



**37 MEETING OF PERMANENT CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEE I: TELECOMMUNICATIONS/
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION
TECHNOLOGIES**
Bogota, Colombia
October 26 to 30, 2020
VIRTUAL

OEA/Ser.L/XVII.4.1.37
CCP.I-TIC/doc. "[Doc. No.]" /20
7 October 2020
Original: English

**“CREATING AN ENABLING REGULATORY
ENVIRONMENT FOR COMMUNITY NETWORKS”**

**Item on the Agenda: 4.1.4 Rapporteurship on Broadband,
universal access, digital inclusion and gender equality**

(Document submitted by the Internet Society)

Impact on the sector:

This document summarizes the joint contributions submitted by the Internet Society, APC, Article 19 and IBEBrasil to the Rapporteur Group meetings (Sept 21 – Oct 2) of ITU-D SG1 (“Enabling environment for the development of telecommunications/ICTs”) on issues pertaining to “strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries” (Question 1) and “Telecommunications/ICTs for rural and remote areas” (Question 5), to be added to SG1 Report on “ICT requirements of people living in rural and remote communities”.

Executive Summary:

Community Networks (CN) are an important part of connectivity ecosystems. They help connect the unconnected in under-connected areas and are a complementary solution for connecting rural remote and underserved areas in an affordable manner. In addition to improving affordability and connectivity, community networks bring digital skills and tools to rural, remote, and underserved areas.

This document prepared by the Internet Society with the support of Article 19, the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and Instituto Bem Estar Brasil (IBEBrasil) presents a set of relevant strategies and policies for the deployment of broadband in developing countries, with a special focus on Telecommunications/ICTs for rural and remote areas. It explains how CNs help connect the unconnected in under connected areas and are a complementary solution for connecting rural remote and underserved areas in an affordable manner. It also covers how governments can foster enabling environments for CNs in fields such as licensing requirements, bureaucratic reform, spectrum allocation, capacity development and direct support to infrastructure deployment, as well as innovative financial and regulatory schemes that can foster the development of complementary connectivity solutions to connect the unconnected.

It concludes by presenting a set of selected case studies from CNs in Latin American countries and abroad.
