

Tanzania urged to make digitalisation process more accessible

ARTICLE 19 is concerned that the recent transition to digital broadcasting in Tanzania did not take into account the needs of viewers and broadcasters and as a result many people are no longer able to watch TV.

ARTICLE 19 calls on the government and the Tanzania Telecommunication Regulatory Authority to fulfil the right to freedom of expression and respect media pluralism by providing information on digital migration and financial assistance to disadvantaged viewers and listeners, as well as to broadcasters to cope with the transition.

"ARTICLE 19 has consistently called upon governments to ensure openness, transparency and universal access as the only way to guarantee that all people enjoy the benefits that come from digital broadcasting. It is not acceptable for digital communication to be an exclusive service available only to the few," said Henry Maina, director for ARTICLE 19 Eastern Africa.

Digitalisation - the process of turning the analogue broadcasting system into a system of digital television and radio - affects the right of freedom of expression of viewers and listeners and of broadcasters. In an ideal situation, digitalisation will foster media pluralism by enabling the broadcasting of more channels with a wider range of programming. As a result viewers and listeners would be able to receive more diverse information and opinions.

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