



FASTAfrica: Communications Toolkit

FASTAfrica is Africa's campaign to highlight the importance of Internet access and affordability to development and human rights. To support local groups working on Internet policy and to encourage regional collaboration, we are organizing an action week from May 1-7, 2016 with over 40 organisations participating across 30 countries. Later this year, we will travel to Kigali, Rwanda for The World Economic Forum on Africa (May 11-13) and the African Union Summit (June) to bring our demands to African leaders.

This toolkit explains how you can participate in the action week online or by hosting an event in your own country, and also offers advice on what ICT policies work best. We equip you with reasons why Internet should be a priority and how it can save and improve lives. You can read this guide from start to finish, or dive into the sections that interest you.

We believe it is the first time so many African groups will join together on Internet issues at the same time, and it is thanks to the more than 60 representatives of different organisations who helped in planning.

If you have questions, please contact:

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1) What We Want

We need FAST Internet in Africa for ALL to meet our development goals.

African leaders have committed to strive for universal and affordable Internet in least developed countries by 2020, through the UN Sustainable Development Goals. One year since making this promise, we want to hear their concrete plans for Internet that is F.A.S.T....

Fast - For true economic and educational impact, we need average download and upload speeds of at least 4MB per second for efficient Web browsing and online communication.

Affordable - A basic prepaid data plan of 1GB should cost less than 2% of average national monthly income, and there should be plenty of free public access points too.

Safe - Our privacy, security and rights online should be protected in line with the African Declaration of Internet Rights and Freedoms, which should be adopted by all.

Transparent - Policies related to information and communication technology (ICT) laws, taxation and pricing need to be openly available and easy to understand.

2) Who Can Make it Happen?

What needs to change in your country, and who can make it happen?

Find your key targets, find allies and apply pressure, expose concern, and stimulate them to think about and act on FASTAfrica's key demands.

Choose the right channels to reach them. It might be via social media, a meeting, email, the media — or all of the above!

Suggested Targets and Allies

Government

Seek out your president or any ministers and ministry officials that can affect ICT and Internet rights, in areas like infrastructure, social inclusion, equality development, education or foreign affairs. They are the ones who draft new policies and have power to prioritise them.

Corporate Sector

Businesses can be either targets or allies (or both). They can partner with government and support policies to encourage competition and bring down prices on Internet and technology. Telecoms, start-up companies, incubators and hubs will agree FAST Internet is needed.

Media

Journalists from newspapers, radio, and all variety of media and blogs need to help communicate why Internet access for everyone is so important. They can also pressure government to follow up on promises for better Internet and more digital rights.

Civil Society

Greater understanding of national, local and rural Internet and mobile phone use helps inform better policy and good arguments for why ICT matters to development. Universities, think tanks, research institutes and foundations can be your allies, at home and abroad.

Web Community

Which other organisations, bloggers, hackers and web defenders can support your activities? Connect and partner with everyone who feels strongly about better Internet, locally and regionally, and demand action from governments, municipalities, corporations, etc.

3) Social Media Guide

Much of the activity during the action week (May 1-7) will take place through social media and on the Web. Here are some quick tips on how to get social with #FASTAfrica.

1. Add a “[Twibbon](#)” to your profile picture on Twitter and Facebook.
2. Make noise using the hashtag [#FASTAfrica](#) targeting key influencers
3. Say YES to the [#FASTAfrica Facebook event](#) and share with friends
4. Share and remix photos, logos, and infographics to raise awareness
5. If you attend a #FASTAfrica event, live tweet and blog
6. Follow [@WebWeWant](#) on Twitter and [on Facebook](#).
7. Connect with other [#FASTAfrica](#) campaigners

Photos for sharing: [Facebook pictures](#) | [campaign images](#)

More Tips

- ★ Connect with targets and allies on social media. Without spamming, engage with them on the issues and what needs to happen. Praise them for actions you agree with.
- ★ Who can help amplify your message in your local twittersphere or blogosphere? Reach out to influencers with a large audience and encourage them to join #FASTAfrica.
- ★ What is a hot topic in the media right now? Environment? Corruption? Gender equality? Join the public debate with information on how FAST Internet could help.

