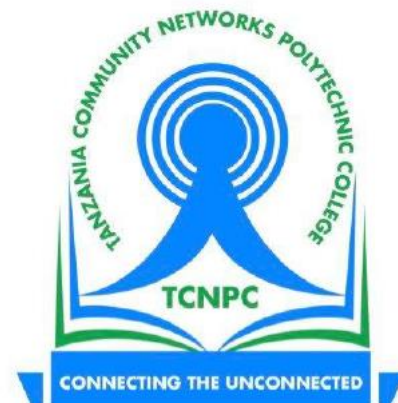




**Venue: Holiday Inn, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**



**Tanzania School of Community Networks**

**4<sup>th</sup> Edition- May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**Theme: Policy and Regulatory Framework for the Sustainable  
Community Networks Cooperatives in Tanzania**

**May 27, 2025**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Tanzania has about 86.8 million telecom subscriptions and 48 million Internet users and that is according to the TCRA report of December 2024. When comparing Internet access in terms of gender, fewer women have access to communication services than men. Similarly, 86% of rural dwellers remain unconnected to the Internet compared to 44.6% in urban areas (RIA, 2018). According to GSMA (2019), the mobile broadband usage gap—defined as the percentage of the population covered by mobile broadband networks but not using mobile internet—stood at 48%. Additionally, 34% of the Tanzanian population lacked coverage by mobile broadband services, compared to 25% across Sub-Saharan Africa.

It is based on the above that the Tanzania Community Networks Polytechnic College and its partners have been advocating for alternative and complementary approaches to address challenges related to Internet access. The approach includes the use of low-cost last-mile solutions, wholesale bandwidth provision, digital literacy programmes and human-centred connectivity that embraces the community networks cooperative to empower urban and rural dwellers.

### 1.2 MEETING SUMMARY

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Paradigm Initiative in partnership with Tanzania Community Networks Polytechnic College organized a nationwide multi-stakeholder annual event in Dar es Salaam Tanzania, bringing together 48 people to include members from Tarime, Kasulu, Kondoa, and Nyasa community network cooperatives as well as CSOs in Tanzania. The event also brought together advocates of community-based telecommunication networks from Zambia and Nigeria. Eng. Dr. Nkundwe Mwasaga, the Director General, ICT Commission in Tanzania was the Chief Guest who graced the event.

The annual event was meant to enable participants to gain technical and non-technical skills to address the digital divide, improve skills in designing, administration, create a sustainable model for community networks as well as enhance management of community-based telecommunication networks.

The event was timely as it came ahead of the general elections slated for October 2025, amid concerns on access to social media platforms as the government of Tanzania had just shut off twitter following attacks to most of the government's social media accounts.



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Pre and post assessments were conducted with translation services provided whenever the need called for. The event enjoyed coverage in social and mainstream media where links are shared as part of the annexure.



### **1.3 KEY HIGHLIGHTS**

Community-owned networks, also referred to as “community networks” (CNs), have existed for many years where they provide sustainable solutions to address the Internet connectivity gaps that exist in urban, remote, and rural areas around the world.

Thus the 4<sup>th</sup> Tanzania School of Community Networks was relevant and interactive as it enabled delegates to discuss various challenges in the country comprising of digital skills gap between the urban and rural areas, poor network connectivity and infrastructure in rural areas, high costs of internet bundles and smart phones and lack of legal recognition for community networks a situation that had seen the country fail to record progress when it comes to internet connectivity.

The session saw delegates come with concrete key recommendations for Community Networks to take lead to invest in capacity building on digital literacy in rural areas, advocate for inclusive digital policies, support programs which address all IMUC parameters and engage underserved communities in connectivity solutions. Others include engaging in advocacy campaigns to ensure that community networks

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enhance collaborations with CSOs, private sector and the government, advocate for community networks to get legal recognition, and for the TCRA to provide communications services to community network like mobile phone companies but with exemptions from paying a universal communication fee of 1 percent as theirs is service and not business.



Apart from the speeches, testimonies, experience sharing, the session entailed award giving ceremony to Founder and CEO of Tanzania Community Networks Polytechnic College, Dr. Jabhera Matogoro, The Principal ICT Officer, Mr. David Nyangaka and Eng. Dr. Nkundwe Mwasaga, the Director General, ICT Commission in Tanzania for their outstanding work to advocate for internet connectivity in hard-to-reach areas to reach the marginalized groups in Tanzania. Notably, Jamii Africa gave a smartphone to Mr. Abeid Dutu, who lives with visual impairment from Kondoa Community Network in recognition of his commitment and services to his community, a move mentioned by PIN as recommendable as it reflected inclusivity. Another award was provided to UCSAF for their generous support towards the networks as well as RAMATA for their efforts to plant trees. Notably, Paradigm Initiative received a certificate of appreciation for their support towards the Tanzania School of Community Networks.

In another move, a moment of silence was observed in honor of the Deceased founding member of Reneal IEOI for his immense support to provide computers and ICT gadgets in various schools in Tanzania. It was also declared that the 5<sup>th</sup> School of Community Networks will be held in Tarime, Tanzania in May 2026.



