

June 2021

Community Networks

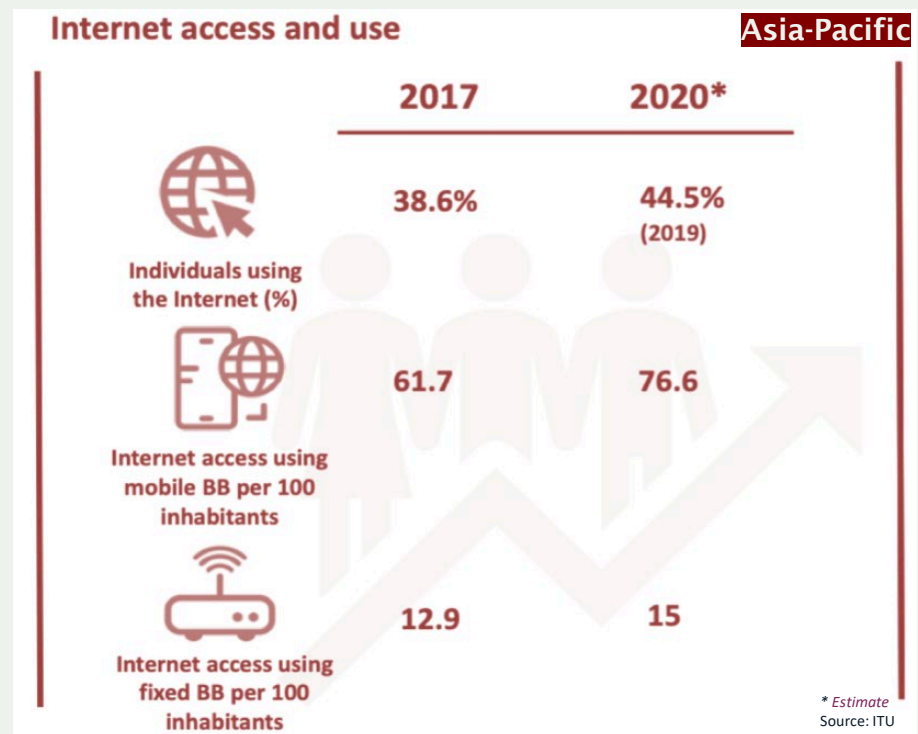
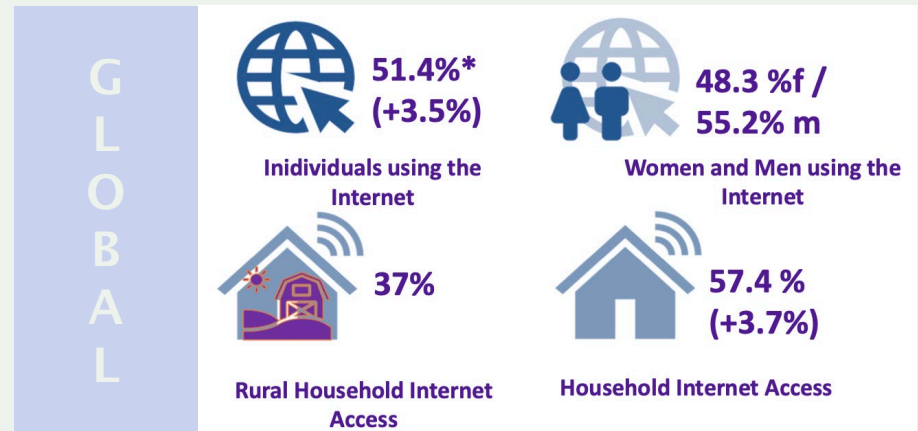
Sustainable solutions for bigger and stronger communities



