



**DIGITAL RIGHTS AND INCLUSION IN AFRICA REPORT**

**TANZANIA**  
**COUNTRY REPORT**

**2024**

## Executive Summary

This report identifies the state of digital rights and inclusion in Tanzania. Throughout the years, Tanzania has made numerous efforts to bridge the digital gap. Furthermore, the nation has adopted Information Communication Technology (ICT) policies and supportive legal frameworks to build a robust digital ecosystem. Despite the efforts made through the various pieces of legislation, including the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, there are still areas of grave concern that impact disproportionately on different demographics of the country.<sup>700</sup> The report employed a combination of qualitative research methods including literature review, policy and legal analysis, and monitoring and observations of digital rights trends through the year via different outlets. The report also gained insights from The Score Index, developed by Paradigm Initiative, to assess compliance with the ACHPR Declaration, evaluating the state of digital rights under the score index. Tanzania seems to be moderately compliant as there are areas of improvement such as revision of specific laws as well as development of laws where there is lack. The penalties that have been placed on information holders who go against the Access to Information Act for releasing information are extreme.

Access to information has been tampered with by government actions such as the reduction of internet speed and also blocking specific websites and applications such as X-formerly, Twitter earlier this year.<sup>701</sup> Following Tanzania's Virtual Private Network (VPN) policy introduced last year has left vulnerable communities exposed, where previously, VPN gave these communities free space online to express their identities under anonymous names. They are now under obligation to get permission to use VPN. The extra layer of security that was being offered by VPN has been ripped off from those most in need. This report aims to shed light on what currently exists, identify the gaps, and make recommendations to help Tanzania's digital space thrive. This report gained insights from desktop research on existing laws, policies, policy briefs, news, other reports and commentaries from different stakeholders.

700 CIPESA, State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2024 Africa's Electoral democracy and technology: pitfalls and promises (accessed on September 2024) [https://cipesa.org/wp-content/files/reports/State\\_of\\_Internet\\_Freedom\\_in\\_Africa\\_Report\\_2024.pdf](https://cipesa.org/wp-content/files/reports/State_of_Internet_Freedom_in_Africa_Report_2024.pdf)

701 Minority Africa 'My privacy matters': Tanzania's new VPN policy leaves LGBTQ+ individuals exposed' (2024) <https://minorityafrica.org/my-privacy-matters-tanzanias-new-vpn-policy-leaves-lgbtq-individuals-exposed/> (accessed on November 2024)



# Introduction

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DIGITAL  
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REPORT

LONDA  
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Tanzania is an East African country that came about as a union between Tanganyika Mainland and the Islands of Zanzibar in 1964. According to the 2022 census, the population of Tanzania stood at 61 million with a majority of the people residing in rural areas.<sup>702</sup> The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) reported that in the quarter ending September 2024, the number of internet users in Tanzania grew from 39.3 million in June 2024 to 41.4 million showing a significant growth in a short period of time.<sup>703</sup>

Against this backdrop of growth in internet usage across the country, the regulatory space has also been trying to keep up with evolving technologies, in some cases leading to multiple taxation in digitalisation, lack of promotion of cyber security and lack of proper use of data by both private and public entities. It is worth noting that strides have also been made by the government to deliberately position the country as a digital thinking nation or hub in the eastern part of Africa. Notably among these was the launch of the Tanzania Digital Economy Strategy 2024-2034 that will spearhead the government's effort to harness the digital economy opportunities in the next decade.<sup>704</sup> This new strategy has six key pillars ranging from enabling digital infrastructure which is critical for any development in the digital space, governance and enabling environment, digital literacy and skills, digital innovation culture, digital inclusion and digital financial services. It outlines how Tanzania harnesses the power of digital technologies to boost economic growth, create jobs, and improve the livelihoods of its citizens and residents.

Tanzania has taken great strides in setting up a data protection authority and its inauguration by the president on April 3, 2024. The country has also enacted laws on cyber security and cybercrime, as well as laws to govern electronic transactions, thus covering three thematic areas of the Malabo Convention<sup>705</sup>.

The Personal Data Protection Act (2022) has been challenged on the grounds that it does not specify the timeline for registration, rejection and issuance of any notification to applicants who have applied for registration as data controllers and data processors.