## 2 REMARKS & SPEECHES

### 2.1 OPENING REMARKS

#### **Opening Remarks by Mr. Ihueze Nwobilor- Senior Programmes Officer, Paradigm Initiative**



Mr. Ihueze Nwobilor from Paradigm Initiative issued some opening remarks saying the Tanzania School of Community Networks has been on-going saying the Paradigm Initiative was happy to partner with the Tanzania Community Networks Polytechnic College to enhance more understanding as his organization knows the role that internet plays today in everyday lives.

At PIN he said digital inclusion work focuses on people who are easy to be forgotten to ensure they are reached for them to benefit from the internet. He hailed community networks for their work saying it was because of the work that he believed that their capacity should be built more. He then mentioned the objectives of the session as to share experiences for them to take home to improve on what they are doing and hear challenges and areas in need of support.

Concluded his speech with a call for networks to work together with CSOs and government, engage in a consultation session where its outcome can help them to put resources to push the work that they are doing.

### 2.2 WELCOME REMARKS

#### **Welcome Remarks by Dr. Jabhera Matogoro**

Dr. Matogoro utilized the chance to welcome delegates and shared how he began with the Kondoa community network when the road was impassable. He introduced some of the delegates to include Green Beacon, an organization within 18 regions of Tanzania where the latter through community engagement have been able to plant over 200 trees, a



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social media influencer- Kapeto with more than 200,000 followers and delegates from Zambia and Nigeria.

He compared the school to a family and grassroots movement because community networks have things which bind them together. Mentioned that they were given permission to establish 5 networks but only four remained strong, as one was at the time not doing well. He was quick to add however that it was their wish to establish more community networks.

### 2.3 KEYNOTE SPEECH

#### ***Guest of Honour, Eng. Dr. Nkundwe Mwasaga, Director General, ICT Commission***

The Director General for the ICT Commission began his key- note speech by paying an accolade to delegates for what they were doing saying they were helping as they were sending ICT to people at the grassroots level.



Majority of people in Tanzania are still in rural areas and the movement is addressing the rural gap. Paid an accolade to all the teams for relentless innovation before he highlighted milestones achieved by community networks:

- Kondoa, Nyangaka model has helped to connect international communities and local communities with affordable internet, TV,
- Tarime has pioneered a local led movement and supports schools to amplify digital tech
- Nyasa Community Networks: supports E fahamu- a digital education portal that offers learning materials to schools for free and provides quality education.
- Kasulu- shares digital infrastructure between Buha FM and OHIDE where communities are given knowledge and support

“If a solution is participatory, it is a more effective solution and it can multiply,” said the Director.

He mentioned the ICT department’s mission as to promote inclusive ICT policies that support people at the grassroots, conduct capacity building as well as coordinate stakeholders’ engagement, support and provide platforms for emerging technologies and ensure community networks are not left behind.



Mentioned digital economy as the economy for the people most of whom are in rural areas adding “ the movement you have, is what will take people in Tanzania ahead. We want a digital economy that is inclusive. We want information that comes from the rural areas.”

For community networks to thrive, he said they must:

- Ensure access to universal services funds
- Ensure digital inclusion and strong point of action for regulators
- Support innovation from top down.

He relayed the government’s gratitude to the Paradigm Initiative saying Africa is creating an African single trade area and the partnership with PIN is what Tanzania wants.

Happy to see Paradigm Initiative supports these initiatives as it will help us to understand opportunities in our market and create one single market.

The Chief Guest mentioned community networks as the real game changers adding that connectivity is not a luxury but rather a right and a platform to so many opportunities.

“Work with communities not just for them but for the country. Together we can build a country where no one is left online,” concluded the chief guest.

### 3 PRESS INTERVIEWS

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Immediately after the official launch of the event, members of the press conducted interviews with various delegates. The session then resumed with presentations

### 4 PRESENTATIONS & GROUP DISCUSSIONS

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#### 4.1 PRESENTATION 1: INTRODUCTION TO MEANINGFUL UNIVERSAL CONNECTIVITY FRAMEWORKS AND PARAMETERS

##### ***Ihueleze Nwobilor- Senior Programmes Officer, Paradigm Initiative***

Mr. Ihueleze Nwobilor began by highlighting that universal connectivity goes beyond basic internet access and implies quality, affordability, relevance, inclusive, sustainable and must encourage everyone regardless of color or creed.

- Meaningful universal connectivity is having a connection that is available, accessible, affordable, relevant, safe & trusted. If not sure of safety then that internet is not worthwhile.

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- One should never use more than 10 percent of their income for the internet. However, some use up to 20 percent of their income before they have access to a meaningful internet.



Why meaningful universal connectivity matters:

- Internet access is a human right (UN 2021).
- The internet affects all ways of life, and is critical for education, employment, health and civic participation.
- With the internet one may find what is happening to other parts of the country unlike in the past where things went unnoticed.
- Every SDG depends on how effective one is meaningfully connected to the internet.
- Proposed guidelines on ITU- UNESCO Broadband Commissions' Global targets 2030- calls for accessible and affordable broadband for all.
- One of the challenges facing internet connectivity is an enabling legal framework.

