

Facebook CEO aims to connect the world

 By [Danette Breitenbach](#)

Today only half of the world is connected to the internet. Facebook's mission is to connect the entire world's population. Why? Because, said Mark Zuckerberg, the platform's founder, it will make the world a better place.



Mark Zuckerberg live streamed address

Zuckerberg was addressing developers and entrepreneurs in Lagos, Nigeria in what is his first ever visit to the African Continent. Last year the platform launched its first African office, located in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Africa, he said, is at the beginning of this journey, and it is not Facebook that is going to build this. "Africa needs to build itself. Facebook will help and invest and empower, but it is not building this."

To connect the world, he told the audience in a broadcast that was streamed live, firstly you have to build access - that is, provide connectivity.

"Secondly you have to make that network affordable and you do this through building cheap infrastructure and getting app developers to use less data. Thirdly, you educate people so that they understand why the internet is valuable to them."

He called the 18 million Nigerians on Facebook, "not a bad start... actually a pretty good start", but said he would be disappointed if this number were not much bigger the next time he comes to Nigeria.

Recognising that cost was one of the barriers to entry in this regard, he says that Facebook wants to help entrepreneurs in the country by growing the Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) base on Facebook and so providing them with the tools they need to grow their businesses.

Asked by a member of the audience what he predicts for the future, Zuckerberg said the best way to predict the future is to create – one of his favourite quotes.

“What I care about today is still what I cared about when I started Facebook as a college student. I want to spread the internet to everyone. And here we are 10 to 12 years later, with almost two billion people on the platform and we are able to invest millions of dollars into innovations that might come to fruition in a decade. But it is through these investments that this dream of connecting everyone could possibly be achievable in our lifetime. If I can do that, I will feel good about my life.”

In the future, he sees many physical objects disappearing and being replaced by apps. “Objects such as television will disappear. Instead you will use your “glasses” or anything that is a screen to create these objects. In the future you will build a chessboard on an app. It will allow people to save money because they will have an app instead of a having to purchase a television.”

He added that this will also unlock a lot of creativity. “That’s the future I hope we reach but we will have to be patient as we need some scientific breakthroughs.”

Zuckerberg indicated that he was very taken with Nigeria, including its cuisine (having eaten traditional Nigerian food the night before, including the snails).

He said Nigeria was his country of choice for his first visit to Africa because of its potential and entrepreneurial energy. “The world needs to see the energy here. In Lagos, and across the continent, things are shifting really quickly from a resource to knowledge-based economy. This story and the entrepreneurial spirit in the country and continent is under appreciated by the world. There is a vibrant developer and entrepreneur ecosystem that exists in this country.”

His visit forms part of his mission to visit different cities across the globe to interact with Facebook communities in these locations and find out how they use the platform’s services.

ABOUT DANETTE BREITENBACH

Danette Breitenbach is a marketing & media editor at Bizcommunity.com. Previously she freelanced in the marketing and media sector, including for Bizcommunity. She was editor and publisher of AdVantage, the publication that served the marketing, media and advertising industry in southern Africa. She has worked extensively in print media, mainly B2B. She has a Masters in Financial Journalism from Wits.

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