



Mike Jensen, APC Labs-Community Networks coordinator, community networks project

Mike Jensen is a South African ICT expert currently working as APC's internet access specialist. Mike has assisted in the establishment of internet-based communication systems in more than 40 developing countries over the last 20 years, mainly in Africa. He provides advice to international development agencies, the private sector, NGOs and governments in the formulation, management and evaluation of their Internet and telecommunication projects, ranging from national ICT policy development to international fibre and rural wireless telecommunication feasibility studies.

Mike sent his first email 30 years ago while studying for his Master's degree in rural planning and development in Canada. He subsequently returned to South Africa to work as a journalist on the leading national newspaper in Johannesburg, the Rand Daily Mail. When the paper closed in 1983, with little sign of improvement in the political situation in South Africa, he moved to Canada, and in 1987 he co-founded the country's national internet service provider for NGOs, called, coincidentally, The Web. He returned to work on the development of the Internet in Africa in the early 1990s. Mike's clients have included the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Internet Society, the UK Department for International Development, the UN World Food Programme, UNESCO, the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC), and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. A member of the African Conference of Ministers' High Level Working Group, which developed the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) in 1996, Mike's more recent projects include strategic advice on cross-border fibre provision in Africa, and a study of the benefits of promoting infrastructure sharing for lowering the cost of access.