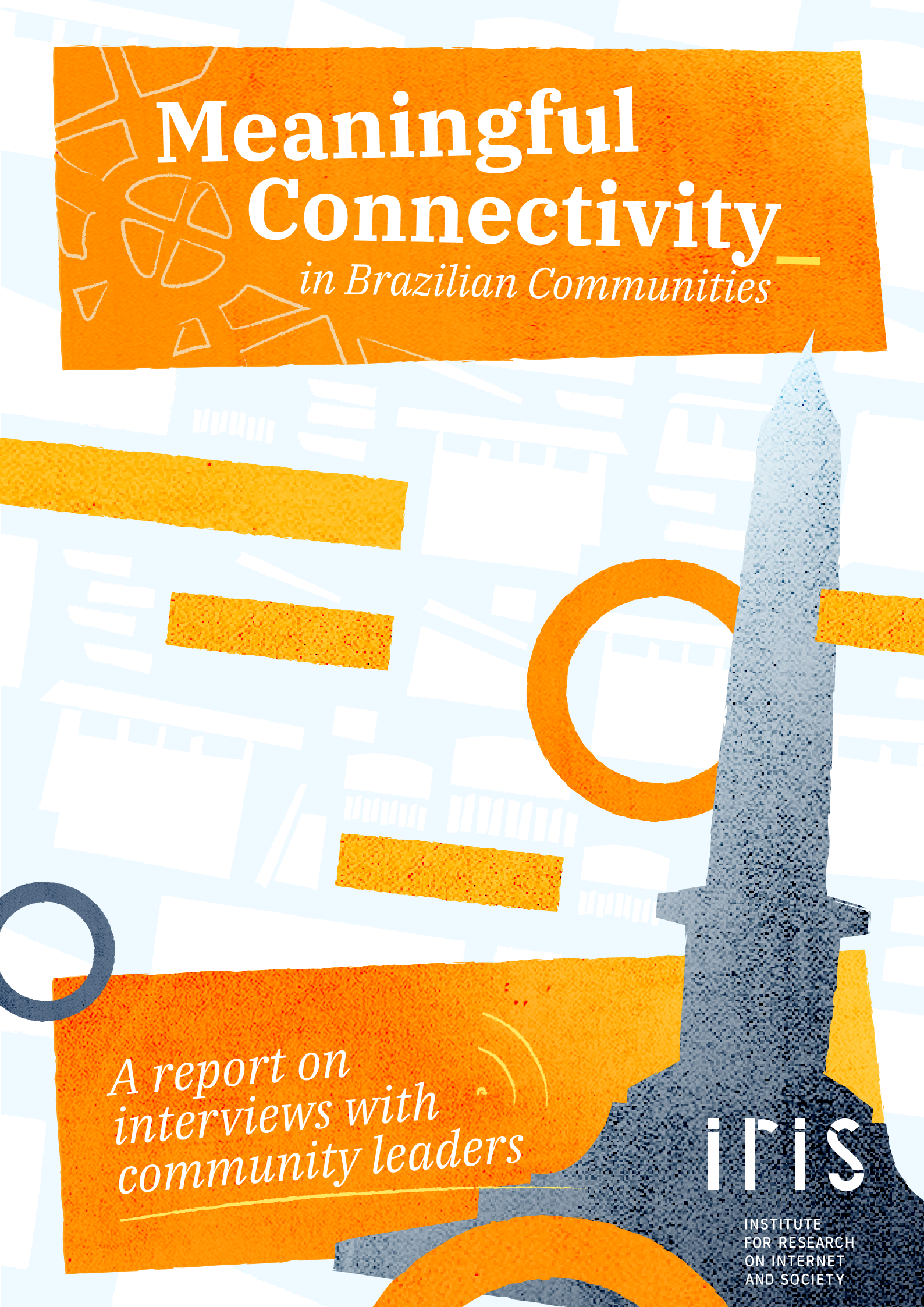
Meaningful Connectivity

in Brazilian Communities

A report on interviews with community leaders



INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH ON INTERNET AND SOCIETY

Meaningful Connectivity
in Brazilian Communities

A report on interviews with community leaders

AUTHORS

Ana Bárbara Gomes

Júlia Caldeira

Paloma Rocillo

REVIEW

Lahis Pasquali Kurtz

VISUAL IDENTITY,
GRAPHIC DESIGN PROJECT, COVER & LAYOUT

Felipe Duarte

TRANSLATION

Ana Zuleika

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION

Instituto for Research on Internet and Society

HOW TO CITE IN APA

Gomes, A. B., Gertrudes, J., & Rocillo, P. (2022). Meaningful Connectivity in Brazilian Communities. Report. Institute for Research on Internet and Society. http://bit.ly/42akmuP

Produced by

Supported by

UK Government

INSTITUTE
FOR RESEARCH
ON INTERNET
AND SOCIETY

DIRECTORS

Paloma Rocillo e Gustavo Rodrigues

MEMBERS

Ana Bárbara Gomes | Head of Public Policy & Researcher
Felipe Duarte | Head of Communication
Fernanda Rodrigues | Head of Research & Researcher
Juliana Roman | Researcher
Júlia Caldeira | Researcher
Lucas Samuel da Silva | Research intern
Luiza Dutra | Researcher
Paulo Rená da Silva Santarém | Researcher
Rafaela Ferreira | Research intern
Thais Moreira | Communication analyst
Victor Barbieri Rodrigues Vieira | Researcher
Wilson Guilherme | Researcher

INDEX

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 6

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 6

1. INTRODUCTION 8

2. METHODOLOGY 8

3. AGGREGATE RESULTS 10

3.1. The socio-economic context 10

3.1.1. Housing inequality 10

3.1.2.Economic inequality 11

3.1.3 Historic inequality 12

3.2. Historic inequality 13

3.2.1. Building support networks and maintaining identity ties 13

3.2.2. Internal communication 14

3.2.3. Cultural manifestation 15

3.3. Quality access 15

3.3.1 Obsolescence and the lack of devices 16

3.3.2. Limiting access to the Internet by the mobile data franchise model 17

3.3.3. Zones with no network cover 18

3.3.4. Zones with no network cover 19

3.4. Perceptions of digital inclusion 19

3.4.1.The perception of digital inclusion as a broad concept 19

3.4.2. Generation/age marker 21

3.5. Security on the Internet 21

3.5.1 A lack of digital skills generates online insecurity 22

3.5.2 A concern with privacy and data protection 23

3.5.3. The impact of social markers on online security 23

3.6. Perception of the interviewees on the public policies in their communities 24

3.6.1. Distancing from public policies 25

3.6.2. The insufficiency of publc policies 25

4. NEXT STEPS: A MEANINGFUL CONNECTIVITY STRATEGY 26

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 27

APPENDIX 1 – INTERVIEW SCRIPT 29

Acknowledgements

We were only able to carry out this work, of which this report is an important component, because of the availability and engagement of community leaders in Belo Horizonte and the BH Metropolitan region. As the Institute for Research on Internet and Society (IRIS) team, we value the life trajectory of all the people we interviewed and greatly appreciate their participation. They are:

Adriana Fernandes Carajá, from the Kariri-Sapuyá people; Gláucia Vieira, Quilombo Souza; Eni Carajá, Carajá community; Maria Victória Gonzalez, Generosa de Oliveira, Vila Acaba Mundo; Makota Cássia Kidoialê, Quilombo Manzo ; Yolis Lyon, an Indian in an urban context; Tainá Rosa, eastern Belo Horizonte; Mãe Neli, Umbanda and Candomblé UTTs; Marco Aurélio, eastern Belo Horizonte; Maria Cristina, Freitas Farm; José Aparecido, Taquaril: Poliana, Ocupações Barreiro; Tatiana de Oliveira, Quilombo Mangueiras; Alexandre Araújo, Quilombo Araújo; Luciana Matias, Quilombo Matias; Marcelo Evaristo, Quilombo Pimentel; Grace Kelly Soares, Pingo d'água.