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How things look today

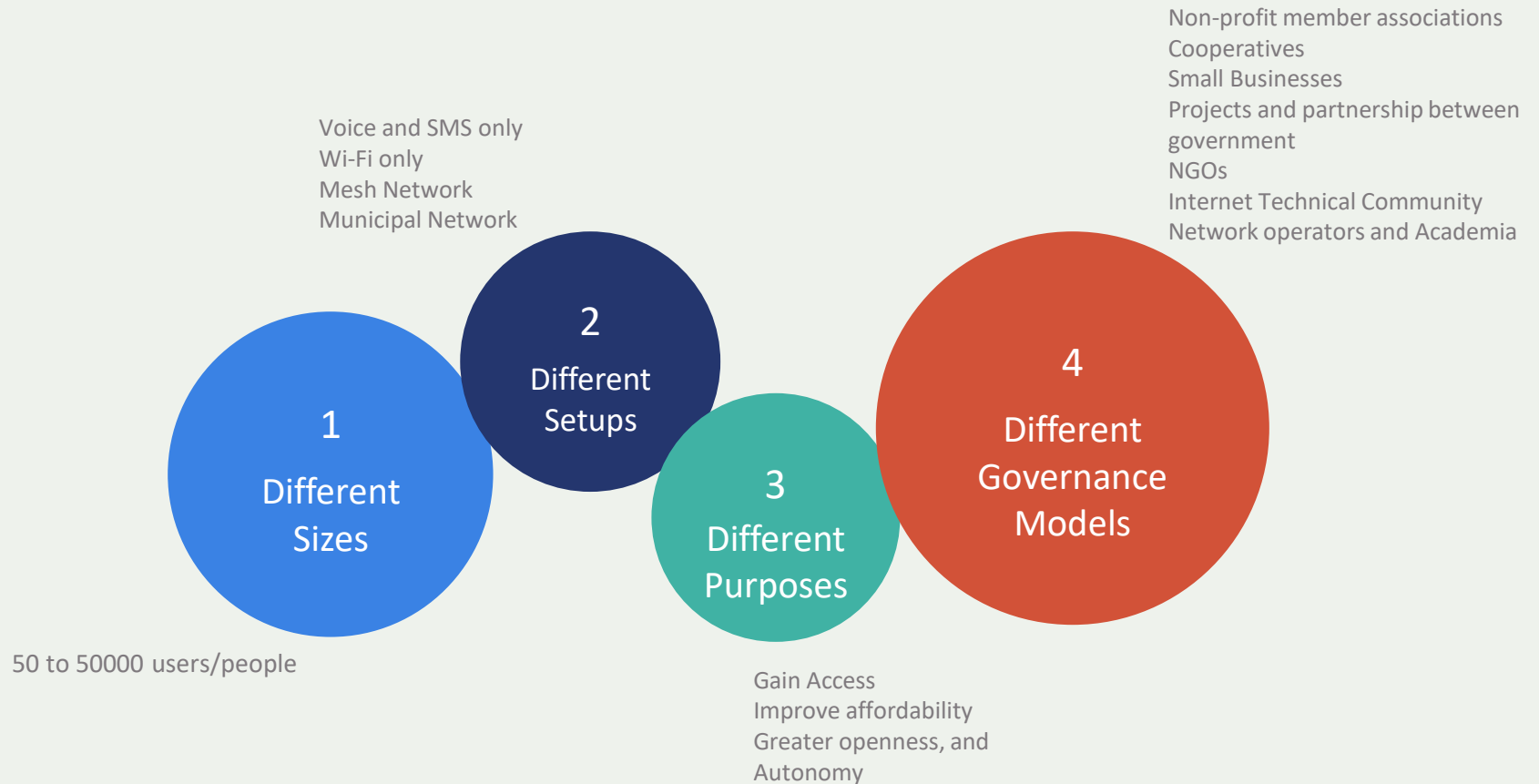
- **Half** of the global population remains offline
- A **slowdown** in the rate at which people are coming online
- **New and emerging** digital divides are a concern
- COVID-19 pandemic clearly demonstrated the **importance** of the Internet
- The need to connect people is as **urgent** as ever



Community Networks are
networks built, managed and used by
local communities.



