**What is the geographical reach of your project?\*** Global One Country One Region

*A global reach is one in which those that directly participate and benefit from your programs are in multiple regions. A regional reach involves work across several countries that are part of the same single global region. A national reach that is specific to a country will focus work in one country only.*

One country.

**Project Summary:\*  
  
*Please make sure to include the purpose and goal(s) of your proposed project***

​​We propose a novel solution using portable internet devices to improve the ability to collect data and monitor ongoing public health programs in rural Maharashtra, India, for programs run by a nonprofit, spanning 100 villages over 16 blocks in the Jalgaon District.

Aadhar Sanstha is helping pregnant women in the tribal areas of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh border by working in collaboration with the government ANM nurses and Asha workers (local non-profit) who are locals of the villages and sending their own field workers on a daily and monthly basis to each and every pregnant woman's house inside the villages to keep track of their well-being and guide them through their pregnancy process by advising them what food they should eat, what medication they should take in order to keep their health well. However, these workers spend 25+ mins taking over 17 pages of handwritten notes per house, per worker, in order to collect data, because they don’t have digital means to do it, and the remote areas inhabited by indigenous local tribes have no internet connectivity. This poses a number of issues in documenting issues.

Our work proposes to develop digital infrastructure and tools to automate data collection including monitoring infrastructure with alerts to minimize the manual effort required for data entry making their data more accessible to all NGO members and eliminating the 100+ hours each week their tech team spends manually entering data into excel sheets due to a lack of connectivity. Specifically the offline suite of tools combined with a set of portable internet devices will accomplish the following goals:

1. Track and store their data locally, uploading to the cloud, and optimizing storage.
2. Include a mobile app that contains all the forms they’re filling manually with the future ability to voice-automate data collection.
3. All forms should be in both Marathi and English for it to be easier for the workers to understand.

All the forms in each app will have the option of storing the submitted data offline and sending the data to their excel sheet as soon as the user arrives in an area with network coverage for the portable internet devices, as there is no network connection at all in the villages, where these workers will fill the data. Our team has already been onsite and engaged with the nonprofit workers and local population so we are well aware of their current challenges with regards to connectivity. We are reducing the time-to-action on the insights from worker data collection from weeks to hours!

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**Please describe your plan to connect the selected community to the Internet and how it will ensure financial sustainability beyond the grant period.\***

Aadhar Sanstha is an NGO dedicated to serving tribal villages situated along the Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh border, where internet connectivity is virtually nonexistent. These remote areas harbor a significant population in need, particularly concerning access to medical assistance, notably for pregnant women who frequently require urgent care during deliveries. The absence of reliable network access poses a serious risk to the well-being of women in these communities, jeopardizing their safety and health during childbirth due to inadequate access to transportation and essential medical information for healthcare providers.Following our comprehensive field assessment, we identified the pressing need for improved connectivity as a vital solution to address these challenges effectively. Establishing reliable internet infrastructure would not only facilitate timely communication and coordination with healthcare professionals but also empower villagers to access vital resources and support networks, ensuring better outcomes during critical situations.The proposed infrastructure initiative aims to bridge this digital divide, even beyond the grant period, enabling seamless connectivity that connects villagers with essential services and enables them to stay in touch with their families and friends, thereby fostering stronger community resilience and well-being.

**Describe the current level of engagement of the community benefitting from this project and the role it will play in the project's development.\***

Our team visited the villages that Aadhar Sanstha has been assisting for quite some time. Currently they are mainly focused on helping the pregnant women in the villages as it is common there to have a child at the age of 17 or 18. Since the age of pregnancies is so young there and the literacy rate is very low, extra care needs to be taken in order to keep the mother and the child safe before and after birth. That is what Aadhar Sanstha mainly focuses on for the community in these areas by visiting these women regularly, keeping track of their pregnancy, their well-being, their child’s well-being, arranging vaccination drives, awareness events, etc. Right now, they are doing all this offline as there is absolutely no network connectivity of any kind in these villages. “Connecting the Unconnected” will help them a long way to manage the data they collect from these women in order to keep track of their health. The portable devices we intend to install will be useful in the longer run as people will be able to connect with the appropriate authorities during emergencies like doctors & nurses, field workers (people from the NGO), ASHA workers, etc. They might also be able to find transport for themselves during critical times. It will also make the life of the people from the NGO easier as internet connectivity would mean easy access to all the health data of these women which will be very helpful during critical times like deliveries.

