Enable Remote Desktop (Ubuntu) & access your Office Desktop via VPN

Guide to Connecting to Your NCRA Office Ubuntu Desktop via OpenVPN and Remote Desktop

Overview

This guide provides step-by-step instructions for setting up and using OpenVPN to connect to your office network and then accessing your office Ubuntu desktop remotely. This guide is intended for users who are not very familiar with computers, so please follow each step carefully.

Step 1: Install OpenVPN Connect on Your Laptop

1. **Download OpenVPN Connect:**

- If you are using Windows, download OpenVPN Connect from:

  https://openvpn.net/client/
- If you are using macOS, download the macOS version from the same link.
2. **Install OpenVPN Connect:**
   - Open the downloaded file and follow the installation instructions.
3. **Launch OpenVPN Connect:**
   - After installation, open the OpenVPN Connect application.

Step 2: Import the .ovpn Profile

1. **Locate the .ovpn File:**
   - Your system administrator has provided you with a `.ovpn` file.
   - Save this file in a convenient location on your laptop.
2. **Import the .ovpn File:**
   - Open OpenVPN Connect.
   - Click on **"Import Profile"**.
   - Select **"FILE"** and then browse to the `.ovpn` file location.
   - Select the file and click **"Open"**.
3. **Enter Your Credentials:**
   - When prompted, enter your **username and password** (provided by your administrator).
   - Click **Save Credentials** if you want the application to remember your details.
4. **Click Connect:**
   - Click **"Connect"** and wait until it shows "Connected".
   - You are now connected to the office network.

Step 3: Enable Remote Desktop on Your Office Ubuntu Desktop

1. **Go to Your Office Ubuntu Desktop:**
   - If you are in the office, log in to your Ubuntu system.
2. **Enable Remote Desktop (RDP):**

- Click on **"Settings"** from the Ubuntu menu.
- Select **"Sharing"**.
- Enable **"Remote Desktop"**.
- Turn on **"Allow connections to control the screen"**.
- Set **"New connections must ask for access"** to **OFF**.
- Under **"Authentication"**, choose **"Require a password"**, and set a strong password.

3. **Find Your Ubuntu Desktop IP Address:**
   - Open **Terminal** (`Ctrl + Alt + T`).
   - Type the command:

     ```
     ip a | grep inet
     ```

   - Look for an IP address similar to `192.168.X.X`
   - Note down this IP address.

Step 4: Connect to Your Office Ubuntu Desktop from Home

1. **Ensure OpenVPN is Connected:**
   - Open **OpenVPN Connect** on your laptop.
   - Click **"Connect"** if not already connected.
2. **Install a Remote Desktop Client:**
   - If you are using Windows:
     - Open **Remote Desktop Connection** (`mstsc` in the Start menu).
   - If you are using macOS:
     - Install **Microsoft Remote Desktop** from the Mac App Store.
   - If you are using Linux:
     - Install `remmina` using:

       ```
       sudo apt install remmina
       ```

3. **Enter Connection Details:**
   - Open your Remote Desktop client.
   - Enter the **IP address** of your office Ubuntu desktop.
   - Select **RDP (Remote Desktop Protocol)**.
   - Click **Connect**.
4. **Login to Your Ubuntu Desktop:**
   - Enter the **username and password** you use to log in at the office.
   - If prompted, accept the security warning.
   - You should now see your office desktop screen!

Step 5: Disconnect When Done

1. **Log Out of the Remote Session:**
   - Close the Remote Desktop window or log out from the Ubuntu session.
2. **Disconnect from OpenVPN:**
   - Open **OpenVPN Connect**.
   - Click **"Disconnect"**.

Troubleshooting Tips

1. **Cannot connect to OpenVPN?**
   - Ensure your internet connection is working.
   - Check your username and password.
   - Try restarting your laptop and reconnecting.
2. **Remote Desktop Connection Fails?**
   - Ensure your Ubuntu desktop is powered on.
   - Double-check the IP address.
   - Ensure Remote Desktop is enabled.

This guide ensures a smooth and secure remote desktop experience. If you face any issues, contact your [meshram@ncra.tifr.res.in/ ratnakumar@ncra.tifr.res.in](mailto:meshram@ncra.tifr.res.in) for further assistance.