The four parameters of meaningful internet connectivity were highlighted as:

- Availability: where internet infrastructure is present and reliable.
- Affordability: where access is economically feasible for users.
- Quality of service - where the quality is good enough without challenges
- Digital skills & literacy: where people have skills to use the internet meaningfully. Cited the case of Nigeria where computers were sent to community centers where some were found to have had no one who knows

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how to use them making it turn into a museum. “If purpose is not known, abuse is inevitable,” he cautioned.

- Politicians simply send a project to the community even when it does not add any value. People who are at the grassroots can help to merge the gap.
- Each community network should know where they are and which area they need to put more efforts to reach the people.
- Online safety and security are relevant in local languages.

He then highlighted the need to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities at the policy level, as more often than not women, girls and PWDs are normally left in decision making. Thus, stakeholders must ensure that policies are inclusive. Cited the case of Nigeria with more than 271 languages where English is the national language where those who have not gone to school, were more likely to be left and the country is now working to see that the digital content considers local languages.

Meaningful connectivity indicators were mentioned as:

- Daily use.
- How many people use smartphone?
- Devices without the internet are not meaningful to the community.
- 4G Mobile network access and above.
- Digital skills use.
- Unlimited broadband connection at home.

The presenter encouraged governments in Africa to utilize the resources it has. He shared a story of a young boy in Nigeria who used the knowledge on the internet to apply for a scholarship to Ghana, went and excelled and got another scholarship in the USA and has helped his siblings to have the same and is now helping his community in Nigeria. The internet connectivity creates equal opportunities between the poor and rich.

### CHALLENGES:

- 2.6 billion people are still offline as of 2025 with many more with poor quality and unaffordable access, rural, low income and marginalized groups are most affected.
- In some areas in Nigeria people said girls were not allowed to learn and it took a lot of advocacy to change the perception.
- Policy program and implications: public investment in infrastructure, subsidies, and pricing

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Community networks should be channels for the government to subsidize the cost of internet connections.
- Digital literacy gap: we don't do one size fits it all, identify what the most important needs are.
- Advocate for the government to work with the private sector to partner and enable communities to have access to free internet services.



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- Community networks should build strong networks as engaging with the country without a network will not succeed.

### 4.2 GROUP DISCUSSION

The presenter posed two questions one for each of the side of the classroom whose rejoinders have been indicated hereunder:

#### **GROUP 1: Question- What does meaningfully connectivity look like in your region?**

Rejoinder:

- The content is not wanting.
- Devices and bandwidth are very costly.
- On inclusivity- women and other marginalized groups are left behind (young girls and PWDs).
- Poor digital literacy- lack of relevant skills for people to use it. Things should go hand in hand for connectivity to be more meaningful.

#### **GROUP 2: Question: - What major barriers do you encounter as you implement your activities in the community?**

Rejoinder:

- Most people lack digital literacy skills such as internet networks as they fail to understand it.
- Most people don't have smart phones and as such say they can survive without it as they can still use their mobile phones to communicate. Whenever you complain of internet connectivity they simply wonder.
- In rural areas some can't even afford to communicate due to lack of mobile phone connectivity cited a case of a certain village where people must climb on stones at a certain area to be reachable.
- Limited infrastructure especially in rural areas.
- High costs of computers.
- Poor signals.
- Language barriers and accessibility issues especially for PWDs.
- ICT knowledge.
- Poverty – cannot afford to buy data.
- Poor connectivity.
- Family priorities, which is best to consume in food or connectivity and thus leaving internet behind.
- High taxes and fees on the internet make families not prioritize the internet.

Rejoinder from the presenter: If you don't raise your hands, no one will see where you are. There are things that can be done without waiting for the government.

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The progress and the good news we are seeking starts with us. They are a limit to how much they can help us.

Way forward:

- Advocate for inclusive digital policies.
- Support programs addressing all IMUC parameters.
- Engage underserved communities in connectivity solutions.

### 4.3 PRESENTATION 2: BACKGROUND OF COMMUNITY NETWORK COOPERATIVES IN TANZANIA: BACKGROUND, ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGES

***The presentation was made by Stanley Moshia, one of the pioneers for the establishment of the community network cooperatives in Tanzania***

Introduction and definition:

Community networks are all over the world and are established by communities to help communication for the benefit of the community.



- A community hub was created in Kondoa, as the first one where they connected schools and colleges to the internet. There was demand for outreach and thus, they decided to meet with other communities in the country in Kasulu OHIDE , and Nyasa, Unyanja FM.
- Kondoa community network began as an NGO- they faced a lot of challenges and thus decided to operate it in a very sustainable way.
- All programs ought to be meaningful and sustainable.
- The cooperative was established where networks were required to be established and owned by the community themselves.

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- The four community networks are now model cooperatives networks as they have brought impact.

