

APPENDIX C – INTERIM NARRATIVE REPORT (REPORTING TEMPLATE)

Interim Narrative Report: Community Network Catalytic Grant & APC Labs funding

Name of Organization: *Digital Empowerment Foundation*

Name of Project: Barefoot Women Wireless Engineers strengthening community networks and community radios in promoting public Wi-Fi access

Country: *India*

Date Submitted: *31th Oct 2019*

Name of person who completed the report: *Saurabh Srivastava, Project Officer, Coordination, implementation and documentation of the program*

Please answer the following questions briefly and submit the **interim narrative report no later than 31 October 2019**. Please limit your report to a maximum of 8-10 pages. If you want to send any additional information attach it as appendices. We also understand that you might not have all the information need for this report, therefore it would be helpful if you can answer as best you can, and specifically on the two sections: 1) Objectives and 2) Activities.

A. Administrative information

Community Network name: Community Radio and Community Service Provider

Name of two community network catalytic grant members:

1) Name 1 – A.K Khamar Rahman, President, Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam (VJMS Awaaz Wanaparthy 90.4 FM), Wanaparthy, Telangana

[Other team member involved in the project from VJMS is Madhu Krishnana, Technical Coordinator]

2) Name 2 – Kalyan Akkipeddi, Director, ProtoVillage, Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh

[Other team member involved in the project from the Proto Village is V. Goverdhan, Coordinator]

Project period: 01 July 2019 – 31 October 2019

B. Project report

1. Objectives

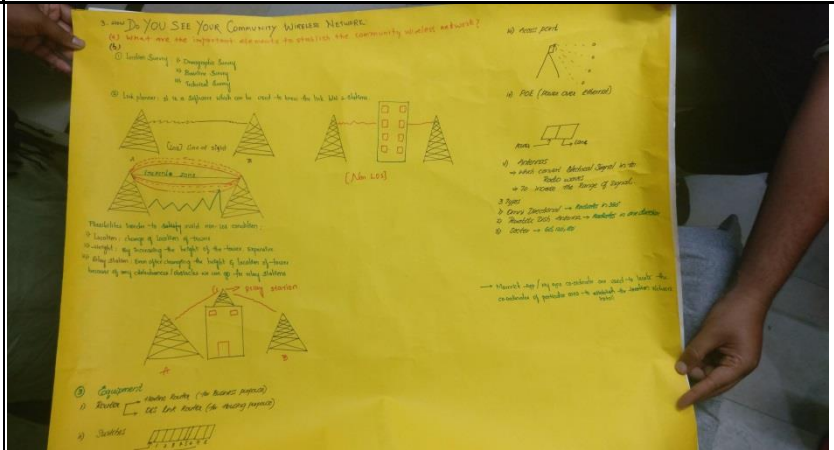
Please write down the objectives of your community network catalytic grant and explain briefly how you think the project contributed to achieving your objective. Provide any evidence that you have that your objective was (partly or wholly) achieved.

Please also list any objectives and those which are still to be met within this period. Feel free to attach or refer to your monthly monitoring reports.

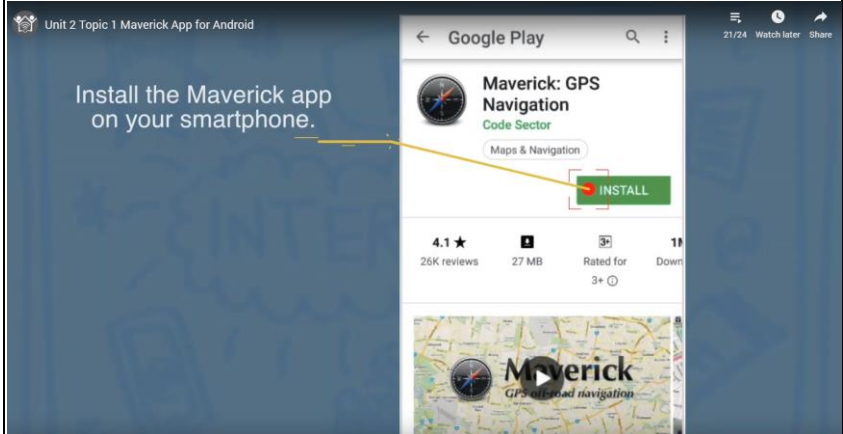
Objective	Project Contribution
<p>Support innovative technology use and approaches that enable scaling and sustainability of community networks</p>	 <p>By adopting the approach of "Community Networks", Digital Empowerment Foundation is working towards providing sustainable solutions to the problems related to connectivity gaps in rural areas of Wanaparthy district of Telangana state.</p> <p>Digital Empowerment Foundation have deployed advanced wireless equipment to create a wireless network in the selected areas and as a part of community networks, these 24 women from the community are being trained who will provide sustainable solutions to the existing connectivity gaps by breaking down the barriers of culture and society.</p> <p>These 24 women aged between 18 years to 35 years have been selected on the basis of their interest to learn wireless technology, entrepreneurship skills and their zeal to serve the community by providing information and digital services.</p> <p>"Aawaz Wanaparthy radio station is the place for women led activities in all the major sectors of development like health, education, life skills and livelihood etc. "Padiaparthy" is a place situated in Wanaparthy – is an internet dark area where this project is being implemented.</p>
<p>Enable women to understand the concept of internet and to understand the fundamentals of wireless networking and community networks</p>	