Hashtags

Use the official #FASTAfrica hashtag in all tweets — people supporting the campaign will be watching and re-tweeting.

The World Economic Forum’s Global Shapers Network is using: [#internet4all](#). Include this where relevant, since their followers will also be interested in our campaign. Engage them!

Other relevant hashtags to follow or use include:

[#AfricanInternetRights](#) | [#WomensRightsOnline](#) | [#AffordableInternet](#) | [#AF16](#) | [#Transparency](#) | [#WEFAfrica](#) | [#Africa](#) | [#OpenData](#) | [#AU](#) | [#WebWeWant](#)

Sample tweets

Wherever possible, try to include an image in your tweets. Make your own, or reuse these [Facebook pictures](#) / [campaign images](#)

Fast

- 🐦 Speed it up! We need Internet at a minimum of 4MB/s. #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 Our children deserve Internet at 4MB/s to help them learn. #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 Businesses need Internet speeds of at least 4MB/s to grow #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 If I can't stream — it's not my revolution! #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 Slow Internet = slow economies! We need at least 4MB/s! #FASTAfrica

Affordable

- 🐦 Only 20% of Africans are online, it costs too much to connect. #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 Only 9 countries in #Africa have met the UN's 5% broadband affordability target. #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 We need #internet4all but high cost is a barrier. We can change this! #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 Let's redefine affordability - give us 1GB for 2% of average income #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 #Internet4all can only happen if it's affordable #FASTAfrica

Safe

- 🐦 Digital rights are human rights! #FASTAfrica #AfricanInternetRights
- 🐦 We have the right to browse privately and securely #FASTAfrica #AfricanInternetRights
- 🐦 Support African Internet rights! @AfricaNetRights @WebWeWant #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 #FASTAfrica means #Internet4all without snooping on us #privacy #nosurveillance
- 🐦 (@PRESIDENT) Please endorse the African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms #FastAfrica <https://africaninternetrights.org>

Transparent

- 🐦 We want ICT policy that is open and transparent! #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 There is almost no #OpenData in Africa. Let's fix this! #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 We have a right to know what data costs. Give us transparent price plans. #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 African leaders, show us your ICT policies. Help us connect! #FASTAfrica
- 🐦 With more Internet, comes more transparency in governance #FASTAfrica

4) Plan Your Own Event

Take part in the FASTAfrica Week of Action: 1 – 7 May 2016!

Would you like to join the campaign by hosting an event? You don't need special permission or credentials to host a FASTAfrica event. Everyone can support the campaign by drawing attention to the need for fast, affordable, safe and transparent Internet in their own way.

- ✓ Visit the [campaign homepage](#) for updates and toolkit additions
- ✓ [Register your event](#) and we will help you spread the word.
- ✓ See our [map of events](#) to see what is happening near you.

Ideas for Activities

Anyone can organise an activity for FASTAfrica – either big and small, quiet or loud. Events during the action week are meant to amplify long-term efforts for local and regional change. Please note that we need everyone to share photos of activities as they happen via Facebook and Twitter with the hashtag #FASTAfrica. This will help us show leaders just how many of us care about FAST Internet.

- a. Ideas for Larger Groups, Organisations and Networks
- b. Ideas for Individuals or Small Groups
- c. Plan Your Own Event (10 Steps)
- d. Grantee Guidelines
- e. Other Campaign Toolkits

a. Ideas for Larger Groups, Organisations and Networks

Internet Speed Testing

Initiate a comparison of Internet speeds around the country and see how they vary in different locations with different service providers and plans. Are you actually getting the speeds advertised by your Internet service provider? Ask people to test their connections using [Speedtest.net](#) (create a [Speed Wave](#) for comparisons) and compile the numbers so you can map and discuss results.

Participate in a Radio Show

Contact your community radio station and see if they will dedicate a show to the problem of expensive mobile data plans and how to solve it. Arrange for the live participation (or pre-recording) of a person who can improve Internet access in your country. Encourage calls and social media interaction. Offer an award to caller number 25 or message number 50 to keep the audience engaged.

