



**Centre for  
MultiLateral  
Affairs**

# **POLICY BRIEF**

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**Advancing Inclusive and  
Contextually Relevant AI  
Policies in Uganda**



## Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformative potential for Uganda, offering opportunities to address critical challenges in sectors such as health, education, and agriculture. However, the AI policy landscape in Uganda remains in its infancy, characterized by evolving frameworks and inadequate integration of local contexts and diverse perspectives. This policy brief synthesizes findings and recommendations to guide the development of inclusive and effective AI governance in Uganda.

## Key Findings

### 1. Understanding of AI Policies



- A majority of stakeholders possess foundational knowledge of digital governance frameworks, but specific AI-focused regulations are either absent or in formative stages.
- Existing laws, such as the Data Protection and Privacy Act, provide a basis for digital governance but lack AI-specific provisions.

### 2. Gender and Inclusion Challenges



- The AI policymaking process is male-dominated, with women and marginalized groups underrepresented.
- Systemic barriers, including inadequate digital skills and cultural biases, limit women's participation.
- LGBTQI communities and other marginalized groups face exclusion, exacerbated by discriminatory legal frameworks.

### 3. Human Rights and Ethical Concerns



- AI surveillance technologies present risks to privacy, freedom of expression, and democratic processes, particularly during elections.
- The absence of accountability mechanisms increases vulnerabilities, especially for women and minorities, to online harassment and exploitation.

#### 4. Localized Data and AI Biases



- AI systems often fail to reflect local realities, hindering their effectiveness in addressing Uganda's unique challenges.
- The reliance on global AI models introduces biases that may exacerbate inequalities.

## Policy Recommendations

### 1. Develop Comprehensive AI Legislation



- Establish a robust legal framework tailored to Uganda's socio-economic and cultural context.
- Include provisions for ethical AI development, transparency, and accountability mechanisms.

### 2. Promote Gender and Inclusion in AI Governance



- Ensure equitable representation of women and marginalized groups in AI policymaking bodies, such as the AI task force.
- Conduct gender and human rights impact assessments to inform policy development.
- Foster mindset changes through public education and advocacy to dismantle cultural biases.

### 3. Enhance Digital Literacy and Capacity Building



- Invest in digital skills training for women and marginalized groups to bridge existing gaps.
- Encourage women to pursue STEM education and careers in AI.

### 4. Address AI Biases with Localized Solutions



- Develop and utilize localized datasets to ensure AI systems reflect Uganda's diverse realities.
- Conduct research on the impact of biases in global AI models and explore strategies for contextual adaptation.

### 5. Safeguard Human Rights in AI Deployment

- Integrate human rights standards into AI policies, emphasizing a human-centric approach.



- Establish independent oversight mechanisms to audit AI systems and their societal impacts.
- Regulate AI surveillance technologies to protect privacy and democratic freedoms.

## 6. Foster Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration



- Engage diverse stakeholders, including civil society, academia, and development partners, in participatory policy making processes.
- Leverage regional initiatives, such as SMART Africa, to promote shared learning and best practices.

## Future Research Priorities

- 1. Gender and AI:** Investigate systemic barriers limiting women's participation in AI and explore strategies for fostering inclusivity.
- 2. Human Rights and AI:** Assess the impact of AI surveillance technologies on privacy and democratic freedoms in Uganda.
- 3. Localized AI Solutions:** Examine the development of contextualized AI models and datasets tailored to Uganda's needs.

## Conclusion

Integrating gender, human rights, and contextual considerations into Uganda's AI policy landscape is essential for leveraging AI's transformative potential. By addressing systemic barriers, fostering inclusive participation, and aligning policies with local realities, Uganda can position itself as a leader in equitable and responsible AI governance.

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