Executive Summary

• This report forms part of the "Meaningful Connectivity in Brazilian Communities" project, which was supported by the British Embassy and carried out by the Instituto de Referência em Internet e Sociedade [Institute for Reference on Internet and Society (IRIS), whose objective is to help overcome barriers to digital inclusion and promote a more egalitarian and democratic society. The project provides training for community leaders in order to build strategies for meaningful connectivity. To offer training based on effective and specific demands, interviews were conducted with the target audience. This report presents the aggregate results of fifteen interviews that were conducted with leaders of former slave settlements [quilombos], and indigenous, and migrant communities, suburban complexes, settlements and occupied areas.

• With regard to the analysis of the characteristics of the communities and their socio-economic context, the various markers of social vulnerability reinforce their digital exclusion. Inequalities are being constantly superimposed on communities that are already economically underprivileged to the extent that challenges to the democratic and empowered use of the Internet, which could be easily circumvented in privileged contexts, become major bottlenecks.

• The social markers most mentioned by the interviewees were: 1. housing inequality, which has an impact on the telecommunications infrastructure and the diversity of companies offering Internet access; 2 economic inequality, which impacts the acquisition of quality Internet access service and digital literacy, and; 3. historical inequalities, which cross racial, cultural and identity dimensions and relegate vulnerable communities to the position of not being part of the Internet society.

• The apps most widely used by Brazilians are very concentrated on just a few, the most popular being WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Google Meet and Zoom. The people we interviewed also reported using the Internet to access public services, build support and communication networks, and strengthen their identity and cultural expression.

• With regard to the quality of Internet access, there is either a lack of equipment or it is obsolescent, there are areas with no coverage at all (digital deserts), and there is little company diversity, which underlines the importance of the small provider when it comes to offering Internet access in regions in which the large telecommunication companies have little economic interest.

• Also with regard to the quality of Internet access, most respondents experience restrictions because of their limited access to mobile data due to the current franchising model. In all topics in this report (socio-economic context, Internet use, quality of access, the perception of digital inclusion, online security and public policies in communities), limited access by franchise is a central element in the increase in digital exclusion and poor connectivity.

• The digital inclusion concept of the people we interviewed starts from an integrated notion that recognizes both the importance of access to the network and technological appropriation for the effective enjoyment of digital resources. There is an urgent demand for communities to be at the center of the opportunities for individual and collective development as offered by the Internet, thereby overcoming a concept that is purely infrastructure-centered, even though this is an essential aspect.

• Children and young people are often mentioned as groups that have outstanding engagement with the Internet in the community, and provide other members with help at certain times. Even though they use the Internet more persistently, however, some interviewees mention the lack of criticality and safety in using it, with literacy and digital literacy steps still needed even by young people.

• There is great concern with security on the Internet, mainly in relation to financial scams and the lack of control over the flow of personal data, which is heightened by a feeling of vulnerability on the part of most of the people who were interviewed and their low degree of digital literacy.

• Almost none of the communities seek to overcome the challenges of digital inclusion with the help of public policies, which shows the distance that exists and the neglect of the State in matters of meaningful connectivity. The few public policies dealing with such matters that are known and that have an impact on communities were criticized and pointed out as being insufficient or inactive by the people interviewed.

1. Introduction

The "Meaningful connectivity in Brazilian communities" project emerged in response to the barriers to universal access to the Internet in the national context, and more specifically, because of the two gaps that were identified in previous IRIS[1] work: the lack of coordination of public policies and the lack of participation of vulnerable communities in constructing such policies. Using this as the basis, the project was designed in two phases: 1. semi-structured interviews with community leaders from vulnerable groups (from the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais); and 2. training the people who were interviewed to build meaningful connectivity strategies in their respective communities. Based on these steps, the aim was to identify gaps and offer communities both theoretical and practical support for developing meaningful connectivity strategies.

This report presents the main results from the interview phase, which was decisive for mapping the problems faced by the communities involved, and which was used for planning the training (the second phase of the project). As project interviewee Adriana Fernandes Carajá from the Kariri-Sapuyá people pointed out, our intention is "not only to offer the course, but to welcome them [the course participants] according to their needs and characteristics." The most recurrent challenges to digital inclusion mentioned by the communities in the interviews are reported in the "Results" section in an aggregate and structured way. The phases in which the interviews were conducted are also described in the "Methodology" section. The "Summary and Conclusions" are presented at the end.

2. Methodology

The research began in May 2022[2], the objective being to map out the demands for meaningful connectivity based on the reported experiences of community leaders. The first activities involved designing the research, reviewing the project timetable and choosing the bibliography related to digital inclusion in vulnerable communities in order to set the scene for the team and help members acquire a deeper understanding of the topic. We held training meetings at the time on the topic we were going to address, which allowed us to prepare and anticipate some stages of the research process.

At the same time, we outlined the scope of the communities we would seek to reach. The criteria for selecting interviewees were that they had to be someone who had: 1. exercised a leadership role within a vulnerable community; and 2. lived in the metropolitan region of

1 CARMO, Paloma; DUARTE, Felipe; GOMES, Ana Bárbara. Inclusão Digital como Política Pública: Brasil e América do Sul em perspectiva. Instituto de Referência em Internet e Sociedade: Belo Horizonte, 2020. Available at: https://irisbh.com.br/publicacoes/inclusao-digital-como-politica-publica-brasil- e-america-do-sul-em-perspectiva/ . Accessed on September 9, 2022.

2 *IRIS* has been studying the subject of digital inclusion since 2019. Its publications on the matter can be found at: https://irisbh.com.br/publicacoes/?tematica=inclusao-digital

Belo Horizonte. We chose as our research method the snowball method[3], based on non-probabilistic sampling that uses reference chains. This method is suitable for reaching groups that are difficult to access and offers qualitative results that are suitable for the project's objective. To reach community leaders we contacted other institutions that work in the area of defending human rights, among them: university extension activity groups, NGOs, legal support groups for vulnerable populations, and collectives.

From the first contacts, which were carried out through the above institutions, new names were indicated by the interviewees themselves, as intended when the snowball method is used. Contacts were scheduled by email, telephone or private messaging apps. The interviews were conducted in person or online, depending on the interviewee's preference.

