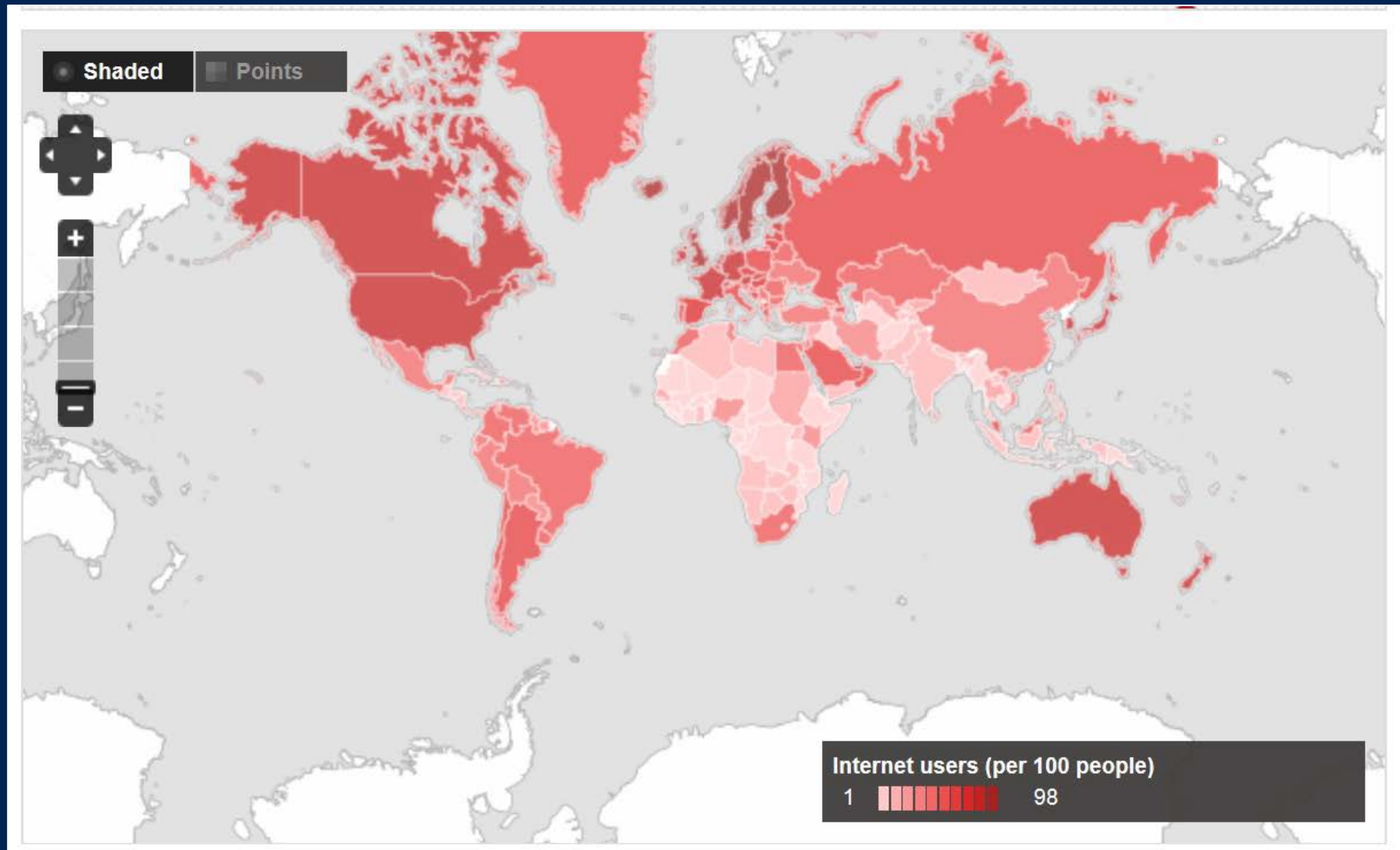


Global Connect, 2015-2017

An initiative to help bring an additional 1.5 billion people online by 2020; supporting achievement of the SDG goals. <https://share.america.gov/globalconnect>

