



2025 Annual Report

Community-built connectivity



Inside 2025

A year of challenge, transformation and renewed ambition.

A clearer path towards partnership, capacity building and community ownership.

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A defining year for Hello World

A year of challenge, transformation and renewed ambition.

Like many organisations in our sector, in 2025 we faced a difficult funding environment and significant financial uncertainty. At times, we had to make hard decisions about how to prioritise our work and ensure that the organisation could continue. Through this, one thing became even clearer: the need for what we do has never been greater.

For the communities we work alongside, connectivity is not a luxury. It can shape whether a child is able to learn, whether a teacher can access the resources they need, and whether families can find information, communicate and pursue new opportunities.



Joanna Henderson
Executive Director,
Hello World

“

Every Hello Hub represents far more than infrastructure: it can become a catalyst for learning, livelihoods and community resilience.

**The internet
should belong to
everyone.**

**In 2025, we took meaningful
steps towards making that a
reality.**

**Thank you to our team,
partners and
communities.**

Community power became our clearest direction

In 2025, we took an important step in Hello World's evolution. We strengthened our transition from a model centred primarily on direct delivery to one focused on partnership, training and capacity-building. Across Uganda, we supported our network of 92 hubs, which provide an estimated **828,000 people** with accessible and affordable connectivity. This reflects what we have always believed: **lasting connectivity solutions must be shaped, owned and led by the communities that use them.** We also continue to prioritise innovation and listening to communities; developing an adapted Hub model, a more cost-effective and lighter version, and deploying it across 5 new communities.

We also deepened partnerships that create opportunities to scale our model. Through our work with the [Internet Society](#), the Internet Society Foundation, [Giga](#), the global school connectivity partnership Giga Accelerator Programme and others, we are contributing to wider efforts to connect schools and communities while making sure that community-centred approaches remain at the heart of those efforts. Our selection for the inaugural Giga Accelerator Programme and recognition through the [MIT Solve Andan Prize](#) reaffirmed the relevance of the model we have developed over more than a decade.

What stands out most to me is what communities told us about the difference that access to a Hub is making. In our largest impact survey to date, people described better access to learning, new livelihood opportunities, greater confidence and a stronger connection to the wider world. These are not changes that Hello World creates alone. They show what becomes possible when communities have access to the tools, skills and decision-making power to drive their own development.

We also know that we are still at the beginning of what is possible.

1/3 global population remain offline.

The scale of the digital divide demands collaboration, openness and new ways of working. Our commitment to open-source approaches, and to sharing what we have learnt, is central to how we will help reach communities that conventional infrastructure and delivery models continue to leave behind. As we look to 2026, our focus is clear: to deepen partnerships, support pathways to national scale, and build the capacity of communities and organisations to lead their own connectivity solutions. We are particularly excited about opportunities to work alongside national stakeholders in Uganda and to expand our contribution to school connectivity and connectivity in refugee contexts.

“

I am incredibly proud of the Hello World team, our partners and the communities we work alongside. Their resilience, creativity and commitment make this work possible. We often say that the internet should belong to everyone. In 2025, we took meaningful steps towards making that a reality.

Hello World in 2025

Hello World is a non-profit organisation working to close the digital divide through affordable, sustainable and community-led connectivity.

Our solar-powered, community-built Hello Hubs provide internet access, devices, power and opportunities to develop digital skills in schools and communities that conventional infrastructure often fails to reach.

Our vision is a world in which every community can use the internet to learn, solve problems and pursue new opportunities. Although almost three-quarters of the global population were online in 2025, **2.2 billion people remained offline**. This inequality is particularly stark in low-income countries, where **only 23% of people use the internet**.

Our work is grounded in the belief that when people gain access to the internet, they rapidly begin to use it to educate themselves, build businesses, connect with others, and improve their lives. Every success within a Hub community filters outward, multiplying impact across generations.

Infrastructure alone will not close this divide: **access to the internet must be meaningful**. Connectivity must be affordable, relevant and supported by the skills and local capacity needed to sustain it. This is why communities are at the centre of the Hello World model, from building and governing Hubs to maintaining them and deciding how best to serve local priorities.