The semi-structured interview script (Appendix 1) was organized into three blocks. The first block dealt with presenting the person being interviewed, their community, and their local activities. The second block involved asking questions about the quality of Internet connection and its availability in the various locations, about usage habits, and the main demands and difficulties. The last block comprised questions about what the interviewees expected from a course on promoting meaningful connectivity.

The interviews lasted an average of fifty minutes each and were recorded in audio format, with the consent of the interviewees that was collected by way of an Informed Consent Form (TCLE) (Appendix 2). Seventeen interviews were carried out with spokespeople from quilombola [former slave settlement] and indigenous communities, suburban complexes, squats, public schools and a migrant group.

In order to concentrate the results and analyze the responses we obtained, we prepared a form based on the questions raised in the interview script. We completed the forms according to the registered interviews, which allowed us to gather information for visualizing the relevant points that emerged from our conversations with the spokespeople.

Finally, the team met to discuss the results and prepare this report, which was written with the aim of highlighting the gaps for achieving meaningful connectivity in the communities involved in the project, and pointing out the potential of the Internet as a tool for social transformation, as narrated by the interviewees.

The report is the main input for preparing the program for the course "Formulating a meaningful connectivity strategy in my community", which will be held in the first half of October 2022. The target audience for the course will be community leaders who contributed to the project and any people they nominate. Preparation of the course and the topics to be dealt with are described in Topic 5.

3 VINUTO, Juliana. *A amostragem em bola de neve na pesquisa qualitativa: um debate em aberto* [Snowball sampling in qualitative research: An open debate]. Temáticas, v. 22, n. 44, p. 203-220, 2014. Available at: https://econtents.bc.unicamp.br/inpec/index. php/tematicas/article/view/10977. Accessed on September 29, 2022.

3. Aggregate Results

3.1. The socio-economic context

The inclusion of this block is justified by how important it is to consider specific cross-community contexts so that solutions can be developed for overcoming inequalities in a way that is coherent with local demands.

With regard to analyzing the characteristics of the communities and their socio-economic context, we were able to observe how the different markers of social vulnerability reinforce digital exclusion. In communities that are already vulnerable, inequalities are constantly superimposed, so that challenges that could be easily overcome in privileged contexts, become major hurdles.

3.1.1. Housing inequality

With regard to housing conditions, the group that has most challenges with regard to the precariousness of physical infrastructure - which affects Internet access - were suburban complexes and illegally-occupied land. In the Alto Vera Cruz and Granja de Freitas districts, the interviewees mentioned several elements related to housing inequality and urban policy that interfere with their use of the Internet, the main ones being the presence of many "puxadinhos[4]" and alleyways between houses, in addition to the theft of connection cables. It is important to mention in this context that both of these suburban complexes are part of the L4 complex in the east of the city, comprising Baixo and Alto Vera Cruz, Taquaril and Granja de Freitas, which are home to more than 20,000 people (most of them living in Vera Cruz).

Given this structure and territorial organization, two other issues arise: the quality of the connection and the coverage. The quality of the connection is generally unstable because of the region's high demographic density and its physical barriers. Both private networks and public Internet points (when available) work best in places that are higher. Second, most of the large network providers refuse to go into these neighborhoods because they are of no commercial interest to them, so the service on offer is reduced and users are dependent on small local providers. These small providers are often companies that offer Internet access services based on agreements they have to use the infrastructure of large providers. They are also usually companies that have some connection with the community, either through the company's administrators or because they are based locally. In the absence of interest, therefore, from strong companies that are technologically well developed, small companies fill the gaps in the supply of Internet access, which is largely justified by the connection they have with the community, and motivated by micro and small entrepreneurship.

4 Informal housing constructed vertically in order to add more area, usually by way of more storeys being added to an already existing building.

The Vila Acaba Mundo suburban complex is different from the previous two because of its territorial extension and reduced population (some 2,000 people) in relation to other suburban agglomerations in Belo Horizonte, and its location close to middle-class neighborhoods that are high up, like Sion and Mangabeiras. Because of this peculiarity the city hall's Internet signals, for example, work throughout the territory even though the quality is reduced.

In the case of illegally-occupied areas, in addition to the precarious physical infrastructure and high demographic density (depending on the community), housing inequality adds new layers of complexity and the efforts that the group needs to employ. This situation was highlighted by community leader, Poliana, from the Eliana Silva occupied area (in the Barreiro neighborhood), who said that residents spend a large part of their time working outside the area, either in a self-employed capacity or informally, and that when they get home they dedicate their time to constructing houses in the occupied area. The quality of life, which is impacted by the residents of the occupied areas themselves having to resolve demands related to their right to housing - which should be the object of public policies - is a conditioning factor when it comes to outlining how the Internet will be used. Considering this vulnerability, the conscientious use of the Internet by citizens becomes an even greater challenge, since acquiring education and literacy demand time, effort, and often an autonomous initiative by the community itself.

3.1.2. Economic inequality

Over and above the difficulty of having access to meaningful connectivity, another point is that precarious connectivity, which is the only connectivity available in many cases, increases inequality. The markers of social inequality are barriers to meaningful connectivity, just as precarious connectivity is a barrier to overcoming social inequality.

This dialogic relationship undermines different issues related to economic development and local integration. An example of this was evidenced by Glaúcia Vieira, a resident of Quilombo Souza that has fourteen families, in the following statement:

> *"Do you want an example of how bad the Internet is? During our June festival there was a time when the card machines weren't working. A stall had to close because theirs wasn't working. It didn't even work right outside the house that had wi-fi."*

In a second example, there is a loss in the allocation of funds (which are already extremely scarce in most of the communities that were interviewed). Because of a lack of knowledge of the services on offer, and considering the local conditions of Internet availability users acquire services that offer poor quality Internet access. Makota Cassia Kidoialê from Quilombo Manzo says:

"We don't know which is the best Internet. We pick one and then see if it's good. So, we jump from company to company. Now I only choose one if I know it's good."

3.1.3. Historic inequality

An issue that stands out in this topic is the reality of the indigenous communities that were interviewed, which comprise indigenous people living in urban contexts, a characteristic that is reflected in other issues that were addressed by the interviewees. Because of the historical violence to which indigenous people were subjected, diaspora movements, which many communities experienced, resulted in the territorial dispersion of this group, making it difficult to apply geographically circumscribed public policies. Since improvements in the telecommunications infrastructure and the provision of public connectivity policies are mainly based on the criterion of territoriality[5], dispersion of the indigenous community throughout the territory, which is the result of environmental degradation, territorial imbalance due to access to goods and services because of the type of colonization that took place in Brazil, and hygiene and globalization movements[6], the demand for public infrastructure policies is facing new obstacles.