**Please describe the current average cost of connectivity (how much 1 GB costs or average cost per speed by the local service provider/mobile operator) and average speed of connectivity in the community where the proposed project will be implemented.\***

​Currently, 1 GB of data costs about 3 rupees assuming a user agrees to an annual plan of INR 3,699 with Reliance Jio that has the most competitive plans in the Indian market. The lowest cost plans in the area are INR 149 (exclusive of taxes) per month that allows users 1.5GB of data per day.

**Describe what equipment you intend to use to deploy your community network.\***

The equipment we intend to use is providing the people of the community with portable devices accessible to the Internet that are able to collect data from the community. These are basically smartphones with all the features that a proper smartphone would have like calling, internet connectivity, texting, other external apps, etc. This equipment will be able to automate data collection including monitoring infrastructure with alerts to minimize the manual effort required for data entry making their data more accessible to all NGO members. It will also be able to connect the people from the community to the proper authorities like the people from the NGO (field workers), ANM nurses, ASHA workers, Doctors, their families, etc. which is very critical during situations like deliveries or any illnesses, etc.

.Indicators and Measurements Section

**What specific indicators will you track and measure along the way?**

**Please select at least 1 indicator (maximum of 3) and provide your target number and data collection method for each.**

**Select Indicator 1:\*** Number of households connected to the Internet

**Indicator 1 - Target:\*** Distributing the portable devices to all the households of the villages

**Indicator 1 - Data Collection Method:\* Survey based data, App usage data  
  
*How and at which frequency will you collect data for this indicator (please describe which data collection method(s) you will use: e.g. focus group, interview, survey, participant list, form, observation, etc and ensure that this is in line with what you've put in your proposal)***

Our approach involves integrating data collection applications into portable devices, featuring specifically designed forms for gathering essential information. These apps will not only streamline the data collection process but also facilitate monitoring of their usage. Additionally, we plan to develop specialized survey apps for field workers to gather information on various aspects, including internet usage and household details, such as connectivity status. These surveys will also track the volume of smartphone usage during fieldwork on an hourly basis, number of target users served by field workers per day, time spent on daily survey activities, time spent on daily patient care and activities and quantify the data collected through digital devices. This transition from physical forms to digital surveys will enhance efficiency and accuracy, enabling the NGO to comprehensively monitor and manage households across the villages. We will supplement our survey data with a small set of focus group interviews subject to field worker availability, in order to validate our assumptions and ensure we have a robust causal estimate of the outcomes..

Select Indicator 2: (Optional) Number of individuals or groups in newly connected communities using the internet Other

Indicator 2 - Target Keeping track of the individual users that we have connected to the community.

Indicator 2 - Data Collection Method  
  
*How and at which frequency will you collect data for this indicator (please describe which data collection method(s) you will use: e.g. focus group, interview, survey, participant list, form, observation, etc and ensure that this is in line with what you've put in your proposal)*

This metric serves as a vital tool in monitoring the internet usage of individuals utilizing the portable devices we've distributed. Field workers of the NGO visit the villages on a daily basis, so additionally, we intend to equip field workers with these devices to monitor internet usage locally. For example, the number of pregnant women, mortality rates, specific data for pregnant women, like weeks of pregnancy, health and well-being of the fetus or infant if the baby is born, etc. Through the integration of forms within the mobile applications installed on these devices, the NGO will maintain a comprehensive database of all users. This approach ensures that each person's activity is meticulously tracked, facilitating personalized assistance for those encountering difficulties or challenges with the infrastructure.

Select Indicator 3: (Optional) Number of households connected to the Internet Decrease in average cost of connectivity per person per month due to project Increase in average connectivity speed due to project Number of individuals or groups in newly connected communities using the internet Other

Indicator 3 - Target:

Indicator 3 - Data Collection Method  
  
*How and at which frequency will you collect data for this indicator (please describe which data collection method(s) you will use: e.g. focus group, interview, survey, participant list, form, observation, etc and ensure that this is in line with what you've put in your proposal)*

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### Funding Information

**Do you have other funds secured or requested for this project?\*** Yes No

**Are you currently receiving or have you in the past received any other funding from the** [**Internet Society**](https://www.internetsociety.org/) **or** [**Internet Society Foundation?**](https://www.isocfoundation.org/)**\*** Yes No

### Survey Questions

*The following two questions will not influence your application approval or rejection.*

* **Have you read the following Community Network resources?\***[**Community Network Do-It-Yourself Toolkit**](https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/community-network-diy-toolkit/)
* [**Community Network Readiness Assessment Handbook**](https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/doc/2022/community-network-readiness-assessment-handbook)