Vive Digital program (Colombia)

Good practice: Improving Internet access and skills through whole-of-government digital policymaking

Relevant DFI commitment: Promote affordable, inclusive, and reliable access to the Internet for individuals and businesses where they need it and support efforts to close digital divides around the world to ensure all people of the world are able to benefit from the digital transformation.
Type of the initiative: Policy
Stakeholder Group: Government
Launch/adoption: 2010 - Now

Goals

The Vive Digital program, launched in 2010 by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, aims to revolutionize the country's digital landscape. Its primary objectives are to create jobs, stimulate economic growth and development, and most importantly, reduce poverty. The initiative seeks to expand Internet access and usage across Colombia, focusing on reaching the poorest citizens and bridging the digital divide. By leveraging information and communications technologies (ICTs), Vive Digital strives to promote social inclusion, enhance connectivity in rural and remote areas, and position Colombia as a leader in developing social applications for those at the base of the socioeconomic pyramid.

Description

Vive Digital is a comprehensive national program that has transformed Colombia's digital infrastructure and services. The initiative has dramatically increased Internet broadband connections, from 3.1 million to 9.9 million in its first four years, while also boosting Internet penetration for small and medium enterprises from 7% to over 60% during the same period. A key component of the program is the National Broadband Policy, which has expanded Internet connectivity to 96% of Colombian municipalities, up from just 17% in 2010.

The project encompasses various initiatives to ensure widespread access and digital literacy. These include the establishment of Community Internet Centers, such as 899 PuntosVive Digital and 7,621 KioscosVive Digital, which provide training, Internet access, and other tech services in rural communities. Vive Digital also offers Internet subsidies for lower-income populations, covering part of the monthly cost of Internet plans or computer purchases.

To address the needs of citizens with disabilities, the program has implemented initiatives like ConVertic, which provides free screen reader software for the visually impaired, and online relay centers for the hearing-impaired. The Cinema For All project offers free entertainment with subtitling and audio description technology for those with visual or hearing disabilities. Vive Digital also focuses on e-government services through the Gobierno en Línea program, which has significantly improved citizens' interactions with government entities. As a result, Colombia ranks third in Latin America and the Caribbean for e-government usage and eleventh globally for electronic participation. The second phase of Vive Digital (2014-2018) aimed to strengthen the demand side of the digital ecosystem by positioning Colombia as a world leader in developing social applications

for the base of the socioeconomic pyramid. It also aimed to expand government transparency and efficiency through partnerships with the private sector.

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