

Local Access: How are grassroots communities promoting digital inclusion?



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How are grassroots communities promoting digital inclusion while reinforcing their autonomy? By sharing knowledge and thinking together about how to build and strengthen community networks! Around 35 communities are joining the national community networks schools, the first of their kind, taking place in five countries this year: Brazil, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

Welcome to the 47th monthly round-up of developments impacting your local access networks and community-based initiatives.

Events and conferences

- The ITU World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC) will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, from 6 to 16 June 2022, under the theme “Connecting the unconnected to achieve sustainable development”. [Read more](#).
- This year, WTDC will feature the Partner2Connect Digital Development Roundtable from 7 to 9 June. It will give an opportunity for member states, private sector, academia, civil society, international organisations and other entities to announce their pledges related to digital transformation. [Read more](#).
- The 11th edition of RightsCon will take place online from 6 to 10 June 2022. Registrations to join close on 3 June. [Read more](#).
- The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) invited all stakeholders to submit proposals for the 17th annual meeting by 3 June 2022. [Read more](#).

Community networks in news and blogs

- Meet the national community networks schools empowering grassroots communities to bridge the digital divide. [Read more](#).

- The third iteration of the South Africa School of Community Networks started on 2 May 2022 in Mankosi, Eastern Cape, South Africa, bringing together seven community networks both established and yet to be established. Find out more in this piece from KICTANet. [Read more](#).
- In Brazil, a [series of visits](#) were made to the seven communities that will be part of the Amazon Community Networks School taking place between June and December this year. This interview with Beatriz Tibiriçá, one of the School's board members, spoke about the culture of free access. [Read more](#).
- Rhizomatica shows how the most remote communities can build their own communications networks. [Read more](#).
- And this interview with Rhizomatica's General Coordinator Peter Bloom also features how high-frequency digital radio systems are connecting Amazonian communities. [Read more](#).
- The University of Technology Sarawak is currently carrying out an initiative to develop the first community network in Malaysia. [Read more](#).
- This series of podcasts by Colnodo features experiences and learning in accompanying the implementation of community networks in rural areas of Colombia. [Read more](#). [Available in Spanish]

Gendering community networks

- Women in the Africa Community Networks Movement: This meaningful online session took a deep dive into the role that women play in community networks, the challenges and, more importantly, opportunities for change. The recordings are available [here](#).
- Meet Hackers Comunitarias, the women challenging communications, tech and access inequalities in Mexico. In this photo essay we will discover the experiences and learnings from women who get together to redefine technologies and develop their networks locally. Now also available in Spanish. [Read more](#).

News on policy and regulation

- AlterMundi has prepared a summary of the Roberto Arias Programme with information on its characteristics, requirements and a step-by-step guide on how to apply for this programme to support community initiatives in Argentina. [Read more](#). [Available in Spanish]
- Applicants' communities will also get support in a training initiative, the "Semillero de Redes Comunitarias", which will support their access to the Universal Services Fund through the Roberto Arias Programme. [Read more](#). [Available in Spanish]
- The radio spectrum is a way to access human rights; find out why in this interview with lawyer and ICT specialist Adriana Labardini Inzunza for the Peruvian media website Brecha Cero. [Read more](#). [Available in Spanish]
- Digital inclusion is still a challenge in Brazil and community networks can and should be part of the answer. Learn more in this article from IBEBrasil. [Read more](#). [Available in Portuguese]

Funding opportunities

- Applications are still open for the 2022 Information Society Innovation Fund (ISIF Asia) Grants cycle. The deadline was extended until 31 May. [Read more.](#)
- In the Latin America region, FRIDA's 2022 call for proposals will also remain open until 31 May 2022. [Read more.](#)
- IEEE Connecting the Unconnected Challenge launched its call for participation this year with submissions open until 15 July. This competition aims to identify and award innovative ideas and early-stage projects which have potential to provide internet access to unconnected populations. [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](#).

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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.