

Facebook opens up Internet.org after neutrality flap

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Facebook said Monday it was opening up Internet.org, which provides connectivity to people in developing nations, to outside applications following a controversy over its limited set of online services.

The move comes after [news organizations](#) in India announced they would withdraw from the program, claiming it violated the spirit of "net neutrality," or equal treatment for all services online.

Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg said Internet.org would operate as a free platform "so anyone can build free basic services," but that the full Internet would not be included.

Zuckerberg, in a video announcing the change, said the goal of the program remains giving people a limited number of basic services for health, education and jobs, for example, arguing this is not in conflict with net neutrality principles.

"Net neutrality should not prevent access. We need both," he said.

"Our vision is to give people more access to free services over time."

But he noted that access is offered as a partnership with local mobile operators, which agreed to offer certain services for free with an option to get the full Internet with a paid subscription.

"It's not sustainable to offer the whole Internet for free," he said. "No operator could afford this."

Facebook said the platform however would be opened to any developer who met certain guidelines. Any apps must use data "very efficiently," and should not include data-intensive services that use considerable bandwidth such as video or high-resolution photos.

The services will be free for any participating developer, Facebook said.

The Times of India and earlier this month spearheaded a campaign to get news publishers to withdraw from Internet.org, saying the closed set of

services was in conflict with the notion of [net neutrality](#).

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