Achievements:

- Communities in areas have computer hubs in Kasulu, Kondoa.
- Community networks have helped to be a channel where NGOs pass through them whenever they want to implement activities in the respective communities.

If each district can have one community center they will be able to reach our goal.

### 4.4 PRESENTATION 3: SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY INITIATIVES: ACHIEVEMENT AND CHALLENGES



**David Nyangaka - Principal ICT Officer and the Country Director for Reneal International Education Outreach Inc**

The presenter shared his computerization strategy for government secondary schools in Tanzania recalling that ICT in schools which had now been given computers was only done on the blackboard.

Achievements:

- Through donor support the latter made donations of 20 computers, and servers where they managed to place all past papers, simulations and science practical.
- The project has supported 129 schools in Arusha, Pwani, Tanga, Kilimanjaro, Dodoma, Mbeya, Iringa, Mara, Lindi, Mtwara and Manyara.
- Secondary school servers in the project regions have incorporated National exams from 1988- 2024.
- Most schools have an ICT subject where most children have been able to sit for exams.
- Most students at the level of form two can now design websites.
- There is now an E Library with a lot of materials offline.
- Salary slips and pep miss and other documents are now there.
- Some of the heads of schools called their ICT teachers to stay on leave to train. They also charge parents to pay graduates who are yet to secure employment.



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Made a call for community networks to never lock in computers but rather utilize the form four leavers and high school students to come and pay a small fee to undertake computer classes.

He mentioned challenges in implementing the project as shortage of ICT teachers, internet and computer; calling upon the need for additional equipment such as photocopiers and printers for the school to print as the scope of the project does not cater for it and thus called upon partners to support in that area.

What the support from RENEAL IEOI entails:

- An increase in the number of computers as per their uses.
- Utilizing the team of local graduates yet to employed to support in terms of training.

Achievements:

- The company has provided 2,402 equipment, 90s with the project estimated to be of 2 billion shillings.
- 109 schools have received computers, some programmers are a result of the computer where one learnt online and some have been employed as designers from self-learning.

Way forward:

- They intend to increase computers in schools.
- To increase internet connectivity.
- Increase the number of teachers in schools.
- Expand the project to reach more schools.
- Want to see how they can incorporate the new syllabus in the server.

Challenges:

- In some of the schools, teachers lock the computers for them to remain new.
- In some areas, people steal computers, in some 20 laptops were stolen.
- Called on community centers to keep a close eye to ensure all documents are safe.
- Involve the community to sort out challenges instead of writing letters to authorities.

Displayed the various resources online and how students can engage in practical sessions with the digital contents online.

### **4.5 PRESENTATION 4: COMMUNITY-BASED FINANCIAL SERVICES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORKS COOPERATIVE**

#### ***Grace Mwangende Tanzania Cooperative Development Commission***

The presenter began by posing questions to delegates asking whether as cooperatives they had leaders, had been audited and had gotten orientation amid few hands.



- The presenter highlighted the background of SACCOS, its meaning, procedures and the legal framework.  
Meaning: an abbreviation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies  
Regulated by two Acts, the Cooperative Act,  
Structure: starts at primary where an individual person is a member while the federation starts from top up.  
Formation:
  - Members must be at least 20 and above
  - The more the members, the stronger the cooperatives.
  - SACCOS is a proper place for loans instead of banks. Mentioned over the cooperative bank recently officiated in Dodoma.
  - She highlighted requirements for them to register for SACCOS as a capital of 10 million shillings.
  - Mentioned their priority as ICT use for the year 2025-2026
  - All networks must be registered as well as the move.
  - Cautioned that voting for leaders was critical and so was the succession plan for the same and separation of power was critical between the cooperative and SACCOS.

### 4.6 PRESENTATION 5: INTERNET CONNECTIVITY PROJECT

#### **Presentation by Ms. Catherine Kimambo from African Child Projects**

Catherine Kimambo gave a background on the African Child Projects as:

- A small project whose goal is to enhance internet connectivity where they have been working with various networks ever since 2020.  
Achievements:

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- School connectivity project began in 2020 during the Covid saying it was a time where it proved to the government on the need to secure internet connectivity



- Began on a pilot of 10 schools where the key performance indicator was internet connectivity will enhance performance in schools.
- Selected schools with partners from Norway, USCAF.
- The goal was to reach 300 schools to connect with the internet and create digital literacy and ICT teachers and students.
- The other goal was to come with content that will benefit them.
- The last point was stakeholders' engagement where digital friends and community networks inclusive of universities through students, where they cannot practice.
- Second phase- 2022 reached 50 schools – meant to increase pass marks in public schools. Managed to increase pass mark by 5 percent.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> phase- was to see how to incorporate ICT in teaching.
- Trained almost 2,000 teachers where they also donated projectors and TV screens.
- 13 regions reached.
- 8,000 students trained.
- This helped students to be able to go in the computer room and to learn.
- Managed to create self-learning.