In addition to the challenges of territorial dispersion, the interviewees pointed to the economic fragility of most indigenous families. Many of them live in extremely vulnerable situations in the cities, either in shelters or on the streets, and survive by selling handicrafts or doing informal work. This situation of economic vulnerability explains why, in many cases, digital inclusion is a step to be taken along with digital inclusion and access to basic rights. Before the use of the Internet can be made viable as a personal and collective development tool, therefore there are still meaningful access difficulties to overcome. Even people who already have a cell phone have difficulty in using it fully, as observed in the following report by Adriana Fernandes Carajá from the Kariri-Sapuyá people:

"Most people have a cell phone, but don't know how to use it. They don't know how to make payments; they don't know how to use it (they keep getting paid in cash because they don't know how to use their cell phone). It's hard producing a marketplace because they don't know how to use it properly. They don't know how to use the basic tools."

5 Most public policies for expanding access to the Internet in Brazil are centered on territorial requirements for applying the policy. For example, the purpose of the *Norte Conectado* program is o expand the communication infrastructure in the Amazon region; the Wi-Fi Brasil program is for installing wi-fi in specific locations, such as public institutions and traditional communities. Even though these public policies are essential, they do not welcome requests from communities that are spread out territorially.

6 DE CAMPOS, Marden Barbosa et al. A Migração dos indígenas em Minas Gerais na decade de 2000. Cadernos do Leste, v. 18, n. 18, 2018. Available at: https://periodicos.ufmg.br/index.php/ caderleste/article/view/13604. Accessed on: Sept 30, 2022.

The social exclusion experienced by this group is also heightened by public policy designs that are based on criteria and requirements that are alien to the reality and possibilities of this group, such as certain formal records. The interviewees pointed out the exclusive nature of public policies that are out of step with the demands of certain people. This is illustrated by the discourse of Eni Carajá, a Carajá indigenous person living in an urban context:

> *"To get emergency help everybody had to be registered with CadÚnico and many of the families never managed to register, and some didn't even have the right to do so, because they were working, but everybody had difficulties."*

In view of this, policies and social benefits also become inaccessible, thereby contributing towards maintaining the situation of vulnerability, digital exclusion and poor social integration.

3.2. Community use of the Internet

The objective of this block is to understand how communities use the Internet in order to obtain levels of technological appropriation. The responses to the interviews that go to make up this section enable both an understanding of the daily reality of the interviewees and their communities, and the use priorities that most interest each group. The use of apps by Brazilians is concentrated, particularly on WhatsApp, TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, Google Meet, and Zoom. Most respondents also reported using the Internet to access public services, build support and communication networks, and strengthen their identity and cultural expression.

3.2.1. Building support networks and maintaining identity ties

Most of the communities interviewed experience violations of their rights and are excluded from public policies precisely because of their status as a marginalized minority.

In various interviews, the importance of the Internet for vocalizing agendas and gathering the community together around demands that affect the community as a whole was mentioned. An example of this is the discourse of Eni Carajá, a member of the Carajá tribe living in an urban context:

> *"Our community needs help regularizing the indigenous community, strengthening the indigenous network in urban contexts, and creating more such networks. They are fundamental for us, because we have no expertise in how to set up a good Instagram account so it becomes well known."*

The construction of networks over the Internet is also essential for overcoming a problem that is seen in the next section: limited access to the Internet because of the mobile data

franchise model (an issue detailed in Section 4.2). Community leader, Eliana Silva, pointed out that it is not possible "to rely on WhatsApp as the main form of communication, because most families have no Internet access for part of the month". Strategies such as the newsletter and face-to-face meetings, therefore, are used by communities for general contact. There is, however, an active interest in using the Internet to expand the reach of their communication.

3.2.2. Internal communication

One of the interviewees reports the importance of the Internet in a context in which the group is living in an obviously vulnerable situation. In 2015 the municipal government of Belo Horizonte evicted those living in Quilombo Souza, who immediately sought public help via the Internet. Although political mobilization took place online, the families that lived in the *quilombo* were dispersed territorially. From then on, the Internet was used intensively for another purpose that was often mentioned in the interviews: for internal communication in the communities and maintaining identity ties, as reported by Eni Carajá, an indigenous Carajá person living in an urban context:

> *"The main priority for the digital inclusion of our community is approximation: bringing people together."*

But even though these two uses appeared frequently in the interviews, they were often accompanied by criticism. The demand to learn how to read and write and for technological appropriation will be presented in more detail in the following sections.

One of the points that most surprised the research team during this phase of the project was the intensity with which the interest and urgency for effective technological appropriation appeared in the interviews. As our work at IRIS has been mainly an effort to analyze Brazilian public policies, we often think that the lack of connectivity infrastructure is still the main barrier to meaningful connectivity. The precarious nature of the connectivity infrastructure that exists has been accompanied in many of the responses by the precarious nature of the information and education provided, as Makota Cássia Kidoialê from Quilombo Manzo says:

> *"The main challenge today is knowing how to use these tools. The quilombo has its own site that was made following a workshop, and training, but they can't maintain it. We need content and text for the site, and it needs to be updated. It's out of date, and people are telling us it is."*

3.2.3. Cultural manifestation

Several of the leaders who were interviewed pointed to the cultural initiatives of communities that were driven by the Internet: podcasts, YouTube channels, websites, and profiles on social networks produced by residents for individual and collective purposes.

At Quilombo Souza, a project approved by the Belo Horizonte Municipal Culture Incentive Law (1150/2020 - The ancestral memory paths of the ancestral memories of the matriarchs of Quilombo Souza) helped young people from the Souza and Manzo quilombola communities in Belo Horizonte prepare a podcast. The podcast talks about what it is to be a quilombola [former slave descendant] and tells the history of the quilombos [former slave settlements]. Another example was the case of the Eliana Silva settlement, where a podcast was created during the COVID-19 pandemic to provide everyone with information and guidance with regard to the precautions to be taken.

The "PARU – living indigenous culture in the city" group was set up to talk about indigenous community life in the city. The project, which operates independently, promotes indigenous culture over the Internet, raises awareness in schools and promotes the solidarity economy with a view to tackling a recurring problem: financial independence. Community interviewee, Adriana, reports that during the site construction process, which is still ongoing, difficulties were encountered that they could not even have imagined when the project was idealized. There is language barrier, and so the site needs to consider native languages.

There are posts from mid-July in the Pataxó indigenous group profile on a digital platform calling on indigenous exhibitors to complete a form about how they sell their products and the needs for a marketplace. The objective of the contribution is to improve the platform that is being developed, and to detect the specific requirements of the community.

One of the recurrently identified demands is the need for training that enables communities to construct communication strategies to show what they are already doing internally, and that organizes local production and gives them visibility by way of an online record. The indigenous population in the city, for example, is made up of many artisans, and it is in the interests of leaders to make an online commercial space (marketplace) viable that stimulates the local economy and generates income. This idea, however, runs up against the fact that many of the artisans do not have full access to the Internet, nor are they sufficiently digitally literate to interact and manage a digital market.

3.3. Quality access

This block considers the quality of Internet access in the communities. The objective was to understand if there are certain necessary conditions for the adequate use and full appropriation of information and communication technologies.

3.3.1. Obsolescence and the lack of devices

The availability of adequate equipment, which is a defining aspect of quality access and the possibility of fully appropriating the technology, is a recurring problem among those we interviewed. Most report that the community mainly, and often exclusively, uses smartphones to connect to the Internet.

