

CONCEPT NOTE & AGENDA



Meaningful Access with Community Networks

Online Conference



November 20 - December 4, 2020

Organising Partners:



Supporting Partners:



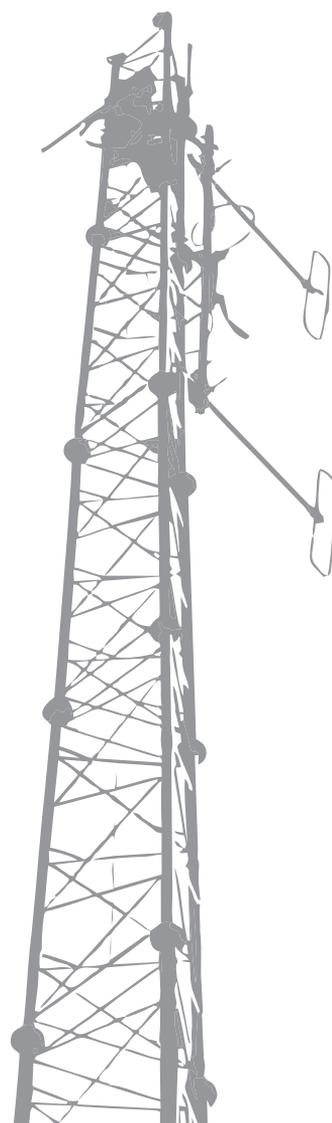
INTRODUCTION: CNX 2020

Since its inception, CNX has played a crucial part in understanding the role, relevance, and evolution of community networks in different contexts. The first edition of CNX delved into understanding the synergies between community networks and community radios. The second CNX was themed around the "Role of community networks and community radios in leveraging public Wi-Fi in Asia-Pacific countries". CNX 2019 explored understanding how community networks can be looked at as a complementary means of access to the Internet for people with the theme "Can Community Networks become Internet of People!"

CNX 2020 takes place in the midst of a new reality. In the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, the significance of community networks cannot be emphasised more. With rolling social distancing restrictions, people across the globe have been forced to remain at home and the Internet has become an absolute necessity. While half of the world's population is connected online, the other half remains out of reach. The digital divide is deeper in developing countries, where only 19% of people are connected to the Internet, when compared to 87% in developed countries. In India alone, despite the high Internet and smartphone penetration across the country, there are still some 300 million citizens who have no Internet connectivity of any kind.

In such situations, where groups of people have no connectivity or means to access the Internet, community networks can play a significant role in connecting and empowering rural and underprivileged populations who are still struggling for meaningful access to the Internet. Under the shadow of the global pandemic, perhaps the question to ask is how best to ensure connectivity for all, and should it be considered a basic right? What sort of enabling regulatory and policy environment is required for the mass adoption of community networks? How do we ensure the newly connected are capable digital citizens and are able to maximise the digital opportunities on offer?

With this in mind, the theme of CNX 2020 is "Meaningful Access with Community Networks". Within this overall theme, ten sub-themes will address various dimensions related to meaningful access with community networks and how local communities can leverage them.



OBJECTIVES & METHODS

CNX 2020 will run online from 20th November to 4th December 2020. To ensure maximum engagement without the fatigue that comes with lengthy and day-long online sessions, each day of the conference will only have two focused sessions, running for a total of 150 minutes.

The sessions will be held using Zoom and will be broadcast live on a number of diverse platforms including Livestream, Facebook Live, YouTube, and Twitter/Periscope.

To maintain participants interest and engagement, each session will have three components:

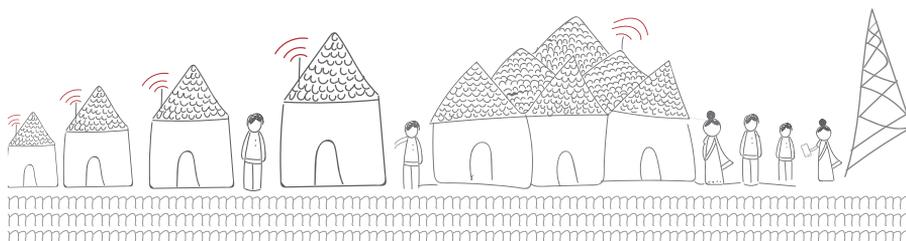
- A moderated roundtable discussion for 25 minutes with 3 speakers
- A 15 min segment called "Voices from the Community" which will include several short videos from community networks around the region
- A curated free-flowing open mic session to cater for questions and answers on the session topic

The second session will run in the same format, and it will be preceded by a short break where posters from the communities will be displayed via the Zoom platform.



