PROJECT INTERIM REPORT

CHIRALA FISHING COMMUNITY PROJECT

Submitted to
Internet Society

Submitted by
Digital Empowerment Foundation

Prepared by
Digital Empowerment Foundation
44, Kalu Sarai, New Delhi
Website: www.defindia.org

Internet Society

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WIRELESS FOR COMMUNITIES

Executive Summary

The report provides an overview of the ISOC funded project "Chirala Fishing Community Project" program implemented by Digital Empowerment Foundation In target area Vadarevu (Chirala).

A feasibility study was conducted at the location to assess the various components of setting up the community networks in the target area. The initial activities were Baseline survey, setting up Centre/ wireless, Identification of center coordinator and the identification of potential internet hotspots.

Vadarevu Beach is a large fishing village, and the inhabitants are largely classified as minorities and dalit (lowest caste) and of poor economic status. There is no school in the entire area, nor any health centers in the community. Being a coastal area, the region is also disaster-prone.

The first wave of COVID-19 and the more devastating second wave affected the fishing community as well as the weavers' community and left them jobless. Tourism also dropped off and fishing became highly restricted. Children and adolescents in the community have also been suffering from a severe lack of access to education. To-date, schools still have not opened, nor the nearest village panchayat (lowest form of local government) level health centers. Even for simple access to food rations and basic banking, the community has to travel to digital points of access in urban and city areas.

Hence, the project aimed to provide internet access to the people and also promoting digital inclusion and help create community development opportunities also the project helped establish Internet Information Resource Centres which will act as a stable information access point for people living in those communities.

Introduction

In the current Digital Era, all Government policies are available online to be accessed by the beneficiaries, but, due to lack of internet, they are unaware of the online process or even the general existence of these schemes and policies. Therefore, to promote digital inclusion and help create community development opportunities, Digital Empowerment Foundation with Internet Society (ISOC), is going to implement a project named " Chirala Fishing Community Project". The project will covered 1000 households in an identified area Vadarevu in Chirala. This location is internet dark zones which lack access to education, information, entitlements, and rights.

Baseline Survey

About this baseline study:

The project aims to create a digitally integrated sustainable rural ecosystem. It works towards this objective through a rural entrepreneurship model by integrating technology in existing uses and practices across six pillars: education, health, entitlement, livelihoods, jobs, entrepreneurship. This study evaluates the project pillars including Wifi Internet connectivity.

This particular study relates at the Vodarevu village of Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh.

Key findings:

- ICTs rank the lowest in terms of access to information and services.

- The access to internet services remains very low in general.

- The level of awareness regarding the government schemes is less than even 15%.
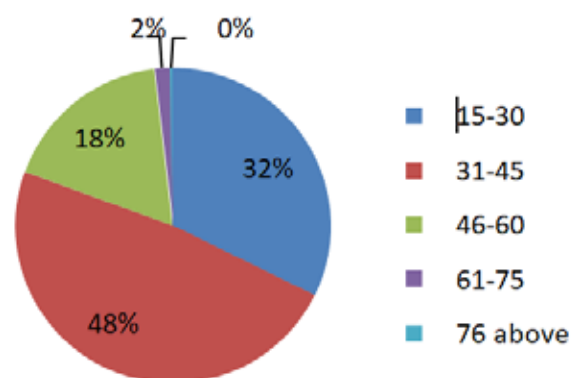
- The social ties in the village are strong, and