There are frequent complaints about obsolete devices, which have storage capacity problems and prevent the download of new applications and media, such as the following interview excerpts:

"But things are lost very quickly with the cell phone, because they don't have much memory and people don't know how to use them properly."

Makota Cássia Kidoialê, Quilombo Manzo

"Four people live in the house, and they only have one good cell phone that they actually use."

Maria Victória Gonzalez, Cio da Terra (migrant community)

"The difficulty is having (the Internet) and the devices too... Sometimes people ask me to help sort out something on their phone. So, you take the phone and you don't even know how it's still working. I say to them: Goodness, how do you make any calls with this phone? And lots of people don't have wi-fi at home. There's a house there that provides wi-fi access for about fifty people. I have a cousin who lives near the square at the top of the quilombo and it seems that only his house has wi-fi, from what I understand, so everyone there uses it: it's for a lot of people. So the Internet [connection] ends up being terrible."

Tatiana de Oliveira, Quilombo Mangueiras

Because they are leaders in their communities, the Internet is an indispensable means of communication for all the interviewees, who even highlight the use of messaging apps as the main communication and articulation tool in many contexts. These tasks are performed, however, using limited and obsolete devices:

> *"I've even been thinking about buying another cell phone. Because it's like... my cell phone can't take it anymore. It's a lot of things at the same time for me to sort out: to take care of. It's my personal life, it's the quilombo. So, the quilombo occupies 90% of my phone today: it's the city hall, it's those candidates who get in touch with us at election time.... It's all on my phone! Sometimes I open my WhatsApp and there are fifteen, twenty, thirty outstanding conversations: until I can answer everyone... "*
>
> *Tatiana de Oliveira, Quilombo Mangueiras*

In other cases it is necessary to choose whether the professional or personal device will have a mobile Internet connection given the cost of the service, as reported by teacher Luciana Matias, a resident of Quilombo Matias:

> *"I have two cell phones that together don't make one! So, I have one for work: for managing groups of students... For example, one of my people doesn't have the Internet on their line because they have to pay, and I've had no way of paying yet. Everything's very expensive!"*

The limitations of the franchise models are also felt very strongly, as explained in the following topic.

3.3.2. Internet access limitations because of the mobile data franchise model

Most communities use prepaid plans and cannot always connect outside the home, because they depend on having the necessary funds to purchase a mobile data package. There are several obstacles to using mobile data, such as the high price and difficulty connecting during peak hours. Tainá, one of the interviewees, talks about how applications that consume a lot of data are not used by people in the community, because they are always economizing usage with their plans. Problems with connection stability and traffic speed were also frequently reported, as mentioned by Makota Cássia Kidoialê, from Quilombo Manzo:

> *"We have the problem of slow Internet speed; sometimes it's very slow. It's not because of the number of phones, because all the houses have their own Internet connection."*

The reports also corroborate research that points to precarious access for people living in socio-economically vulnerable situations:

"Most of my brothers use a prepaid cell phone. Then it's difficult because we send a serious message and it arrives three days later. 'Ah, today I've got credit' and he sends all the messages that are overdue."

Eni Carajá, a Carajá indigenous person living in an urban context."

"Sometimes I put R$ 15 when I have to go to college, or somewhere. Sometimes it's not enough for the whole month; it depends. These R$ 50 plans are not enough. So we work here with wi-fi and when it's running out, we charge it."

Maria Victoria Gonzalez, Cio da Terra (migrant community)

Data from the Idec survey in partnership with the Locomotiva Institute show that in the most vulnerable classes the cell phone is notably the most widely used means of connecting to the network (91%): 58% use prepaid plans, and have no Internet access on several days in the month. Classes C, D and E users of prepaid plans have data packages that last an average of twenty-three days a month. This means that they spend about a third of the month deprived of access to the network and all the functionalities it has, and use only free apps.

3.3.3. Zones with no network cover

Respondents report that connection quality is not the same in all locations in the communities. There are also reports of the existence of "blind spots", where the Internet does not work, or places where it works much better. Added to this is the criticism of the great difficulty they have in communicating with Internet operators when it comes to making complaints and demanding improvements, because contact with these companies takes a long time and willingness to wait [to be attended]:

"You have to set aside a whole day to complain about the Internet. I spent 48 minutes with Claro yesterday for it to restore my signal after I'd asked for it to be suspended temporarily."

Gláucia Vieira, Quilombo Souza

"Internet stability depends a lot on the region. Only two operators cover the place where the school is located. In other places it works well. You hear a lot of complaints from the community. It seems there ae places that have a 'ghost' signal."

Marco Aurélio, Vera Cruz – Eastern Belo Horizonte (suburban complex)

"When we have time we contact the operators. Because, like, we don't talk to people, we talk to that annoying machine, a robot. Then you have to be there on WhatsApp giving the number. The options you have don't work for you. Then sometimes it's better to let it go, you know, because it's a drag! You get even angrier!"

Luciana Matias, Quilombo Matias

3.3.4. Little choice of companies and the importance of the small provider

In smaller communities, most of the available Internet supply comes from small providers. In some communities, there are collective Internet connection points, such as in the Eliana Silva settlement, where two open connection points were installed: one at the day-care center and the other at the Youth Center. These points were obtained in exchange for a partnership with a small provider: they were installed in exchange for the company being able to use community-owned poles for its cables.

3.4. Perceptions of digital inclusion

This section presents the aggregate results of the questions we asked of the people we interviewed about their conception of digital inclusion. This question is important for understanding how the community itself perceives the elements that are mobilized within this concept, which has a direct impact on the strategies to be developed by the community to overcome the barriers it has identified. In introducing Block II of the interview script, the interviewees were asked for their conceptions of digital inclusion. We then presented the concept that was taken as the basis of the research, that is: Internet use beyond a good connection, encompassing the personal and collective development of the user through the network, skills development, the search for useful services, etc.

The interviewees' responses present several factors, such as their own limitations with regard to accessing and using the Internet, perspectives and interpretations as to the condition of inclusion, and how digitally excluded they often feel. We thus observe the realities in which access is limited, the connection conditions are, for the most part, precarious, and people are conscious that their digital literacy is reduced. They do not, however, know exactly how to improve it, or they do not have time/access opportunities for doing so.

3.4.1. Perception of digital inclusion as a broad concept

Brazilian public policies often focus only on the aspect of network coverage and infrastructure availability as sufficient for promoting digital inclusion. As we saw in Topic 3.3., this is a profound gap that prevents communities from enjoying meaningful

connectivity. The questions about the interviewees' conception of digital inclusion, however, resulted in many answers perceiving this element in a holistic way, as opposed to the one-off and isolated perspective of many Brazilian public policies:

"It's a whole that cannot be dissociated from anything. For example, it's no use for a person to take a computer course if they have no access to a laptop (...) It's no use paying dearly for a service that doesn't work."

Eni Carajá, a Carajá indigenous person living in an urban context.