### Outcomes:

- Managed to increase pass mark by 22 percent.
- Done with partnership with Vodacom foundation where the government through the UCSAF has made it possible as well as digital friends.

### Future plans:

The latter intend to train teachers who are still in colleges as well as pre-service teachers on digital skills. Called upon delegates to share details of colleges in need of training.



## **4.7 DISCUSSION**

The following session on the agenda was a discussion where participants got the chance to comment, ask questions with immediate rejoinder provided from the presentations made as indicated hereunder:

Question: What strategies were used by the government to empower PWDs through community networks?

Rejoinder David Nyangaka:

On PWDS: the ICT strategy stressed upon inclusivity of all special groups in ICT. The move on girls on ICT is also part of the support to special groups. Needless to speak, the main challenges have been digital content for teaching. When you think of persons with disabilities, it becomes a bit challenging when it comes to software. We take it and will share it with the responsible authorities.

Rejoinder Grace Mwangende on PWDs: each political party manifesto addresses all special groups. We must go further. As cooperatives we have taken care of it.

Question: to David Nyangaka: your institution has been providing computers and equipment and I have seen efforts directed to areas where giant leaders in the country come from those who have the power to provide. Any plans to reach those in marginalized areas without top brass leaders in power?

Rejoinder David Nyangaka: This question is very important but we just connected Rungwe DC, Handeni DC, Manyara DC and they all have computers. We are in 35 municipalities in 11 regions. Some moves are also done strategically to achieve your goals. I once provided support for computers somewhere with a top brass government leader and as a result got free internet connectivity for all the schools that I was supporting.

Question: I see most of the support on internet connectivity is directed to secondary schools. Any plans to invest in primary schools, if not please consider and start with my Isaga primary school in Kondoa. I think outside the box I would wish to have my school get the ICT gadgets with the new syllabus.

Rejoinder David Nyangaka: while planning, we did overlook. The project has four criteria for it to get assistance. At the time we wanted to know whether the school has reliable power and must have an extra class with 300 students and an ICT teacher and most primary schools had none while secondary schools have several rooms. I shared the idea with the donor to start with primary schools. ICT is now going down where coding is taught to people underground. We just began with Matimu primary school.

Question: Can you utilize community networks where they can engage in selling ICT gadgets for a reasonable price, whether they can get subsidies to sell those

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undergraduates to establish internet cafes or mobile phones even if it means by loans or technological devices to facilitate communication?

Comment: A call was made for cooperatives to increase activities for them to earn income and receive dividends.

Question: There are special schools for the blind. There are computers which are donated to various schools. Since you donate them, wouldn't it be wise to also donate to special schools where they can share their knowledge with others? I learnt braille but have not been around such a gadget.

Question: Chairperson of Tarime Community Network: we would wish to engage to have equipment for those who apply for them to get. How can we when we don't have them ourselves? We supervise distribution of computers but have no idea, kindly consider us.

Rejoinder: David Nyangaka - said he had encountered a question while donating computers to the community network where they asked whether they could take it where his response was that he was bound by the contract. He said he could not guarantee one as he too could not even take a free computer from the support even if he wanted to.

Comment CN Kondoa: thanked presenters for the session saying they got a lot of good things. It is our plea to call for the energy to shift to primary schools as those who come from primary schools go to secondary schools. There is a requirement for an institution to have savings of 10 million shillings to register as SACCOSS. Kindly request the authorities to lower the amount to 5 million shillings.

Rejoinder: Grace Mwangende: Those to be established are SACCOSS within the community network. We will supervise them to ensure they move forward. Each cooperative must meet the criteria. You can come with a guideline where you can even sell shares for 5,000. With SACCOSS you can get loans and it will emancipate you and you can buy computers and sell them by loans. This will motivate them. You must also know the cooperatives' bank. 5 million instead of 10m, falls under the SACCOSS law as set by the Bank of Tanzania. You can register- start with DCO. Five million was a long time ago, we cannot compromise.

Comment- gap – community network is not in any provision of the law. Let us see how we can come with it.

Comment: There were discussions with TCRA for consultation on the internet.

The following item in the program entailed sharing the impact of community radios in Tanzania.

### **4.8 PRESENTATION 6: COMMUNITY RADIO AND ITS IMPACTS: A CASE OF BUHA FM Prosper Kwigize- Buha FM**

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Buha FM community radio station manager shared over how his station had been able to make impact in Kasulu district, Kigoma region in Tanzania where the latter had been able to



build capacity of more than 100 students to use E fahamu in learning where one of the students emerged among the top ten in the whole country in terms of form four national exams.

Definition of the community radio:

Community radio is the one that is established and operated by community members. In Tanzania it was challenging to get the proper definition. At the time they established TADIO for community-based radios. Most of the

community-based radios are under NGOs. What makes them unique is the content. Community radio means, when community members have issues and want their grievances aired, they can call for a meeting to establish a radio and they can do so. Once the issue is gone, the radio can as well end. Community radio is every day's livelihood where stories touch the lives of the respective community. They deal with general issues.

