Digital Connectivity: How to achieve affordable Internet in the digital era

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What is A4AI?

We are the
world's broadest technology sector alliance
working to
drive down the price of broadband
by
transforming policy and regulatory frameworks.

Public-private collaboration in action with 80 member organisations

All have endorsed one set of **best practices**

- grounded on the principles of internet freedom and the fundamental rights of expression, assembly, and association online -

for making affordable broadband internet a reality.

How do we work in member countries?

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In each member country, we form a
national multi-stakeholder coalition

↗ civil society
↑ public sector
↖ private sector

to
IDENTIFY KEY BARRIERS TO AFFORDABLE ACCESS
&
DEVISE TAILORED SOLUTIONS TO DRIVE PRICES DOWN

Conducting robust original research to underpin evidence-based policy

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Annual Affordability Report

Latest edition released February 2017

Case studies

Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Peru, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Myanmar, Bangladesh

Thematic briefings

Universal Access & Service Funds; Zero-rating & other mobile data plans

2017 Affordability Report

- Annual effort to track policy & regulatory progress towards affordable internet

- Based on primary research across 58 low- and middle-income countries

- Why have some countries succeeded in improving internet access and affordability? What can other countries do to catch up quickly?

Progress toward affordable internet:
A global overview

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Public Access

Just half of the countries studied have public access policies in place that are also backed by financial support for implementation.

Resource Sharing

ONLY 45%

45% of countries have plans to facilitate resource sharing among telecommunications companies (e.g., sharing of infrastructure, including towers and fibre networks); even where countries have plans, implementation is rare.

Efficient Use of Spectrum

Only one in three countries have detailed, time-bound plans for making more spectrum available to meet increasing demands.

USAFs

Universal Service and Access Funds, an important tool to finance strategic investments in the sector, either don't exist or are dormant in over a third of countries.

Broadband Plans

OUTDATED IN 41% OF COUNTRIES

National broadband plans to guide the policy reforms needed to achieve universal access have never been developed or are badly outdated in 41% of countries.

Failing to take needed action to provide affordable internet

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Globally, policies have barely changed since 2014

<< Average increase in policy scores across all areas: 10% >>

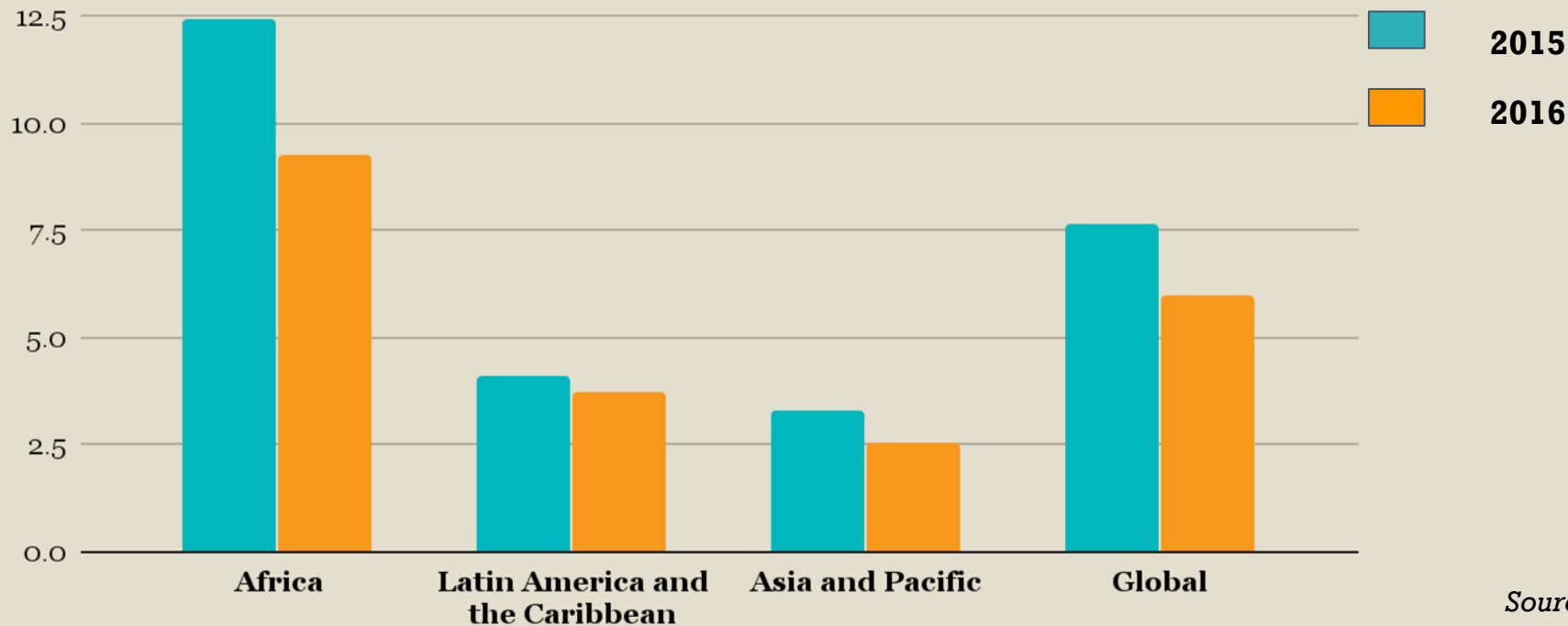Just **19 countries meet "1 for 2"** affordability target
--1GB of mobile broadband priced at 2% or less of average monthly income --

