

PRESS RELEASE



Kampala, 16th September, 2025; Health Equity and Policy Initiative (HEAPI) is deeply alarmed by the [BBC investigation](#) aired yesterday, alleging that traffickers involved in the exploitation of young Ugandan girls in Dubai may have access to the [National Identification and Registration Authority](#) (NIRA) database.

If true, this represents a serious violation of citizens' data protection and privacy, security, and dignity. Such breaches would not only endanger vulnerable Ugandans but also undermine public trust in our *Ndaga Muntu* ID systems.

We note NIRA's response distancing itself from the allegations. However, the gravity of these claims requires independent investigation, accountability, and stronger safeguards. We urge the government, Parliament, and Personal Data Protection Office to take urgent action to ensure the [Data Protection and Privacy Act](#) is fully enforced and that citizens' data is protected from misuse.

"Uganda's National ID is a critical piece of Digital Public Infrastructure, meant to facilitate access to essential services and rights. Any compromise of its integrity threatens not only individual privacy but also national security and social trust. Protecting this system must be treated as a matter of utmost urgency," said Advocate Peter Arinaitwe, Head Strategic Litigation, HEAPI.

HEAPI condemns all forms of human trafficking and calls for decisive measures to protect young Ugandans from exploitation. The safety, dignity, and privacy of citizens must remain a national priority.

About HEAPI

Health Equity and Policy Initiative (HEAPI) is a Uganda-based civil society organization advancing access to health, equity in social policy, and the intersection of digital rights and justice. HEAPI continues to support communities facing systemic exclusion, safety, and digital rights, especially in the context of Uganda's digital transformation.

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