There are 50 radios under the umbrella of the community radio network. Some were also established by companies where they realized they too were providing services. Buha FM was established in 2021 because Kigoma was one of the regions with a fast growing population, lack of security. At the time, it was odd to travel without security organs to guard you to ensure you are safe. We had more than a million refugees from Rwanda, Burundi, and other areas. Poverty and stunting were high in regions with food in abundance so we needed a radio to communicate. The literacy level was low amid shortage of communications. At the time there were only two radios of such but Kasulu had no radio and they were fed with content from other areas but not Kigoma region. Communities complained that they were not involved in programs.

Achievements:

- The radio now involves community members in-live and call- in programs with a coverage of 95 percent of Kigoma region. The radio also covers Katavi as well as the four regions of Burundi and DRC where whenever the station prepares programs on refugees its natives are able to listen to it.
- Community radios ensure gender inclusion where Buha FM has 2 PWDs among its staff members who were once DJs but have now been trained to do reporting.



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### Challenges:

- Limited funding for sustainability – the radio relies on small adverts as most investors don't believe that rural areas have customers but assume that they are only in urban areas.
- Political interference or censorship
- Technical capacity and infrastructure
- Training and professional development
- Had hired the TTCL tower and used to pay dollars where they got their tower through UCSAF, and got computers.
- It is hard to get journalists who are qualified.

## 4.9 PRESENTATION 7: POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY NETWORKS COOPERATIVES IN TANZANIA

**Adv. Paschal Mshanga: an expert on Data Privacy, AI Chairperson: Tanzania Privacy Professionals Association**



- In the current world, AI is perceived in a way it can facilitate communication but that can not happen without reliable internet connectivity.
- There is nothing under the sun that can succeed without the law.
- Laws are a foundation for the life to move on and not all laws are made by the Parliament.
- Laws will guide you how to push for the government to act.
- Regulatory: there are authorities which regulate the implementation of the law
- Tanzania has a lot of cooperatives unions and each fall under a certain category of cooperative
- Community network cooperatives: the presenter asked which authorities were overseeing consumer rights in the communication sector for small players in regard to cooperatives unions where participants showed their understanding of the laws in place.

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The presenter mentioned laws and policies governing community network cooperatives as:

- The Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (1977) under its Article 16 right to privacy and Article 18 on the Freedom of Expression where he said freedom without access is meaningless.
- EPOCA- CAP 306.
- TCRA Act.
- The Cooperatives Societies Act no 10 of 2018.
- Microfinance Act.
- Community microfinance.
- The Cybercrime Act, 2015.
- Electronic Transactions Act 2015.
- Personal Data Protection Act No 11 of 2022.

The presenter asked whether delegates had been registered under the Personal Data Protection Commission where most did not seem to be aware of what he implied.

He went to give clarity on the Personal Data Protection Act No 11 of 2022.

*Anyone who collects data, contributions and deals with people's information is required to be registered under the Personal Data Protection Commission ( PDPC) .*

Draft National ICT Policy of 2023:

The presenter highlighted over the background of the ICT policy and other legal documents as follows:

- The first ICT policy was prepared in 2003 and 2016 respectively where it brought a lot of laws.
- The policy guides one to know what the government plans to engage in terms of technology.
- The government has put in place the Digital Economic Strategic Framework- 2024- 2034.
- AI policy- has come with its draft strategy where it aligns with the Tanzania Development Vision 2025- 2050.

Challenges:

- Limited technical skills, digital literacy.
- Licensing costs.
- Gender digital divide.

Way forward.

- Policy reforms, more accessible licensing framework.
- Public private partnership.
- There is a need for a supportive regulatory framework that not only legitimizes community led connectivity efforts but also ensures data protection and equitable access.

## Community Networks Training

- Strategic alignment between government, civil society and local communities, inclusion, economic empowerment and community networks can become a cornerstone of Tanzania's vision for digital inclusion, economic empowerment.

### 4.10 DISCUSSION

The following session entailed discussions, questions and answers and reactions from the presentations as indicated:

Question: Whenever I use my phone I am forced to view witchcraft content, attacks against leaders on tick tock and forced to take loans that I don't want. Is there a way that you can help to control the same especially now that we are heading towards the general elections?

Rejoinder: Advocate: on being forced to see content in regard to loans; several cases have been sent to the commission. You can send them to court. On Content moderation for leaders: TCRA has the powers to regulate the same and they are the ones who license tick tock. There is a need to balance it. Those who misuse it are fewer compared to its benefit. We need to find ways to regulate it.

Question: most people fall trap due to language barriers in laws. Can you come with a Kiswahili version of the laws for more people to understand?

Rejoinder: The law requires that all court proceedings be held in Kiswahili. In courts, witnesses can provide it in any language. The translation of procedural laws is yet to be completed so its use is very limited. Soon we will be able to learn the Kiswahili language. Tanzania has brought a lot of revolution on laws and judgements.

