The iHub & State of Internet in Kenya

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The iHub

The iHub

- Nairobi Tech Hacker Space with focus on young entrepreneurs, programmers, designers, researchers investors and VC funders.

- Started in March 2010

- Proposed in grassroots tech mailing list & meet ups

- Membership: 3 Membership Schemes- 13K + members

- 40+ Startups in 1st Year Alone

The iHub

Expansion from 1 to 7 Spaces in a span of 3 years:

- **iHub:** Tech Community http://ihub.co.ke

- **iHub Research & Consulting**

- **m-Lab:** Mobile applications incubation space http://mlab.co.ke
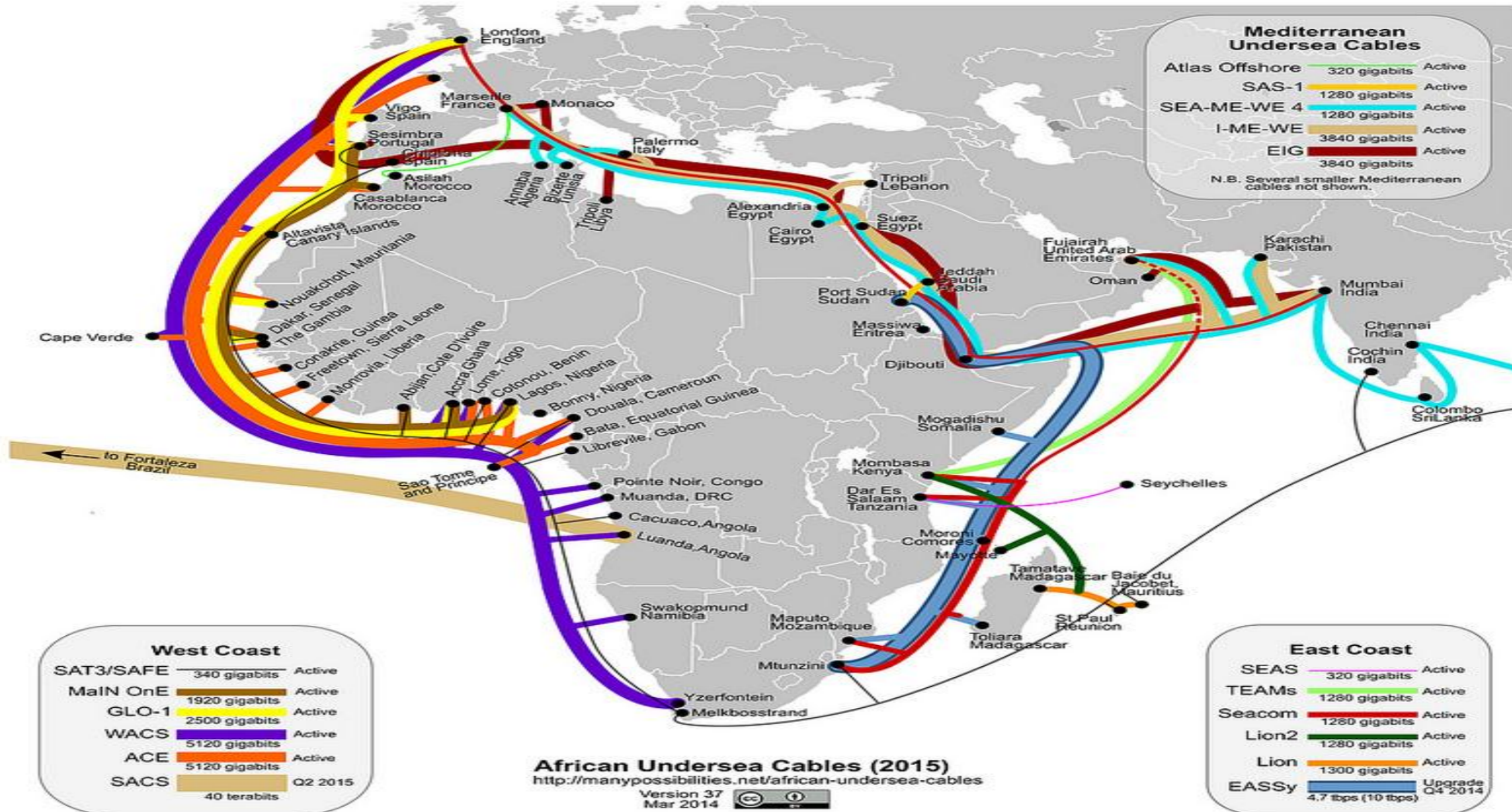
- **UX Lab:** User interface design lab

The iHub

Expansion from 1 to 7 Spaces in a span of 3 years:

- **BRCK:** Project to develop portable wireless device to bridge internet connectivity in remote areas. http://brck.com

- **AkiraChix:** Initiative for women& girls in ICT http://akirachix.com

- **Ushahidi*:** Crowdsourced incidence response app. Founded the iHub: http://ushahidi.com

Internet in Kenya

Over last 5 years Internet growth has profoundly affected Kenya in general and iHub in particular.

African Undersea Cables (2015)
http://manypossibilities.net/african-undersea-cables
Version 37
Mar 2014

Quick Stats

- **Population:** 45m (Estimate for 2014)

- **Internet Users:**
  - ➢ 22.3m or 49.5 % of population (2014)
  - ➢ 99% access Internet on mobile
  - ➢ 2.045 million FB users – 4.7% (2013)

  Source: Internetworldstats & CAK Sector Statistics

- **Average Home Broadband Download Speed:** 7.2 Mbps (2014) Source: Netindex

- **Mobile Subscribers:**
  - ➢ 32.2 million users – 72% of population
  - ➢ 26.6 million mobile money subscribers – 59% of population

Quick Stats...

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Internet Freedom:
- ➢ 28th freest in the World
- ➢ No state sanctioned content censorship
- ➢ Unfettered freedom of expression online esp in social media with the only exception being hate speech propagation.

Source: Freedom House

Growth Factors

➢ **Liberalization** of the telecoms sector (circa 2000-2004)

➢ **Infrastructure:** Establishment of **undersea marine fibre optic** network (2009-Present) & Internet Exchange Point (IXP) lowered cost of bandwidth for ISPs.

➢ Content: Almost **No regulation** of online content.

➢ **Political Will:** ICT sector forms part of government's vision for a middle income economy in 2030.

➢ **Entrepreneurship:** Kenyans are highly entrepreneurial and have taken advantage of

Impediments

- **Lots of room for improvement!** ☺

- **Bandwidth costs are still very high**: 100-150 USD per megabit! Most individuals and SMEs can't afford this!

- **Connectivity:** Most parts of country are still offline

- **Content Creation:** Market is predominantly consumes content especially from US Internet firms (Google, Facebook, Twitter). **More local content creation** needs to be encouraged.

References

- Communication Authority of Kenya (CAK) Sector Statistics (Fourth Quarter 2013-2014): http://ca.go.ke/images/downloads/STATISTICS/Q4SectorStatisticsReport2014-2013FINAL.pdf

- World Internet Stats: http://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#ke

- NetIndex: http://www.netindex.com/download/2,128/Kenya/

- Freedom House: http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2013/kenya#.VFaVWIu3jC4

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