

Kenya to get first deployment of internet balloons from Google parent

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The first commercial deployment for Project Loon—the "balloon-powered internet" being developed by Google parent Alphabet—is headed for Kenya, the US tech giant said Thursday.

In a collaboration with Telkom Kenya, Loon will provide [internet](#) service from high-altitude balloons whose paths across the sky are choreographed to maintain coverage, according to Loon, the newly independent business unit within Alphabet.

Loon-enabled internet service will be provided to portions of central Kenya starting next year, according to Loon chief executive Alastair Westgarth who said the company's goal was to "connect people everywhere."

"We couldn't be more excited to start our journey in Kenya, and we look forward to working with mobile network partners worldwide to deliver on the promise of Loon," Westgarth said in a blog post.

Alphabet last week announced it was raising the profile of two "moonshot" projects—Loon and the drone delivery unit known as Wing.

Wing and Loon have been part of the Alphabet "moonshot factory" known as X, creating projects with potential to disrupt new sectors.

Loon has been testing a network of balloons, traveling along the edge of space, to expand [internet connectivity](#) to underserved areas and disaster zones.

Facebook last month ended its plan to produce a fleet of drones to provide internet connectivity to remote areas of the globe but said it would continue working on these efforts with various manufacturing partners include Airbus.

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