This holistic notion was evidenced by the centrality in which the people interviewed placed the aspect of technological appropriation. Despite also including the concept of digital inclusion, the axis of technological appropriation is often neglected and receives less attention in debates on the subject for several reasons. The interviews made it quite clear, however, that the communities are not satisfied with their access to the network and are demanding the effective use of the Internet in its various dimensions, which has to do directly with the concept of meaningful connectivity, as noted in the following quote:

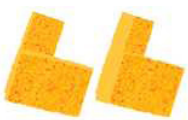
"It's using the Internet, this virtual world, and understanding what you can take advantage of to strengthen... to improve your life: you can sell something, you can make friends with people, you can do anything. In the sense of the community, I think it would make it a lot stronger if we actually knew how to use the tools that concern our daily lives."

Makota Cássia Kidoialê, Quilombo Manzo

Also underlining the integrated vision of digital inclusion, many responses pointed to the importance of making digital inclusion universal, so that there were no social, economic, cultural or external barriers to the enjoyment of the network:

"I think that digital inclusion is when everyone has access. The possibility and the opportunity of digital access for everybody: migrants, Brazilians, the disabled and the elderly."

Maria Victoria, Cio da Terra (migrant community)



"We have a lot of difficulties with regard to something that should be general, free and for everybody, but that only reaches those who have money."

Eni Carajá, an indigenous Carajá person living in an urban context.

3.4.2. Generation/age marker

Considering the predominant age group of the interviewees (30 to 50 years old), the generation issue was a prominent variable. In this context we considered both the trajectory of the interviewees in terms of their access to and use of electronic devices and the activities they carry out today. Although some interviewees have good access and connectivity, they do not consider themselves digitally included because they are not very literate. This situation, in turn, was indicated as being different from that of children in the community who were born familiar with cell phones, computers and Internet use as a whole, although there are still limitations, such as the quality of the devices. In many interviews young people were indicated as being helpers in technological matters and access to the Internet. But Makota Cássia Kidoialê, from Quilombo Manzo, pointed out that the support that young people offer does not make it possible to learn how to fully use the tools and apps, so those who are unable do not master information and communication technologies become dependent on young people.

Although the technological engagement of young people in various communities is valued, one of the interviewees was sharply critical of them and their lack of criticality and full appropriation, which was also briefly mentioned by other leaders.

> *"Ah, the lads were born with technology and they dominate it, but if I ask them to write down an address on an address bar, they can't do it They freeze. They don't know what an address bar is; what an address is. They use it, but they end up being digitally illiterate. People are functional: they can access that app, they can do what it proposes, but they don't know what it can do, what its potential is, what they can use it for."*
>
> *Marco Aurélio, Vera Cruz – Eastern Belo Horizonte (suburban complex)*

What the interviewee narrates is how, despite the fact that while young people have a greater familiarity [with apps], there is still a lack of literacy that prevents them using the Internet in a meaningful way, depending on the different conditions in which the individual finds him/herself. Linked to this aspect, people also talked about how communities are interested in expanding the use of the Internet in the community as a way of bringing young people closer to community matters of interest and forging identity bonds.

3.5. Security on the Internet

This block presents the aggregate results of the question the people we interviewed were asked: "Do you feel safe on the Internet?" This question is justified inasmuch as it directly relates to digital inclusion. User security on the network - and the feeling of being safe - is directly related to how digitally included the user is. Practices that guarantee

security in the virtual space are linked to the individual's education and awareness, the way in which they use the Internet, the influences of the environment (physical and virtual), the political and social context, and the quality of the equipment they use. Although vulnerable social contexts increase virtual exposure, even individuals with good access conditions and good education are prone to insecurity in this environment. The peculiarities, in turn, are the types of situations that represent risk and the way of in which each individual acts in response. Generally speaking, the people we interviewed do not feel completely safe on the Internet, mainly because of their lack of understanding of how to use digital tools and virtual environments properly and in a protected way. Online insecurity is a counterpoint to the idea of the Internet as an emancipatory tool, since it makes the Internet a potential tool for increasing challenges, as observed by Gláucia Vieira, from Quilombo Souza:

"But with so many scams this is a point we're insecure about, aren't we? It's that thing: the Internet opens a thousand doors for you, but there are some that drop you down a hole."

This insecurity is manifested by different causes and contexts, which will be addressed in the following subtopics.

3.5.1. A lack of digital skills generates online insecurity.

It was clear from the interviews that almost all respondents feel insecure on the Internet. The main use of the Internet that reinforces the perception of insecurity is when shopping online. The narratives presented by relatives, neighbors and members of their communities make them apprehensive and insecure in this activity, as Luciana Matias from Quilombo Matias says:

"I think people are afraid. Being careful is more relative."

There were reports in this context of a lack of familiarity with and training in the operations necessary for using the Internet and its applications, and for adopting strategies that guarantee greater security and protection for the user. Faced with a lack of instruction on how to use the Internet safely, some respondents choose to distance themselves from it and exercise a form of self-deprivation, as observed in the discourse of Maria Victória Gonzalez, from Cio da Terra (migrant community):

"Sometimes I don't feel safe. And when I don't feel safe, I don't do anything. We were technologically illiterate when we got here and we hear a lot of things, every scam that happens, and we get scared. I'm not a bold person. I'm more cautious."

3.5.2. A concern with privacy and data protection

Several reports point to concerns about the lack of control over the flow of personal data. Most interviews relate this concern to e-commerce, because of the fear of financial scams. Data used for advertising purposes and content targeting was also mentioned:

" Nowadays our data is all out there. I was doing a test recently. You get your cell phone and say you want to travel. Then when you look at it later it's full of travel offers. It's too much. It's a total invasion of [my] space, especially with data. Everything you do asks you for your CPF [personal taxpayer's number], RG [identity card number], location... if I could, I wouldn't use the Internet."

Poliana, Eliana Silva settlement - Barreiro.

"The Internet's a bit complicated, isn't it? It's somewhere you can't give all your details."

Marcelo Evaristo, Quilombo Pimentel.

"I talk a lot with the girls about it, because you put your personal data, address, telephone: it's very dangerous! Because nowadays if you have a CPF you can even find the color of the clothes the person is wearing, so it's very serious!"

Tatiana de Oliveira, Quilombo Mangueiras.

3.5.3. The impact of social markers on online security

With regard to the social contexts from which the interviewees come, these are also a relevant factor in determining the security conditions on the network. In scenarios in which people do not feel safe and/or supported in their own communities, presenting this behavior in the virtual environment becomes an even greater challenge. Such was the case of Eni, a Carajá indigenous person who lives in Belo Horizonte, who has been territorially separated from his community. According to Eni, urban indigenous people are already a frequent target of prejudice, denialism and racial insults. Faced with this whole scenario, he does not feel safe on the Internet. Another example was an interviewee who, in an online event via Google Meet during the pandemic, was the victim of racist and misogynistic attacks by an anonymous group. Even though she sought legal remedies, she received no support.

Socio-economic vulnerability was also indicated as an element that increases the fragility of the community in fraudulent situations. Considering limited access to digital literacy, which makes it possible to identify disinformation and financial scams, when people with limited resources are faced with income generation proposals they are often encouraged to prioritize a potential means of overcoming their lack of financial resources rather than critically and cautiously analyzing the proposal:

"[Members of the community] They find something on the Internet and send it there [to the community's WhatsApp group], and I say: Guys, it's not good to keep sending things like this. And another thing: it's fake news!