FASTAfrica Salon

Instead of a traditional workshop or conference, consider hosting an informal “salon” for a group of people who want to learn more about why FAST Internet matters and what policies work. Combine artistic performances (music, video or poetry) with short, conversational presentations. Engage the creative communities when you live, perhaps through a cultural centre that could co-host.

Pecha Kucha Night (20 seconds x 20 slides)

Powerpoint presentations are never boring in Pecha Kucha-style talks where speakers present their thoughts in only 20 slides that each display for only 20 seconds. Topics could be: What makes the Internet wonderful? What makes it a necessity rather than a luxury? How does a society benefit from the Internet? Attendees can write their names on a giant photo collage that is sent to stakeholders.

Spotlight on Experts

Bring one expert a day to a public space or classroom (or popular online forum) and let participants ask anything they want about Internet access. How does the Internet work? Why is Internet access so expensive in Africa compared to the rest of the world? What makes the Internet fast? How do you get around Internet shutdowns? How do you encrypt? Make the questions and answers available to all.

Internet Policy Roundtable

Gather key people from civil society, the public sector and business to discuss what new policies and actions are needed to improve Internet access in your country. Share facts about the current state of the Internet and regulations, and discuss what strategies can be combined to speed up the process of change. Keep a good record of the meeting and follow up with participants on any proposed actions.

Public Light Projections

During the action week, beam a powerful campaign message on a building after dark. Say why your country needs better Internet and what can be done to make it affordable and accessible for everybody. Alert the press and share photos of your light installation with everyone. Previous examples of activist projections [Luminous Intervention](#) | [Beautiful trouble](#) | [WITNESS](#) | [Take Part](#)

b. Ideas for Individuals or Small Groups

Start a #FASTAfrica Wall

Paint a wall in a public space in a dark colour (make sure to get permission first). Then begin a conversation on “Why do I need FAST Internet?”. Invite people passing by to write their comments and ask them to add their name, age and profession. For example: “With FAST Internet I can speak with my grandchildren abroad.” - Lulu, 57, school teacher. Photograph your beautiful wall and share on social media using #FASTAfrica.

Be the #FASTAfrica Paparazzi

Create a photo series showing how Internet is accessed in your country. Describe it and add locations. Is it FAST? Is it slow? Is it free? Is it costly? Who can use it and who can't? Send us your photo or tag it using #FASTAfrica. Make sure you share it under a Creative Commons license so others can use it to illustrate the diversity of Internet access, and remember to ask permission from people whose photos you want to take. ([See example from South Africa.](#))

Sing a Song or Design a Meme About SLOW Internet

Is your Internet so slow or so expensive it makes you want to cry? Share your feelings about struggling to connect in creative, humorous or lyrical ways. You can't find a public access point. You can't apply to that job. You don't have money for the extra megabytes. You had a Skype date and your Internet is down. We all know the feeling. Let's talk about it! Share it using #FASTAfrica and we'll spread the best ones far and wide!

Join our Social Media Squad

During the #FASTAfrica action week (May 1-7) we will be very active on social media and want you to join us! Help lead or participate in daily conversation topics, involving people in your own country as much as possible. Help share the knowledge and materials of the #FASTAfrica campaign. Join on the fly, or send us a message to let us know you will be online.

Host a #FASTAfrica house party

Gather friends, family or colleagues and inform them about the benefits of Fast, Affordable, Safe and Transparent Internet for a society. Discuss safe Internet use, show your grandmother and siblings how to use Google and Skype, or teach your friends how to do basic coding or Web design. As complex or simple as you want — help create the Web We Want!

c. Plan Your Own Event (10 Steps)

Checklist

- ✓ Does your event or activity have a clear objective?
- ✓ Do you have a clear target for your campaign message?
- ✓ Who will participate and how will you inform them?
- ✓ Do you have questions for colleagues in other countries?
- ✓ Do you have a long term strategy for advocating change?