Objective

Project Contribution



The self-designed course has been designed in the form of videos and local case stories-available in both offline and online version (on web and mobile), developed as an open source learning management system (LMS), known as Moodle. This course is available on lms.defindia.org. The self learning material has been especially designed for barefoot wireless engineers with visual content and video stories.



Objective

Project Contribution

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Setting up Wireless Networks - Part I

Setting up Wireless Networks - Part I


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The primary objective of the training is to create a network of rural women wireless engineers for further managing and operating wireless networks across the country and contributing to gender inclusion in internet and technology environment. The specific objective(s) of the training are as follows:

- Enable women to understand the concept of internet and wireless networks
- Build confidence amongst women participants in handling the wireless network through practical learning
- To understand the fundamentals of wireless networking
- To introduce the LMS and take them through the wireless course modules
- To be able to setup wireless network
- To be able to understand the nuances of troubleshooting and maintenance of the network

Objective	Project Contribution
<p>Enable women to setup wireless network and able to understand the nuances of troubleshooting and maintenance of the network</p>	 <p>The primary objective of the training is to create a network of women wireless engineers living in rural areas so that they could further manage and operate wireless networks across the country and contribute to the society.</p> <p>Specific objectives are as follows-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To make the women understand about the concept of internet and wireless networking 2. To train them through wireless course modules 3. Introduction of Learning Management System 4. To build their capacities so that they are able to setup wireless networks in their communities, because rural communities in target areas did not have access to internet and they want a sustainable digital solution for education (online scholarships/fellowships), health (tele-medicine), skill development (e-cources for livelihood) and e-governance solutions run by government. <p>These women can be digital service providers for providing such services as well as they can earn their livelihood.</p>
<p>Enable women from the community to be an wireless entrepreneur as well as influencer to use the community wireless network</p>	<p>A training program of 7 days was organized in Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam (Awaz Wanaparthly Radio Station) and Proto village to provide hands on training to these women on usage and management of wireless equipment.</p> <p>During the training, the team interacted with the community based organisations and infuses to promote the usage of internet for information-focusing primarily on self-governance and digital services.</p> <p>These women from Wanaparthly are the part of Self Help Groups. These groups are connected with our local radio partners Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam (for more information visit https://www.vjms.org/). These groups are engaged with various micro/small livelihood activities. With the support of</p>

Objective	Project Contribution
	<p>internet they can market their products online and increase their income.</p> 
<p>Establishment of digital centre for digital literacy, access to information and services</p>	  <p>With establishment of the community networks people are now connected to the world of possibilities that lie ahead. For the same purpose, digital centers were set up wherein trainings were held in digital literacy. The Digital centers were a physical outcome for the community to access the information online. Most of the rural population including in surrounding villages either had no access to the government</p>

Objective	Project Contribution
	<p>benefits or were not aware. With the setting of these centers connected to the community network, these people can now access the entitlements online which also helped save their time and daily wage.</p>
<p>Demonstration by barefoot wireless engineers trainee at CNX 2019</p>	<p>Digital Empowerment Foundation in partnership with Association for Progressive Communication held the third Community Network Exchange. The event was aimed at understanding how 'Community Networks' as a technological alternative and infrastructurally independent can be looked at as an alternative to the Internet for people's communications system. The theme of CNX 2019 was "Can Community Networks become Internet of People!" and saw participation from across South Asia. They indulged in interactive sessions to workshops wherein they explored various solutions that the community radios can initiate with the help of community network. One of the sessions was conducted by the Barefoot Wireless Engineers who explained how community network not just helped in their area to be connected but also provided a livelihood option. They also demonstrated how an access point is setup.</p> 

2. Activities

Please list the activities that were planned for the year (including monthly online dialogue, travel exchanges, country policy profiles, for example) and explain (one by one) the results of each activity. Highlight positive and negative aspects of the activities. Highlight ways in which what you did was different from what was planned. Give reasons if you did not do the activity or you changed the activity in any way.