We also undertook our largest impact survey to date. Nearly 700 people across more than 50 communities told us how access to a Hello Hub is contributing to learning, livelihoods, communication and greater equality of opportunity. Their experiences reinforce the principle on which Hello World was founded: **when communities have access to the right tools, skills and support, they can lead their own digital development**.



In 2025, as we celebrated ten years of Hello World, we reached an important point in our evolution. We strengthened our focus on **training, partnership and capacity-building**, enabling communities and other organisations to take greater ownership of the model. Across Uganda, we supported our network of 92 Hubs through the transition towards community management while working alongside new communities to build more affordable and adaptable connectivity solutions.



“

Every success within a Hub community filters outward, multiplying impact across generations.

2025 at a Glance

Impact

GLOBAL REACH

126

communities reached globally

1.1 million

people provided
with connectivity

5

new communities reached with
the Hello Hub Lite model

UGANDA

92

Hubs supporting community
ownership in Uganda

828,000

people around these Hubs
provided with connectivity

20

refugee communities connected
reaching **180,000 refugees**

EDUCATION

49

Hubs are in schools

204

teachers trained in
digital skills

30,000+

primary students have access to
online learning resources in Uganda

Reported outcomes

~700 people surveyed across 50+ communities

96%

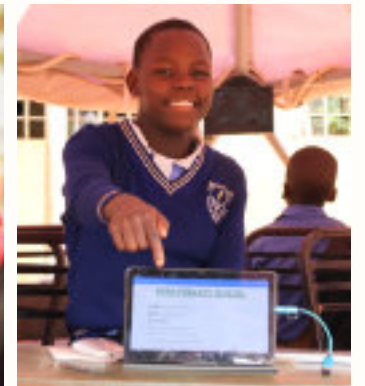
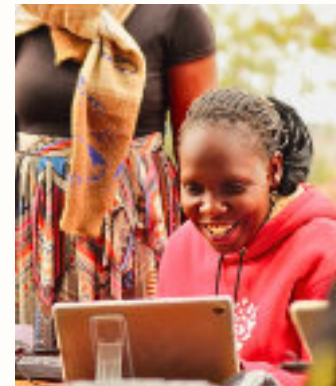
said a Hub improved their quality of life

93%

said the Hub reduced inequality in access

60%

used Hub skills to increase monthly income



Innovation

Recognition

GIGA ACCELERATOR

One of ten organisations worldwide selected for the inaugural [Giga Accelerator Programme](#), supporting the development of scalable solutions for school connectivity.

MIT SOLVE ANDAN PRIZE

Hello World received the [2025 Andan Prize for Refugee Inclusion](#), recognising the relevance of our community-led approach in refugee settings.



COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP + SUSTAINABILITY

**Built with
communities.
Sustained by
communities.**



Community Ownership & Sustainability

Many people assume internet access is a given. For the communities we work alongside, often it is not.

When access is weak, unaffordable or absent, children have fewer opportunities to learn, teachers struggle to access resources, businesses cannot take advantage of digital tools, and entire communities risk being left behind.

During 2025, we invested in programmes, models and approaches that enable communities to solve problems locally, with sustainability considered from the outset. We also continued to adapt the Hello Hub design to address different community needs and reduce both capital and operating costs. By training local engineers and management committees, we help communities simplify maintenance, lower operating costs and reduce reliance on external providers. In our 2025 survey, three-quarters of participating headteachers felt confident that their school and community could sustain their Hub in the future.

Across Uganda, our team supported all 92 Hello Hubs built prior to 2025 as they progressed towards community ownership and management. By the end of the year, more than half had moved to independent community management and cost recovery. This is how we have always hoped the model would develop: owned and sustained by the people who use it most.

The transition also generated important learning about affordability, governance, maintenance and the different levels of support communities require. In 2026, we will document and share these sustainability approaches so that other communities and organisations can learn from and adapt them.

We continued developing our freely available **How-to Build a Hello Hub Guide**, which introduces organisations and communities to the Hello World model and supports them to adapt it to their own context. Sharing our tools and learning openly is fundamental to our ambition to reach more communities than Hello World could ever connect through direct delivery alone.

Open-source approaches and principles remain at the heart of everything we do.