## 5 PANEL DISCUSSION

### ***Enabling Environment for Community Networks: Policy & Regulatory Framework***

Moderator: Ihueze Nwobilor, Senior Programmes Officer, Paradigm Initiative

Discussants:

1. Mr. Stanley Mosha
2. Advocate Paschal Mshanga
3. Mr. Alembe Joseph

Question: One of the challenges we face is an enabling legal framework? What legal framework guides the establishment of the laws that prevent or inhibit the free establishment of the community network in Tanzania?

Rejoinder Advocate Mshanga: all issues pertaining to network establishment fall under the TCRA. There is no specific provision but there are community licenses. The commission is there but limited to certain licenses. It has not been simple.

## Community Networks Training

Regulatory wise, it requires a lot of investment. The government has not been willing to have a regulatory spectrum for community networking.

Moderator: In Nigeria, Paradigm Initiative is engaged in closed sessions with the Nigerian communication regulatory authority to push for them to understand community networks.

Question by moderator: Can you mention some of the existing policing spectrum licenses in Tanzania?

Rejoinder Advocate Mshanga: the licensing framework has categories to specify where some licenses require local restrictions. For community licensing, it applies to the content services for that particular community.

Rejoinder Stanley Mosha: We had a consultative meeting with the TCRA as they did not understand the purpose of community networks. We met an official who wondered what the Kondo network was doing. The TCRA is now ready to provide licenses at the district level to support. We need advocacy and lobbying to ask the TCRA to have another consultative meeting to present our aims and performances so that we can be licensed.

The moderator reiterated the Paradigm Initiative's commitment to provide support in the engagement with the government.



The panel discussion entailed representatives of community networks where the moderator posed a question for each of the readers to respond as indicated hereunder:

Moderator: What financial modules or incentives have you used in your community network in Tanzania?



### REJOINDER:

- Tarime Community Network earns its income through shares where members contribute to it. Each share costs 2,000/- (two thousand shillings) for one to be a member with 10 shares. They are also required to pay an entrance fee of 20,000/- (twenty thousand shillings). Others entail small contributions where you can fundraise to a certain sum, fines for small offences due to regulations inclusive of being late, absenteeism in meetings.
- Kondo Community Network: has shares and an entrance fee. During the establishment they had high hopes hoping they could establish an internet café. We request an environment that will see us have an internet café. You are called to a training and are required to pay 200,000 which you don't have. Once the environment is conducive we will be able to do it.
- Nyasa community Network: have shares of 10,000/ per person where the registration costs came from members. We are yet to get any business to run. We are still thinking of engaging in business which will not touch the legal aspect. The session on SACCOSS has been an eye opener for us to come with an alternative means to earn income.
- Kasulu Community Network: We rely upon entrance fee as shares are only a capital of its owner while as the entrance fee is used for office use. Challenge: request TCRA to give us a license so that we can have our own networks and income generation means but we are yet to. Wish to see cooperative acts support us. As we are told to engage in SACCOSS but with our members some are yet to even reach 10 shares. Once we get in SACCOSS we may be told to get in the BOT. Our goal was to build community capacity on digital skills.

Mr. Alembe Joseph- panelist: made a response in regard to whether community networks could engage in selling ICT gadgets and communication services

- The government has established the Universal Communication Services Access Fund (UCSAF) to ensure that the network goes where it is yet to reach. Once you plan to have chips it means you are going to be regarded as a commercial entity in competition with other network providers. It means you will be required to have towers and you will go to class one and two tiers. Access to spectrum is costly and that is a challenge to many community networks.

Response whether community networks can establish SACCOSS: Once you start making contributions to make income, BOT will come there as you will be moving from the community network to microfinance or banks or financial technology companies.

Response: As for community networks selling communication materials, cooperatives societies can supply the internet but not for profit as doing so will see them pay taxes. The cost will not be relevant to the service they provide.

## Community Networks Training

- Embrace Public private community partnership- this can help as it provides room for the network to collect donations. This will help the community network to be sustainable. The ICT policy supports infrastructure.
- Community Networks should engage with legal, ICT and financial experts to see how the module can support community networks to help people in rural areas.

Questions to community networks: What are the things you need to support you to go and sustain your community network?

Rejoinder:

- Buha Community Network: most community people own smartphones and use them for the internet. We would like to have an internet café to support students who are there in rural areas. While waiting for the policy to be conducive- establish a community internet café targeting students and youths out of school.
- Kondoa Community Network wants a training center on digital skills to youth who are out of schools and students in terms of also entrepreneurship.
- Nyasa Community Network: computer center for training, ICT gadgets as they are in demand for us to supply it we will be sustainable.
- Tarime Community Network: we need to create digital literacy- internet café is critical especially in rural areas.
- Clarity was given that it was not a must to have a SACCOSS as it was only a suggestion.
- Dr. Matogolo Jabhela- Community Networks should not be so rigid in case there is room to establish SACCOSS. Told them to be flexible in case the financial demand is high. Doing so will also require separate leadership.

## 6 CLOSING & WAY FORWARD

### 6.1 CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Jabhera Matogoro issued closing remarks while relaying their gratitude to Paradigm Initiative for the support which saw them convene the annual event something they failed to engage in last year due to lack of resources. He called upon the need to invest in evidence-based engagement – for the community networks to have an enabling environment.