Activity	Results	Comments & changes
Reece of 2 project location	<p>Area exploration has been completed by the program experts of Digital Empowerment Foundation.</p> <p>Team of experts visited "Aawaz Wanaparthi" community radio run by Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam (District - Wanaparthi, State- Telangana), MannDeshi radio(run by Mann Deshi Foundation, Masvad, Satara district, Maharashtra) and Protovillage (Anatapur, Andhra Pradesh,a community led organisation.</p> <p>Radio Station run by Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam and ProtoVillage have been selected as the two final project locations.</p>	
Agreement with 2 local community networks	Digital Empowerment Foundation has signed up a MoU with both the local implementing partners for the successful implementation of the project in their areas.	
Agreement with HR involved with this project	<p>Agreement has been done with the Human Resources involved with the project.</p> <p>Shahid Ahmed (Project Head), Saurabh Srivastava (Project Officer), Fauziya Nazim (Trainer), Tamre Alam (Trainer).</p>	There are other supporting team members, helping in setting up the wireless centre at both the locations. Ritu Srivastava, Aamir Rahman, Manoj Ojha and Manoj Lodha are helping to setting up the wireless network.
Identification of 24 women beneficiaries for wireless engineering	The primary responsibility of 2 local partners/community networks/radio station was to identify 24 potential wireless network engineers, who will become the wireless network providers from their communities.	
Community mobilisation	<p>The process of community mobilisation aimed to identify potential participants, who are enthusiastic and have social and entrepreneurial skills.</p> <p>Different mobilisation activities have</p>	

Activity	Results	Comments & changes
	been conducted by the partners to finalize the participants.	
Training Phase 1	<p>48 women participants have been trained in first phase of training in 2 locations</p> <p><i>Phase 1:</i> Wanaparthi with Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam : 24th July to 26th July 2019 ProtoVillage: 27th July to 30th July 2019 Palghar with BIAF & Gram Marg: 21st August to 24th August 2019</p> <p>Out of 48 participants 34 were from Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam, Wanaparthi (Telangana) and 14 were from ProtoVillage, Anantapur (AP)</p>	<p>A training program of 3 days was conducted by the master trainers and 4 days practical training will be done by the local partners.</p> <p>One knowledge exchange training program has been conducted with BIAF & GRAM Marg with 12 participants.</p>
Monitoring and Supervision	To ensure day to day activities, regular monitoring and supervision is being done through groups created on what's app.	
Network planning, Feasibility Study and Equipment information	<p>Network planning has been conducted by the participants at both the locations via link planner.</p> <p>Participants has been training for equipment planning according to the feasibility study i;e identification of Router, Access Point, Premises Equipment (CPE), Antenna, Radio Device and PoE etc.</p>	
Training Phase 2 & 3	In Phase 2 & 3, the focus is to provide more hands on training to the participants, so that they can be trained to install and manage the wireless network, equipment calculations, setting up the tower, configuring the hardware, assigning IP to the router, creating connections, testing the device, configuring Access Points, configuring the Ubiquity Radio, configuring Devices etc.	<p>Phase 2: Wanaparthi with Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam : 13 October - 16 October 2019 ProtoVillage: 17 October - 21 October 2019</p>

Activity	Results	Comments & changes
<p>Training of Phase – 3 and setting up the digital resource centre</p>	<p>The last and the third phase of the training involved practical implementation such as configuration of the devices and setting up of access points in the required nearby areas. Since many people saw how community networks helped in these two locations, persons especially girls were keen to connect their village and most importantly their schools with the help of these trainings.</p> 	<p>Wanaparthly with Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam : 23 December - 27 December 2019 ProtoVillage: 16 December - 20 December 2019</p>

4. Overall reflection

Please write a few paragraphs (300 words or less for each question) of general reflection. Write about:

* What went very well in the project - what are you especially proud of?

Wireless network is something which women can't access or avail -especially those who lived in rural areas of India. Women from those areas feel, wireless networks/Internet can only be accessed or availed by the males and they can't avail it. Digital Empowerment Foundation has broken that barrier by giving the opportunity to the women from rural and tribal communities to install, manage and run the community networks at the internet deprived areas- Wanaparthy and ProtoVillage.

Vanitha Jyoti Mahila Sangam, Wanaparthy is working with Self Help Groups run by women members. Internet is something, which can be a pathway to give them easy access to market linkages. Similarly, Protovillage is a community organization with a number of women participating from SHGroups, schools and villages. Through the program, there is a synergy coming with women wireless engineers and women from the community.

* What did not go very well, and why? What would you change or want to do differently if you were to do this project again?

