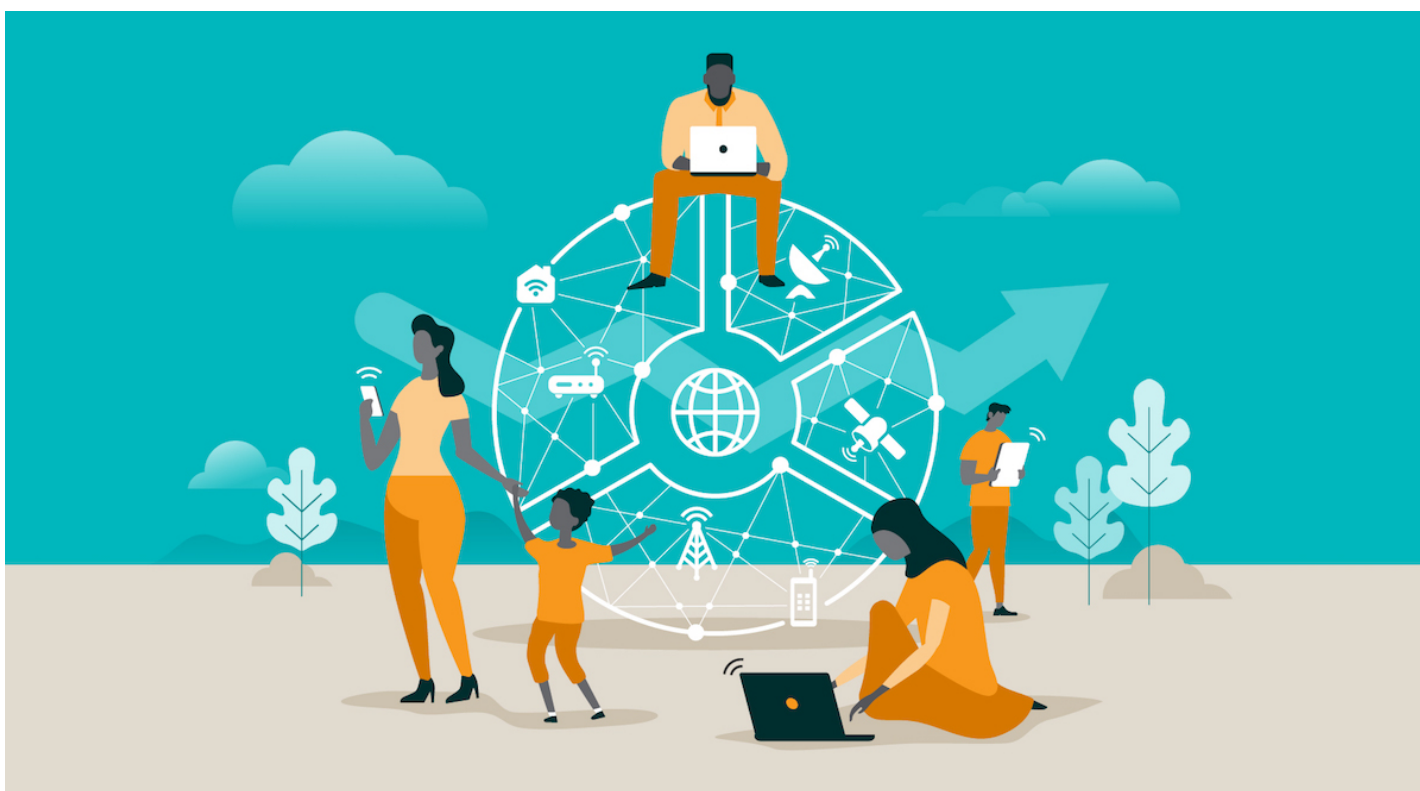




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2019 Affordability Report: Lack of competition in broadband markets keeping millions offline

October 22, 2019



Billions of people around the world are kept offline by the cost to connect. Our [2019 Affordability Report](#) — published today — finds that consolidated broadband markets are keeping prices high and putting life-changing internet access out of reach for hundreds of millions of people.

Each year, our Affordability Report analyses the policy progress low- and middle-income countries are making to advance affordable internet. This year's report points to a lack of market competition in broadband markets as a major barrier to internet access.

Our research finds that people living in countries with consolidated broadband markets pay USD \$3.42 more per GB of mobile data than those in similar countries with competitive markets. Around 900 million people currently live in countries where the cost of internet access is kept high by consolidated markets.

When people have no option to switch providers, they are likely to pay inflated prices for mobile data. Our research estimates that 1GB data in a monopoly mobile market could be as much as USD \$7.33 more expensive than if it were a two-operator market.

If governments and companies take steps to increase market competition, they can dramatically boost the number of people able to access the internet.

We call on governments to focus their policies and regulations on building healthy broadband markets that improve competition, bring down prices, and expand internet access by:

- **Adopting policy and regulation that support market competition**, including fair rules for market entry and incentives to encourage new competitors.
- **Bringing down costs for new operators to compete** by supporting affordable access to wholesale internet data, so that competitors aren't locked out by high capital barriers to entry.
- **Investing in public internet access**, such as free public WiFi and telecentres, and support community networks to expand internet coverage to those not served by commercial markets and provide consumers with more choices to get online.

A failure to build and sustain competitive markets will push up broadband prices and undermine efforts to get everyone online — preventing millions of people from accessing the internet's economic, social, and creative opportunities.

[Read the report](#) to explore the findings and recommendations in full.

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