They post for example: emergency help has increased to R$ 1200. Click here and put in your details to receive this help. This is what happens most. The person ends up putting in their details and then they say: Goodness, I asked for it and I haven't received it! It's something that happens a lot in the community. It's a money thing, or courses that promise you can earn R$ 5000."

Tatiana de Oliveira, Quilombo Mangueiras.

With regard to the context of the interviewees there are also situations in which, given the insecurity in the neighborhood, the insecurity when handling electronic equipment becomes even greater. This is the case with one of the interviewees who, when her cell phone was stolen, began to feel more vulnerable in the virtual environment, since the device contained important data, files, and documents. This case shows how vulnerabilities can add up. Although most individuals today feel extremely insecure because of episodes such as their cell phone being stolen, there are already several technological mechanisms for mitigating the situation (like two-factor verification, password protection in apps, cloud backup, tracking features, etc.). Mastery of such mechanisms, however, is a variable that depends on the degree of digital inclusion of the individual; users who are already excluded from this environment, in addition to being easier targets, also suffer more in this type of situation.

3.6. The perception of the interviewees of the public policies in their communities

The discontinuity and inadequacy of the Brazilian government's public policies for digital inclusion are topics that have been addressed in other work undertaken by IRIS,[7] This section presents the situations in which those interviewed sought public policies

7 CARMO, Paloma; DUARTE, Felipe; GOMES, Ana Bárbara. *Inclusão Digital como Política Pública: Brasil e América do Sul em perspectiva*. Instituto de Referência em Internet e Sociedade: Belo Horizonte, 2020. Available at: Accessed on: Sept 9, 2022.

to overcome barriers to digital inclusion and how they understand their interaction with the State in this matter. Generally, the people we interviewed had never turned to public policies as a means of overcoming the precarious connectivity situation, either because they did not know how to do this, or because they did not perceive public policy as an instrument to be used for this purpose, or even because they understand such actions to be distant or ineffective. The few interviewees who had had any experience with public connectivity policies reported various criticisms and shortcomings in their implementation.

3.6.1. Distancing from public policies

Public connectivity and Internet access policies are generally not found in the contexts in which the interviews took place. When they were asked about this, many people gave brief responses. Although this is not a result that can be measured by the responses to the interviews, in the perception of the researchers who conducted them, there is a distance between the communities and access to these policies; most of the time this is not because of any lack of knowledge, but because of the notion they have that these policies are distant, inaccessible, or difficult to implement.

But even though most of the people we interviewed do not perceive the right to digital inclusion as a duty of the state, they said they were interested in using the Internet and they needed to use it to access and take advantage of other public policies unrelated to its use, as noted by the words of Makota Cássia Kidoialê, from Quilombo Manzo:

> *"[We want] to know how to use this tool to demand commitment from government. Mastering the language of the Internet in order to be heard."*

3.6.2. The insufficiency of public policies

Marco Aurélio, one of the project interviewees, is the director of a state school in the east of the city. He reported that his school forms part of the Federal Government's Connected Education Innovation Program (*PIEC*), a public policy that allocates funds for connecting public schools to the Internet, through the Direct Money in Schools Program (*PDDE*). The amount, however, is only enough to hire a connection service, but does not cover maintenance of the infrastructure or the equipment. The school was built decades ago and also needs to have its electrics renovated, but the *PIEC* does not resolve structural bottlenecks, which hinders implementation of the public policy's objective.

There were several reports about access spaces that had already existed but that have been closed, such as telecenters and the laboratory of the Reference Center for Social Assistance (*CRAS*). These initiatives were aimed at offering space and machines for Internet access via computers, the aim being to overcome the deficit in access to equipment, and a stable connection.

Other knowledge policies for residents were never put into effect, such as the laboratory for Quilombo Souza, which was a result of the "Internet for all" policy, but the community never received the computers; or initiatives for installing public wi-fi points, such as in Quilombo Souza, which is located in the historic district of Belo Horizonte, and that was hoping to receive the connection. But this does not seem to have happened, as Gláucia Vieira from Quilombo Souza said:

"They say that here in Santa Tereza we were going to have it, because it's BH heritage and we're in a heritage site (...) But there's no wi-fi locally (..) I don't know if this is going to go ahead."

4. Next steps: A meaningful connectivity strategy

The main objective in carrying out the interviews was to map out the demands for a context of meaningful connectivity so that, based on the responses, a training course could be prepared for the communities we interviewed. This report served as the main support for outlining the subject of each of the five modules that have been planned for the activity, which are:

- Module I. Understanding meaningful connectivity as a human right.
- Module II. Communication from/to the outskirts: data, disinformation and communication strategies.
- Module III. Activating public policies for the digital inclusion of my community.
- Module IV. Technology transforms my community: appropriating technology.
- Module V. Security on the Internet: avoiding scams and looking after the community.

From these thematic axes it is intended to address some of the interviewees' important demands, such as: the fight against disinformation, and awareness about how to use the Internet responsibly and safely; strategies for instrumentalizing the Internet in favor of local visibility, and for promoting cultural, social, and economic initiatives; the construction of counter-narratives in networks; strategies for the better use and knowledge of the digital tools available on the network; and the digital security strategies that need to be disseminated in the community;

The lesson plans for each module will be published on the Institute's website and will be openly and freely available.

5. Summary and conclusions

As already presented throughout the report, the interviews that were carried out constituted the first phase of the project. The second phase is a training course for the community leaders we interviewed in order to build a connectivity strategy together. The aggregate results were extremely important for mapping out the challenges, demands, and perceptions of the communities we contacted, thus helping to formulate a roadmap for the course.

The following are some of the conclusions of the first phase of the project. First, the context of vulnerability of the communities was already a factor that had been considered, and was even one of the requirements for selecting the interviewees as per the methodology. The way in which these realities were presented, narrated and specified, however, provided a unique panorama that made it possible to relate the different vulnerabilities of the groups' daily lives to the situation, particularly that of digital exclusion. The way in which the vulnerabilities were reported was a prominent factor in the interviews. An example of this is how the impossibility of obtaining quality devices and guaranteeing a constant connection are factors that affect the commercial and economic development of communities, which results in the current situation being maintained. This was also observed at the individual level by people who are unable to use resources such as PIX [free bank payment facility] or card machines for sales in their local businesses. From a collective perspective, some communities find themselves limited in terms of their social visibility and local culture, since they face difficulties when it comes to creating marketplace environments or increasing cohesion and engagement among their members. Still on this topic, the general context and reality of the people who make up the groups is an element that is directly related to the use of the Internet.

Other relevant issues relate to how the context as narrated influences the security conditions on the network and the implementation of solution measures, such as actioning public policies. Access difficulties, poor digital literacy, and little technological appropriation mean that communities are limited in terms of the resources that they might use for their development. This situation, in turn, aggravates the feeling of insecurity (in the physical and virtual environments), creating a space that is more prone to virtual scams, for example, and making it difficult to access the services and public policies offered on the Internet. In view of this, we identified situations in which, although there are already possible solutions to be implemented that are within the power of government, the difficulty the community has in actioning them is proving to be a determining obstacle.

