Community Networks and Local Access Monthly Newsletter - Number 35

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Welcome to the 35th monthly round-up of developments impacting your local access networks.

We have created a new platform for community networks to share our experiences and grow together. Please join us at https://communitynetworks.group/

APC shares highlights of its work to promote affordable and sustainable connectivity between 2016 and 2019. Read more.

Events and conferences

- RightsCon has published its 2021 session list, which includes over 500 sessions in total this year. You can find sessions that involve community networks in the categories of Internet Access, Education and Inclusion. Read more.

- Reimagine the Internet is a virtual conference exploring what the internet could become over the next decade. From 10 to 14 May, it will feature six sessions, including one about pioneering alternative models for community on the internet. Read more.

Resources from past events

- A session at the WSIS Forum 2021 highlighted existing initiatives enhancing digital inclusion of Indigenous peoples, including those aimed at increasing access and digital skills. It also shared lessons learned for replicating such initiatives. A recording of the session is now available online. Read more.

- This virtual seminar organised by the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (OAS/CITEL) discussed how to connect the unconnected in rural

areas that are neglected or insufficiently served. The event's videos are available in Spanish, and include participation by Colnodo from Colombia. Read more.

- CoolabCamp is an event organised in Brazil to discuss community networks, autonomy and digital sustainability. In the context of the pandemic, the event happened online this year. This post tells more about the gathering (available in Portuguese). Read more.

- The webinar "Catching Technological Waves: Innovation with Equity, the Role of Civil Activism" marked the launch of the 2021 UNCTAD Technology and Innovation Report. Mike Jensen from APC, one of the panellists, highlighted communities' interest in self-provisioning of connectivity where they have given up waiting for affordable broadband to arrive in their rural or remote areas. Read more.

Community networks in news and blogs

- On Earth Day 2021, APC launched the 2020 edition of Global Information Society Watch (GISWatch) on the theme of "Technology, the environment and a sustainable world: Responses from the global South". One of the thematic reports in this new edition highlights community networks as a people- and environment-centred approach to connectivity. Read more.

- The article "Sarantaporo.gr Community Network: Tending to Our Communities' Needs with Care and Flexibility" shares the journey of Sykea village in Greece and the challenges faced to get internet connectivity. Read more.

- Seeding change: Find out about the ways Zenzeleni Community Networks has been growing its capacity to provide internet access while building a local source of income alongside community members in South Africa's Eastern Cape province. Read more.

- La Difference's Pamoja Net project is a community network located on an island in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this article, its CEO Mike Beeston comments on the importance of community connectivity initiatives. Read more.

- This beautiful photo report on the experience of the community network Red Comunitaria INC (RedINC) explores opportunities, connectivity and the hope of this rural territory in Colombia. Read more.

- Indigenous communities and former armed combatants in Colombia join together to bring internet connectivity to Cauca. Read more.

Gendering Community Networks

- In this article for GenderIT.org, Daiane Araujo dos Santos discusses the link between popular education and community networks, and argues that class, race and gender should be part of the analysis in the implementation of autonomous infrastructure and technical training dedicated to digitally excluded communities. Read more.

News on policy and regulation

- The videos from the High-level Thematic Debate on Digital Cooperation and Connectivity promoted by the UN in April are available on its Web TV. During the event, a joint letter called on governments, industry, multilateral

institutions, civil society, and international financial institutions to close the digital divide by putting people at the centre of our approach to achieving meaningful connectivity for everyone. Read more.

- As a way to promote digital inclusion, the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) advocates and offers recommendations for the development of community networks in Nigeria. Read more.

Tools and toolkits

- The Argentine organisation AlterMundi uploaded a series of videos on its YouTube channel providing more information about the LibreRouter, the open-source hardware and software router. Read more.

Funding opportunities

- The Local Networks initiative announced its 2021 grant programme for projects involving existing or new community networks linked to technological innovation and appropriation, gender and women's participation, community-led processes and policy-related aspects. If you are looking for opportunities to start or strengthen community-based connectivity initiatives, don't miss the deadline: the call is open until 30 April. Read more.

Previous editions

- Previous editions of this newsletter are available here.

This newsletter is part of the Local Networks (LocNet) initiative, an initiative led by APC in partnership with Rhizomatica that aims to directly support the work of community networks and to contribute to an enabling ecosystem for the emergence and growth of community networks and other community-based connectivity activities in developing countries. You can read more about the initiative here, here, and here.

Invite others to subscribe to this monthly newsletter here!

One more thing! If you have comments about the newsletter or information relevant to the topic that you would like us to include in the next edition, please share it with us at localaccess.newsletter@apc.org.

Topic
- Access
- Community networks
- Gender and ICTs
- ICT for development
- ICT policy

APC-wide activities
- Local access and community networking

Tags
- Access
- community networks

Region
- Global

Related projects
- Connecting the Unconnected: Supporting community networks and other community-based connectivity initiatives
- Local Access Networks: Can the unconnected connect themselves?