Community Networks



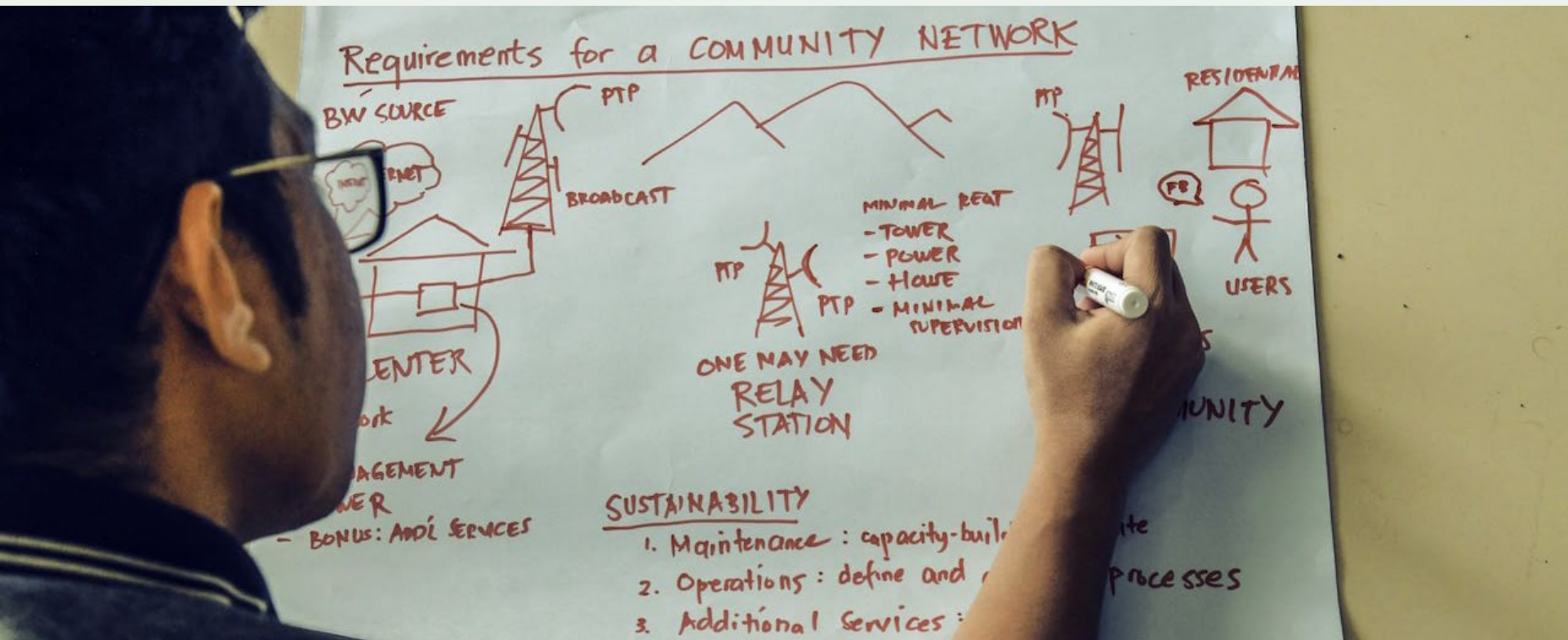
Community Networks

- Offer an essential and **complementary** solution to last-mile connectivity
- **Lower** connectivity cost for communities
- **Empower** communities with digital tools and skills to improve their lives
- Help **achieve** the Sustainable Development Goals



What Challenges do Community Networks Face?

- Policy and Regulatory Challenges
- Technical Challenges
- Financial and Sustainability Challenges



Financial and Sustainability Challenges

- Limited access to financial resources for:
 - Capital expenses: equipment, fees for licenses and permits, and backhaul connectivity
 - Operational expenses: Training, rent, utilities, communications, salaries, taxes, and maintenance and support services.
- Sustainability options



Policymakers and Regulators

- Consider innovative licensing solutions for Community Networks
- Ease requirements and obligations
- Reduce or waive license fees
- Spectrum bands for Wi-Fi
- Availability of secondary-use spectrum
- Spectrum Sharing



Policymakers and Regulators

- Open Access to backhaul and ISPs
- Ensure affordability: backhaul/infra
- Allow tax deductions: CN support
- Limit civil and criminal liability for people sharing Internet access
- Make funding available: USF, Grants
- Promote open standards
- Consult with Community Networks



Network Operators and Business Entities

- Recognise Community Networks as an essential and complementary player in last-mile connectivity
- Engage in partnerships with Community Networks to deliver telecommunications services to underserved areas
- Provide backhaul connectivity and share infrastructure and spectrum at rates affordable to Community Networks
- Fund Community Networks as part of corporate social responsibility
- Offer technical expertise in installing, upgrading and operating the networks in communities



Good Financial and Sustainability Practices

Argentina: Regulator's formal recognition of Community Networks

Chile: Community Networks can apply for funding from the government's Telecommunications Development Fund

Europe: The European Commission endorsed Community Networks as a complementary business model in its Broadband Investment Guide.



Good Policy and Regulatory Practices

Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Uganda:

Provides license exemption or license fee exemption for Community Networks

Nepal: Charges a fee of USD1 only for rural Internet service provider license

Mexico: Indigenous communities can apply for an indigenous social-use license, tax free, to use spectrum in the 850MHz band to build their own networks

India: The Supreme Court holds that spectrum can be allocated on a license-exempt basis for organisation with a social or welfare purpose. The regulator issued experimental licenses for TV white space to Community Networks

China and USA: Expanded license-exempt spectrum bands for Wi-Fi

USA: Awards spectrum auction credits to small businesses, including those owned by minority groups and women

Canada, Spain, UK: Tax deductions for contributions to cooperatives and non-profits



Thank you.

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