Voices from the community segment: Each session will have a 15-minute segment called "Voices from the Community" which will feature short videos from locations around the region where community networks are deployed. They will include human interest stories, regional stories, and impact stories in English and regional languages.

Each day of the virtual conference will run for 150 minutes (2hr 30mins) in total. The online platform will go live 10 mins prior to the daily start time to allow participants and speakers to connect, and to ensure a timely start to proceedings.



CNX 2020 FORMAT

Time	Description
5 min	Introduction of session topics
25 min	Roundtable for speakers and moderator
15 min	Voices from the community
20 min	Question and Answer
Break	
15 min	Poster/video display
5 min	Introduction of second topic
25 min	Roundtable for speakers and moderator
15 min	Voices from the community
20 min	Question and Answer
5 min	Close of Day



CNX 2020-THEMES

Session 1: Community Network Models & Best Practices: There are several community network models in practice across the world, and the Asia-Pacific is no different. This session will explore the different models and conditions under which community networks operate, along with the technology used. It will also highlight some best practices and learnings.

Session 2: Access during the pandemic: Saving Democracy, Citizenship & Education: Internet access has become vital - and an uncompromisable necessity - during the pandemic due to restrictions on movement and social distancing requirements. However, at the same time, some governments appear to be using this greater dependence on Internet-based applications and services as an opportunity to promote authoritarianism and control. This session will discuss the complexities - as well as the necessity - of open access for citizen rights and sustaining democracy.

Session 3: Policy & Regulation for Mass Adoption of Community Networks: Even though community networks have successfully been in practice as an alternative method to connect communities to the Internet, they have not become a viable alternative in many countries. This session will look into what kinds of policy, regulatory, advocacy and design effort is required to facilitate greater adoption of community networks and help fast-track access for the unconnected in countries and regions all over the world.

Session 4: Community Networks as a Model to fight Misinformation & #Fakenews: Community networks can be thought of as 'trusted networks' in that the participants are all from the same community and would have an intrinsic element of community trust between them – just about every one knows every one else. This can potentially enable trust-based information sharing, and at the same time help avoid misinformation and fake news. This session will discuss how community networks can potentially be leveraged to counter the pandemic of misinformation and fake news.



Session 5: #Gender Sensitive Community Networking: Various studies and reports have shown that there is a significant gender divide in digital spaces, and many elements around the use of the Internet are male-dominated. This is sometimes exacerbated in rural areas. Community networks can provide an opportunity to bring about gender equity. This session will discuss the efforts that have been successful in providing gender equity through community networks and how that can be used to redress gender issues in the wider community.

Session 6: #Content, Context and Community for Community Networks: Community networks are designed to serve the community's needs and are often built by the community themselves. The relevance of community networks is in the fact that they have the ability to far better contextualise local content, local content consumption and production through the involvement of the local community. This session is designed to highlight some of the best practices in how communities are using community networks to create localised content for their local communities and suited to their local context.

Session 7: Community #Radio & Broadcasting with Community Networks: Community radio networks excel in producing local content with local context. They are also usually developed, managed, and produced by the community, for the community. Community radio operators also know the best ways in which to broadcast content and reach out to the larger community. As such, they are well-placed to evolve into community network operators as they also have technical knowledge about radio transmission and radio mast design. This session is designed to explore how community radio operators can transform into community (Internet) network operators and provide greater value to their local communities.

Session 8: #Training & Cadre Development for Community Networks: As Internet access and provision becomes further localised with communities in remote areas getting connected, there is a need to develop local capacity for developing, managing, maintaining and sustaining the network. It is important to create local cadres that know local content, have the local context, and are able to play a part in locally developed community networks. This session will explore the ways in which this type of capacity building can be facilitated.



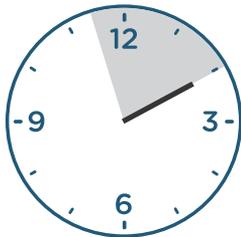
Session 9: **#Partnerships & Collaborations for Community Networks:**

Community networks while considered to be affordable and participative in terms of local participation, also require the involvement of multiple stakeholders for success. These range from community organising to financial assistance and donor backing to technological assistance and so on. This session is designed to understand how different stakeholders can come together to make community networks successful and will look into ways to enhance collaborative efforts and partnership across different stakeholders.