most of the information regarding education, livelihood, health and finance are provided by friends and village community which ranks high as a source of information.
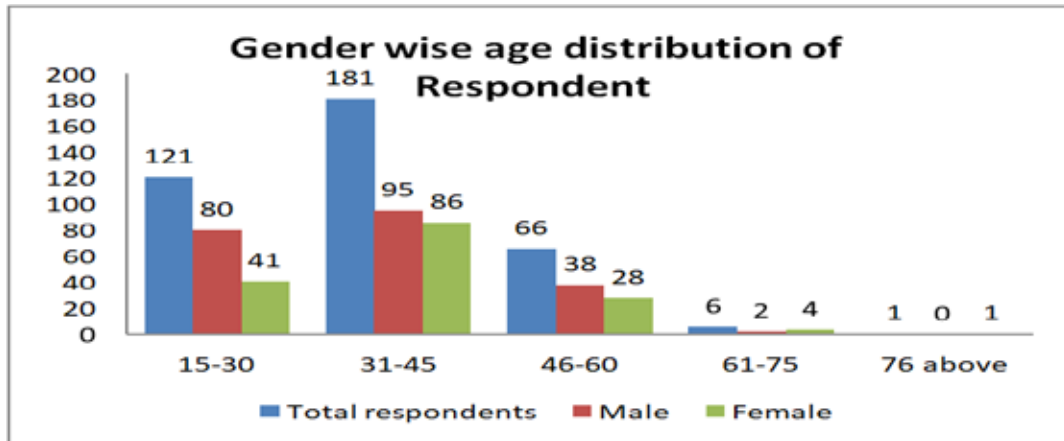
- The awareness about the availability of digital literacy remains very low

- The level of education of the population under study is fairly good, however in terms of the impact on higher paid employment is undeterminable underscoring the requirement for skill-based or vocational training

- Although overall digital engagements are low, in a comparative perspective, they are higher compared to reported levels of smartphone ownership and internet connectivity

Socio-Economic demography

The baseline survey has been conducted in Vodarevu village in Chirala, of Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. A total of 375 respondents were surveyed, out of which 160 (43%) were female and 215 (57%) were male. Most of the respondents were in the age group of 31-45 years (48%) of which 52% were male and 48% were female, followed by 15-30 years (32 %) with 66% male and 34% females and lastly 46-60 years (18%) with 58% male and 42% females respectively.

Age group of respondents

Pie chart legend:
- 15-30
- 31-45
- 46-60
- 61-75
- 76 above

Chart values: 2%, 0%, 32%, 48%, 18%

Gender wise age distribution of Respondent

Age	Total respondents	Male	Female
15-30	121	80	41
31-45	181	95	86
46-60	66	38	28
61-75	6	2	4
76 above	1	0	1

ICT Uses and Practices

Digital media (Smartphone/computer/laptop) penetration stands at 31% with 75% owning a basicphone. Calling remains the primary function for which mobile phones are used followed by text/ SMS and communication. Out of the respondents who have memory cards, it was primarily used for storing songs, photos and movie/ videos. An overwhelming 71% responded to having no internet connectivity. Among the 257 respondents with no smartphones/laptop/ computer, majorly about 229 respondents have no internet connectivity. Among those having internet connectivity, almost 70% have Jio connections; the next preferred connections are Airtel at 10% and Idea at 13%.