702 National Sensus 2022. <https://sensa.nbs.go.tz/> (accessed on 10 November, 2024)

703 TCRA, Communications Statistics quarter ending 30th September, 2024. [https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20Report%20for%20the%20Quarter%20Ending%20September%202024\\_1729286237.pdf](https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20Report%20for%20the%20Quarter%20Ending%20September%202024_1729286237.pdf) (accessed on 10 November 2024)

704 Ministry of Information, communication and information technology "Tanzania Digital Economy Strategy 2024-2034" (2024) [https://www.ictc.go.tz/public/documents/tanzania\\_digital\\_economy\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.ictc.go.tz/public/documents/tanzania_digital_economy_strategy.pdf) (accessed on 10 November 2024)

705 Dentons' Legal challenges and Constitutional Issues on the personal and data protection Acti 2022: analysis of the Tito Magoti Vs The attorney General' (June, 2024) <https://www.dentons.com/en/insights/articles/2024/june/27/legal-challenges-and-constitutional-issues-on-the-personal-data-protection-act> (accessed on 8 November, 2024)

## Internet Access

While internet usage has grown widely in Tanzania to reach a total of 40 million users as of September 2024 according to TCRA, throttling and limiting of internet access still happens when regulatory bodies deem fit. According to Netblocks, Tanzania authorities restricted X (formerly Twitter) on August 30, 2024 for major mobile broadband users (Airtel, Vodacom and Tigo).<sup>706</sup> It is noted that this ban was incited by ongoing political conflict between security forces and the main opposition political party-Democratic and Development Party commonly known as CHADEMA. They believed that CHADEMA was utilising social platforms such as X to mobilise young people to attack all police stations in Dar es Salaam. This was due to the abductions of CHADEMA youth leaders Deusdedit Soka, who disappeared on 18th August 2024, and two youth representatives from CHADEMA. The Barrons reported that “On August 30, 2024 at 11:35 East African Time, the police force released a public statement warning CHADEMA to stop organising protests and attacks on police stations in Dar es salaam. X was blocked from 11:50 AM on 30th August, 2024 and restored on 31st August, 2024 early in the morning. Telegram was blocked as of the end of August 2024 and was inaccessible without circumvention software.”<sup>707</sup> This growing trend of government-imposed internet disruptions and banning of key platforms impacts transparency, credibility, and public trust. This kind of action has become a tool for stifling political dissent and controlling the flow of information, especially during politically sensitive periods such as elections and protests<sup>708</sup>.

## Data Protection and Privacy

On September 25<sup>th</sup> 2024, Tigo Tanzania, a telecommunications firm, was accused by a former employee of assisting the government in tracking the location of an opponent who was later targeted in a failed assassination attempt. The company denied allegations in a lawsuit filed by the former employee.<sup>709</sup> This brought to light the fact that the Government did have access to information, including the location of key political figures. In this instance, Milicome, the parent company of Tigo, did not deny the issues but claimed that they had been addressed internally.<sup>710</sup> The question of protecting the personal information of users when the government is the one seeking information has always been one that is defended by the government on the basis of “national security”, among other coined terminologies, leaving no room for trust. The Access to Information Act was amended slightly to allow exemption in access to certain information in cases where another law governs the handling of information, and also the procedure to appeal against information holders’ decisions which automatically brings about conflict of interest.<sup>711</sup>

In May 2024, the High Court of Tanzania ruled in favor of human rights advocate, Tito Magoti, in a case challenging the Personal Data Protection Act (2022). In the landmark case, Magoti, the petitioner, petitioned the court to examine the constitutionality of the PDPA for the first time. He had arguments that identified parts that were unconstitutional claiming that overall these provisions were, in some respects, broad, ambiguous, and egregious in how they disaffected various rights. These parts include the presence of ambiguous definitions of key terminologies, the President’s broad powers to appoint the Director General of the PDPC without interviews, transparency, competition, or security of tenure violated the rights to equality, non-discrimination, and privacy.<sup>712</sup> The court’s decision in *Tito Magoti vs. The Attorney General* largely validated the PDPA despite the

706 Techpoint ,Tanzania reportedly blocks access to X amid political tension,30th August,2024 <https://techpoint.africa/2024/08/30/tanzania-reportedly-blocks-x/> (accessed 11 January,2024)

707 The barrons,Tanzania Police Ban Opposition Protest,13,September 2024 <https://www.barrons.com/news/tanzania-police-ban-opposition-protest-11883ef6> (accessed 11 January,2025)

