All the dreams yet to come

A COLLABORATIVE STORY ABOUT COMMUNITY NETWORKS

This is the tale of a community that lived on the peak of a mountain, far away from the city. Though the civilization of cities kept getting closer, they held on to their traditions with pride.

Like most stories, ours too started with curiosity. "How do others communicate with each other?" we wondered.

We gathered together and began to look for information about the internet. What is it? How does it work?

After finding a group of people who could help answer some of our questions, we realized that the internet could be really helpful to the community.

We wanted to explore more, and there the first seeds of an organization were sown.

We embarked on a long journey to the nearest town, where we came across many closed doors and cynical responses that tried to dissuade us from pursuing it further because of the endless bureaucracy.

So, we began to speak to like-minded people and found a fountain of information and experience to learn from.

Soon, we were faced with a lot of roadblocks: the distance between the city and community was extensive, we needed more resources than we could imagine and technology was cost-prohibitive. Challenges seemed to be looming, and solutions, lacking.

But we had begun exploring and we were convinced to keep going. We started speaking to neighboring communities and researching the process of internet infrastructure.

We found APC, who were already working on similar struggles with people from across the world.

sparks of CONVERSATIONS, and EXPERIENCES,

Slowly sparks of conversations, knowledge-sharing and experiences began flying between friends from other countries: Argentina, Mexico, Colombia and Brazil.

As we developed our technical and financial knowledge, we realized we had unraveled a whole new world.

This was not just a journey about routers, computers and the internet; at its core, it was about connecting people to form community networks.

An important part of the process was the dialogue between women across our communities who were creating a space to reflect and support each other through shared experiences, restrictions and obstacles.

With the worsening of the pandemic, our communities were in low spirits. But we realized that everything we had worked for had helped our children attend school from home. We were able to use technology and stay connected through turbulent times. As we started using the services, we grasped the need to build a large network of organizations for better communication. Everything was a continuous process.

Soon we approached the completion of a year since the start of our journey. Taking the required precautions, we celebrated the milestones we had reached and made wishes for the ones to come.
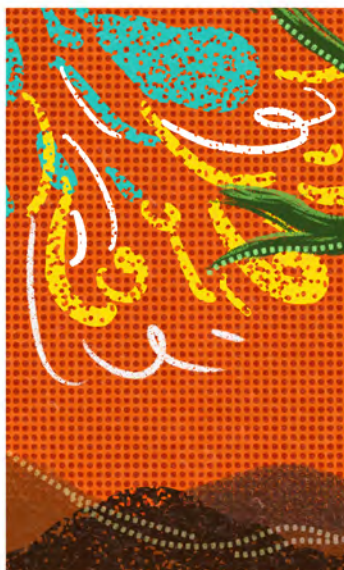
WRITTEN
collaboratively
DURING the
LATIN AMERICA
REGIONAL
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CONVENING
2020

Reflecting on our shared joy, we realized
that organizing with communities across
the nation had helped us set a precedent.
The government noticed and began
generating public policies for communities
to manage other areas like water, health
and public services too.

With an up and running network
generating its own content, participation
and interaction, the strengthening of ties
and resources continued.

Every time our communities assembled,
we realized that the network is only a dot.
But a beginning nonetheless,
for all the dreams yet to come.

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