Step 1: Goals

Define your objective and how it will help bring about FAST Internet in your country. Define who you will be targeting with your message, and how many people you will affect.

Step 2: Event

Write an approximate timetable for the event from beginning to end, and consider whether it will be engaging, entertaining and meet your objectives.

Step 3: Budget

Is there a free venue available? Do you need refreshments, paper handouts, open WiFi or anything else that could cost money? Write your budget, seek funds. (We've already given out all the grants we can for now!)

Step 4: Invitations

Think about your target participants and partners. What are their interests? How can you approach them? It is best if you can reach out to people individually at least 1 week in advance.

Step 5: Communicating

Does everyone understand the objective of your event as well as how it forms part of a regional #FASTAfrica campaign? Download [campaign logos and materials](#).

Step 6: The Big Day

Good luck! Be open to feedback and to revising your event strategy as you go if something isn't working well.

Step 7: Sharing

Document your activity immediately for maximum visibility and impact. We need everyone to share photos of activities as they happen via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) with the hashtag #FASTAfrica. Write a summary of the event immediately after to

publish on your own website, in social media, or on [Web We Want](#). Send us your link or text by email or [@webwewant](#).

Step 8: Thanking

Download and print a #FASTAfrica Certificate of Participation in [English](#), [French](#) or [Portuguese](#) to recognise participants upon the successful completion of activities and meetings.

Step 9: Friending

Encourage participants to stay in touch with you and also to get involved with regional and international activities via #FASTAfrica and Web We Want if they are interested.

Step 10: Evaluating

Be honest, what did you really achieve? Are there things you learned or accomplished that surprised you? What would you do differently next time? Let us know!

d. Grantee Guidelines

If you have been awarded a grant for a #FASTAfrica activity please state visibly on your campaign materials, “This event was made possible by a grant from the Web Foundation”. We encourage sharing of all materials, images and output under Creative Commons licenses.

e. Other Campaign Toolkits

The [IFEX campaign toolkit](#) contains very useful advice on planning free speech campaigns. For more ideas on how to host small, medium, and large events, see these resources from Mozilla on [how to host “maker parties”](#).

5) Media Advice and Press Release

We want to help you get your own activities and the #FASTAfrica campaign mentioned in the media. Journalists often choose what stories they cover based on a press release. Below is a sample release you can send to reporters. You can add details of your own event, perhaps in the second paragraph.

Some tips for working with the media:

- Find the contact details for the right journalists first. Have you seen a related news story? A few minutes of research makes you more likely to reach the right person. Otherwise, try to speak to a news editor.
- It is a good idea to try and call a reporter to explain why your story is important. Reporters are busy and may get hundreds of emails a day. A quick phone call is the best way to make sure they hear you.
- You probably won't get to talk for long, so think about what you will say, and particularly why their audience will be interested.
- The reporter may ask you to email them a press release, or call back later for an interview. Or, they may not be interested at all.
- Good luck! If you have questions, you can always contact us.

PRESS RELEASE

New Pan-African Movement Seeks Faster, More Affordable Internet for All

- *#FASTAfrica campaign launches with events spanning 30+ African nations during a Week of Action: May 1-7, 2016.*
- *Campaigners want all Africans to have access to Internet that is Fast, Affordable, Safe and Transparent (FAST) by 2020.*

Unveiled today is #FASTAfrica, a new campaign to demand Internet that is faster, more accessible, and affordable for all Africans before 2020. The message is that development, and therefore African lives and futures, depends on it. Campaign events will be held during the first week of May across more than 30 African countries, with results to be presented at the World Economic Forum on Africa and African Union meetings later this year. Anyone can sign up to host an event or participate here: <https://webwewant.org/fast-africa/>

Africa is home to four of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world, and is the fastest growing market for mobile phones. However, the continent suffers from the slowest and most expensive Internet in the world — as a result, around 80% of people in Africa remain offline. Most African governments have not

prioritised ICT policies despite having committed, through the UN Sustainable Development Goals, to achieving universal and affordable Internet in all least developed countries by 2020. The FASTAfrica campaign aims to change this by bringing popular attention to the issues and highlighting possible solutions.