708 CIPESA,State of Internet Freedom in Africa 2024 Africa’s Electoral democracy and technology:pitfalls and promises(September 2024)[https://cipesa.org/wp-content/files/reports/State\\_of\\_Internet\\_Freedom\\_in\\_Africa\\_Report\\_2024.pdf](https://cipesa.org/wp-content/files/reports/State_of_Internet_Freedom_in_Africa_Report_2024.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2024)

709 Reuters ‘ Tanzania Opposition asks Telecom Firm To respond to data sharing accusation’(September 2024)<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tanzania-opposition-asks-telecoms-firm-respond-data-sharing-accusation-2024-09-25/> (accessed 8 November 2024)

710 The Guardian ‘ Firm disclosed Phone data of shot Tanzanian politician, UK tribunal hears’(September,2024)<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/sep/24/firm-disclosed-phone-data-of-shot-tanzanian-politician-tundu-lissu-uk-tribunal> (accessed february 8,2025)  
(September 2024)<https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tanzania-opposition-asks-telecoms-firm-respond-data-sharing-accusation-2024-09-25/> (accessed 8 February,2025)

711 Twaweza ‘Draft Analysis of the Access to Information Bill (2016)’(January 2017) <https://twaweza.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Twaweza-ATI-Act-Analysis-BT130217.pdf> (accessed by 8 November,2024)

712 CIPIT ‘Challenging the Constitutionality of the Personal Data Protection Act:Tito Magoti Vs.Attorney general’(August,2024) <https://cipit.org/challenging-the-constitutionality-of-the-personal-data-protection-act-tito-magoti-v-attorney-general/> (accessed on 8 November 2024)

petitioner's extensive concerns, showing once again the lack of complete anatomy of the three arms of the government. The Court dismissed most of the claims as speculative and unsupported by concrete evidence, underscoring the need for actual proof of constitutional violations. However, the Court found Sections 22(3) and 23(3)(c) and (e) unconstitutional due to their vague and ambiguous language. Section 22 (3) was found unconstitutional due to its ambiguous definition of the term "unlawful means," which was not clearly described hence could violate privacy rights.

Tanzanian Journalist Erik Kabendera sued Tanzania Telecom Vodacom where he stated that the company aided the government to arrest him for economic sabotage charges in 2019. He described the incident as an abduction and wanted the court to order Vodacom to pay him USD 10 million as compensation for their role. However, the court dismissed his case on September 10, 2024 following an objection raised by Vodacom that the case was filed beyond the statutory limitation period.<sup>713</sup> Opposition leader Tundu Lissu also made claims that Tigo had aided his attack in 2017 by sharing his mobile data with the Tanzanian Government.<sup>714</sup> These incidents show that there is a worrying trend of the government gaining access to the personal information of critical voices with the aid of Telecommunications companies. These claims of Lissu were heard at a London court in 2024 and since then Tigo has changed its name to Yas Tanzania.

## Freedom of Expression

Tanzania has had regular multiparty elections since the 1990s though the opposition has remained weak and under a lot of strain. The opposition, media and civil society have increased under the leadership of Samia Suluhu Hassan's presidency<sup>715</sup>. President Samia has lifted the Magufuli ban on political parties but on the other hand authorities have forcibly dispersed and prevented numerous opposition rallies and anti government protests throughout 2023 and 2024. The demonstrators were subjected to arbitrary arrests. On October 17, 2024, the United Nations Human Rights Council called on Tanzania to end the increasing violations of human rights against opposition parties, civil society organisations, journalists, indigenous peoples, and human rights defenders.<sup>716</sup> As the local elections in November approached, opposition parties faced deprivation of liberty, disappearances, torture, unlawful killings and restrictions on freedom of expression.<sup>717</sup> The government of Tanzania has reportedly utilised the Non- Governmental Organisations Act to deregister and restrict activities of civil society organisations.<sup>718</sup>

In August 2024, the government ordered the delisting of several villages within Ngorongoro Conservation Area from voter registers which many claim is due to their opposition to the evictions from their ancestral lands and livelihoods. The government has continued evicting indigenous members of the Maasai community living in Ngorongoro throughout the year. Various reports show human rights abuse inflicted on the pastoralist communities. The government also went on to further approve DP World, a global logistics company, partial control of Dar es salaam port despite widespread opposition of the deal from opposition and the citizens.<sup>719</sup>

These two instances show that the Government is not in support of the citizens exercising their right to freedom of expression, and when citizens aired their concerns, they were further oppressed through acts such as deregistration from local elections.