92

Hubs in Uganda progressed towards ownership and management.

75%

of participating headteachers felt confident their community could sustain the Hub.

> 50%

Hubs had moved to independent community management and cost recovery by year end

“

The challenge is now with the community when it comes to cleaning the Hub. We continue to sensitise them during meetings about caring for it.

--

PARTNERSHIPS FOR GREATER REACH

**Scale works when
local ownership
remains at the
centre.**



Partnerships for Greater Reach

The scale of the digital divide means that no single organisation can address it alone.

Partnerships with communities, community-based organisations, government, civil society, funders, and connectivity providers are essential to sustainably expanding access. During 2025, we strengthened existing relationships and formed new partnerships that enabled us to test, adapt and share our approach.



Advancing School Connectivity with Giga

In November 2025, Hello World was selected as one of ten organisations worldwide to participate in the inaugural [Giga Accelerator Programme](#). Giga, a UNICEF and International Telecommunication Union initiative, aims to connect every school in the world to the internet.

Through the programme, we began refining our school connectivity model, drawing on more than a decade of experience in rural and underserved communities. In 2026, we will pilot two variants of Hello Hub for Schools and make the resulting model, implementation guidance and learning available to national partners and communities in Uganda and beyond.

Two variants. One community-centred principle.

01 School Model
school led and managed through school leadership

02 Anchor Model
Community asset linked to school providing access connected to wider local use

Working with the Internet Society and Internet Society Foundation

Our partnerships with the Internet Society and Internet Society Foundation enabled us to explore two areas that have always been central to Hello World's work.

First, with support from the [Internet Society Foundation](#), we introduced Hello Hub Lite: a more affordable, rapidly deployable, solar-powered Wi-Fi solution designed to be managed by communities from the outset.

Three Hub Lites were established in three Ugandan communities, providing internet connectivity and reliable lighting for studying and phone charging.



Kisima 1 Island

Power, light and a new connection

With support from the Internet Society Foundation, we introduced Hello Hub Lite designed to be managed by communities from the outset. Three Hub Lites were established in Ugandan communities, providing connectivity and reliable lighting for studying and phone charging.

[Kisima 1 is an island community in Lake Victoria](#) with no electricity, limited infrastructure and one primary school. Before the Hub was built, pupils often studied by candlelight.

In October 2025, the community came together with the Hello World team to build its first Hub Lite. It now provides power to the school and gives pupils, teachers and other community members a new connection to information, learning and the wider world.



Connectivity led by refugee communities

We worked with the [Internet Society](#) to build capacity of [refugee-led and community organisations](#) to deliver and sustain community-centred connectivity in refugee settlements.

Hello World has established Hubs in 20 refugee settlement communities, providing connectivity to more than 30,000 refugees. In 2025, we extended this work to Rhino Refugee Settlement in north-western Uganda, home to nearly 200,000 refugees. Working alongside the Internet Society, the refugee-led organisation CETA and local stakeholders, communities began building new connectivity infrastructure. We established two new Hubs and extended connectivity to the local market from one site.

The physical infrastructure is only one part of this work. We built capacity within the community and refugee-led organisations to manage, maintain and extend connectivity across the settlement. In 2026, we will use the learning from Rhino, about what works, what lasts and what enables genuine community ownership, to support replication in other refugee contexts.

20

Refugee settlement communities with Hubs

180,000

Refugees connected

“

The Hello Hub has reduced isolation, saved time and money, and created new opportunities for learning, communication and development.

--

LASU SAMUEL, CETA UGANDA



Supporting community connectivity beyond Uganda

Beyond Uganda, we remained focused on training, capacity-building and advocacy. We continued to share the Hello World model and strengthen the capacity of communities and organisations working on digital inclusion.

In Nigeria, we supported the **Centre for Information Technology and Development** and other community organisations in building and managing community connectivity. Hello World's first Hub was piloted in Nigeria in 2012. Thirteen years later, **learning from this work contributed to national discussions about enabling communities to build and govern their own connectivity:** a significant step towards more inclusive and locally-led digital development.

Looking ahead, we are also working with key stakeholders, including the Uganda Communications Commission, to explore how community-centred connectivity can contribute to national efforts to reach underserved schools and communities.