FASTAfrica has been shaped by a planning group of more than 60 representatives of African groups and organisations that work on Internet rights issues in their own countries. The campaign is being coordinated by the World Wide Web Foundation, which was established by Web inventor Sir Tim Berners-Lee. Twenty-nine small grants were made to local organisations hosting events during the action week. These grants will allow youth groups, technology activists, developers and policy experts to host campaign activities in Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, and many other countries.

"If you look at all the countries that enjoy relatively good Internet connections in the developing world, they all share one trait: a deliberate government policy to intervene in connecting the country," says Moses Karanja, co-founder of a brand new online African ICT Policy Database based in Kenya that is participating in #FASTAfrica.

Renata Avila, Global Campaign Manager at the Web Foundation added: *"For the Internet to have a truly transformative effect in Africa, everyone needs to be able to get online — either by being able to afford regular access, or through a widespread public access programme. Once online, it is important that everyone knows that their rights will be respected, otherwise it will limit the way they use the Web. Minimum speeds of 4mbps are also a must to make the most of vital educational and health resources. And, we need openness about prices, speeds, and government policies, so anyone can track progress and think of new solutions to obstacles."*

Key Demands of the Campaign

We need FAST Internet in Africa for ALL to meet our development goals.

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Transparent - Policies related to information and communication technology (ICT) laws, taxation and pricing need to be openly available and easy to understand.

ENDS

1. Key Dates

- May 1-7, 2016 : #FASTAfrica Action Week (pan-African)
- May 11-13, 2016 World Economic Forum on Africa (Kigali, Rwanda)
- June (TBC): African Union Summit

2. Contacts

To attend individual events in different countries or speak with local activists engaged with Internet rights in YOUR country, please ask the #FASTAfrica campaign for contact details.

For #FASTAfrica: Ms. Renata Avila
Global Manager, Web We Want (#FASTAfrica)
renata.avila@webfoundation.org

For Internet policy facts and statistics: Ms. Sonia Jorge
Executive Director, Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)
sonia.jorge@webfoundation.org

3. Logos and campaign images

Please download and reuse freely in print or online.

<https://webwewant.org/fast-africa/fastafrika-logo-image-resources/>

4. Link:

Campaign Homepage: <https://webwewant.org/fast-africa>

Map of Events: <https://webwewant.org/fast-africa/map-of-events>

5. About the World Wide Web Foundation

Established by the inventor of the Web, Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the World Wide Web Foundation seeks to establish the open Web as a global public good and a basic right, creating a world where everyone, everywhere can use the Web to communicate, collaborate and innovate freely. Represented by more than a dozen nationalities working from hubs in London, Washington DC and Cape Town, the World Wide Web Foundation operates at the confluence of technology and human rights, targeting three key areas: Access, Voice and Participation.

Website: www.webfoundation.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/webfoundation

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/webfoundation>

6) Logos and Images

Logos and campaign images in different sizes can be downloaded here:
<https://webwewant.org/fast-africa/fastafrika-logo-image-resources/>



7) Nine Reasons Africa Needs FAST Internet

Fast, affordable, safe, and transparent Internet should be a priority for African governments. Why? The benefits of access are wide-ranging and significant. Increasing access to a FAST Internet can:

1. Close the digital divide and accelerate development.

In Africa, just one in five people use the Internet. This stands in stark contrast to developed countries, where over 82% of people are already online. Ensuring FAST Internet in Africa will enable billions more to come online, and to take advantage of the life-changing socio-economic opportunities that access to the Internet provides.

2. Improving health care, saving lives

Online health services are already being used to fill critical healthcare gaps, particularly in rural, conflict-affected and other underserved areas in Africa. Access to FAST Internet will expand the ability of citizens to access and use these services. A study by the GSM Association estimates that e-health services, including remote diagnosis, advice, treatment and health education will save over a million lives in Sub-Saharan Africa over five years.

