

# Giga Country Tour Guatemala

Discover the Giga Country Tour Highlights for Guatemala  
10 September 2026 | 9:30–10:30 AM Guatemala Time





# Guatemala

The Giga Country Tour held its first stop in Guatemala, spotlighting its school connectivity landscape. Most of the country's schools lack internet access, but its new National Digital Connectivity Plan and a growing conversation on telecom regulatory reform are pulling government agencies into closer cooperation to close the gap.

According to the most recent surveys, about 23 per cent of the country's more than 3.5 million students have internet access, but often through their parents at home rather than through school. Forty per cent of the overall population remains unconnected, with especially low penetration in rural areas, where the Government wants to rely on satellite connectivity. Demographics raise the stakes even more: the average age of the population is under 25.



## Giga and School Connectivity

Guatemala joined Giga in May 2025. To date, by combining school location mapping and network infrastructure data collection and analysis, the ITU-UNICEF initiative has provided the government with a network analysis to plan school connectivity affordably and sustainably. Governments can engage at any stage – school mapping, infrastructure planning, or guidance on financing and contracting – rather than follow a fixed sequence.



# Key Takeaways

- **Inter-ministerial collaboration.** Despite their different mandates, priorities and perspectives, SIT, the regulator, and the Ministry of Education are advancing school connectivity through coordinated efforts.
- **Closing the gap requires a full ecosystem and partnerships.** Government sets policy and regulation, Giga provides a framework and technical support, development banks and donors bring financing, private companies build infrastructure and skills, and civil society drives digital literacy. No single actor can do it alone.
- **Affordability and sustainability** are real hurdles, not just infrastructure. Guatemala has one of the most expensive basic broadband baskets in Central America, but among the lowest per-capita incomes. The government is looking at an "open contract" mechanism to speed up procurement and lower costs.
- **Data and georeferencing anchor the Giga strategy.** A regulatory gap, not a technical one, had left key infrastructure data reliant on voluntary operator participation. SIT proposed using quality-of-service data instead, which Giga cross-referenced against school locations to create a roadmap of network options for school connectivity.





## Voices From Stakeholders

### **Herbert Rubio, SIT's Superintendent of Telecommunications**

“One of the most relevant areas is schools, because education is the future of nations, and for us it is our top priority. Because of this, it's very important for us to take part in global initiatives that apply mechanisms, policies, and activities that have been tested and proven elsewhere. For that reason, we are very grateful to Giga for these kinds of initiatives.”



### **Francisco Cabrera, Technical Deputy Minister of Education**

“We have been working with the Superintendency on connectivity since last year, and we're very pleased that we've reached 34% connectivity at the upper-secondary level, despite all the challenges in a country where the geography is complex, where the procurement processes for these services are complex, where even the institutions themselves can be complex.”

### **Enrique Iglesias, Telecom Sector Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank**

“We believe that all this increased connectivity can encourage the proliferation of data centers in the region and, ultimately, create a stronger, more robust digital ecosystem that also allows the citizens and businesses of each country to achieve greater development.”



### **Sergio X. Plaza, CEO, Wayfree, and Partner2Connect pledger**

“The issue we face is no longer just about coverage. A signal may be present, but that doesn't mean there's meaningful access. And I believe that's precisely the spirit of Giga and (ITU's) the Partner2Connect Digital Coalition—that connectivity stops being a promise and becomes real opportunities for people.”





**Aldo Natalizia Nasser, Director, Regulator and Sustainability Affairs, Millicom, and Partner2Connect pledger**

“With our “Connected Teachers” program...we provided specific tools for teachers to strengthen their digital skills, enabling them to take advantage of this new ecosystem. We’ve reached 56,000 teachers in Guatemala over five years.”



**Marisabel Ruiz, CEO Sheva Association, Guatemala**

“We’ve trained parents, we’ve trained teachers, and we’ve provided training on AI tools. What we’re aiming to do is pave this digital path so that once people are connected and have access to this world of information, they know how to use it efficiently and safely.”

## Looking to the Future... Vision 2030

The next phase in Guatemala depends less on infrastructure alone than on turning connectivity into durable state policy, pairing new access with the teacher training, safe/regulated browsing, curriculum change and content needed to convert connectivity into actual learning and economic opportunity. Between 2025 and 2035 the government aims to connect 100% of Guatemala's schools, starting with the upper-secondary level and its 1,100 schools, continuing with the basic secondary level and 4,500 schools, and finally the primary level, the largest group.



## Next Stop for the Giga Country Tour Is...Cambodia!





# Next stop on the Giga Country Tour Cambodia

21 October 2026 | 15:30-16:30 Cambodia time

