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basic Internet services free of cost in November 2014. The people of Kenya would have access to features such as AccuWeather, BBC News, BBC Swahili, BabyCenter & MAMA, Brighter Monday, Daily Nation, Ebola Information, Facebook, Facts for Life, Girl Effect, Jamii Forums, Messenger, OLX, Scholars4Dev, Super Sport, Toto Health, Wattpad, and Wikipedia.¹²

Another pilot initiative of Internet.org was the introduction of Social EDU, which provided Rwandan students with free access to online education in collaboration with the government of Rwanda, together with Nokia subsidizing its smartphones for the initiative.¹³

In India, Internet.org collaborated with Unilever to expand net connectivity in rural areas and evaluate educational and cultural factors that limited the usage of Internet in India. Unilever's Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Keith Weed, asserted, "Access to the Internet is improving in countries like India but there is still a very high proportion of people that would love the opportunity to connect and engage but who cannot enjoy what many of us take for granted. Having no Internet access naturally removes all associated opportunities that it brings which, in turn, can be a barrier to learning and ultimately hinder economic development. Through our long history of serving the Indian market we bring an in-depth understanding of rural Indian communities. We hope, together with Internet.org, we can use this know-how to understand better how a vital modern resource can benefit many more millions."¹⁴

Internet.org was planning to partner with other countries to expand its operations in other markets as well. Other than partnerships, the initiative needed new technologies to solve the barriers for connectivity, and Facebook was investing in technology to deliver the necessary solution. Because different communities required different technologies, Facebook was focusing on developing different platforms to serve different population densities. Facebook's connectivity lab would develop technologies in the forms of drones, satellites, mesh networks, radios, and free space optics, employing leading experts from reputed organizations such as NASA.¹⁵

Also, Facebook, in collaboration with Ericsson, set up the Internet.org innovation lab at Facebook's Menlo Park headquarters. This lab would give developers an opportunity to test their apps in simulated network conditions that existed in new growth markets so as to optimize their applications for use in diverse markets of the world.¹⁶

Globally, 4.4 billion people were without access to Internet as of September 2014; bringing them into a connected

¹²Batambuze III Ephraim, "Free Internet access to Kenyans Thanks to Airtel and Facebook," <http://pctechmag.com/2014/12/free-Internet-access-to-kenyans-thanks-to-airtel-and-facebook/>, December 2014.

¹³"Introducing SocialEDU," <http://www.Internet.org/press/introducing-social-edu>, February 23, 2014.

¹⁴"Unilever and Internet.org Partner on Internet Study for Communities across India," <http://www.unilever.com/mediacentre/pressreleases/2014/unileverandInternetorgpartneronInternetstudyforcommunitiesacrossindia.aspx>, February 24, 2014.

¹⁵"Connecting the World from the Sky," op. cit.

¹⁶"Internet.org Innovation Lab," <https://Internet.org/press/Internet-dot-org-innovation-lab>, February 23, 2014.

world required a major collaborative effort from government, civil society, and companies¹⁷ (Annexure D). Johan Wiberg, executive vice president and Ericsson's head of Business Unit Networks, while elaborating on its collaboration with Facebook for the innovation lab said, "The goals of Internet.org are very much aligned with our long-standing ideal that communications is a basic human need. The creation of the lab will provide a unique environment for testing and ultimately optimizing applications regardless of network, device, or operating system. The collaboration with app developers will provide Ericsson with invaluable understanding of user requirements on our networks, which we can apply to enable the continued development of the best performing networks globally."¹⁸ But Jen Schradie, a PhD student at the University of California, felt that the initiative was a Trojan horse that was intended to expand Facebook's potential market.¹⁹ He opined, "The Internet as a human right is more than just freedom of speech; it is also freedom to access all of the tools of that speech. Access to Facebook and participating in its business box algorithms that generate profits for the company are not human rights."²⁰

A Solace for Emerging Economies or a Canny Business Move?

Zuckerberg felt that the Internet.org initiative would generate a positive impact on the global population. "They're going to use it to decide what kind of government they want. Getting access to health care for the first time ever. Connect with family hundreds of miles away. Getting access to the Internet is a really big deal." But barriers to Internet connectivity were numerous and Internet.org was geared to break the barriers (Exhibit III).

Also, compelling findings were revealed in the study conducted on the impact of Internet access in the developing world.²¹ (See Exhibit IV.)

EXHIBIT III Barriers to Internet Connectivity

- Devices are too expensive.
- Service plans are too expensive.
- There's no mobile network to connect to.
- Content isn't available in the local language.
- Awareness of the value of the Internet is limited.
- Availability of power sources is limited.
- Networks can't support large amounts of data.

Source: "Internet.org," <https://Internet.org/>.

¹⁷"Offline and Falling Behind," <https://Internet.org/press/offline-and-falling-behind>, September 30, 2014.

¹⁸"Ericsson and Facebook Create Innovation Lab for Internet.org," <http://www.ericsson.com/us/thecompany/press/releases/2014/02/1763215>, February 24, 2014.

¹⁹"Facebook's Universal Access 'Trojan Horse' attacked," <http://www.sc.com/global/communication/news/facebook-universal-web-access-trojan-horse-attacked.html>, November 27, 2014.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹"Value of Connectivity: Economic and Social Benefits of Expanding Internet Access," op. cit.



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