The high cost to connect is excluding billions from the digital revolution

Slow progress means billions are still excluded

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Average price of a 1GB mobile broadband plan as a % of GNI per capita, by region
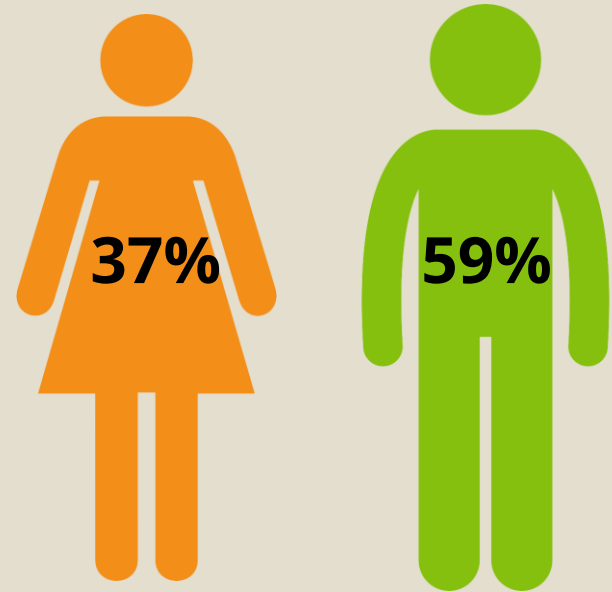

Legend: ■ 2015 ■ 2016

Source: A4AI

Exploring the true extent of the gender digital divide

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- Women are 50% less likely than men to use the internet in poor urban communities

- Women who are politically active offline are twice as likely to use the internet

- Access to higher education narrows the gender gap in internet access

37% **59%**

% of poor urban men and women surveyed by Web Foundation who are online across 10 cities in the developing world

Internet for all by 2020?

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In September 2015, world leaders agreed on a new global goal:

Affordable, universal internet access in the world's least developed countries by 2020

On current trends, the world will miss this goal by 22 years.

2020?

What action must we take to make universal access a reality?

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Employ Public Access Solutions to Close the Digital Divide

Critical to reach groups that cannot pay for regular internet use.

Foster Market Competition through Smart Policy

Competitive markets provide foundation for growth, innovation & affordable access.

Implement Innovative Uses of Spectrum

Clear strategies to ensure availability of sufficient spectrum on a timely basis.

What action must we take to make universal access a reality?

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Promote Infrastructure and Resource Sharing

Provides operators the best option to reduce the cost of service provision.

Make Effective Use of Universal Service and Access Funds

Active, transparent & efficiently managed funds can support broadband strategies & targets.

Turn Effective Broadband Planning Into Effective Implementation

Plans that set clear, time-bound and measurable targets are best of all.

How is A4AI working to tackle these gaps?

Encouraging the adoption of ambitious affordability targets to drive down prices & increase access

Working with national coalitions & stakeholders on the ground to develop policies needed to improve affordability

Improving collection of gender- and poverty-disaggregated data to track progress

Advocating for expanded public access initiatives

Designing gender-responsive policy

Thank you!

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