<sup>713</sup> The Citizen. (2025, March 11). High court dismisses Kabendera 10 million lawsuit against Vodacom Tanzania. The Citizen. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/court-news/high-court-dismisses-kabendera-10-million-lawsuit-against-vodacom-tanzania--4756646>

<sup>714</sup> The Citizen. (2025, March 12). Another telco linked to allegations of tracking prominent Tanzanians. The Citizen. <https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/tanzania/news/national/another-telco-linked-to-allegations-of-tracking-prominent-tanzanians-4774318>

<sup>715</sup> Zaina Foundation 'Internet Shutdown Report in Tanzania, August 2024' <https://zainafoundationtz.org/internet-shutdown-report-in-tanzania-august-2024/> (accessed 10 November, 2024)

<sup>716</sup> OHCHR 'Tanzania: Experts Call for Urgent action amid crackdown on civil society ahead of elections' (October 2024) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tanzania-experts-call-urgent-action-amid-crackdown-civil-society-ahead> (accessed 6 November 2024)

<sup>717</sup> OHCHR 'Tanzania: Experts Call for Urgent action amid crackdown on civil society ahead of elections' (October 2024) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tanzania-experts-call-urgent-action-amid-crackdown-civil-society-ahead> (accessed 6 November 2024)

<sup>718</sup> OHCHR 'Tanzania: Experts call for urgent action amid crackdown on civil society ahead of elections' (October, 2024) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/tanzania-experts-call-urgent-action-amid-crackdown-civil-society-ahead> (February, 2025)

<sup>719</sup> Human Rights Watch 'Tanzania's Eviction of Maasai pastoralist continues' (February 2023) <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/02/02/tanzanias-eviction-maasai-pastoralists-continues> (accessed 5 November, 2024)



## Access to Information

Access to information in Tanzania is limited by a number of factors such as the imposing prison term for officials for improperly releasing information but not for improperly withholding it hence allowing information that should be made public to be withheld from the public. The government does not accurately or proactively report official data.<sup>720</sup> The Statistics Act was amended in 2019 to remove criminal liability for publishing information that conflicts with the national bureau of statistics but the government has continued to resist transparency efforts and punished journalists and civil society groups seeking transparency.<sup>721</sup> The Newspapers Act of 1976, the National Security Act of 1970, the Public Service Act of 2002, and the Public Leadership Code of Ethics Act of 1995 are some of the laws that impede access to information by not publicising certain key information to the public. The government has resisted transparency efforts and denied journalists and civil society groups information on key issues as they arise such as questioning disappearances, abductions and killings of activists and opposition leaders.

## Digital Inclusion

As of January 2024, Tanzania had an internet penetration of 40.96% with the number of internet users being more than 40 million and an average broadband speed of 13.62 Mbpts in 2024. 3G network coverage is estimated to be 85.47%, 4G network coverage is estimated to be 39.88%.<sup>722</sup> Tanzania's internet landscape is rapidly expanding, primarily driven by mobile networks. The total number of internet subscriptions rose by 5% from 39.3 million in June 2024 to 41.4 million in September 2024. Mobile internet remains dominant, with 22.9 million high-speed mobile lines.<sup>723</sup> The national ICT Policy 2024 aims to develop safe and reliable ICT infrastructure and promote digital skills and talents<sup>724</sup>. Tanzania's acquisition of an orbit slot for its first communications satellite and the proposed programme of Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority and Universal Communications Service Access Fund (UCSAF) to build broadcasting infrastructure in hard to reach locations by acquiring additional frequencies has far reaching implications in the communication space. These achievements extend from advancing fifth-generation (5G) internet services to strengthening air and maritime communications safety.<sup>725</sup>

