Co-Designing The iNethi Mobile Application

1 Background

Globally, over 4.2 billion people, or 58% of the population, lack internet access. In South Africa, high mobile data costs further limit connectivity, especially for low-income communities. The iNethi Community Wireless Network in Ocean View aims to address this issue by providing affordable local connectivity and services. However, despite its potential, local usage of iNethi services remains low compared to external internet services.

2 Objective

The project aimed to increase engagement with iNethi services through a mobile app, focusing on:
1. **Map and Internet Voucher:** Real-time hotspot status and data tracking.
2. **Local Content:** Centralized access to iNethi services with a splash page, Jellyfin, and an App Store for apps via F-Droid.
3. **Community Voucher Digital Wallet (Kroon):** A platform for managing community vouchers and peer-to-peer transactions.
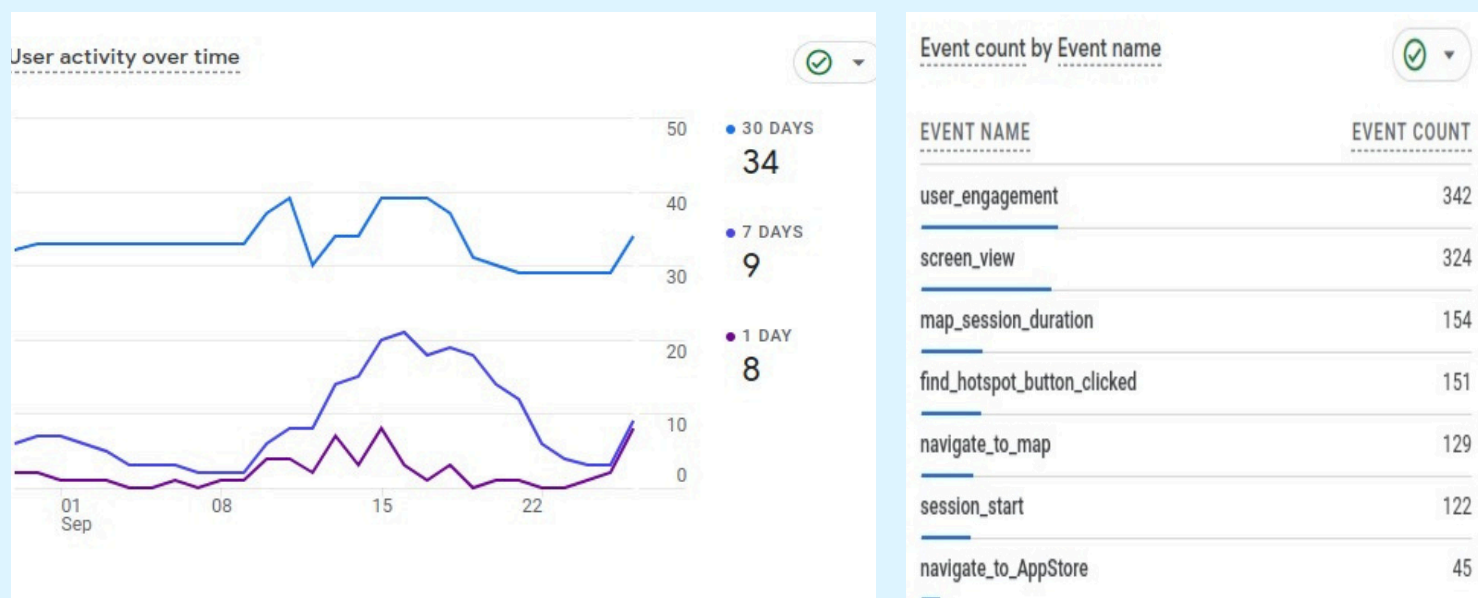
3 Methods

A participatory **co-design** process engaged community members in three iterative **workshops. Agile** development with **3-week sprints** and **usability testing**, combined with **app usage tracking**, guided design improvements.

4 Participants

We recruited 20 Ocean View community members, mixing familiar and new iNethi users aged 18 to late 50s, with balanced gender representation and varying levels of digital literacy. Using snowball sampling, we captured diverse perspectives to inform the app's development.
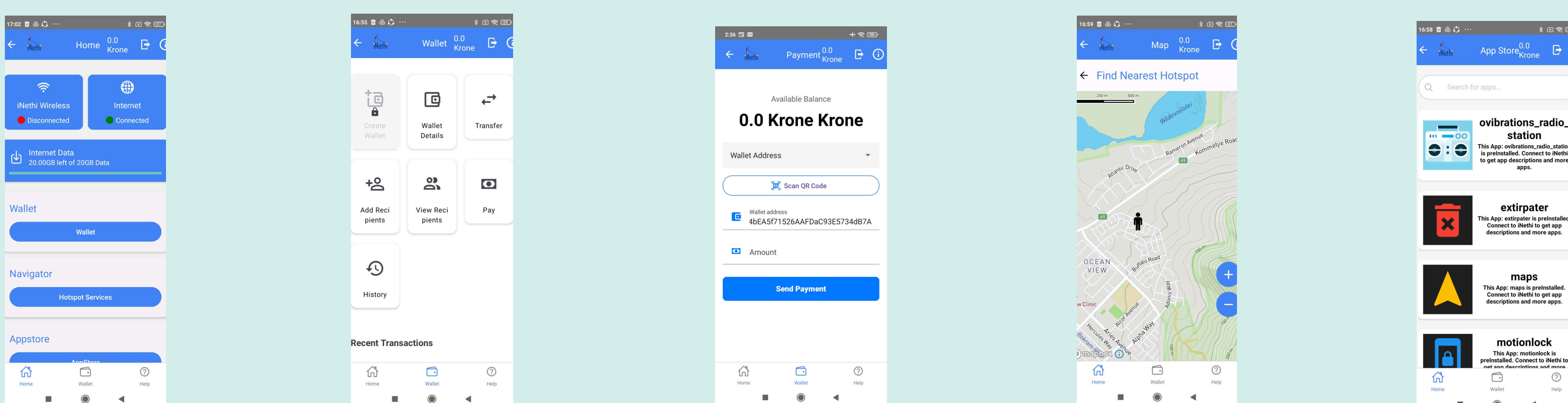
5 App Usage Tracking

6 Key Findings

The map feature enhanced users' ability to locate hotspots, and unified access to services boosted visibility and usage. Interest in the digital wallet highlighted security concerns and simple app on boarding experince, while **offline functionality was valued across all components.**

7 Conclusions

The co-design approach created a **community-relevant** tools that **boosted initial engagement** with iNethi services, but the long-term impact remains uncertain, stressing the need for ongoing community involvement for sustained success.

8 The iNethi App

Read More

Project Team

Reabetsoe Mpapa
Community Voucher Wallet
mpprea001@myuct.ac.za

Prosper Mambambo
Map and Internet Voucher
mmbpro002@myuct.ac.za

Takunda Dzingirai
App Store
dzntak002@myuct.ac.za

Melissa Densmore
Project Supervisor
melissa.densmore@uct.ac.za

iNethi

University of Cape Town · iYunivesithi yaseKapa · Universiteit van Kaapstad

SPES BONA

IT | SCHOOL OF IT