



# Proposed partnership to build Movement Infrastructure

(V1.0, 27 Aug 2021)

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Project Context</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Project Possibilities</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Proposed Project Goal &amp; Results</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Project Design</b>	<b>3</b>

## Introduction

Yetu Infotech Collective<sup>12</sup> is a new initiative formed to grow “a people’s internet that is user owned and controlled, decommodified, free/affordable, resilient, safe and secure - a communications network that enables a world where all the resources required for life are produced democratically in harmony with the biosphere by each according to their ability and shared according to their needs - a world where everyone enjoys equality and dignity, and are free to contribute their creativity and live in peace.”

Yetu aims to enable “working class community initiatives to establish and maintain secure and affordable networks that build the Internet From Below and provide progressive civil society organisations - and social movements in particular - with affordable and secure communication technology and capacity development so that they can maximise the benefits of information technologies while mitigating the risks.

---

<sup>1</sup> Yetu is the Swahili word for ‘ours’ – a declaration of collective democratic ownership and an expression of African internationalism. Our logo contains a reference to covering wi-fi signals framing the letter Y in negative space. The wifi bands also form an expanding ripple signifying growth – as well as an enclosed target in negative space signifying focus and security.

<sup>2</sup> See our website at [www.yetu.coop](http://www.yetu.coop) and the [full concept note here](#).

## Project Context

Events following the arrest of Jacob Zuma serve as a stark reminder of the fragility of the South African social fabric and the urgent need for South Africa's marginalised majority to claim its voice in the national discourse and assert progressive agenda to redistribute resources and secure a sustainable and dignified future.

Information technology (Infotech) is increasingly shaping our lives and the Covid pandemic is accelerating the need for online interaction. This process has the potential to enable greater access to information, openness and transparency, greater freedom of expression, solidarity, as well as stronger and more democratic forms of organising. However, the digital age is reproducing the inequality and injustice of the society it is emerging in. We see not only an increasing divide between the power of those with access to decent internet and the majority without decent access, but also new forms of domination: rising authoritarianism (including surveillance, censorship and propaganda) is transforming our public spaces into open air prisons where we are constantly watched and trained to police ourselves - as well as surveillance capitalism that is transforming our privacy into a commodity

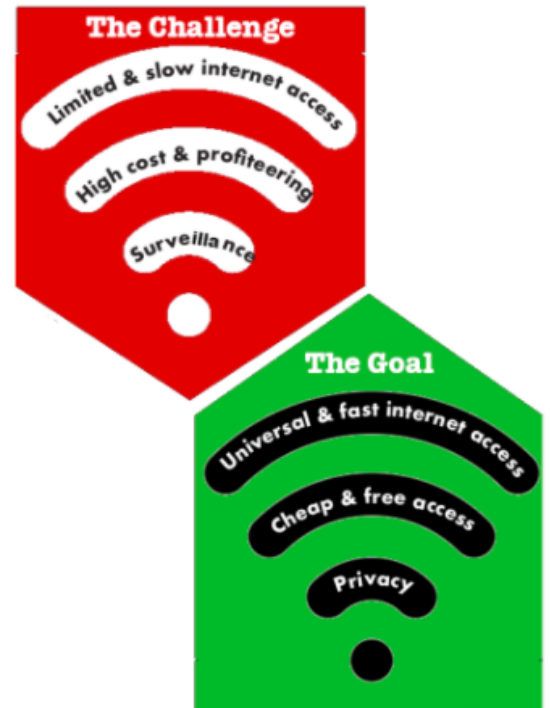
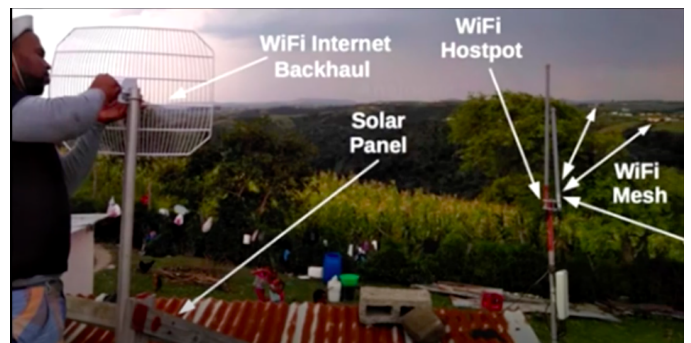
The right to communicate is emerging as a critical freedom to defend and advance democracy in response to a digital feudalism where governments and a handful of large corporations control networks, platforms, technology and can shape content.

In this context digital ownership is key. Progressive organizations and communities must own and control their own communication infrastructure and organisational data.

## Project Possibilities

Depending on the needs and priorities identified with Irig and their movement partners, there are a number of possibilities including:

1. Develop a community wifi network that offers the community both secure affordable internet access and free on-network resources;
2. Developing a public facing website where movements can self-publish 'newsletter' type updates and other material relevant to their constituency,



3. Reselling bulk data to community members at affordable rates as a source of income for the Association member.
4. Providing secure open source cloud services including storage and hosted applications like online offices, membership databases, email, video/audio conferencing, instant messaging, etc. These can be hosted online by the ILRIG office, Yetu, or on a local community server.

## Proposed Project Goal & Results

The project aims to provide identified movements with the hardware, software and skills to meet the online communication needs of their organisation and their community.

We will:

1. Conduct a participatory needs assessment with Association Members and agree priority needs;
2. Procure, customise and install required hardware & software;
3. Provide training & support to enable effective use of infrastructure.

## Project Design

The project is conceptualized in 4 phases:

<p><b><u>Phase 1:</u></b>  <b><u>Establishing</u></b>  <b><u>priority needs</u></b>  <b><u>and prototyping</u></b>  <b><u>solutions</u></b></p>	<p>This will include a series of interviews/discussions and a two day workshop with each identified movement to (1) introduce them to key principles, politics, and possibilities of Infotech (2) identify their existing capacities and resources (3) establish their priority needs and (4) agree on a process/partnership that includes a team of local ‘champions’ we will work with.</p> <p>Before undertaking the movement visits we will set up a prototype local server that will be used to demonstrate possibilities during the site visits.</p>
<p><b><u>Phase 2:</u></b>  <b><u>Customisation</u></b>  <b><u>and testing</u></b>  <b><u>solutions</u></b></p>	<p>After establishing the priority needs of each movement we will (1) procure, configure, and test all the needed hardware and software, and (2) produce ‘user guides’ and promotional material to support adoption.</p>
<p><b><u>Phase 3:</u></b>  <b><u>Implementation</u></b>  <b><u>&amp; Training</u></b></p>	<p>We will return to the movement for an extended period (+- 5 days) to install the hardware and run a workshop(s) and coaching sessions to train comrades to use the new systems.</p>
<p><b><u>Phase 4:</u></b>  <b><u>Ongoing</u></b>  <b><u>support</u></b></p>	<p>We will run a series of virtual trainings and set up a ‘help desk’ to provide remote support to each movement in the first three month after installation so comrades can contact us for advice, training, troubleshooting, etc.</p>

### ENDS ###