The country had 72.5 million telecom subscriptions by March 2024 for point-to-point connection and machine-to-machine communications from operators. Mobile money subscriptions have increased from 52.9 million in December 2023 to 53 million by March 2024.<sup>726</sup> On September 18, 2024, Cecil Francis, an engineer with Tanzania Telecommunications Company Limited stated that 106 out of 139 districts are connected to the National ICT Broadband Backbone cable and the remaining 33 districts will be linked in 2025 with construction ongoing at the time of writing this report. He also stated NICTBB cable is connected to international submarine cables including SEACOM company, and EASSY company, and will soon be connected to Africa. The government has launched the digital Tanzania project supported by the World bank and in partnership with mobile network operators (MNOs) to achieve 80% broadband penetration by 2025. The project is worth a total of USD 112M and implemented under UCSAF. The MNOs will need to deploy 728 new towers while existing 2G sites will be upgraded to 3G and 4G. The 636 new sites to be built will be in addition to 758 towers that have already been planned for underserved areas.<sup>727</sup> According to UCSAF as of October 2024, about 295 towers have been built out of the planned 758 with Airtel

720 Freedom House 'Tanzania: Freedom in the World 2024' (2024) <https://freedomhouse.org/country/tanzania/freedom-world/2024> (accessed 4 November 2024)

721 Freedom House 'Tanzania: Freedom in the World 2023' (2023) <https://freedomhouse.org/country/tanzania/freedom-world/2023> (accessed 4 November 2024)

722 Statista 'Digital and Connectivity Indicators: Tanzania' (2024) <https://www.statista.com/outlook/co/digital-connectivity-indicators/tanzania> (accessed 10 November 2024)

723 Statista 'Digital and Connectivity Indicators: Tanzania' (2024) <https://www.statista.com/outlook/co/digital-connectivity-indicators/tanzania> (accessed 10 November 2024)

724 Ministry of education, Science and Technology 'National Digital Education Strategy' (June 2024) [https://www.moe.go.tz/sites/default/files/Draft\\_National\\_Digital\\_Education\\_Strategy%202024-2030-2.pdf](https://www.moe.go.tz/sites/default/files/Draft_National_Digital_Education_Strategy%202024-2030-2.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2024)

725 TCRA The Regulator; Quarterly magazine of the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority' (March 2024) <https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1715423692-The%20Regulator%20JAN-MAR%202024%20ENGLISH.pdf> (accessed 6 November 2024)

726 TCRA 'Communications Statistics (June, 2024)' [https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20report%20for%20end%20of%20June%202024\\_EN\\_1721315046.pdf](https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20report%20for%20end%20of%20June%202024_EN_1721315046.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2024)

727 TCRA 'Communications Statistics (June, 2024)' [https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20report%20for%20end%20of%20June%202024\\_EN\\_1721315046.pdf](https://www.tcra.go.tz/uploads/text-editor/files/Communication%20Statistics%20report%20for%20end%20of%20June%202024_EN_1721315046.pdf) (accessed 10 November 2024)

having the largest number at 111 followed by Vodacom at 93 towers, a total budget of 126 Billion Tanzanian Shillings has been set apart for the whole project.<sup>728</sup> Internet connectivity is still beyond the reach of most citizens living in rural areas and mobile data is particularly expensive with users in Tanzania paying more compared to other countries in East Africa.

Tanzania has a Law of the Child Act that aims to provide for reform and consolidation of laws relating to children, to stipulate the rights of the child and to, promote, protect and maintain the welfare of a child with a view to giving effect to the international and regional convention on the rights of the child.<sup>729</sup> However gaps have been identified in terms of addressing harms to children on digital platforms. Stakeholders such as civil society organisations and regional entities such as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) have been working with partners to address the gaps. C-sema, an NGO in Tanzania has developed in partnership with the government a 116 National Child Helpline, which is toll-free.<sup>730</sup> In June 2024 the minister of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups introduced the Child Protection Laws (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill, 2024, which was presented for its second reading in parliament on August 30 2024. This bill aims to address and criminalise pornography and child sexual abuse/exploitation material and the offence of online grooming.<sup>731</sup>

## Censorship and Content Moderation

The media industry continues to face oppression and censorship over the content they publish. This is mostly facilitated by enabling laws and regulations that have given more power to the government to determine what is ethical, legal and moral without critically considering the freedoms of the people. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) banned Mwananchi Communications Ltd for 30 days, saying it had published content on October 1, 2024 that "damaged the country's image".<sup>732</sup> The regulator stated that the audio-visual content on the magazine's social media platform is prohibited by the Online Content Regulations 2020.<sup>733</sup> In similar circumstances, the same media outlet had previously posted content on its social media channels regarding ongoing forced disappearances of critical figures and violent acts and later issued a public apology saying the content had been misinterpreted. As the country is approaching elections, online content is now a critical space that is highly monitored due to its influence on public opinion and the fear of many stakeholders such as political parties and human rights defenders is that if this is not addressed now, the elections will be greatly swayed towards enabling those in power rather than being an empowering tool for the people.<sup>734</sup> Between January and June 2024, the government of Tanzania made five requests to TikTok including a request for content removal due to violation of local laws. This is according to TikTok's transparency reports as of December 2024.<sup>735</sup>

## Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies

As of February 2024, some courts in Tanzania had incorporated artificial intelligence (AI) in their court transcriptions and translations system. It is expected that the use of AI technology in courts

728 UCSAF 'DPT Project report October ,2024, [https://www.ucsaf.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1730207890-UCSAF%20Taarifa%20REVISED%20VERSION%203%20-%202024102024%20\(3\).pdf](https://www.ucsaf.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1730207890-UCSAF%20Taarifa%20REVISED%20VERSION%203%20-%202024102024%20(3).pdf) accessed by 22 January,2024

729 The United Republic of Tanzania. (2009). The Law of the Child Act, 2009. Government Printer. <https://www.mcdgc.go.tz/>

730 WeProtect Global Alliance. (n.d.). C-Sema's multi-faceted approach to addressing online child sexual exploitation and abuse in Tanzania. WeProtect Global Alliance. <https://www.weprotect.org/resources/case-study/c-semas-multi-faceted-approach-to-addressing-online-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-in-tanzania/#:~:text=C%2DSema%20operates%20the%20National,service%20providers%20in%20safeguarding%20children>

731 Victory Attorneys. (2024, December 23). Tanzania amends Cybercrime Act to boost child online safety. Victory Attorneys. <https://victoryattorneys.co.tz/2024/12/23/tanzania-amends-cybercrime-act-to-boost-child-online-safety/#:~:text=INTRODUCTION,children%20face%20in%20the%20country>

732 Reuters 'Tanzania suspends Median Company's online platform for 30 days'(October 2024) <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tanzania-suspends-media-companys-online-platforms-30-days-2024-10-03/> (accessed 15 November 2024)

733 Reuters 'Tanzania suspends Median Company's online platform for 30 days'(October 2024) <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/tanzania-suspends-media-companys-online-platforms-30-days-2024-10-03/> (accessed 15 November 2024)

734 Human rights watch 'Tanzania: Address Rights Ahead of Local Elections October,2024 <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/16/tanzania-address-rights-ahead-local-elections> (accessed by February 8,2025)

735 Tiktok,Government Removal request report ,december 18,2024, <https://www.tiktok.com/transparency/en-us/government-removal-requests-2024-1> (accessed January 13,2025)

will allow them to record and translate the court proceedings to either Kiswahili or English, reducing the time spent by judicial officers to transcribe court proceedings.<sup>736</sup> It has been mentioned that Tanzania is in the early process of developing a national AI strategy, however, this has not been made public which has not allowed meaningful participation of the public and diverse stakeholders.<sup>737</sup> Tanzania's national Vision 2050 mentions a focus on digital transformation and science and technology with the intention of embracing among other things emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, block chain technology and Internet of Things.<sup>738</sup>

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736 Kilindu Giatu and Partners 'Impacts of Artificial Intelligence in Tanzania's legal system'(2024)<https://kgpartners.co.tz/impacts-of-artificial-intelligence-in-tanzanias-legal-system/> (accessed 13 November 2024)

737 TechWeez, Tanzania is Drafting a National AI Strategy and Guidelines, June, 4, 2024 <https://techweez.com/2024/06/04/tanzania-developing-a-national-ai-strategy/> (accessed 13th January, 2025)

738 Draft Tanzania Development Vision 2050, [https://www.planning.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1734078009-SUMMARY%20OF%20DRAFT%20VISION%202050\\_.pdf](https://www.planning.go.tz/uploads/documents/en-1734078009-SUMMARY%20OF%20DRAFT%20VISION%202050_.pdf) (accessed January 13, 2025)



## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tanzania has taken great strides in setting up a Data Protection Authority inaugurated by the President Of Tanzania, Samia Suluhu Hassan, on April 3, 2024.<sup>739</sup> However, the Personal Data Protection Act has been challenged on different occasions on the grounds that it does not specify the timeline for registration, rejection and issuance of any notification to applicants who have applied for registration as data controllers and data processors.<sup>740</sup> Access to information and the need for a free and equitable digital space are critical for a thriving digital ecosystem for the country. Issues such as disinformation, which pose a severe threat to democratic elections will be critical to address as Tanzania heads to the polls in 2025. Addressing the disinformation challenge requires a comprehensive strategy focused on fostering media literacy, enhancing tech accountability, and promoting collaborative action among stakeholders in Tanzania. Below are some recommendations made for the government, private sector and civil society ahead of 2025 elections.