According to Matogoro, if one is to invest and finds a law that hinders the move, they will not invest in it. There are two countries Kenya and South Africa with enabling laws to support community networks. The end goal should be to come with a document that will be shared with the government, concluded the Dr. The session was adjourned at 18.00 hours with group photos, logistics and networking.

## 6.2 WAY FORWARD

### 6.2.1 Recommendations

- Engage with TCRA and legal experts for community networks to acquire legal recognition & inclusive digital policies in the legal framework.
- Send a presentation to TCRA requesting to provide communication services like other Telecom companies such as *tigo* but with tax exemptions from the one percent universal communication fee to serve the underserved.
- Embrace Public/ Private community partnership for the network to collect donations and support for them to be sustainable.
- Engage legal, ICT and financial experts in one session to see how the module can support community networks to help people in rural areas.
- Apply funding from the Universal Communication Services Access Fund.
- Utilize financial services from the Cooperatives Bank of Tanzania.
- Support programs addressing all IMUC parameters.
- Build strong networks and engage underserved communities in connectivity solutions.
- Identify what the most important needs are and create digital literacy to underserved communities by making sure the content is in Kiswahili language.
- Advocate for the government to work with the private sector to partner and enable communities to have access to free internet services and affordable ICT gadgets.

### 6.2.2 Lesson Learnt

The timing of any activity is very crucial. In this case, the session came timely as the country had just shut down twitter (X) due to a cyber-attack, a situation that made the discussion draw interest of government officials and other stakeholders. It was also very relevant as the country heads towards the general elections.

## 7 ANNEXES

## 7.1 EVENT AGENDA

Time	Course Content	Responsible
08:30 – 09:00	Arrival and Registration	All
09:00 – 09:30	Official Opening	Guest of Honour, Eng. Dr. Nkundwe Mwasaga, Director General, ICT Commission
09:30 – 10:00	Community Network Cooperatives in Tanzania: Background, Achievement and Challenges	Mr. Stanley Mosha and Dr. Jabhera Matogoro
<b>10:00 – 10:30</b>	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>All</b>
10:00 – 10:30	School and Community Connectivity Initiatives: Achievement and Challenges	Mr. David Nyangaka and Ms. Catherine R. Kimambo
10:30 – 11:30	Introduction to Meaningful Universal Connectivity: Framework and Parameters	PIN
11:30 – 13:00	Enabling Environment for CN: Policy and Regulatory Framework - Panel Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PIN (Moderator)</li> <li>• ISOC TZ</li> <li>• UCSAF</li> <li>• TCNPC</li> <li>• Adv. Pascal Mshanga</li> </ul>
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	<b>Lunch Break</b>	<b>All</b>
14:00 – 14:30	Policy and Regulatory Framework for the Sustainable Community Networks Cooperatives in Tanzania	Adv. Pascal Mshanga



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14:30 – 15:00	Community Radio and its impacts: A case of Buha FM	Mr. Prosper Kwigize
15:00 – 15:30	Community-based financial services for community networks cooperative	Ms. Grace Mwangende
15:30 – 16:00	Building Inclusive Connectivity: A Nationwide Community Networks Architecture	Eng. Damas Makweba
16:00 – 17:00	School and Community Connectivity Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kondo CN</li> <li>• Kasulu CN</li> <li>• Tarime CN</li> <li>• Nyasa CN</li> </ul>
17:00 – 17:30	Recap and next steps	
17:30 - 17:40	Official Closure	PIN

## 7.2 EVENT PHOTOS



## Community Networks Training





## Community Networks Training



### Links

1. <https://www.malunde.com/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
2. <https://www.michuzi.co.tz/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
3. <https://www.sayarinews.co.tz/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
4. <https://www.langolahabari.com/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
5. <https://tangarahatz.blogspot.com/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
6. <https://www.msumbanews.co.tz/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
7. <https://michuzijr.blogspot.com/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
8. <http://www.mtaakwamtaa.co.tz/2025/05/serikali-yaitaka-community-network.html>
9. <https://www.jamiiforums.com/threads/dkt-matogoro-mawasiliano-kwa-wote-sio-chaguo-ni-maamuzi-yanayotakiwa-kutekelezwa.2344749/>
10. <https://timesmajira.co.tz/serikali-yataka-kuongezwa-kwa-vituo-vya-tehama/>

### Presentations

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gKr3BjLp-VOUrbaGz\\_2KUWhI\\_f0D9AuS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1gKr3BjLp-VOUrbaGz_2KUWhI_f0D9AuS)

## Community Networks Training

### 7.3 EVENT STATISTICS

#Attendees	48 people
Gender Breakdown	
Organizations Represented	Paradigm Initiative, TCNA, UCSAF, GBCF, TAMCODE, YOGÉ
Countries Represented	Tanzania, Nigeria and Zambia

#### Platinum Sponsor:



#### Gold Sponsor:



#### Event Organizers:

