Community Networks and Local Access Monthly Newsletter - Number 36

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Welcome to the 36th 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/

Events and conferences

- We are happy to invite you to the online event "Education and Community Networks, Building Opportunities" this Friday, 28 May, 15 UTC. This is the second of the "Community Networks Tech-Talk" webinars, a series that focuses on the different aspects of life within community networks through a dialogue facilitated by key community network builders. Read more.

Resources from past events

- On 20 May, the "Technological autonomy as a constellation of experiences: A guide to collective creation and development of training programmes for technical community promoters" was launched in two sessions, one in English and another in Spanish, gathering representatives from around the world. The session videos are available for those who missed them. Read more.

Community networks in news and blogs

- Fantsuam Foundation works on empowering community members, particularly women, to find means of employment and income to meet their own development needs using ICTs. This article for the APC "Seeding Change" column tells more about how they are improving communities' lives in northern Nigeria. Read more.

- Three new community networks are helping safeguard communities in rural Brazil. Learn more about their experience in this story about the project implemented by the Institute for Research, Studies and Training (NUPEF) in partnership with the Inter-State Movement for Babassu Coconut Breakers told by ISOC. Read more.

- The article "Bridging digital divides through the provision of digital fluency skills - Via Wikonnect" tells more about Tunapanda Institute and Learning Lions experience in implementing this open-source e-learning platform. Read more.

- Colnodo community networks systematised their methodology and shared the steps of the journey taken by communities, collectives and neighbours towards building a community communication network in their territory (available in Spanish). Read more.

- In the article "Common Room: How an artist is connecting rural Indonesia one village at a time", ISOC highlights the incredible work done with community networks in the region. Read more.

Gendering Community Networks

- The 16th Wireless Community Weekend happened from 14 to 16 May, promoting several interesting discussions on this field, including a panel discussion about women's experiences in mesh networks. This and other panels' videos are available on the Freifunk initiative online spaces. Read more.

- Digital Empowerment Foundation in collaboration with USAID and DAI are providing training to women entrepreneurs to ensure financial sustainability and stability under its project Digital Sarthak. Their report provides the key findings from a scoping study conducted to understand the existing usage and practice of digital tools by women. Read more.

News on policy and regulation

- How can regulators enable communities working to connect themselves? The Communications Authority of Kenya announced a public consultation until 1 June that will lead to the country's framework for community networks. To know more, watch the video of the webinar held to discuss this issue and read the framework draft, developed by the authority in partnership with KICTANet, APC, the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland and supported by the United Kingdom's Digital Access Programme. Read more.

- The Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) launched a Community Information Centre (CIC) and the Murambinda Community Network, officiating the first community network in the country on 14 May. Read more.

Tools and toolkits

- From recommendations to reflections on the diversity of communities' values and principles, the "Technological autonomy as a constellation of experiences" guide offers an important contribution to people, organisations and communities that see training as crucial to promote their communication and telecommunications processes within their territories, especially for community networks. The publication can be download in English or Spanish. Read more.

Funding opportunities

- The Information Society Innovation Fund (ISIF Asia) is dedicated to empowering organisations that research, design and implement technical solutions that support internet development and facilitate human and economic development in the Asia Pacific region, with a focus on inclusion, infrastructure and knowledge from a technical and operational perspective. Its call for 2021 grant proposals will open from 3 June to 19 July 2021. Read more.

- FRIDA is a fund that supports initiatives to strengthen the internet in Latin America and the Caribbean. The program provides funding under three thematic categories: internet stability and security, free and open internet and internet access. Project proposals are being received until 11 June 2021. Read more.

- The Strengthening Communities, Improving Lives and Livelihoods (SCILLS) programme aims to expand economic growth and increase educational opportunities by supporting individuals and communities to more knowledgeably and skillfully use the Internet. Grants of up to USD 150,000 will be awarded to eligible organisations in Bangladesh, Colombia and Senegal. The deadline, however, is close: the applications are open only until 28 May. 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.