

Community Networks and Local Access Monthly Newsletter - Number 43

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Original illustration by Gustavo Nascimento.

Welcome to the 43rd monthly round-up of developments impacting your local access networks and community-based initiatives.

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

Events and conferences

- Online launch: On 1 February at 10:00 UTC, IIT Bombay will present and discuss the research paper "Community radio enabling women's empowerment in remote communities of India". Join the event to discover how women have found self-expression through community radio as a low-cost technology while enabling local communities to voice themselves during the pandemic. [Read more.](#)

Resources from past events

- The third session of the Virtual Summit on Community Networks in Africa 2021-2022 took place on 26 January and explored strategies and tools for implementing billing solutions in different initiatives. You can now watch the recording of the session to find out why billing infrastructure is essential for sustainability, what tools are popularly used and why. [Read more.](#)

- From 24 December 2021 to 3 January 2022, AnthillHacks 21.22 gathered local participants in India to reflect and explore different tracks, including one on wireless mesh networking, nodes, devices and services. The [AnthillHacks's Twitter account](#) features photos, videos and more information on this event. [Read more.](#)
- Routing for Communities is an online film festival about community networks and people decentralising the internet for change. On 3 December, the film festival screened a series of creative and inspiring short videos produced by communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America. You can find out more and watch the films on the event's landing page. [Read more.](#)

Community networks in news and blogs

- The strength of a network: This article takes a look back on how APC members have been seeding change in their communities, including inspiring community networks initiatives in Africa, Asia and Latin America. As the need for connectivity has become more evident than ever, these initiatives have found new and creative ways to address this, ensuring that technology responds to people's and communities' local contexts and needs. [Read more.](#)
- In December last year, the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) launched the first Nigerian School of Community Networks. For five days, members of rural communities discussed how to create and manage community networks, as an alternative to bridge access gaps in the country. The school is supported by the initiative “[Supporting Community-led Approaches to Addressing the Digital Divide](#)”, which, in addition to Nigeria, foresees similar initiatives in South Africa, Kenya, Indonesia and Brazil. [Read more.](#)
- In Brazil, the Saúde e Alegria Project (PSA) is also preparing a School of Community Networks, which should take place between June and December this year. Through a methodology of collective creation, PSA is discussing the content to be addressed with 21 students from organisations in three states of the so-called Legal Amazon region in Brazil [available in Portuguese]. [Read more.](#)
- This short video from AlterMundi presents different voices explaining community networks initiatives in a beautiful way [available in Spanish]. [Read more.](#)

- Finally, a video from Telecomunicaciones Indígenas Comunitarias (TIC A.C.) documents their work on the development of a 4G community network in a creative and accessible way. [Read more.](#)

Gendering community networks

- Living in times of inequality in the second year of a global pandemic: this special edition of GenderIT.org, "Infrastructures of resistance: Community networks hacking the global crisis", explores how intersectional approaches in community networks have been transforming realities and bringing hope to communities. The edition includes five articles, one podcast and a tarot card reading. [Read more.](#)
- Whose voices are heard in policy and regulatory spaces? What are our gendered experiences in these spaces? How can we build more inclusive, diverse and community-oriented access policies? Key issues like these were discussed over the past two months by community network advocates, internet governance specialists and digital rights activists from Africa, Asia and Latin America through the Socio-Political Advocacy for Community Networks Engagement (SPACE) initiative. [Read more.](#)
- The Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) convened a one-day consultative meeting on gender and community networks. This piece brings together their observations and recommendations. [Read more.](#)

News on policy and regulation

- African Telecoms Infrastructure in 2021: this annual review highlights telecommunications infrastructure development in Africa and provides links to over 270 articles covering a range of infrastructure development issues in the region. [Read more.](#)

Funding opportunities

- Expanding the reach and resilience of wireless internet-independent peer-to-peer communications: The U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL) has launched an open competition for applications for projects that promote the ability of small groups of at-risk populations to share information and files easily and securely during full internet shutdowns. The deadline for applications is 11 March. [Read more.](#)

Research

- ITU organised the "Connect2Recover Research Competition" to identify promising research proposals that will accelerate digital inclusion during the COVID-19 recovery globally. Among the winners of 15 research grants, there are important initiatives on community networks, such as "Rebuilding Digital Inclusion for the Rural Counties of Kenya" and "CoLRN: A Community-based Vision for Local Resilient Networks". [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.