1. We are happy to say that the program was well designed and appropriate as per the need of the community. Below are some reflections of the program-Through digital/internet, women will have easy access to information, rights and opportunities
2. Through community network space with advanced facilities (Community Information Resource Centre - CIRC), women from the community will be able to use CIRC for their daily internet use and services

* What aspects of gender or women's participation have you explored during the project period or still have plans to do? What about people with disabilities, climate justice, indigenous people or land rights?

Digital Empowerment Foundation has focused the entire project around community networks run by women entrepreneurs especially those who are coming from marginalised, underserved and unconnected communities. A community network led by women can be a changemaker of the community in many aspects i.e. providing access to information for women, persons with disabilities, youth, old aged, self-help groups and other major stakeholders, those are responsible for the overall development of the community.

Through Community Networks Catalytic Grant, Digital Empowerment Foundation has identified and trained 24 women barefoot wireless engineers as digital change agents for the communities. These women barefoot engineers can gain livelihood by providing digital services and information to the community. The community network will be the place for all communities including LGBT, where these community groups can access the rights, health and legal information and services online.

* What has your catalytic intervention project and your team done in broadly addressing the gaps around a sustainable community network environment? Feel free to refer back to the original call for proposals: <https://www.apc.org/en/35436>

In 2 locations, Digital Empowerment Foundation has identified 24 women beneficiaries as 'barefoot wireless engineers' and later they will become 'barefoot wireless entrepreneurs and service providers' for the community. They have set up their digital centres and through that

centre, entrepreneurs will provide various digital services, e-governance services, entitlement delivery, online surveys and data collection and other digital services along with internet/wifi connection for the household.

Digital centre also known as "Community Information Resource Centre" has been set up in both the places, where these network engineers is getting trained as digital services providers.

* What activities still remain incomplete for the duration of this project and will be completed by 31 December 2019?

1. Network management and trouble shoot training to the participants (in December 2019)
2. Internet/Wifi network connection to the nearby villages by women entrepreneurs (Creating at least 5 customers in each project location)

A Story:



Community building through community network

ProtoVillage- as the name suggests- is a prototype of an ideal community living. Situated in the second driest district in India in Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh, ProtoVillage is a rural community built for the villagers and by the villagers. The members are engaged in various activities from community eating to forming self-help groups for livelihood means. The children of the community attend the community established school. The community living is still in progress but the basic thing that this village lack is being connected to the rest of the world. To help these groups to the internet, Association for Progressive Communication in partnership with Digital Empowerment Foundation initiated the programme- Barefoot for Wireless Engineers. Under this, ProtoVillage is now converted into a community network, where major access points like schools, livelihood centre, digital classroom and community Information centre are connected. To further sustain this programme, community members especially the women were trained in setting up and troubleshooting the nodes of the community network. It was amazing to see the girls climb up the towers fearlessly transcending language barriers as well. As a result, when the surrounding villagers got to know of such an initiative many women, especially school-going girls, turned up to learn to setup community networks in their area.



Now, the community network has helped enhance ProtoVillage's vision of becoming a center for learning, practice, demonstration and dissemination of the knowledge on how any community in can organize itself to ecologically sustainable, socially cohesive, and economically viable, inviting more people to have easy access to the network.

Outputs & Documentation

Please include links to: videos, blogs, reports, manuals, press releases, applications and any other result of the project that are available online.

News Release: Attached in Annexure (1)

Application/Curriculum: [Ims.defindia.org](https://ims.defindia.org)

Photos: <https://wforc.in/barefoot-wireless-engineering-training-program/>

Case Story:

<https://share2.apc.org/index.php/s/8GxsrMybaBzkHWe?path=%2FSupporting%20Documents>

Media Reports



ఈనాడు
epaper.eenadu.net

ఆకాశవాణి సాంకేతిక శిక్షణ ప్రారంభం

వనపర్తి రాజీవ్ చౌక్, న్యూస్ టుడే : జిల్లా కేంద్రంలోని వనితాజ్యోతి మహిళా సంఘానికి మంజూరైన ఆకాశవాణి కేంద్రం నిర్వహణకు సాంకేతిక కార్యక్రమాల శిక్షణ కార్యక్రమం ప్రారంభమైందని నిర్వాహకురాలు కమల్ రహమాన్ తెలిపారు. శిక్షణకు దిల్లీ నుంచి సాంకేతిక నిపుణులు సౌరభ శ్రీవాత్సవ, రీతు, షౌజియా, మనోజ్ తదితరులు శిక్షణనిచ్చారని ఆమె తెలిపారు. శిక్షణలో వనితాజ్యోతి మహిళా సంఘం సిబ్బంది తదితరులు పాల్గొన్నారు.



ఆకాశవాణి కేంద్ర టవరు వద్ద శిక్షణ కొనసాగుతున్న దృశ్యం