



A major bridge was built across the digital divide: but a year later, the tollgates are still there.

The cell phone is an amazing thing.

It could give everyone the power of information. Parents could read stories to their children. Teachers and health workers could be able to connect to keep learning. Young people could find new work opportunities. It could help bridge the digital divide. The possibilities are endless.

Except that mobile data is still too expensive.

The COVID-19 lockdown made everyone realise how important digital communication is to all of us. Government declared that health and educational websites should be free to users to share information about the pandemic and to keep children and students learning. Many of these zero-rated websites saw substantial increases in usage.

Then a major breakthrough!

In April 2022, ICASA made zero-rating of the digital content of **government** and **public benefit organisations (PBOs)** a condition of licence for the cellphone network operators that had bid successfully for more radio spectrum. This meant that users of these websites should have had access to this digital content for **FREE**.

A year later, ICASA has not enforced zero-rating of PBO and .gov sites. Some PBOs have stayed zero-rated; others have been removed by the cellphone network operators. PBOs from other sectors e.g. those providing support for better nutrition and job seeking have been unable to register.

There is much wrong in South Africa, but there is a lot we can do right now like putting in place a simple system to zero-rate the digital content of PBOs. The condition of licence is there, in regulation, yet the poorest communities still don't benefit from it. We, as non-profit public benefit organisations ask ICASA to make this a priority and make it happen now. The DG Murray Trust (DGMT) has offered to set up a simple registry for PBOs and pay for it, supporting ICASA to make it happen fast.

If you are reading this and agree with our approach, you can do your part by sending an email to ICASA at ceo@icasa.org.za and request that a mechanism for zero-rating of PBOs be made a priority.

SIGNED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OVER 200 PUBLIC BENEFIT ORGANISATIONS:

A Better Africa Foundation	Columba Leadership	HTA/AT	LEAP Science and Maths Schools	Ncedo Training Projects	Project Literacy	South African History Online	Thusang Setshaba Drop In Centre
Adopt-a-School Foundation	Common Good Foundation	Harmony Home for the Aged	Learn to Earn	Ncinci Ones	Project Playground Trust	South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE)	Training and Resources in Early Education
Acorn Education	Cotlands	Hope Africa Collective	Lesedi Laron Home of Trust	Neema Foundation	Reading to Learn South Africa	Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference	Tshehang Development and Training
Alladin Learning Solutions	Cumululus Blue Trust	Hope Through Action Foundation SA	Lesedi Service Centre	Neil Butcher & Associates	RED INK	Justice and Peace Commission	USIKO
APISA	Development Action Group	ITEC	Life Choices	Net vir Pret	Rise Africa Care Foundation		
AspireYouth	Dlalanathi	IDEA Digital Education	Lisika Unite Foundation	New World Foundation	Rural Development Support Program	Southern Africa Food Lab	Ubuntu Pathways
ASSITEJ SA	Douglas Murray Home for the Aged	Ikamva Labantu Charitable Trust	Living Hope	Ngangezwe Foundation	SA Mobility for the Blind Trust	Southern Africa Educational Trust	Uhambo Foundation
Atlantic Hope Place of Safety	Dr CL Smith Foundation	Impact Trust SA	Maake HIV AIDS and Youth Guide	Ntataise Lowveld	SaveAct	Sparrows Child and Youth Care Centre	Ukhanyo Foundation
Autism South Africa	Early Learning Resource Unit	Inclusive Education South Africa	Malamulele Onward	Ntataise Trust	SAYes Mentoring	Tape Aids for the Blind	Umgoshongo The Fountain
Awareness for Child Trafficking Africa (ACT Africa)	eKasi Entrepreneurs	Indlela Mental Health	Masibumbane Development Organisation	Ntokozeni Village for the Vulnerable	School of Hard Knocks	Thanda	VUSA Rugby and Learning Academy
Axiom Education	Elizabeth Foundation	Innovation Edge	Masifunde Learner Development	Nyara Youth Development	SchoolNet SA	TLC Ministries	VVOB
Banareng Day Care Centre	Engage Empowerment Partnership	I Protect Me	Masimanyane Women's Rights International	Observatory Civic Association	Scouts South Africa	TSIBA Education	Vuyani Safe Haven
Bertha Centre for Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship	Engeli Entrepreneurial Foundation	iThemba Lethu	Midlands Community College	Okani Vutivi ELC	Senecio Support for People with Disabilities	Talitha Cumi	WAAI
Biblionef SA	enke: Make Your Mark	iThembaLethu Outreach Project	Mikulu Child Development Trust	OLICO Maths Education	Seriti Institute	Tape Aids for the Blind	Well Being Africa
Bioregional South Africa	Environment & Language Education Trust (ELET)	JET Education Services	Missionvale Care Centre	OneVoice South Africa	Seven Passes Initiative	Thanda	We Will Speak Out South Africa
Bongani Community Development Centre	Fasimehang Day Care Centre	JGE Funding Trust	Molteno Institute for Language and Literacies	Organising for Work	Shine Literacy	The Breede Centre Trust	Wordworks
Boost Africa	Five Trails Africa	Just Grace	mothers2mothers	ORT SA	Sign Language Education and Development (SLED)	The Dewandré Fritz Foundation	Western Cape Foundation for Community Work
Bridges for Music	Fisantekraal Centre For Development	Just Like Heaven	Mukhomoni Community Forum	Outliers	Siphila Sonke Outreach Programme	The EARTH Centre	Womb to Tomb Development Centre
Broadway Legacy Foundation	For the Voiceless	PSI Projects	NASCEE	PACSEN	Siyafunda Community Technology Centre	The Eyes2Eyes Foundation	YOUTH@WORK
Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSAs)	Foundation for Community Development (FCD)	Keep The Dream196	NPO in a Box	Passion to Serve	Siyashesha Leadership Incubator	The GAP College	Zero Waste Association of South Africa (ZWASA)
CAP	Funda Wandé	Kgwana Community Centre	Nal'ibali Trust	Penreach	Siyavuna Abalimi Development Centre	The Learning Trust	Ziphakamise
Cape Mental Health	Gold Youth Development Agency	KHULA Education	National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW)	Perinatal Mental Health Project	Siyazana YDF	The Movement in Africa	Zoliswa
CHoiCe Trust	Growing Birds ECD	Khululeka Community Education Development Centre	National Youth Development League	Philani Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition Trust	Small Projects Foundation	The Reach Trust	DG Murray Trust (DGMT) including: Grow Great, Embrace, Bumb'INGOMSO, Parent Power, Teachers CAN, Zero Dropout, Youth Capital and JobStarter
Chrysalis Academy	Gun Free South Africa	Kin Culture		Phronesis Students Development Trust	SmartStart	The Social Makeover	
Citizen Leader Lab	GW Foundation NPC	Kouga Windfarm Trust		Pledge Nature Reserve Trust	Social Change Assistance Trust	The Sozo Foundation	
Click Learning	HIVSA	Kuwukuhlula NPC		Primary Science Programme		The Teddy Bear Foundation for Abused Children	
Clowns Without Borders SA		Lake Farm Centre Aid Association				ThembaLethu Care	
						Thusanang Trust	