 Article 117: Persons who, as part of a principal or accessory professional activity, offer to the public a connection enabling online communication through a network access, including free of charge, are subject to compliance with the provisions applicable to operators under this article.

73 Article 121: Operators may also process traffic data in order to market their own electronic communications services or to provide value-added services in compliance with the laws and regulations in force.

74 Article 119: For the purposes of the investigation, ascertainment and prosecution of criminal offenses and for the sole purpose of allowing, as necessary, the provision of information to the judicial authority, it may be deferred for a maximum period of one (01) year to operations tending to erase or anonymise certain categories of technical data.

data allowing the location of the terminal equipment used by the user of electronic communications services and the duration of the communication, except with the authorisation of the user or for investigative purposes. The user is informed about the nature of the processing, its duration and whether or not it is transmitted to other providers. This is provided for in Article 122⁷⁵ of the *Law of 2018*.

The same law grants the user the right to withdraw this consent at any time and free of charge. It goes further in the case of calls for emergency services, which directly constitute the author's consent to the collection and processing of technical information about the communication, the identity of the user and the location of the terminal equipment, but never the content of the communication, as emphasised in paragraph 3⁷⁶ of Article 123.

Those responsible for processing and storing personal data are obliged to collaborate with the competent authorities by communicating the data of the users of their services within the framework of the fight against terrorism, public security and national defence as outlined in article 124.1 and 2.⁷⁷ These data do not include the content of the communications. It is only clearly defined that the user is informed of the communication of the data when the request is made to the operator.

THE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND

The Universal Service Fund (USF) in CAR is established in the Electronic Communications Law of 2018 under Articles 77 to 81. It is defined as "a minimum set of defined services of

specified quality that is accessible to the whole population under affordable tariff conditions throughout the territory" (Article 77), it is formed with contributions from each operator at a rate of "two per cent of the previous year's turnover of each operator" (Article 79).

The law provides that "particular modalities for the provision of universal service are defined



by decree taken in the council of ministers".

Decree No 19 043 defining the terms and conditions for the provision and financing of

75 Article 122: Without prejudice to the provisions of articles 112, 113, 114, 115 and 116 of this Law, and subject to the needs of judicial investigations, data allowing the location of the terminal equipment of the user of electronic communications services may not be used during the communication for purposes other than its routing, nor may it be stored and processed after the completion of the communication, except with the consent of the said user, who shall be duly informed of the categories of data involved, the duration of the processing, the purposes for which it is to be carried out, and whether or not it will be passed on to third party service providers.

76 Article 123.3: In no case may they concern the content of the correspondence exchanged or the information consulted, in any form whatsoever, in the context of these communications.

77 Article 124.1 and 2. In order to prevent acts that may be detrimental to public security, national defence and acts of terrorism, the agents individually designated and duly empowered by the competent authority may, after express authorisation by the Public Prosecutor, demand from the operators and persons concerned the communication of the data stored and processed by them pursuant to the said Article. The data that may be the subject of such a request is limited to technical data relating to the identification of the numbers of a user of voice services or connection to electronic communications services, to the identification of all the numbers or connections of a designated person, to data relating to the location of the terminal equipment used, as well as to technical data relating to the communications of a user of electronic communications services relating to the list of numbers called and calling, and the duration and date of the communications.

the FSU of electronic communications was therefore signed by the President on February 20, 2019,⁷⁸ announcing the formation of the Electronic Communications Development Committee (under Section 2) but very little information is publicly accessible with regard to the functioning of this Committee as well as to the effectiveness of the USF in CAR.

As in many African countries, one can suspect the funds collected as part of the FSU is used to cover the general budget of the country, rather than supporting the growth of communication and connectivity in underserved regions of the country.

DEVELOPMENTS IN ICT AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

CRYPTOCURRENCY

On April 28, 2022 President Faustin-Archange Touadéra, to everyone's surprise, announced the vote by Parliament of a law that "governs all transactions" in cryptocurrencies and makes bitcoin a "reference currency" alongside the CFA franc.⁷⁹ The hope of the Government, the first in Africa to take that move, was that this new move would help replenish the state's coffers. With that law, all payments in digital currency, including taxes, are therefore authorised in the Central African Republic.

This new law faced different push backs from national institutions as well as regional institutions. The Banking Commission of Central Africa (CBAC) has clarified in a statement that only the CFA franc is the authorised currency for keeping the accounts of the institutions that are subject to it. The CBAC prohibits these institutions and their technical partners "in the context of payment services to exchange or convert, settle or cover in currency or CFA francs transactions relating



to cryptocurrencies or having a link with them."

