Conflicts & Connectivity
The problem Internet shutdowns in Africa

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What is an internet shutdown?

An internet shutdown happens when someone — usually a government — intentionally disrupts the internet or mobile apps to control what people say or do. Shutdowns are also sometimes called "blackouts" or "kill switches". A more technical definition developed by experts defines it as: "An intentional disruption of internet or electronic communications, rendering them inaccessible or effectively unusable, for a specific population or within a location, often to exert control over the flow of information."

15
DOCUMENTED SHUTDOWNS IN 2015

Democratic Republic of Congo | Niger | Togo

Nauru | Yemen | Algeria | Iraq | Turkey

Democratic People's Republic of Korea | Brazil

Congo-Brazzaville | India | Ecuador

Malaysia | Burundi

56
DOCUMENTED SHUTDOWNS IN 2016

Malaysia | Chad | Uganda | India | Syria

Ethiopia | Pakistan | Brazil | Iraq | Jordan

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Vietnam | Algeria | Libya | Bahrain | Turkey

Zimbabwe | Bangladesh

South Sudan

Why is it Happening

1. To stop students from cheating in school exams.
2. Punishing certain companies, such as messaging app makers.
3. Preventing attacks during public holidays.
4. Protecting national security.
5. Some governments also shut down social media and the internet during elections - the most critical moment in a democracy - in order to shape the outcome or hide fraud.

How does it happen

Ultimately, the decision to take drastic repressive measures on a country's internet traffic rests with its government.

- Motive
- Capability
- Deterrent

What is at stake

➜ Economy

➜ Our Livelihood

➜ Freedom , Trust , Democracy

➜ The Free Press

➜ The Internet module

After a 93-day blackout, internet service has been restored to English-speaking regions in Cameroon.

Internet Invariants

- *Global reach, integrity:* Any endpoint of the Internet can address any other endpoint, and the information received at one endpoint is as intended by the sender,.
- *General purpose:* The Internet is capable of supporting a wide range of demands for its use.
- The Internet is for everyone – there is no central authority that designates or permits different classes of Internet activities:
- *Supports innovation without requiring permission (by anyone)*:
- *Accessible* – Anyone can "get on" the Internet –

Can we avoid it

Awareness

Advocacy

Activism

Bring more government services online

Multi Stakeholder Policy discussions