Connected Homes Project (Costa Rica)

Good practice: Subsidising Internet access and connectivity to bridge the digital divide

Relevant DFI commitment: Protect and strengthen the multistakeholder system of Internet governance, including the development, deployment, and management of its main technical protocols and other related standards and protocols.
Type of the initiative: Project
Stakeholder Group: Government
Launch/adoption: 2016 -

Goals

The Costa Rica Connected Homes project, part of the National Strategy CRDigital, aims to combat poverty and inequality, promote job creation, and stimulate economic growth by increasing access to information technology for vulnerable groups. The primary goal is to reduce the digital divide in Costa Rica by providing subsidised Internet connections and computers to low-income households.

Description

The project, launched in June 2016, is a collaborative effort involving various state institutions, including the Vice Presidency, the Rector and Regulator for Telecommunication, and is implemented by telecommunication companies with support from NGOs. It falls under the country's "Bridge to Development Strategy" and is financially supported by the Universal Service Fund. The program provides up to 80 per cent subsidy for computers and broadband access to nearly 150,000 low-income families, representing approximately 15 per cent of Costa Rican households. Telecommunication providers deliver Internet services, computer resources, software licenses, program promotion, e-government applications, and digital literacy training. By December 2019, the program had registered 12,000 homes, demonstrating significant progress towards its goals. The Connected Homes project has gained international recognition, receiving the WSIS Prize 2016 from the World Summit on the Information Society in the category of Access to Knowledge and Information.

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