3. Empower women and close the digital gender gap, in line with the AU calling for a special focus on women's rights in 2016.

Research by the Web Foundation shows that women are 50% less likely to be online than men in urban areas of developing countries, and 25% less likely to use the Internet to find employment. The size of the digital gender gap varies by region, but it is found everywhere. The gender pay gap means that women face higher costs to get online and once online, women are often subject to online abuse. Realising the full range of economic and social opportunities that Internet access enables will only happen when we work to make FAST Internet a reality for all women. A report by Intel estimates that closing the mobile gender gap and bringing an additional 600 million women online could increase global GDP by US\$13-18 billion.

4. Contribute to economic growth on local, regional and national scales, including creating 140 million jobs.

If Internet penetration rates in developing countries were raised to those of developed countries, “the resulting economic activity could generate \$2.2 trillion in additional GDP ... and more than 140 million new jobs,” according to Deloitte.

5. Increase access to educational resources.

Connecting people and schools to a FAST Internet will increase their access to information, educational content, and other resources critical to improving educational outcomes. Rural, poor, and other under-resourced schools will be able to provide their students with affordable or free online content, and their teachers with the background information or training necessary to teach. In remote or conflict-affected areas where schools might be non-existent, an Internet connection can enable individuals to access free and open online courses and to steer the course of their own education. In 2015, only 25 African countries had reached net enrolment ratios of 80% or above, meaning FAST Internet could help millions of children not in education.

6. Improve agricultural production and reduce poverty.

Access to a FAST Internet allows everyone increased access to information. Connected farmers can access information critical to maximising agricultural productivity, including important information on weather, crop selection, and pest control, and can also enable them to connect with markets and determine a competitive market price for selling their goods. According to a study by McKinsey, agricultural growth in Africa is two times more effective in reducing poverty as growth based in other sectors — an estimate that is perhaps not surprising when you consider that agriculture provides 70% of Africa's employment and contributes 30% to its GDP.

7. Connect people across distances, enhance social well-being.

Social media has become one of the most common ways people use the Web once connected. Social media, email and other online-enabled methods of communication allow loved ones to stay in touch across long distances. They allow refugee and other disaster-stricken communities to communicate and stay up to date on happenings in their home communities. They allow people to coordinate and unite around shared interests and causes, and to organise for citizen-led actions. Though the value of these effects is hard to quantify, the value cannot be overstated.

8. Enhance governance and opportunities for citizen participation.

When an open Web is combined with governments publishing key data sets openly, everyone benefits. New businesses can be built and citizens can spot patterns of waste and corruption. But a new study by the World Wide Web Foundation shows that Africa is falling behind in making critical government data available to citizens. Only Nigeria presents some fully open data to her citizens, and even that is just two datasets.

9. Improve public service delivery, delivering up to \$25bn in productivity gains.

Widespread access to a FAST Internet connection encourages governments to move services online, and enables increased numbers of citizens to access public services that might not have previously been available to them — a particularly critical development for those that live in rural areas or areas lacking in government offices and services. Enabling more effective delivery of Africa's public services could achieve annual technology-related productivity gains of US \$10-25 billion by 2025, and can improve both citizen lives and government accountability.

8. How Do We Get FAST Internet? (Policy Advice)

Policy documents aren't just empty words on paper. There is a direct correlation between the ICT policies of a country and the speed, cost and reach of Internet access. FASTAfrica is an opportunity to engage those who can affect change in dialogue about what policies are needed.

What have your leaders promised?

At the international level African leaders have made promises and commitments for greater Internet access, for instance as part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. At the local level, it's up to individual countries to decide how it happens.

Aside from the occasional public uproar over a surveillance bill or online censorship battle, the ICT policies of your country may not have received much scrutiny. Have you seen them? Are there already civil society groups engaging in the formulation of the policies? There is probably scope for more public engagement.

What policies can advance universal, fast and affordable Internet?

It can be overwhelming to think about "universal access" when only 20% of Africans are online, but the good news is that there are simple policy steps that governments can take to increase access and affordability quickly. The demands you focus on depend on what is most important and winnable in your country.