Dubbed the Sango Coin, this project would have allowed foreigners to get citizenship or buy land in CAR using this form of electronic payment. Deutsche Welle reported⁸⁰ that for an investment of \$60,000 in cryptocurrency that must be locked in for five years, a foreign investor can obtain Central African nationality. With this passport, a foreign investor will be entitled to obtain shares in the Central African mining and forestry sectors at low cost. Another possibility is to have a company domiciled in the Central African Republic for \$6,000 or a ten-year lease on a 250 square metre plot of land for \$10,000 in Sango Coins.

Civil society groups filed a complaint against this move leading the highest court in the country to declare it "unconstitutional", as reported⁸¹ by BBC. The Constitutional Court ruled that nationality had no market value and

78 Decree No 19 043 defining the terms and conditions for the provision and financing of the FSU of electronic communications: https://arcep.cf/images/textes/decrets/decret_19_043_FSU.pdf (accessed on December 20, 2022).

79 Bitcoin en Centrafrique, les autorités y croient toujours : <https://www.dw.com/fr/centrafrique-bitcoin-cryptomonnaie-faustin-archange-touad%C3%A9ra/a-61794329> (accessed on December 23, 2022).

80 Le fiasco de la cryptomonnaie Sango Coin en Centrafrique : <https://www.dw.com/fr/centrafrique-sango-coin-cour-constitutionnelle/a-63007614> (accessed on December 26, 2022).

81 Bitcoin en Centrafrique : la Cour suprême bloque le plan de crypto-pour-la citoyenneté : <https://www.bbc.com/fr/afrique/region-62723779> (accessed on December 27, 2022)

that residence required a physical stay in the country.

In a country poorly connected to the internet and destabilised by a conflict, such a project was simply ambitious but unattainable.

INCLUSION OF ICTs

Central African Republic is a country that has no record in terms of inclusion or use of technology in people's daily lives, especially regarding state services delivery using ICTs.

For the December 27, 2020 elections cycle, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) delivered a large shipment of election materials to Bangui, on June 13, including 4,400 tablets that enumerators will use to register voters.⁸² It has been reported⁸³ that the electoral body in charge of voter's registration faced issues using these tablets, which resulted in delays in the registration process.

There is however a number of private initiatives aimed at supporting citizens to acquire digital literacy skills, such as this project with US funding, the Central African Republic Technology Entrepreneurship Accelerator launched in 2019 with the goal to assist and mentor early-stage company founders and managers in order to increase their potential for building successful and viable businesses, and furthering their overall ICT leadership capacity.⁸⁴

The initiative of a digital library launched by the Ministry of Education, using a tablet loaded with digital content, makes it easy for teachers to access their lessons while teaching. In this video,⁸⁵ it is said that 1,000 pedagogical cards have been prepared for primary schools by pedagogical advisors of the National Institute of Research and Pedagogical Animation within the framework of the LONDO project financed by the French Cooperation and UNICEF between

2015 and 2016.

CAR citizens say that the country has a long way to go in terms of technology adoption, especially through initiatives from the state. With a country with little to no electricity, where Internet access is still a luxury, the government can only rely on private and donor funding to support its future projects. "No technology is used at police stations, nor at immigration offices, everything is paper-based so far," concluded one of the responders.

82 Centrafrique / Élections 2020 : démarrage de l'enrôlement des électeurs : <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/afrique/centrafrique-elections-2020-d%C3%A9marrage-de-l-enr%C3%B4lement-des-%C3%A9lecteurs-1885888> (accessed on December 27, 2022).

83 Centrafrique : l'enrôlement des électeurs pourra-t-il se tenir dans les délais ? <https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20200711-centrafrique-ane-enrolement-electeurs-elections-generales> (accessed on December 27, 2022).

84 Central African Republic Technology Entrepreneurship Accelerator: <https://care.gmu.edu/car-project/> (accessed on December 26, 2022).

85 Bibliothèques numériques en RCA : la technologie au service du système éducatif centrafricain : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b3It4qI_8VM (accessed on December 27, 2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Digital technology can open up new avenues for development in CAR, support poverty reduction, increase economic activity, and expand public service delivery. In particular, digital transformation starts with improving digital connectivity, given the current gaps in the digital infrastructure network.

CAR is still behind and is therefore not ready to embark in its digital transformation in order to reap all the benefits that come with it.

GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE SECTOR	CIVIL SOCIETY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The government should consider private investments as well as leverage the universal service fund to support the deployment of technology infrastructure which could help expand communication and connectivity opportunities across the country; • The government should consider updating its legal framework to reflect the current development across Africa and leverage these laws to support the development of a more open civic space; • The government should consider reviewing its policies and its interaction with the media in order to ensure a more open media landscape where 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The private sector should consider investing in the country, with a focus on the ICT infrastructure in order to support connectivity for the citizens of CAR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society groups as well as media groups should continue monitoring the state of internet and press freedoms and stay alert to hold the government accountable whenever they feel their digital rights are threatened;

GOVERNMENT	PRIVATE SECTOR	CIVIL SOCIETY
journalists and media professionals are free from any threat related to the exercise of their profession.		



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