### ***Government should:***

- Stop arbitrary media disruptions and allow the media to run as a free source of information.
- Strengthen internet infrastructure to foster digital inclusion.
- Review and amend oppressive laws such as the Media Services Act 2016 and the Personal Data Protection law 2022.
- Recognise specifically digital rights for vulnerable groups and increase the online protection of the rights of marginalized groups such as women and children in the digital space
- Develop a national AI strategy and laws through public participation and engagement with different stakeholders
- Commit to keeping the internet free and open before, during and after elections by lifting VPN restrictions and keeping social media platforms accessible

### ***Private sector should***

- Work with the government to increase broadband access.
- Come up with community projects to fit in the digital economy.
- Uphold human rights such as data protection and embrace principles of transparency.

### ***Civil Society should:***

- Advocate amendment of laws, cybersecurity and inclusion of digital rights.
- Conduct awareness programs and training on digital rights.
- Conduct strategic utilisation on cases of digital rights violation

739 Rive&co, The Personal Data Protection Commission (PDPC) has launched in Tanzania on the 3rd of April 2024, <https://www.rive.co.tz/project/the-personal-data-protection-commission-pdpc-has-launched-in-tanzania/> (accessed on 13th January, 2025)

740 Dentons' Legal challenges and Constitutional Issues on the personal and data protection Acti 2022: analysis of the Tito Magoti Vs The attorney General (June, 2024) <https://www.dentons.com/en/insights/articles/2024/june/27/legal-challenges-and-constitutional-issues-on-the-personal-data-protection-act> (accessed on 8 November, 2024)

## The Score Index

Londa 2025 Key Indicators	ACHPR Declaration <i>(P stands for Principle)</i>	Score	Justification
Internet Shutdowns	P38(2)	2	X was restricted and reports of Telegram too being restricted
Inexistent laws, policies and other measures to promote universal, equitable, affordable and meaningful access to the internet	P37	2	There are some parts in existing laws that try to push for equity and affordable internet such as the Access to Information Act however there is not much mention of equity and meaningful access.
False News Criminalisation	P22(2)	1	The Media Service Act and the Cybercrime Act <b>criminalises “false news”</b>
Sedition Legislation	P22(2)	1	The Media Service Act and the Cybercrime Act <b>criminalises “sedition” with items in cybercrime that have been used previously to silence critics such as comedians and activists</b>
Arbitrary Arrests and Harassments of the Media, HRDs and Citizens	P20(1) & (2)	1	Ongoing arrests,forced disappearance of key HRD's and political figures
Data Protection Legislation.	P42	3	The Data Protection Act is in place and a data protection Commissioner however the operation of the commission is gradual and not yet fully operational.
States interfere and require the removal of online content by internet intermediaries	P38 and P39(4)	2	Media houses have been banned arbitrarily for content they share.
Invasion of Privacy of Communications	P41	2	Laws such as PDPA exists but little compliance,there has been no public information on this however journalists and opposition leaders have claimed that they were surveilled through Telco providers i,e Kabendera sued Vodacom for realising his personal information leading to his arrest while Lisu in 2024 threatened to sue Tigo on surveillance leading to his attack in 2017
Failure by the government to proactively disclose and disseminate information digital technologies.	P29(3)	4	Government uses online media to communicate with citizens such as social media and websites which are often updated in both languages.UCSAF website shares regular updates as well as TCRA quarterly updates available in Kiswahili language making it more accessible to the public
AI and Emerging Technologies national strategies	P39(6)	2	A strategy is being drafted

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DIGITAL  
RIGHTS  
AND  
INCLUSION  
IN AFRICA  
REPORT

LONDA  
2024

Children rights online		3	The Law of the Child Act enforces general protection of children while Cybercrime act,electronics and postal communication address areas around child pornography and cyberbullying
12. Digital Inclusion	P37(3)	4	UCSAF ongoing efforts for connectivity such as having connected 295 towers by October, 2024 out of the expected 758.
TOTAL (up to 60)		27	Mildly compliant

