Towards affordable internet for all

First A4AI-Bangladesh Multi-Stakeholder Forum

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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.
Direct support & action: Where are we working?

Map showing countries where the support and action are being undertaken:
- Dominican Republic
- Liberia
- Guatemala
- Ghana
- Nigeria
- Bangladesh
- Myanmar
- Mozambique
How do we work in member countries?

In each member country, we form a national multi-stakeholder coalition to identify key barriers to affordable access & devise tailored solutions to drive prices down.
Conducting robust original research to underpin evidence-based policy

**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
Affordability still a major barrier to access

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

Over half of the world’s population is still offline
*At current rates, on track to miss global access target by 20+ years*

Just 19 countries meet the “1 for 2” affordability target
*1GB for 2% or less of average monthly income*
Exploring the true extent of the gender digital divide

- 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% of poor urban men and women surveyed by Web Foundation who are online across 10 cities in the developing world.
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
Driving real progress on the ground

- Nigeria, Ghana and ECOWAS have formally endorsed A4AI’s “1 for 2” affordability target.

- In Ghana, the A4AI Coalition helped to secure a commitment by the government to reduce the country’s import duty on smartphones by 10%.

- In Liberia, A4AI supported efforts to improve access to broadband connectivity in the post-Ebola context, and supporting the development of the country’s new ICT sector policy.

- In Mozambique, the A4AI Coalition submitted detailed recommendations for a reduction in custom duties; helped to shape census questions on ICT use, and submitted draft infrastructure sharing regulations.

- In the Dominican Republic, A4AI has revived and is supporting the country’s 2016-2020 Digital Agenda, developed recommendations for infrastructure sharing regulations and an updated fiscal framework for the sector.
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

**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% 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**
- 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

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 --
What is the ADI?

ADI = Affordability Drivers Index

Does not directly measure affordability
Measures the extent to which countries have implemented policies to improve internet affordability

ACCESS

INFRASTRUCTURE
# 2017 ADI: Global rankings

## ADI Top 15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADI RANK</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>ACCESS SCORE</th>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE SCORE</th>
<th>ADI SCORE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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Slow progress means billions are still excluded

Average price of a 1GB (prepaid, mobile) broadband plan as a % of GNI per capita, by region (2013-2015)

Source: A4AI calculations based on latest ITU pricing data.
Internet Affordability in Asia
Internet use across Asia in 2017

49% ONLINE POPULATION (A4AI/ITU, 2016)
41% MOBILE BROADBAND PENETRATION (GSMA, 2016)
17% INTERNET USE GENDER GAP (ITU FACTS AND FIGURES, 2016)
How affordable is internet in Asia?

1GB of data costs an average citizen nearly 3% of their monthly income.

Just 8 out of 17 countries surveyed have “affordable” internet:

- Sri Lanka
- Kazakhstan
- China
- Turkey
- Malaysia
- Jordan
- Indonesia
- Pakistan
Asia’s performance on the ADI

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Policy toward affordable internet

Overall, Asian countries score
5 or less out of 10
in all policy areas, indicating the crucial need for improvement.

1. Policy & regulation for competition
2. Broadband policy
3. Public access policies & use of USAFs
4. Infrastructure sharing
5. Spectrum policy
Internet Affordability in Bangladesh
Internet use in Bangladesh

41% INTERNET PENETRATION (A4AI, 2016)

14% MOBILE BROADBAND PENETRATION (GSMA, 2016)

4% COST OF 1GB MOBILE PREPAID DATA
How affordable is 1GB for different income groups?

Internet Affordability Across Income Quintiles

Price of 1GB as % of GNI pc

0-20% (Lowest Earners)  20-40%  40-60%  60-80%  80-100% (Highest Earners)

- Bangladesh
- India
- Nepal
- Pakistan
- 2% Target
Making Universal, Affordable Internet Access a Reality
Internet for all by 2020?

Sustainable Development Goal 9c:
Affordable, universal internet access in the world’s least developed countries by 2020

On current trends, we will only achieve this in 2042 -- 22 years after the target date
What action must we take to make universal access a reality?

**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?

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.
Towards affordable internet in Bangladesh

- Ensure fair taxation in the ICT sector
- Improve spectrum management policies
- Further incentivise infrastructure deployment and sharing
- Prioritise & expand public access initiatives
Forum objectives

● Form the A4AI-Bangladesh National Coalition
● Identify the key barriers to affordable access in Bangladesh
● Identify priority areas and strategic policy areas for the Coalition to focus its efforts
● Agree on next steps for the Coalition to take to tackle key priority areas
Thank you!

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