How our model scales

01 Train

Local engineers and organisations

02 Adapt

To each community context

03 Share

Open tools and learning

04 Influence

Systems and national pathways

Capacity, not dependency

The goal is not to export a fixed structure. It is to equip communities and partners to build, govern and improve connectivity for themselves.



DIGITAL SKILLS + EDUCATION

**Access becomes
meaningful when
people can use it
with confidence.**



Connectivity is only meaningful when people have the skills, confidence and devices to use it.

We therefore design and deliver context-appropriate digital learning programmes in partnership with local communities. With more than half of our Hubs located in schools, investing in children and teachers is central to our work. In 2025, we continued to build foundational digital skills, support teachers to use digital resources in their classrooms, and help schools integrate Hubs into teaching and learning.

93%

improved digital competency

97%

reported greater confidence

+36%

average knowledge and skills increase

204

teachers across 16 Hubs

“

The Hub helped me learn how to engage, conduct and carry out online meetings through the help of our community support officer, Mr Ngobi Isaac at Mpumude Estate Primary School Internet Hub.

--

A recent digital skills graduate, Mpumude Estate Primary School Hub

Building teachers' confidence and skills

With support from the [48percent Foundation](#), we delivered targeted digital skills training for teachers in rural and marginalised communities in Uganda. The programme was designed to strengthen teachers' professional development, build foundational digital competencies and enable participants to integrate digital approaches into their classrooms. It also supported teachers to act as multipliers, sharing their learning with pupils and colleagues. The training contributed to the sustainability of school-based Hubs by equipping teachers to manage and use them independently and to lead other Hello World programmes, including Hub Heroes.

Hub Heroes

Digital Literacy for children

The [Hub Heroes Library Programme](#) uses structured, tablet-based learning sessions to strengthen literacy and numeracy among children aged six to eleven. Sessions are led by trained Community Support Volunteers in marginalised communities.

In 2025, we delivered three Hub Heroes projects in regions identified as national priorities for digital education, reaching 1,375 children.

With support from the **Educational Opportunity Foundation**, we worked across 25 communities. Of the **547 children** who completed the full programme, **96% improved their literacy and numeracy levels**.

Funding from the **Allan & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust** enabled delivery across 20 communities, with **398 children** completing the programme. More than **80% demonstrated measurable progress**.

With support from the **Coles-Medlock Foundation**, the programme reached **430 children** across 20 Hubs, the majority of whom were girls. Over five months, **90% improved their reading, and 91% improved their mathematics**.



1,375

children equipped with digital skills

“

For children to get a quality education, they must learn to read and write. That is the reason for literacy and numeracy. Right now we have a programme I like to call our library. Many children who had been left behind now go there to learn how to read and write. I also want to appreciate our deaf children and those with hearing impairments. What impresses me most, and what we see clearly, is that when one of our boys is there, he even performs better than us. This programme has helped us enrol and retain learners in school.

--

Aidah, Headteacher, Nakatunya Primary School.

WHAT
COMMUNITIES
TOLD US

**Our largest impact
survey to date**



Supporting community connectivity beyond Uganda

Listening to communities is fundamental to how Hello World understands and improves its work. In 2025, we carried out our largest impact survey to date, gathering feedback from nearly 700 people across more than 50 Hub communities.

Unless otherwise stated, the results below represent the experiences and perceptions reported by survey participants. They provide valuable evidence of how communities use and experience Hello Hubs.

“

The Hub has empowered young people with skills, opportunities and confidence to create change in our community.

—
Survey respondent

People shared how access to a Hello Hub is contributing to learning, communication , livelihoods and greater equality of opportunity.

Hubs as part of everyday life

97% of respondents said they used a Hub at least weekly, and more than one-third used one every day. 96% reported that using a Hub had improved their quality of life.

