



**IXP Briefing Paper e-meeting
Wednesday 5 August 2009, UTC 20.00**

Attendees:

Alan Levin - ISOC South Africa Chapter
Sivasubramanian Muthusamy - ISOC India Chennai Chapter (joined at UTC 20.30)

Sally Wentworth - ISOC staff
Christine Runnegar - ISOC staff
Anne Lord - ISOC staff
Chok Jen Lau - ISOC staff
Christian O'Flaherty - ISOC staff
Micuki Mwangi - ISOC staff
Sebastian Bellagamba - ISOC staff

Christine opened the call and noted that there was not a quorum. As a result the call was canceled and she invited Alan to ask any questions and to have an informal discussion instead. The notes that follow reflect the informal discussion and are not minutes and do not follow the draft agenda.

Alan asked what the strategic programme of the Internet Society w.r.t to Internet Exchange points. It was noted that ISOC is an enabler and facilitator and it fits into the Enabling Access initiative. Christine further pointed to the work that the education team are doing on the ground with skills transfer and education. Christine also commented that her role in policy is to look at the influencers and driver for policy makers.

There was a discussion about the number of IXPs in Africa and worldwide and Christine passed on a comment from the earlier call about an expressed need for work to take place in Developed countries as well.

Alan mentioned that he felt there were more pressing issues – regarding simply getting access to villages and provided a link to a key project: <http://villagetelco.org>.

Sebastian explained the purpose of the call in the context of the Enabling Access initiative - as one of many programmes underway as part of this initiative. Rural and underserved communities is also another important issue but that is not the focus for this call.

Michuki also commented that a lot of work has gone into trying to set up exchange points in a number of countries. However there has been relative success seen as a result. In some countries, access issues have improved whilst in others despite having a noticeable growth in Internet penetration and development, , no real measurable results have been viewed from the IXP perspective over the same period. Its in working to understand what is missing to make IXPs grow in tandem with ICT growth in those countries, that would ultimately enable them reach their full potential. It seems the missing ingredients are both policy and technically oriented and the lack of a driving community. The value that the IXP presents to the members: ie.

when the IXP is down it becomes part of the critical infrastructure. ISOC's role is also to help strengthen the infrastructure by adding value. Michuki mentioned he could see a role for chapters being the champions of IXP's and the local driver.

Michuki mentioned his experience in Senegal. Introduction of mobile Internet services through the GSM networks has presented an alternative infrastructure for Internet from what was available through the Incumbent.

As such Senegal now has 3 operators which is the minimal requirement for peering.

Alan mentioned that in ZA they are supporting a non-interventionist approach. ISPs have been successful and industry have worked to keep traffic local. Policy should be towards driving more open markets.

Michuki echoed the importance of the role of Governments and what role they should play. In Senegal, the community has not been the driving force, however the government has understood that an IXP should be a critical part of the local Internet infrastructure to create more opportunities like content hosting amongst others. ISOC has been quite involved on the ground.

Michuki has seen many different models and drivers and noted that ISOC does not try to be prescriptive and each country is reviewed independently. He sited the case of the Lebanon (Beirut IXP) which has the highest percentage growth in 2009 where none of the traditional drivers were present and faced with regulatory challenges was seemingly growing at an admirable rate.

Christine explained that the briefing papers are not intended to be static documents and will be updated on the basis of new information, experiences etc.

She closed the call by thanking everyone.