

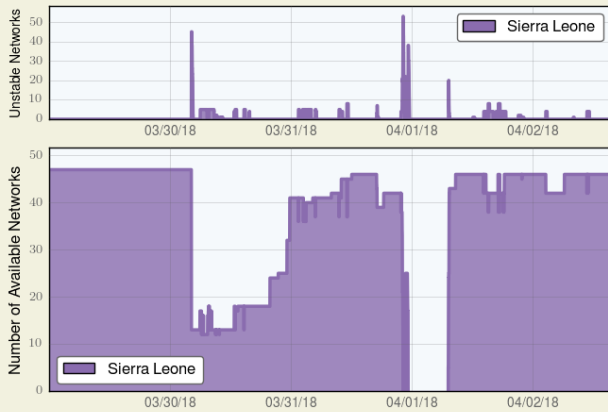
A broken submarine cable knocked a country off the internet for two days

On March 30, the ACE Submarine cable cut out, dropping connectivity for much of West Africa. , the breach came off the coast of Mauritania, resulting in significant connectivity drops for at least ten neighboring countries. Mauritania itself was offline for nearly 48 hours before connectivity was partially restored. Other countries had enough terrestrial cable and satellite connections to route around the downed cable, but they still saw significant disruptions in internet access for most of the weekend.



Outages and Instabilities

March 29, 2018 - April 02, 2018 Times in UTC



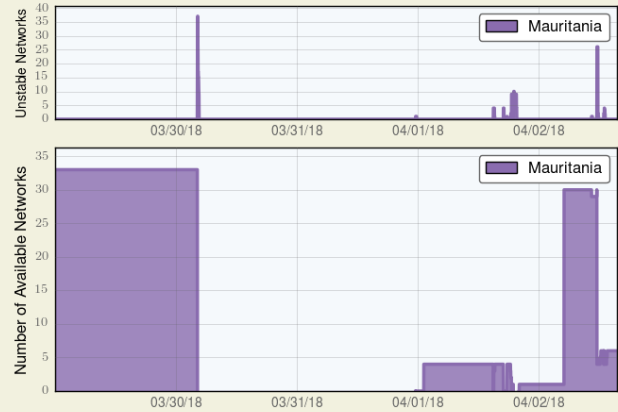
Source: BGP Data

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Outages and Instabilities

March 29, 2018 - April 02, 2018 Times in UTC



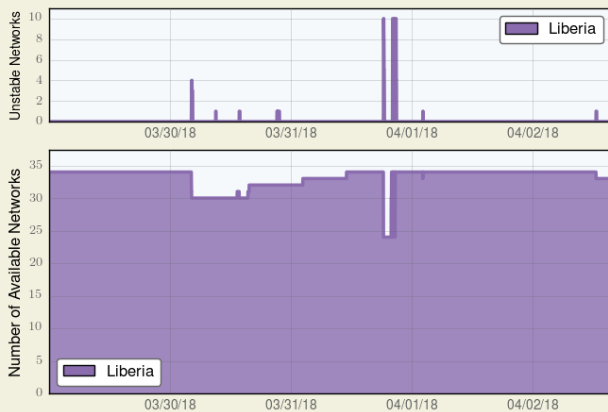
Source: BGP Data

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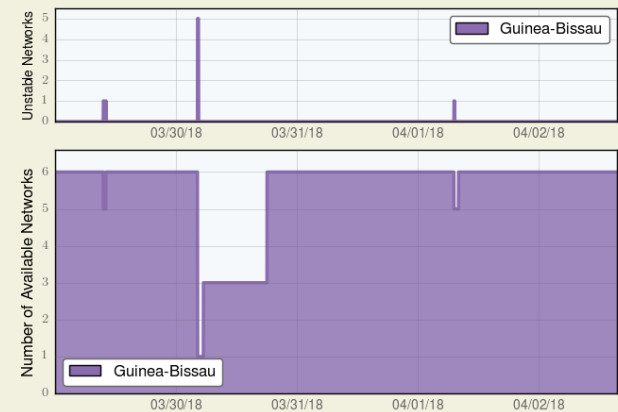
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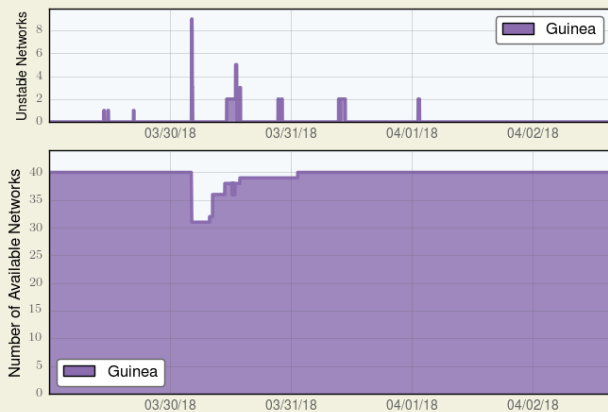
Source: BGP Data

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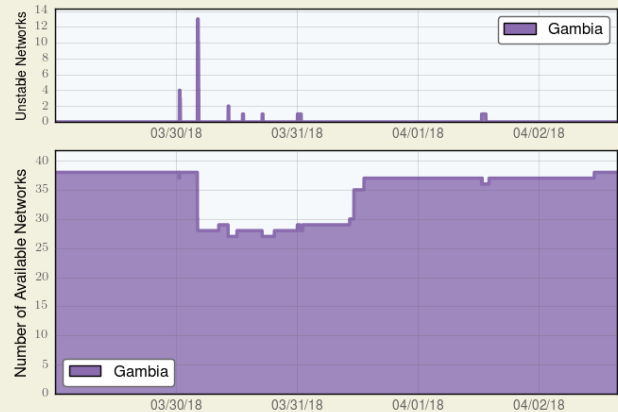
Source: BGP Data

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Outages like this rarely make the headlines, but it's a good reminder of exactly how fragile much of the internet's infrastructure still is – particularly in places like West

Africa. When a major cable gets cut, every other connection has to strain to pick up the slack. When there's no other infrastructure to rely on, connectivity simply drops out. Lacking investment, the internet becomes less reliable for the entire region.

This is the problem that projects like Alphabet's balloons and Facebook's solar drones are trying to solve, at least in theory. But in practical terms, all that's really needed is more cables and landing points – the kind of thing Nigeria has but Mauritania doesn't. And after years of moonshot development, we still don't have many options when a cable gets cut.

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/4/8/17207556/submarine-internet-cable-mauritania-broken>