



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

Categories

1. Get involved

- The submission of initiatives and projects to the WSIS Prizes contest is open until 2 January 2018. [Read more.](#)

2. Calls for grants

- Facebook's Telecom Infra Project has released a call for applications for grants for those interested in deploying their own OpenCellular solution. [Read more.](#)
- Microsoft's Airband Initiative is welcoming applications for grants until 31 January 2018. You can read more about how to apply, who they fund, and the expected outcomes on the grant fund page. [Read more.](#)

3. Events and conferences

3.1 Upcoming events

- The [Internet Governance Forum 2017](#) takes place from 17 to 21 December in Geneva, Switzerland. There are several sessions that could be of interest for those following local access conversations. In [this shared document](#) we have highlighted some. In particular, these three are directly related to the topic:
 1. 18 December 10:50-12:20 UTC: [How devices, content & innovative business models shape our digital future: creativity with purpose.](#) Where the [LibreRouter](#) will be presented.
 2. 19 December 11:20-11:50 UTC: [Financing and building sustainable community networks - the Coolab experience.](#) Session organised by [CoLab](#).
 3. 19 December 16:20-17:20 UTC: [Meeting of the Dynamic Coalition on Community Connectivity.](#)

Links for remote participation will be made available by the organisation closer to the beginning of each session.

- 7amleh, the Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media, from Palestine, is organising the [Palestine Digital Activism Forum 2018](#), which is taking place on the 17th of January 2018 in Ramallah, Palestine.

3.2 Resources from past events

- During 8 and 9 November the Internet Society organised the [Indigenous Connectivity Summit](#) in Santa Fe. Videos from all the presentations are available [here](#).
- The [Global Access to the Internet for All](#) (GAIA) Research Group met on 15 November during IETF100 in Singapore. The [agenda](#), [slides](#) and [videos of presentations](#) have been made available.

- The Digital Empowerment Foundation has made available [pictures](#) and a [report](#) from the Community Network Exchange in the Asia Pacific Region held on 20 September in Delhi.

4. Community networks in news and blogs

- This [blog post](#) by Leandro Navarro compares the benefits of decentralised internet provisions, with many valuable references to local access initiatives.
- [In Spanish] The Internet Society firmó con el Ente Nacional de Comunicaciones (Enacom) un acuerdo de cooperación para detectar los pueblos sin conectividad para promover en ellos las redes comunitarias. [Read more](#).
- [In Spanish] El trabajo de Ik' ta K'op, un colectivo mexicano que trata de resolver sus propias necesidades de comunicación en el estado de Chiapas, ha sido recogido por la agencia Mexico News Network. [Read more](#).
- [Zenzeleni Networks](#), an ecosystem to promote community-owned ISPs in rural South Africa, was recently profiled in the South African news after winning the best social innovation award at a national innovation event. More [here](#) and [here](#).
- Guifi.net, one of the world's biggest community networks, with a major footprint in Catalonia (Spain), was [featured in the Financial Times](#).
- Community networks have been brought to the headlines in the US media as an alternative to the FCC regulations to roll back their net neutrality order. One example is this [article from Vice Magazine](#). An older report about the community network in Detroit mentioned in the article is available [here](#).

5. Relevant articles on technologies related to local access networks

- In the November edition of "The Economist", a series of articles devoted to technology in Africa are very much related to discussions of community connectivity. Glenn McKnight has gone through the trouble of scanning it to make it available to everyone [here](#).
- Airtel India is publishing their tower locations. [Read more](#).
- In "[Zebras Fix What Unicorns Break](#)", Jennifer Brandel, Mara Zepeda, Astrid Scholz and Aniyia Williams share some of the challenges faced by “zebra companies”, defined as those with alternative business models who seek sustainability while creating a more just and responsible society, when attracting funds. There are many parallels between zebra companies and local access initiatives.
- For those interested in community cellular networks, Steve Song reflects in [this post](#) about the convenience of using 3G or 4G.

6. Regulation

- The South African government has published an [invitation to comment on their Electronic Communications Amendment Act](#). This amendment has important consequences for the way local access initiatives will be able, for instance, to access spectrum or government funding. Deadline 31 January.
- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the communications regulator in the United States, has released a [proposal to "Restore Internet Freedom"](#) which many consider a rule against net neutrality.
- In response to the US developments on net neutrality, India reiterated its commitment to protect it. [Read more](#).
- [In French] The African Telecommunications Union urges governments and other stakeholders to make rural connectivity their priority. [Read more](#).

7. Reports and publications

- The Internet Society has released a report on [Promoting the African Internet Economy](#). It focuses on the potential for internet-based platforms to foster growth in Africa's economy and includes some interesting examples of local and regional services that are successfully targeting local needs across the continent. In line with the report's recommendation about the need to develop local content infrastructure in order to support a robust internet economy across Africa, EdgeMicro is working on a [solution](#) to deploy data centre containers right at cell towers.
- After lots of work and too much time, Rhizomatica have finally released their Community Cellular Manual in [English](#). The version in [Spanish](#) is available too.
- The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development released their [Information Economy Report 2017](#) where community networks are mentioned when discussing solutions for "Reducing the Divides in Digital Technology Use".

This newsletter is part of the project titled, "Local Access Networks: Can the unconnected connect themselves?" developed by APC in partnership with Internet Society and Rhizomática, with support from Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

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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.