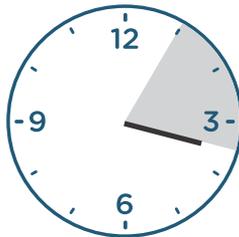
Session 10: **Connecting #Indigenous Communities:** Generally speaking, tribal, aboriginal, and indigenous communities tend to live in rural and remote areas, away from industries and cities. More often than not, they are the last populations to be digitally connected. These communities are also culturally rich with their own linguistic and social practices, and norms. While they require digital connectivity and access to the Internet just like anyone in an urban area, it is important that community networks practice sensitivity and inclusion without violating and polluting the community's social norms and practices. This session is designed to understand and discuss the ways in which community networks can better serve indigenous communities.



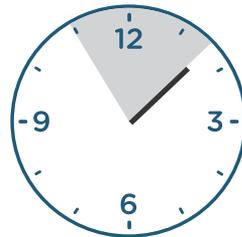
LOGISTICS - CNX TIMINGS



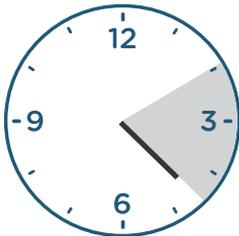
DELHI
1130-1400



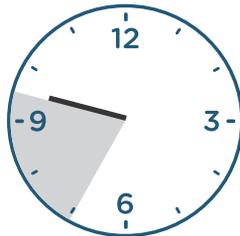
BANGKOK
1300-1530



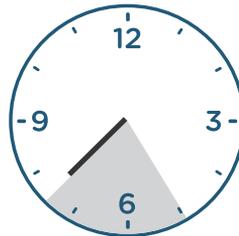
ISLAMABAD
1100-1330



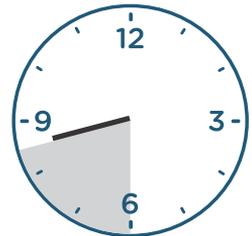
SINGAPORE
1400-1630



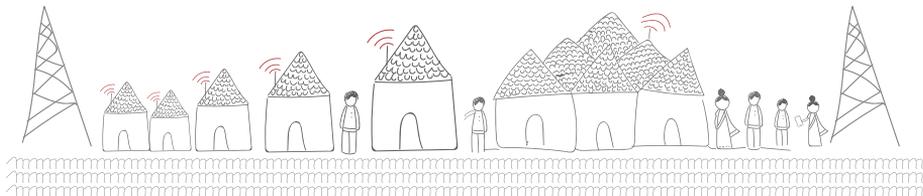
SUVA
1900-2130



SYDNEY
1700-1930

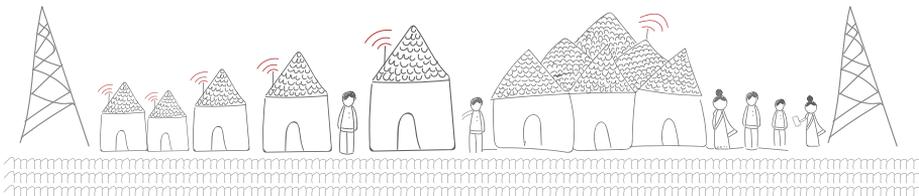


UTC
0600-0830



CNX 2020 FORMAT

Day	Sessions	Theme
20th Nov. 2020	Session 01 Session 02	Community Network Models & Best Practices Access during the #pandemic: Saving Democracy, Citizenship & Education
23rd Nov. 2020	Session 03 Session 04	Policy & Regulation for Mass Adoption of Community Networks Community Networks as a Model to fight Misinformation & #Fakenews
26th Nov. 2020	Session 05 Session 06	Gender Sensitive Community Networking Content, Context and Community for Community Networks
30th Nov. 2020	Session 07 Session 08	Community #Radio & Broadcasting with Community Networks Training & Cadre Development for Community Networks
2nd Dec. 2020	Session 09 Session 10	Partnerships & Collaborations for Community Networks Connecting #Indigenous Communities
4th Dec. 2020		Closing



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