

# Giga



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

- Launched in 2019, Giga sets the goal of providing connectivity to every school in the world. According to the ITU, some 3.6 billion people in the world do not have access to the Internet. The lack of access to the Internet means exclusion, marked by the lack of access to the wealth of information available online, fewer resources to learn and to grow, and limited opportunities for the most vulnerable children and youth to fulfill their potential.
- Closing the digital divide requires global cooperation, leadership, and innovation in finance and technology.

## Giga is anchored and recommended

- Giga is anchored in the Secretary-General's [High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation](#) findings 1A and 1B which state, respectively, that by "2030 every adult should have affordable access to digital networks," calling for "a broad, multi-stakeholder alliance, involving the UN, create a platform for sharing digital public goods."
- The UN Secretary-General's [Roadmap for Digital Cooperation](#) then underlines key recommendations toward Digital Transformation, including Giga — to bring the power of meaningful connectivity to fast track young people's access to educational resources and opportunities.
- Giga was invited to co-present the [UN Security Council's High-Level Arrria-formula Meeting](#) by the Permanent Mission of Niger. The meeting highlighted Giga as a practical step Member States can take to close the digital divide and extend connectivity to learners in conflict, post-conflict and post-disaster settings.

## Giga has four pillars



**Map.** In partnership with governments, Giga is mapping connectivity demand, using schools as a base point, and identifying where there are connectivity gaps. This information, combined with existing ITU mapping data, allows countries to take stock of their existing infrastructure and assess appropriate solutions for connecting schools. Over 800,000 schools in 30 countries have been mapped and are viewable live at [www.projectconnect.world](http://www.projectconnect.world).

- **Ericsson** joined Giga as a [Global UNICEF Partner for School Connectivity Mapping](#) and is the first private sector partner to make a multi-million dollar commitment to the initiative. In addition to funding, Ericsson will commit resources for data engineering and data science capacity to accelerate school connectivity mapping in 35 more countries by 2023.
- Several data sharing partnerships have been established (or are being established) with multiple entities including **GSMA** and **NIC.br**.
- In collaboration with the Directorate of Science, Technology and Innovation, school mapping has been completed in **Sierra Leone** and 205 schools have been connected. Giga will continue working with the Government to accelerate its Free Quality School Education initiative to connect the remaining >10,900 schools. **Rwanda** joins as Regional Lead for Africa.
- Giga has [connected the first school](#) in **Kenya** in collaboration with the Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs, toward connecting the first 1,000 schools by 2020 and realizing the vision of the Ministry of Education and **Generation Unlimited** in Kenya.



**Finance.** Giga works with governments and advises them on building affordable and sustainable country-specific models for finance and delivery, subsidizing market creation costs and incentivizing private sector investment.

- Giga's [collaboration](#) with **Softbank Investment Advisors** and industry experts has resulted in Giga's first financial model, and Giga will continue advising governments on building country-specific finance and delivery approaches.
- The **European Investment Bank (EIB)** is working with Giga to identify financing solutions for connectivity in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Central Asia and the Western Balkans. Giga is also working with the **World Bank, IsDB, ADB** and **AIIB**.

- The Government of **Kazakhstan** signed on as [Regional Lead for Central Asia](#) and 10,200 schools have been integrated into Giga's platform; the first financial model is now being developed for the region.



**Connect.** In partnership with industry, and based on the mapping results, Giga will advise on the best possible technical solutions to provide schools with connectivity, and countries with safe, secure, reliable, fit-for-purpose infrastructure to support future digital development needs.

- The **Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States** joins [to lead the effort](#) to connect 1,147 schools in the region.
- **Niger** has [received \\$100M](#) from the **World Bank** toward connecting schools and villages, and **Giga is providing technical assistance** in identifying locations for infrastructure and additional financing.
- Giga is actively **connecting the first schools** in Kenya, Rwanda, and Niger through Giga's partners and technology.



**Empower.** Through its engagement with countries, Giga can support needs assessments and support to deploy digital solutions. In partnership with the [Digital Public Goods Alliance](#), Giga can help identify and scale Digital Public Goods.

- The Digital Public Goods Alliance has published its first set of vetted digital public goods, focused on [Foundational Literacy and Early Grade Reading](#).
- **Dubai Cares** through Generation Unlimited has made a multi-million dollar commitment to accelerate Giga in six countries and the OECS to empower entrepreneurs to develop and scale connectivity solutions and produce digital public goods.
- Giga aligns with UNICEF's Education Section and coordinates with **Generation Unlimited** under the **Reimagine Education** initiative, through which UNICEF aims to address the learning crisis and transform education by giving children and young people equal access to quality digital learning.

Giga welcomes engagement and leadership from governments, businesses, civil society, technology providers, donors, investors and finance experts. Connect with us at [www.gigaconnect.org](http://www.gigaconnect.org).