

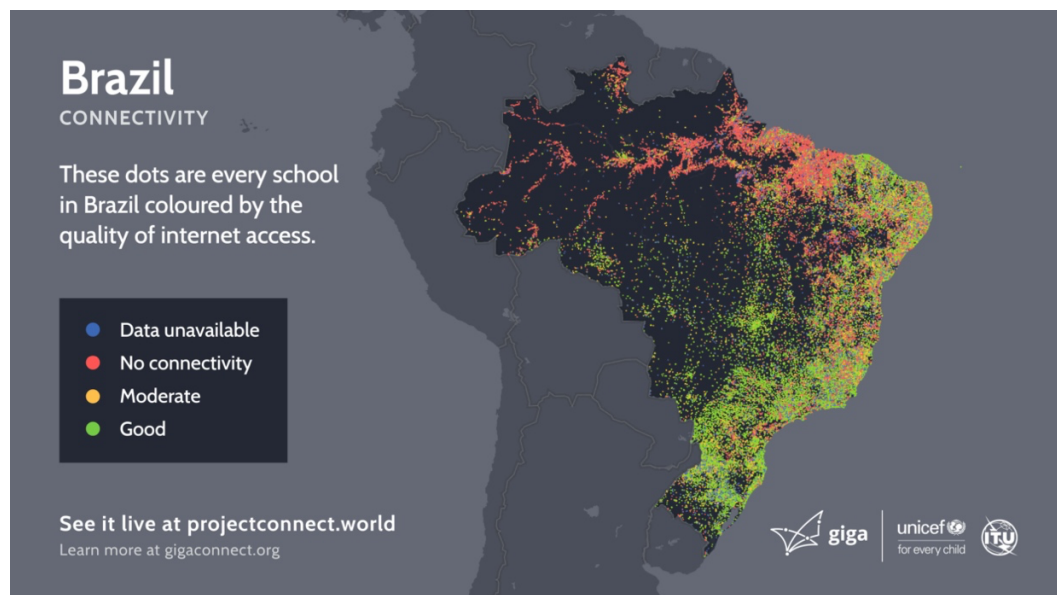
What is Giga?

Giga is a UNICEF-ITU global initiative to connect every school to the Internet and every young person to information, opportunity, and choice.

1.3 billion children have no access to the Internet at home and only around half of the world's schools are online. This digital exclusion particularly affects the poorest, girls and those with disabilities; causing learners to miss out on the resources online, the option to learn remotely (e.g. during pandemics or instability), and the opportunity to develop digital skills. UNICEF and ITU have therefore joined forces to create Giga, an initiative to connect every school in the world to the Internet and address this new form of inequality.

What Giga Does

- It **maps** schools' Internet access. No one knows how many there are in total in the world (estimate: 6-7 million) and Giga's [Project Connect](#) map provides a real-time display of access and need for funders, governments, and accountability. Giga has mapped over 1 million schools in 49 countries.
- It creates models for innovative **financing**. It could cost \$428 billion or more to connect every school. Giga aims to mobilise \$5 billion to catalyse investment in connectivity infrastructure. Giga has secured the support of 14 partners to develop solutions for affordable, sustainable connectivity.
- It supports governments **contracting** for connectivity. Giga helps governments design the regulatory frameworks and competitive procurement processes needed to get schools online. Since 2019, Giga and its partners have connected over 1.3 million students in over 3,700 schools.



Giga is already connecting schools in 19 countries and is prototyping several test solutions, including in refugee camps and remote, mountainous regions. Many of these solutions use advanced open-source technology: satellite data to find schools; machine learning to understand how connected they are; and blockchain to track their connectivity over time, and in some cases facilitate payments. The lessons from these prototypes will help lower risks for investors and support national rollouts.

Giga's achievements since its launch in 2019

—
1,100,000+

Schools mapped

Across 49 countries and all viewable on the Project Connect Platform

—
3,715

Schools connected

in Kenya, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Botswana, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Honduras and the OECS

—
1,350,000+

Students connected

Through Giga and partners' connectivity initiatives

—
\$300M+

Funding mobilized

To countries and UNICEF Country Offices to accelerate connectivity

—
19

Countries joined

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and Latin America & the Caribbean

—
14

Partners joined

Ericsson, Dubai Cares, Musk Foundation, IHS Towers, Dell, SoftBank, BCG, NIC.br, Actual, Jumia, Liquid, GSMA, FCDO, Mapbox

Giga also uses schools as anchor points for their surrounding communities: if you connect the school, you can also connect local businesses and services. This creates opportunities for service providers to generate revenue from paying users, making connectivity more sustainable. A recent [report](#) by the Economist Intelligence Unit found some countries could see a boost of up to 19% to GDP if they increased schools connectivity to Finland levels.

Giga's work in laying the tracks for connectivity is only one part of a wider effort to bridge the digital divide. Giga therefore works with a range of initiatives in UNICEF, ITU and beyond to ensure that students and teachers can access the skills, devices and content they need to make full use of connectivity.

To help deliver on its ambition, Giga needs:

- both governments and companies to **share data sets** to help with open-source mapping;
- governments to join the 19 countries already connecting schools as part of the Giga project and to work with Giga to implement the **regulatory changes** needed to allow universal connectivity and infrastructure innovations to thrive; and
- donor governments and foundations to help raise **\$5 billion in catalytic investment** to help accelerate the process of bringing schools online.