



Press Release

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Contact: press@webfoundation.org

Guatemala Is First Central American Country to Join Alliance for Affordable Internet

Guatemala has become the latest country to join the Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) – a global coalition working to drive down the cost of broadband. At a ceremony today in Guatemala City, A4AI and Guatemala’s Ministry of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding, marking the start of a three-year collaboration to implement policies needed to reduce internet costs and enable all Guatemalans to afford to connect.

A4AI is the world’s broadest technology sector coalition, with 80 member organisations from across the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors – including Sida, USAID, UN Women, Google, GSMA, and the Internet Society – committed to using policy and regulatory reform to lower the cost of internet access to a “1 for 2” target (i.e., where 1GB of mobile data is priced at 2% or less of GNI per capita). Launched in 2013, A4AI is active in seven countries, including Guatemala, and has helped to secure reduced ICT taxes in Ghana, and promote open access, infrastructure sharing, and the revitalisation of national ICT policies in the Dominican Republic.

Guatemala is the first county in Central America – and second country in Latin America, after the Dominican Republic – to join the Alliance. Despite connectivity costs that appear to be relatively low at first glance (1GB of mobile data costs just over 4% of average monthly income), significant income inequality in the country means that data costs significantly more for the majority of the population – the lowest 20% of income earners in Guatemala have to spend 19% of their monthly income to afford just 1GB of data. Partially as a result of these high costs, just 27% of Guatemala’s population are internet users, making it one of Latin America’s least connected countries – in the region, only Honduras (20%), Nicaragua (19%), and Haiti (12%) have lower rates of connectivity.

A4AI – which is already working in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Liberia and Myanmar – will work with a wide range of stakeholders in Guatemala to form a national coalition dedicated to determining the barriers to affordable access and how these can be overcome through a sound policy framework to enable millions more to come online.

Commenting on the signing of the MOU, Guatemalan Vice Minister of Communications, Infrastructure and Housing, Cristian Aguilar, said:



“In Guatemala, we are committed to closing the digital divide and ensuring equal, affordable access for all. Our new Digital Agenda ‘Nación Digital’ lays out a vision for improving internet services and access, and now our collaboration with A4AI will allow us to take a critical look at barriers to affordable internet in our country, and to determine the steps needed to overcome these challenges to make affordable, universal access a reality, and enable us to reach our digital agenda goals on health, education, security, transparency and development.”

Sonia Jorge, Executive Director of A4AI, added:

“We are delighted to be here today to commemorate the start of our engagement in Guatemala. By signing this MOU, Guatemala has signalled its commitment to realise affordable internet access for all its people, and to prioritise the policy needed to make this happen. We look forward to working with the government, civil society, and private sector players alike to drive broadband prices down to — and below — a “1 for 2” level, thereby opening up connectivity opportunities for millions more Guatemalans.”

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Notes to editors:

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) is the world’s broadest technology sector coalition, with 80+ members from across the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, including the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Google, and the US Agency for International Development. Launched in 2013 by the World Wide Web Foundation, A4AI is currently working in six countries — Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Myanmar, and the Dominican Republic — to drive down the cost of broadband internet through locally driven policy and regulatory change. At A4AI, our advocacy efforts are based around our commonly agreed [policy and regulatory good practices](#) and are underpinned by research, including the findings of our [case studies](#) and our annual [Affordability Report](#). To learn more about A4AI, its members, and its work, please visit a4ai.org.