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| **Council Working Group on International Internet-related Public Policy Issues Thirteenth meeting – Geneva, 19-20 September 2019** |  |
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| Brazil (Federative Republic of) | |
| TOPIC FOR THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION OF THE COUNCIL WORKING GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL INTERNET-RELATED PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES | |

**Proposal for a topic**

Brazil presented a contribution on this topic at the 2019 Session of the ITU Council. Brazil presents it again at this 13th meeting of CWG-Internet, amended according to proposals and discussions held at Council.

Brazil proposes the following topic for the 7th Physical Open Consultation of CWG-Internet, February/2020:

**Topic: The role of** **small/community/non-profit operators in Internet connectivity**

**Background:** The 12th meeting of CWG-Internet discussed two proposals for an open public consultation on the general topic of “Community Networks.” According to the proposals, there are experiences in the deployment of community networks that have proven to be successful in many countries in providing access to broadband connectivity. In Brazil’s point of view, those proposals heed the call of [Resolution 203 (Rev. Dubai, 2018)](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts/RES-203-E.pdf) “Connectivity to broadband networks”, particularly in Invites the Member States 2, 4 and 6.

Brazil corroborates that small/community/non-profit operators can collaborate to raise Internet services penetration, assisting the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals 9 and 17 and the reduction of the digital divide. Although public policies for Internet expansion in Brazil are being addressed in a wider context, the contributions of small/community/non-profit operators should be highlighted.

Public policies for broadband expansion in Brazil are a component of the “Structural Plan on Telecommunications Network (PERT),” approved by the Board of Directors of Anatel on June 14, 2019. In addition to a diagnosis of the Brazilian broadband infrastructure, PERT also indicates specific projects to overcome Internet gaps in Brazil, including in remote, unserved or underserved communities.

As PERT, other projects that contribute to Internet expansion have been approved, such as the creation of the Committee of Small Telecommunication Service Providers (Resolution nº 698/2018). Nowadays, there are more than 12,000 small commercial telecommunications service providers in Brazil, and this number increases continuously with around 200 new small commercial broadband service providers each month.

According to Anatel’s indicators, small commercial telecom service providers represented 17% of overall Internet accesses in 2017, and today they represent 27%. Other important indicators to highlight are that over 20% of households with internet access in Brazil share the access in their neighbourhood, and more than 3,650 small/community/non-profit operators have obtained from Anatel license exemption to provide internet access.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The expectation of Anatel is that the recently created Committee could facilitate this expansion even further, helping to promote improvements in public policies and regulatory frameworks, capturing the demands from these specific stakeholders, elaborating studies and promoting actions for the provision of services by small/community/non-profit operators.

Although the Internet Access Sharing indicator does not necessarily correspond to a Community Networks initiative, it shows that a large proportion of Internet users tend to share their own infrastructure to reduce costs, improve quality of service and ensure access to users through a more collaborative and sharing management models.

Besides the search for universal access to the Internet, another relevant issue is the sovereignty of information. Approaching the user as protagonist rather than merely a consumer leads us to questions how communities can strengthen political and cultural roles through the self-management of networks. Therefore, infrastructure control is also linked to other rights, such as freedom of expression, privacy, and avoiding abusive practices.

Given these regulatory actions and aiming to expand society’s access to broadband services, Brazil is in favour of an open discussion on the role of small/community/non-profit operators in advancing Internet connectivity. A CWG Physical Open Consultation presents an ideal forum to promote an inclusive debate and exchange of experiences and best practices.

**Questions:**

* + How can community networks be best defined and how are they modeled in your country?
  + Which new technologies have the highest potential to increase the population covered by broadband infrastructure of small and/or non-profit community operators?
  + What kind of regulation and funding is necessary for small/community/non-profit operators?
  + In your country, do the community and non-profit operators generally use their own Backhaul or they use other operator’s infrastructure, especially small operators’ infrastructure (considering their increased presence in rural and remote areas)?
  + What kind of community engagement and collective actions are necessary for small/community/non-profit operators to flourish? What can be done to facilitate and enhance these practices? What are the challenges of extending connectivity infrastructure and affordable services to end users?
  + Does the current policy landscape existing in the country foster the development of small/community/non-profit operators as one possible solution for helping to bridge the digital divide? Are market-based solutions and community-based initiatives treated as complementary?
  + Is the existing regulatory framework an enabler of small/community/non-profit community operators? Are there initiatives for modernizing such a framework to reduce the regulatory, political and commercial barriers to community networks?
  + Do policies and regulations applicable to spectrum allocation specifically address not-for-profit and small-scale operators?

1. CETIC.br (2018). “*TIC Domicilios*”, <https://www.cetic.br/pesquisa/domicilios/indicadores> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)