In conclusion, we observe how digital exclusion is a structural vulnerability in the communities in question, and this is related to other spheres of social inequality. Access, digital literacy and the technological appropriation of resources thus become yet another marker of the inequality that exists among Brazil's citizens, but is also a possible tool for

coping with various problems that are experienced in communities. With this in mind, by way of the course, which is a product of the project, our objective is to define strategies aimed at the realities that were analyzed, so that leaders can have an increasing impact on local connectivity and expand the conditions and possibilities for using the Internet for collective development.

6. Appendix 1 – Interview script

Personal presentation

The project explained

In this project, which is funded by the British Embassy, our aim is to offer a training course on how community leaders can design a connectivity strategy that is meaningful in terms of addressing the specific demands of their communities. The plan is not just to teach and explain, but to ensure that the knowledge acquired is passed on internally.

At this stage we are conducting these interviews with the aim of understanding the main challenges you have encountered in accessing and using the Internet. From analyzing these results we will continue developing the course, to which all interviewees will be invited.

Nature of the interview: semi-structured.

Interviewees: Community leaders from vulnerable groups, suburban complexes, quilombola communities, indigenous communities, migrant communities, settlements and occupations.

Objective: To understand the actual demands of the selected groups in terms of their digital inclusion. Based on what is identified, a training course will be developed for leaders in order to discuss and develop connectivity strategies for communities in Brazil and for their leaders. In addition to offering opportunities for implementing Internet access for the groups that are represented, the aim is to do so in a meaningful way that is adapted to the local reality.

Explanation to the interviewees: In this block we would like to understand better who you are, who your community is, and how it is organized.

Block I – Introducing the interviewee and the community

Objective: To understand who the interviewee is and the context of their community/group; to outline an initial profile from the information that is shared (observing what the interviewee considered to be relevant).

1) First of all, we would like to ask you for some specific information about you:

- Profession/Occupation
- Age
- Race
- Gender

2) Now we would like you to briefly present yourself: tell us who you are, a bit about your background, and any other points you consider important.

3) Now present your community/group and tell us a little about its routine.

Explore:

- Traditional community festivals and/or events
- How people from the community maintain their ties (is there a community hub, an association, a trade union, WhatsApp and/or Facebook groups...?)
- Average number of people
- Gender, age and predominant races
- Time living at the current address
- Professional occupation
- Education level

4) What activities do you exercise within the community/group?

5) Which main apps/sites do you use?

6) What do you understand by digital inclusion? (remember that there are no correct or

incorrect answers: we want to know your conception and general impressions)

The concept of digital inclusion

We are investigating what access to the Internet is like in communities located outside major centers, and how it is used.

We want to know what service availability is like, but more than that, we want to know if there is meaningful access. We work with an idea of digital inclusion that does not stop when we connect to the Internet, but also pays attention to the possibility of using the Internet for personal and collective development. This includes the ability, for example, to: check information; search for services; carry out tasks; move between sites; pay attention to the safe use of the network; and exercise citizenship online.

Internet access is the first step, and it is extremely important for the digital inclusion experience, but we want to promote a digital inclusion that pays attention to its meaningful use, that is, that helps people achieve their full rights.

Block II – Identifying the main difficulties and demands with regard to digitalinclusion

Objectives: To understand the main difficulties of the community/group in general in relation to digital inclusion and how these difficulties are related. To understand/identify if there are already any public policies in place and if they are effective. To understand/identify if any strategies are being used by the group for overcoming the barriers to digital inclusion. To observe how this is presented by the interviewee (degree of difficulty, how long it takes, the division of responsibilities, the attribution of cause). To outline a profile based on the connectivity conditions that are presented.

Explanation to the interviewee: In this block we would like to have a better understanding of your relationship with the Internet and that of your community, and what difficulties and solutions you find in this regard.

7) In which situations do you and other people from the community/group use the Internet in your day-to-day activities?

- Are there any social media you predominantly use? Is there a group, a shared page...?
- Which are the main apps/websites used by the people you are close to in your community?
- Is there someone in your community who is known to be an influencer, blogger, or something similar?
- What is your main way of accessing the Internet: cell phone or computer? If it is a cell phone, what is your main way of connecting to the Internet: via wi-fi (public/private) or mobile data?
- Do you have a cell phone plan? If you do, is it a prepaid plan (recharged every month and with a limit on Internet access), or post-paid (with a monthly charge)?
- To understand your community's Internet connection profile, I'm going to ask you some specific questions:
- Where is the Internet access located? (home, school, Internet cafe, work, other);
- What type of device? (phone, computer);
- What type of connection is it? (wi-fi, mobile data, radio)
- Is the connection you and your community have of generally good quality?

- Is access stable (not frequently being lost)?

- Good access: a connection that is stable (not frequently lost), permanent (the Internet is available the whole month), fast (high speed), not susceptible to bad weather (heavy rain, power outages).

8) What's the Internet service like in your community? Is it difficult to access the service? (financial, infrastructure).

- Do you hear any complaints from the community about access to the Internet?

9) Which companies offer access to the Internet?

- Which type of Internet package do you have (cell phone, home) and how much does it cost?

- Is anything done with the companies regarding the poor quality of the Internet access service? Who is responsible for the access difficulty (the company or the government)?

10) What are the main difficulties you face in your daily life? E.g.: precarious infrastructure issues, a lack of funds, government negligence.

11) What difficulties are there in using the Internet in terms of the daily life of the community?

- Do you usually organize yourselves to try and resolve these difficulties together? Do you have an example of a problem you solved together?

- Do you feel safe on the Internet? (Do you believe you take actions related to your network security? E.g.: password protection, use of antivirus programs...).

- Do you think that members of your community make use of the Internet as citizens?

- Do you think that members of your community face difficulties related to digital education?

- Do you try and identify people in the community who have difficulties in handling basic equipment?

- Have there been conflicts/situations in the community involving digital scams or events such as sexting and/or cyberbullying?

Block III – Interests, suggestions and proposals

Objective: Having identified the main demands and issues regarding digital inclusion, the objective of this block is to understand the possible solutions and proposals already considered by the community/group and, based on that, how we can consider them when developing the training course. We also try and understand if any actual local initiatives are currently being used, or if any have been planned/are wanted by the community/group.

12) Have any local strategies already been designed and/or implemented to overcome the problems of digital inclusion?

13) Have you already looked for public policies to promote the use of the Internet in your community?

14) How do you imagine the Internet could help solve local problems?

15) What would you like to see addressed in a free course to encourage digital inclusion in your community, or in others in a similar context?

16) After this very long interview, for which we are very grateful, and in which we talked about the elements of digital inclusion, is there any point you consider to be a priority for improvement in your community?

17) Is there anything you would like to add, or anything you wish I had asked?

iris

INSTITUTE
FOR RESEARCH
ON INTERNET
AND SOCIETY