Learning, skills and confidence

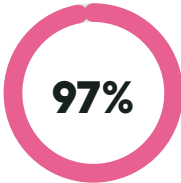
Across age groups, respondents most commonly used Hubs for learning, research and communication. 97% said they felt confident using a Hub. Almost 70% had shared skills or knowledge learnt at the Hub with someone else. Among those who shared their learning, participants reported reaching an average of 19 other people. This peer-to-peer exchange considerably extends the reach of formal training.



used a Hub at least weekly; more than one-third daily



said a Hub improved quality of life



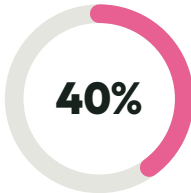
felt confident using a Hub



reported lower data costs



used Hub skills to increase earnings



of earners added at least UGX 100,000

Teaching, learning and school participation

We surveyed 35 headteachers from schools with Hello Hubs. Every headteacher surveyed felt that the Hub had improved teaching and learning, with 80% describing the improvement as substantial or transformational.

89% had seen increased enrollment following the introduction of a Hub.

All reported improved pupil retention, with **66% reporting a significant improvement.**

91% had observed a moderate or significant improvement in pupil motivation.

86% had observed measurable improvements in academic results.

Among 422 parents and teachers surveyed, 95% said their children used the Hub for education. 97% reported an improvement in their child's attitude towards school, while more than 99% reported an improvement in school performance. These findings represent respondents' perceptions and should be read alongside the reports from headteachers.

“

It has made it easier for me to support my children's education. During the holidays, I bring them to the Hub so that they can keep learning.

--

Survey respondent

Wider community impact

When asked about the single biggest impact of the Hub on their community, respondents most frequently identified access to free internet and improved opportunities for education, research and life skills. 18% identified improved communication as the Hub's biggest community impact, often citing the ability to stay in touch with family and friends in other countries. Nearly 10% identified access to information and news as the greatest impact.

Other responses highlighted savings on data, business and employment opportunities, and free device charging. Overall, 93% of respondents believed that the Hub had helped reduce inequality in access to education and technology.

Asked about the single biggest impact of the Hub, respondents most frequently identified free internet and improved opportunities for education, research and life skills.

18%

Communication

access to timely information and the wider world

~10%

Information + news

staying in touch with family and friends in other countries

93%

Greater equality

said the Hub reduced inequality in education and technology

“

It has helped us stay connected to the internet at no cost, giving us access to the same opportunities as people who are already online.

--

Survey respondent



Innovation

Hello Hub Lite

In 2025, with support from the Internet Society Foundation, we invested in a more affordable and adaptable model. Three solar-powered Hello Hub Lites were introduced in Ugandan communities, providing Wi-Fi connectivity, reliable lighting for study, phone charging and safe, connected spaces for learning.

Hello Hub Lite is designed for rapid deployment and lower-income contexts. Its open-source hardware and software support adaptation, transparency and reliable performance in underserved areas. Local engineers and school management committees are trained to troubleshoot, maintain and expand the Hubs, reducing dependence on external support. Communities also test income-generating activities and affordable access models through their Hubs, helping to build locally relevant approaches to financial sustainability.

Our [How-to Guide](#) and innovation curriculum are freely available as open-source resources, enabling other organisations and communities to learn from and build on the model. The technology uses an open-source stack, supporting flexibility and collaboration as the approach is adapted in different contexts.

////////

DESIGNED FOR ADAPTATION

Solar powered
Rapidly deployable
Locally maintained open source

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Looking Ahead to 2026

The progress made in 2025 has positioned Hello World for the next stage of its development. In 2026, our priorities are to:

01 Build capacity

Continue building capacity within communities, refugee-led organisations and other partners to deliver and sustain community-centred connectivity

02 Expand partnerships

Secure partnerships that expand meaningful connectivity in underserved schools, communities and refugee settings.

03 Scale schools and refugee connectivity

Develop a pathway to scale our school connectivity model across Uganda.

04 Share openly

Document and share our tools, sustainability models and learning as open-source resources.

05 Influence systems

Contribute to national and global conversations about practical, inclusive and locally led approaches to closing the digital divide.

**Community power
remains the central
theme.**

Scale matters.
So does who owns the
solution.



Thank you.

To the Hello World team, our partners, funders and, above all, the communities we work alongside: thank you for making this work possible.

For more information or to discuss integration of the model, contact:

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The Internet should belong to everyone

<https://projecthelloworld.org>