10 Policy Recommendations

- 1. Get governments and donors to step up efforts.** Governments should convene civil society, the technical community, and business to revise (or create) national broadband plans or ICT strategies. These plans must establish a clear agenda and roadmap with time-bound targets for increasing Internet access, and they must allocate the necessary funds. Multilateral banks and other donors must increase their ICT funding to ensure a more equal spread of “digital dividends”. ([More detail](#))
- 2. Agree on what is "affordable".** A4AI’s recent [Affordability Report](#) shows that in order for marginalised populations currently priced out of the digital revolution to afford access, we must work toward a “1 for 2” affordability target — 1GB of mobile broadband priced at 2% or less of average monthly income. At this price level, the majority of people in most countries can afford regular access. Previous affordability targets have been higher.
- 3. Invest in public access solutions.** The Internet is not like a vaccine that works after just one injection. Its benefits increase with regular use. Even with lower prices, if we rely on market mechanisms alone, a large segment of women, young people and the poor will still have to ration their Internet use. Closing the digital divide will require digital skills training for more people, and enabling regular access through offers of community WiFi and free or subsidised Internet in community centres, schools, etc.
- 4. Make better use of Universal Service and Access Funds.** In many countries, there are large funds earmarked for connecting the unconnected that are sitting unused. Governments must spend the billions that are sitting unused in these funds, and ensure the funds are used on projects that will benefit those potential users that need it most.
- 5. Settle on fair and transparent ICT taxes.** Governments must reduce “luxury” tariffs on ICT devices and services, excess royalties on technology patents, multiple sales taxes on airtime, and other taxes that deter long-term growth of local tech entrepreneurship and increase costs for users. [“Royalty stacking”](#) on devices, for example, can increase the cost of a smartphone by as much as 30%. An approach that considers the jobs and economic growth produced through a diversified ICT sector — and ensures that a fair share of the revenues stay in the country — will benefit all.
- 6. Make getting women online a top priority.** [Web Foundation research](#) in urban slums in nine developing countries shows that women are 50% less likely than men to be online, and 30-50% less likely to use the Internet for personal empowerment. We need policies that focus specifically on

connecting women with concrete targets on digital gender equality — backed by adequate budget allocations. Donors and UN agencies should work with governments to ensure that women’s organisations are consulted on the design of ICT plans and programmes with clear, costed measures.

7. **Make better use of existing ICT infrastructure.** Telecommunications companies should allow competitors access, at reasonable market prices, to costly infrastructure, such as towers and cables, and facilitate sharing or trading of spectrum (the chunks of the airwaves used to beam the Internet) as well as unlicensed use of low-value spectrum for public benefit (e.g. community WiFi). This will improve connections and reduce costs for providers, which in turn will allow for lower costs and better service for end-users.
8. **Adopt the African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms.** This document expands on principles of human rights, extending them into the digital age via 13 clear principles. It offers important policy guidance on digital rights that the African Union and all its member states should adopt as a guiding framework for policy and legal reforms to encourage innovation and freedom of expression online, protect Internet users against cybercrime and hate speech, and establish transparent, necessary and proportionate limits on state use of digital surveillance powers.
9. **Aid and lending for Internet access should be decoupled from cybersecurity negotiations.** Many governments often use national security to justify the control of political communications and cross-border content generally, passing hasty and ill-informed laws with little public debate. While ensuring the safety of Internet users is important, donors should not press for quick adoption of cybersecurity laws, but rather invest in and support processes such as the African Declaration on Internet Rights and Freedoms (above) and equivalent national level policy dialogue.
10. **Implement the Africa Data Consensus.** Governments should take steps to open their data for all to scrutinise and reuse, particularly ICT data. The Africa Data Consensus, which was adopted by the High Level Conference on Data Revolution of the African Union and UN Economic Commission in 2015, states that “Official data belong to the people and should be open to all. They should be open by default.”

For more research and policy recommendations, visit the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), Research ICT Africa, the UN Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, the Internet Society, and CIPESA.