

Does the Internet deserve everybody?

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WE WANT
INTERNET!



What is the ethicality of ICT initiatives in developing regions?

Why Internet deployment for developing regions?

- Only 37.9% of the world's population have access to the Internet.

– Developed:		75.7%	0.9	0.3
– Developing:		29.9%	1.8	4.2
			<i>billions online</i>	<i>billions offline</i>

Sources:

- UN International Telecommunication Union (ITU). “World telecommunication/ICT indicators database”. <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>, 2013.
- Population Reference Bureau. “2014 World Population Data Sheet”. <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2014/2014-world-population-data-sheet/>, 2014.
- Many Western countries and organisations are working to bridge *the digital divide*.

Let them have Internet!



- Undeniably benefited millions:
 - economic growth
 - better health interventions
 - topple dictators; etc.
- Correlation between Internet penetration and development (social and economic) is often cited.
- Not entirely altruistic:
 - e.g. fostering long-term economic relationships.

eMarketer. “Emerging Markets Drive Twitter User Growth Worldwide”, 2014.

Let them have Internet!



- “Some access is better than none”.
- Raises questions on long lasting implications.
- Exploring the nuances is key to avoid short/medium/long-term damage.

Internet?

Value through
being connected.



But...

Not always successful

- **No association with national/
regional strategies.**

Chinn and Fairlie. “ICT Use in the Developing World: An Analysis of Differences in Computer and Internet Penetration”, 2010.

Weerakkody, El-Haddadeh and Al-Shafi. “Exploring the complexities of e-government implementation and diffusion in a developing country: Some lessons from the State of Qatar”, 2011.

- **Poor sustainability planning.**

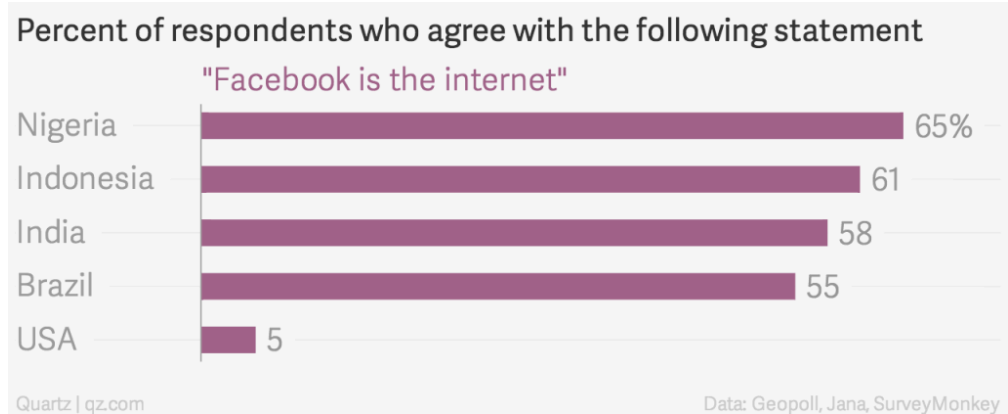
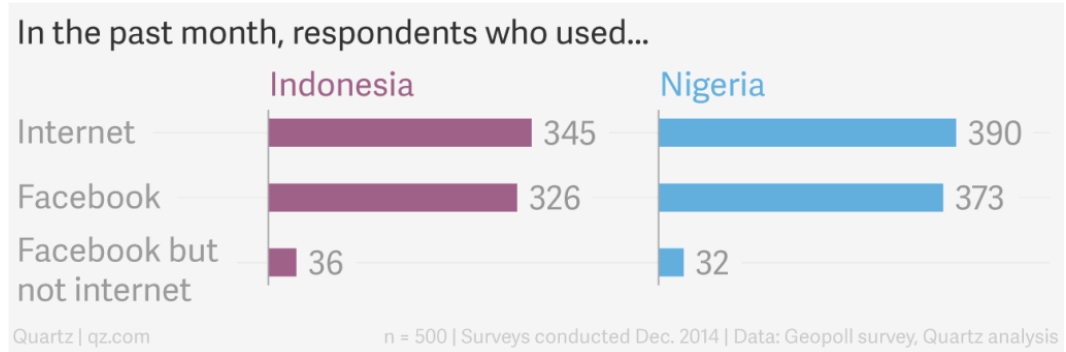
Best and Maclay. “Community Internet access in Rural areas: solving the economic sustainability puzzle”, 2002.

Heeks. “Most e-Government-for-development Projects Fail: How can risks be reduced?”, 2003.

- **Extremely difficult to recruit
users.**

Cecchini and Raina. “Electronic government and the rural poor: The case of Gyandoot”, 2004.

Possible side effects



Mirani. "Millions of Facebook users have no idea they're using the internet", 2015.



Possible side effects

Does not give access to "the Internet"



**THE MORE WE CONNECT,
THE BETTER IT GETS.**

Possible side effects



Sanity Checklist



- Considerations for ethical and effective long-term ICT deployment initiatives.
 - 4 themes. Transparency at the core.
 - To follow: political and societal will.
 - Non-exhaustive. Stimulate discussion.



Sustainability

Ensure independence
and long-lasting effect.

- *Affordability:*
Commercial targets. Feasibility.
Financing influx. Contingency.
- *Stake:*
Benefactors and beneficiaries.
Maintenance.
Conflict of interest between financial and
managerial machinery.
- *Partnership:*
Liaison with public and private sectors.
Opportunities to engage with a wide cross-
section of society, and stimulate reforms.

Trust

Huge CAPEX and expertise is needed, but it places scary power in a few hands.

- *Stakeholders:*
Who are they (internal and external)?
Exact role of each.
- *Decision making process:*
Decision makers.
How much control.
Accountability.
Mechanisms for local community to participate in the process.
- *Timeline:*
Targets (foundation, pilot, launch, etc.).
Who is managing these?

Impact

Consult recipients to identify clear pathways to benefit.

- *Recruitment:*
Adoption means and success criteria.
Retention strategy.
- *Local impact:*
Educational, organisational, commercial opportunities.
Community dynamics: potential to favour certain groups over others?
- *National impact:*
Business/social links to be built.
Effect on the political structure.
- *Global impact:*
Enriching the international community with local knowledge and experience.
Contribution to global governance.

Community Capacity Building

Infrastructure & software
are not enough.
A commitment to
continuous learning is
required.

- *Introduction:*
Introduction to the Internet.
Education about different access means.
Education about potential risks.
- *External input:*
Training processes, educational material,
shared best practices and lessons learnt.
Availability in local languages.
Respect to local traditions.
- *Local input:*
Technical support channels, Internet safety
courses, and material for responsible use.
Support for localisation.

Summary



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- Improving ICT metrics will not magically bring transformation in developing regions.
- A more sophisticated methodology beyond “let’s do it” should be formed.
- No one size fits all. Context dictates.

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