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Community networks newsletter:

12 stories of people connecting themselves while defending the well-being of their communities

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This month we are sending out the last issue of this newsletter in 2023, and to mark the end of an intense year for community-centred connectivity initiatives, we want to highlight the first season of the Routing for Communities podcast – now completed and sharing 12 powerful stories of community networks around the world.

The season brought diverse voices and experiences reflecting on how and why to be connected throughout the past six months. Looking forward, they also share a common message about the need to create human and digital networks based on nurturing a viable future for all.

Welcome to the 64th monthly round-up of developments impacting your local access networks and community-based initiatives.

Routing for Communities podcast

- In November we launched the last two episodes of the first season of the Routing for Communities podcast! This month, we travelled to Thailand and Kenya to discover pioneering actions centred on local communities. Listen to them now:
- [Episode 11: Thailand's first community network connects around 500 homes](#)
- [Episode 12: Celebrating community networks making change in Kenya and around the world](#)

- Get involved: Help us to share these stories and reach people who may support community-centred connectivity. Recommend the [podcast page](#) to others. Also available on [Google Podcasts](#), [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#). You can help by sharing it on social media (check out some [messages on this thread](#)).

Community networks news and stories

- The National Schools of Community Networks are collective capacity-building efforts laying the foundations for change through shared knowledge in five countries: South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Indonesia and Brazil. This photo essay provides a glimpse into the special journeys of local communities making change happen to bridge the digital divide. [Read more](#).
- In Brazil, the participants of the Amazon Community Networks School are celebrating the achievements they are promoting in their home communities using the school's mentorship and micro-grants. This is the case of a web radio from Rede Wayuri and of a space created by the Arandu Caratateua Collective to foster community connectivity and communication. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- In Colombia's rural areas, digital inclusion efforts from civil society organisation Colnodo aim to initiate a School of Community Networks to accompany communities interested in managing their own connectivity. [Read more](#).
- From Kenya, the Kijiji Yeetu community network has been sharing exciting news on [its social media](#). They received an offer letter from the Communications Authority of Kenya as a community network and service provider. And new deployments are coming after a technological feasibility study and gap analysis conducted in Ambira, Ugunja, Ngunya and Umala villages in Ugunja town. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).
- The hundreds of solidarity and non-profit experiences that support the right to connectivity in uncovered areas are the focus of the book "Conectividad popular", launched in Argentina. [Read more](#).

Gendered experiences

- Celebrating the Indigenous Cabécar women who hacked the white man's technology: Learn from an inspiring project carried out by Sulá Batsú in partnership with the Alto Pacuare Cabécares Women's Association in Costa Rica. Together, they mobilised technologies and communications to strengthen local women's voices and agency. [Read more](#).
- In Colombia, Colnodo is celebrating a new community network led by women: the Zacarias UFS community network. USF stands for "Unidos Fortaleciendo Sueños", which means United Strengthening Dreams – the motto of their initiative. [Read more](#).

Enabling policy and regulation

- In Brazil, the telecommunications regulatory agency, Anatel, held a seminar focusing on challenges for the sustainable expansion of community networks. The event brought together different players, including community representatives, to discuss how to create an enabling environment for community-centred connectivity in the country. The recordings are available on Anatel's YouTube channel [here](#) and [here](#).

- You can also find out about some of the policy and regulation priorities among community networks and civil society organisations through the national press coverage, such as [here](#) and [here](#).
- As a contribution to the dialogue in Brazil, Giudice Jérica, from AlterMundi, sent a message from Argentina sharing some reflections on their experience. Through participatory processes, the country has implemented pioneering programmes to support the flowering and continuity of community networks. [Watch the recordings](#).

Publications, research and toolkits

- Who can say no to a project that promises internet access for everyone? Starlink, a global Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite constellation, has dominated the news with its service availability in several African countries. In this comprehensive article, Steve Song examines the business model of retail LEO satellite constellations and asks whether we might be better off without them. [Read more](#).
- In Brazil, the Nupef Institute and InternetLab, in partnership with local organisations, have started the Networks in the Forest project (“projeto Redes na Floresta” in Portuguese), which will analyse how the rapid expansion of LEO satellites will impact the Amazon region from various social, economic and political perspectives. [Read more](#).
- Community Network Do-It-Yourself Toolkit: This guide recently launched by the Internet Society provides simple steps for those interested in building local networks, along with links to additional resources to learn more. [Read more](#).
- Codesigning community networking literacies with rural/remote Northern Indigenous communities in Canada: This article discuss a series of virtually facilitated, participatory workshops that utilise “hacker literacies” and “infrastructure literacy” to reimagine connectivity infrastructure. [Read more](#).

Events

- The Latin American and Caribbean Internet Governance Forum (LACIGF) will be held in a hybrid format on 4 and 5 December, in Bogotá, Colombia. [Read more](#).
- Under the theme “Closing the Gender Digital Divide”, the 2023 IEEE Connecting the Unconnected Summit will happen on 4 December 2023 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with the possibility of virtual participation. [Read more](#).
- This online meetup on 29 November discussed one of the leading open source network management tools for internet services providers: the OpenWISP. [Read more](#).
- The 7th Community Network Xchange 2023 just took place on 24 and 25 November in India. For two days, dialogues showcased the stories, challenges and successes of community-led initiatives. The recordings are available on the [YouTube channel of Digital Empowerment Foundation](#). You can also check out some highlights on [their thread here](#).
- The NOA Community Networks Meeting, held at the National University of Salta in Argentina, addressed the inequality of access to connectivity in rural and popular areas, and discussed shared agendas among community networks to reverse it. [This video offers some of its highlights](#).

- Regenerating Community in the Rainforest at DWeb+Coolab Camp Brazil: Learn more about the reflections of this gathering through the words of one participant and beautiful pictures. [Read more](#).

Funding opportunities

- Wehubit supports a selection of projects that use digital technologies in exploring new ways to solve development challenges and specifically target the scaling-up/replication phase of digital social innovations. Its call for proposals is now open until 5 January 2024. [Read more](#).
- Training opportunity: The call for participation in the first edition of the "Central American Training Programme in Telecommunications and Broadcasting in Indigenous and Rural Communities 2024" is open until 7 January 2024. [Read more](#) and [submit your request for registration](#).

Featured from the community networks learning repository

This month, several Spanish-language materials on community networks were uploaded to the repository as part of the preparations for LACIGF. In recommending them in this issue, we would like to highlight the contributions from the Latin American and Caribbean region, recognising the importance of producing materials in different languages, which is still a challenge on the internet.

The repository is a collective online space to store and exchange resources that can be useful in training processes, focused on materials made for and by community networks.

[Find out more!](#)

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 Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. You can read more about the initiative [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Previous editions of this newsletter are available [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 [here](#).