Setting Up Centre/ Wireless

Chirala Fisherwomen Wifi Centre
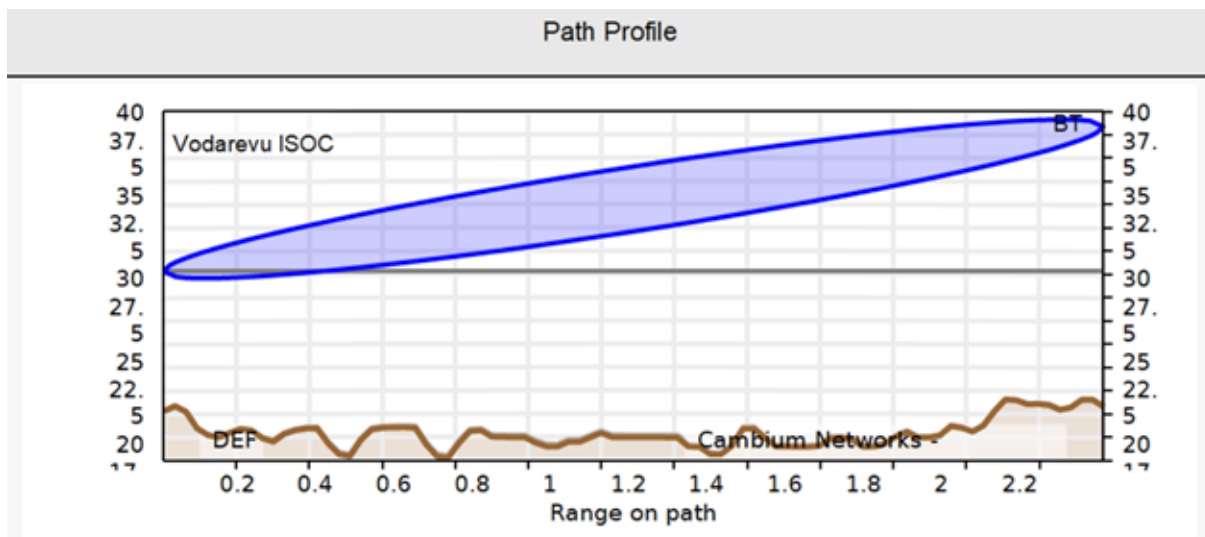

Wireless Tower

Wireless feasibility

The feasibility study has been conducted in the target location. The study comprised of understanding the critical parameters required to set up the wireless network infrastructure. The range of the internet reach, performance of the internet - speed, climatic conditions, materials requirements, site for installing the antenna were some of the parameters considered during the feasibility study. Below are the findings of feasibility study: -

State	Location	Latitude	Longitude	Feasibility
Andhra Pradesh	Vodarevu	15.79875N	080.41007E	Feasible

Summary	
Link Name	Vodarevu ISOC to BTS
Profile Type	Line-of-Sight
Equipment Type	PTP670
Maximum Obstruction	0 meters
Link Distance	2.576 kilometers
Free Space Path Loss	115.91 dB
Excess Path Loss	0.00 dB
User IP Throughput Expectation Aggregate	Aggregate 451.20 Mbps assuming PTP-670 Series running the 670-03-12 software
RF Frequency Band	5.8 GHz (5725 to 5850 MHz)
RF Channel Bandwidth	45 MHz

Graph: - Feasibility of Vodarevu, Chirala, Andhra Pradesh

Identification of Centre Coordinator:

Centre Coordinator have been identified for the project.

Selection criteria for the Centre Coordinator are as follows:

• Technical capacity

• Willingness to work for the community and

• Commitment to be associated with the project/organisation for long term

Mr Ruben-Centre Coordinator

Identification of Potential Internet Hotspot

By adopting the approach of "Chirala Fisherwomen Wifi community Center" under this project is to ensure the sustainability of the project in the identified location. Chirala Fisherwomen WiFi Community Center is equipped with digital tools which is required to support the marginalized communities and Wi-Fi Internet connectivity for the communities following a Community Network Model.

One of the major objectives of the programme is to connect people of the last mile with the benefits of government welfare schemes/ entitlements, digital literacy, citizen services, jobs and setting up micro enterprises including tourism. Therefore, by providing Internet access to the people, the established Chirala Fisherwomen Wifi Community Center is acting as an information access point for people living in the community.

Specific objectives that will be fulfilled through center are: -

• To provide digital access to the people who do not have access to digital device.

• To provide basic digital literacy to illiterate/ Semi- literate people.

• To help facilitating government schemes and entitlement.

• To assist the community as a digital service point for various digital services like, printing, scanning, booking ticket, filling online forms, etc.

• Create a foundation for a digital ecosystem by setting up digital resource centers.

- Provide the fishing community with an opportunity for digital inclusion

- Train the people from the local community in basic wireless technology, to run and manage these networks

The wireless trainer's liaison with the local bodies like School, Anganwadi, Panchayats, etc. to create a holistic approach of wifispot to access information, opportunities and services online.

School will be connected through wi-fi to access digital education

Aanganwadi center

Community Health Care Centre

Sachivalayam center

Email: def@defindia.net | URL: www.defindia.org