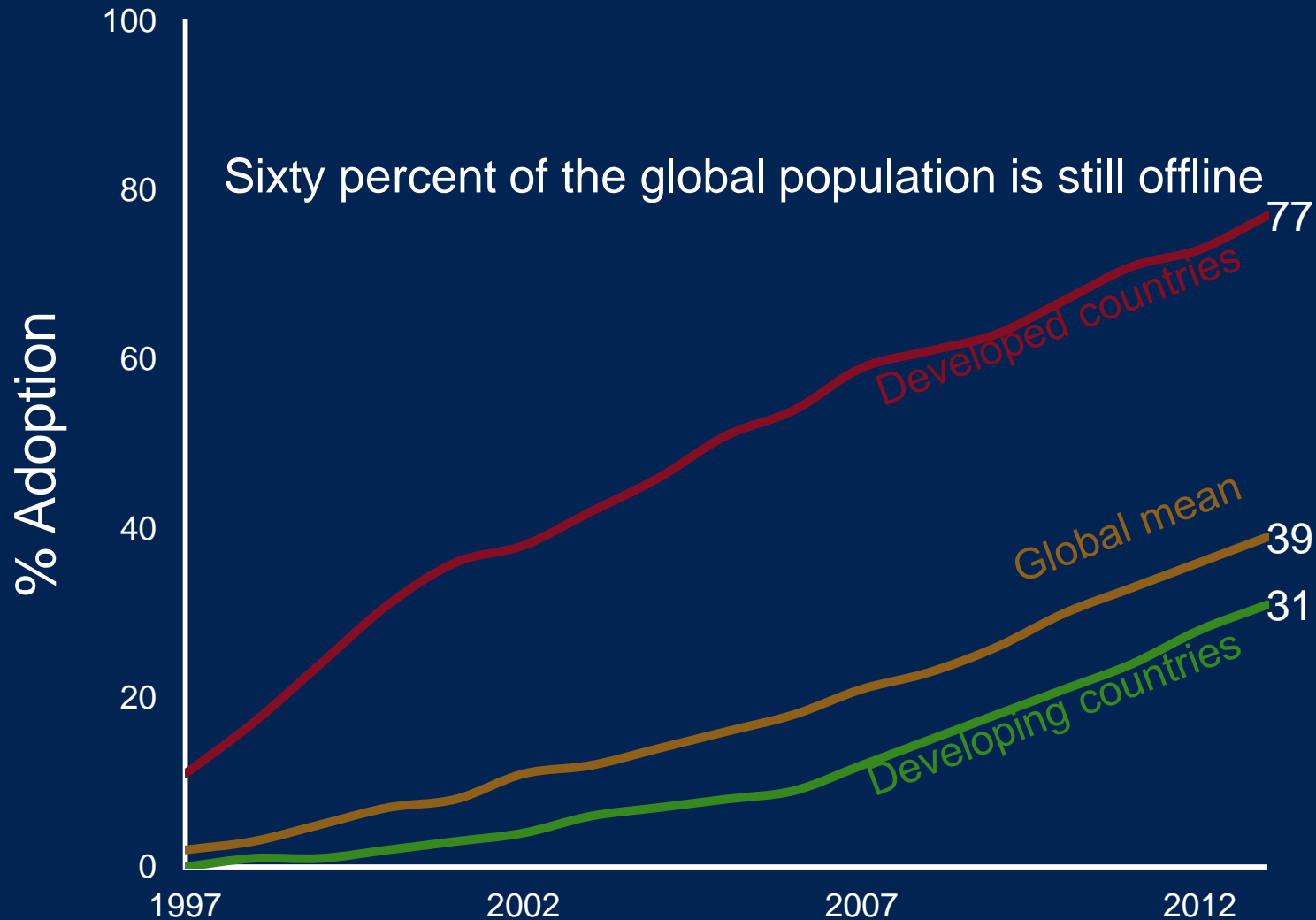


The Challenge of Internet Access: The majority of Internet traffic is in developed countries



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators: 2011-2014

The Challenge on Internet Adoption: Despite growth, the digital divide remains between **developed** and **developing** countries



Source: International Telecommunication Union ([website](#))

The Challenge: Why are some countries lagging?

Lack of funds for infrastructure



Minimal technical expertise



Corruption



Political instability



Restraints on free speech



Key Achievements of Global Connect, 2015-2017

- Policy: Mainstreamed the view that Internet connectivity is as fundamental to economic development as roads, ports, electricity (e.g. Finance/Health Ministers; additional funding secured from development agencies; World Bank 2016 Digital Dividends Report).
- Countries: More countries integrating Internet connectivity and digital technologies as key part of national development strategies. Stressed in all bilateral meetings at S, U/S, and Amb level.
- Financing: International development institutions and USG prioritized Internet for development to help market access of U.S. companies. (e.g., 1% of entire infrastructure budget of WB was ICT/internet versus \$1B of OPIC Financing for U.S. companies.)
- Accelerate Progress and Capacity Build for Faster Scaling: Worked with IEEE and others to build a tech and connectivity corp to help emerging nations figure out new/workable strategies. Next meeting in April in Washington DC during Spring IMF/Bank Fund.

Bi Partisan Support for Int'l Internet Connectivity

- Two Major Congressional Bills – Digital GAP Act (House) and Digital Age Act (Senate)
- Both Adopted Metrics of Obama Administration's Global Connect effort: "Policy of the United States ... to promote first-time Internet Access to mobile or broadband Internet for at least 1.5 billion people in developing countries by 2020 in both rural and urban areas."
- Increased Focus from OPIC, USAID and MCC: Proposes President Trump outline partnerships by US development agencies on Internet infrastructure programs at agencies.
- After enactment, requests annual reporting on progress of U.S.G efforts in developing countries, including technical and regulatory road map for promoting Internet access.

What should stakeholders do now?

- Encourage the USG to continue to make connectivity – both domestic and international – a domestic policy and foreign policy priority (e.g., State continues Global Connect program without significant alteration to policy objectives)
- Fulfill following functions through collective action:
 - Clearinghouse (April 2016 – listed 65 initiatives valued at \$20 Billion)
 - Convener/ Central Hub (Every Bank Fund, April + October)
 - Annual report on Progress (e.g., financing, partnerships, broadening support)
 - Elevate political visibility of topic
 - Create connectivity corp of experts to help governments and partners.