



CONSULTANCY - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Giga Regional Coordinator for Latin America and Caribbean Region and Panama

UNICEF Office of Innovation - Giga

Duration: 12 months (Deliverable-Based)

Duty Station: Remote (Panama-based)

Advertising summary

UNICEF is seeking a Regional Coordinator to join Giga, an initiative aimed at connecting every school globally to the Internet. The successful candidate will be engaging with key stakeholders, aligning Giga's mission with UNICEF's broader educational strategies, and advancing connectivity solutions in the Latin American and the Caribbean region.

Child Safeguarding

Is this project/assignment considered as "Elevated Risk Role" from a child safeguarding perspective? YES NO

If YES, check all that apply:

Direct contact role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of direct interpersonal contact with children, or work in their immediately physical proximity, with limited supervision by a more senior member of personnel:

Child data role YES NO

If yes, please indicate the number of hours/months of manipulating or transmitting personal-identifiable information of children (name, national ID, location data, photos):

More information is available in the [Child Safeguarding SharePoint](#) and [Child Safeguarding FAQs and Updates](#)

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. To save their lives. To defend their rights. To help them fulfill their potential.

Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, every day, to build a better world for everyone.

And we never give up.

For every child...innovate

UNICEF has a 70-year history of innovating for children. We believe that new approaches, partnerships and technologies that support realizing children's rights are critical to improving their lives.

The **Office of Innovation** is a creative, interactive, and agile team in UNICEF. We sit at a unique intersection, where an organization that works on huge global issues meets the start-up thinking, the technology, and the partners that turn this energy into scalable solutions.

About Giga

Launched in 2019 as a joint initiative between UNICEF and ITU, **Giga** has set the ambitious goal to connect every school in the world to the internet. Half of the world's population has no regular access to the Internet. Millions of children leave school without any digital skills, making it much more difficult for them to thrive and contribute to local and global economies. This has created a digital divide between those who are connected and those who are not, a divide that has become even wider during the Covid-19 pandemic. 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.

Giga focuses on connecting schools so that children and young people have access to information, opportunity, and choice. It 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 2021 report by the Economist Intelligence Unit found that a 10% increase in school connectivity can increase effective years of schooling by 0.6% and increase GDP per capita by 1.1%.

You can read more about Giga's work at <https://giga.global/> and by following us on twitter @Gigaglobal

Panama Context

While Panama is a High-Income Country, inequalities remain among the highest in the world with a Gini Index at 50.9, affecting primarily indigenous and Afro-Panamanian populations. Children are impacted disproportionately: three out of 10 children live in multi-dimensional poverty (nine out of ten children in indigenous areas called Comarcas). The results of the 2022 PISA assessment painted a concerning picture for Panama with the country showing one of the lowest educational outcomes in the region. A vast majority of 15-year-old students continue to struggle with foundational learning skills, such as mathematics and reading, with results that are significantly below the OECD average (for instance 84% of 15-year-old students did not reach the minimum proficiency in mathematics). One of the reasons of the poor educational outcomes can be found in the outdated pedagogy and teaching methodologies and the lack of access to Internet and digital learning tools for many children in the country.

Despite a significant financial investment by the Government, a 40 per cent of public schools do not have access to internet. Within the framework of the global GIGA initiative, UNICEF conducted in 2023 the first-ever study on Internet quality in schools in Panama that showed the low quality and high cost of the internet in Panama and the lack of the appropriate infrastructure (computers and wireless equipment) in many schools. This study initiated a dialogue among the Ministry of Education, the National Innovation Authority and the Public Services Authority aimed at increasing the access of all schools to quality internet at a reasonable cost. With support from GIGA, UNICEF



will continue to provide technical assistance to the Government of Panama on Internet procurement processes and School Internet Quality monitoring in 2024.

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO) Context

The UNICEF Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office is located in Panama City, Republic of Panama. The Regional Office coordinates and supervises the work of UNICEF in 36 countries and territories through 24 national programmes to promote the rights and well-being of all children and adolescents in the region.

Giga aims to increase its footprint in the LACRO region. As of March 2023, Giga is active in Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, OECS and Panama. Giga has also provided mapping support to Costa Rica and Colombia and is currently in discussions with an additional 3 countries that have expressed interest in the initiative.

How can you make a difference?

Under the supervision of the Giga Global Country Engagement Manager and matrixed to the LACRO Education Specialist on Digital Education, the Giga Regional Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean Region, and Panama will lead the regional advocacy, oversight, and implementation of Giga in LACRO while coordinating with the global Giga HQ team and relevant Country Offices (COs) and national stakeholders.

This includes (i) coordination with relevant global, regional and national school connectivity stakeholders (ii) compiling relevant data, research and presentations, (iii) leading advocacy in national connectivity efforts to ensure UNICEF's equity principle is realized, (iv) represent Giga at national and regional conferences (v) support the smooth implementation of Giga activities (vi) identify opportunities to anchor Giga to broader UNICEF digital education programs in countries, including potential partners to scale-up the programme.

Key responsibilities include:

In LACRO (80% of time)

- Liaising with Giga's HQ Country Engagement team and support coordination with Country Offices in LACRO for Giga activities
- Support the implementation of activities related to all 3 areas of Giga's work in LACRO – advocacy, technical assistance on mapping and monitoring and procurement.
- Participate in and represent Giga in regional and national conferences and present Giga success stories as well as showcase Giga tech products.
- Act as a primary focal point for coordination with regional stakeholders including government entities, private sector players, civil society and ITU for Giga activities, to:
 - Align Giga with their plans, roll-out strategy for connectivity, and financing flows.
 - Identify opportunities for Giga to add value in the existing plans/targets.
 - Create advocacy materials to ensure partners' plans can contribute to equity focus.
 - Connect with and cultivate potential partnerships opportunities.

- Act as primary focal point for coordination of Giga with other UNICEF digital education initiatives in LACRO. Connect COs working with/interested in Giga to other initiatives for support on devices, skills, content, etc. by participating in LACRO team meetings, in focus groups, liaise with other UNICEF working groups and digital education initiatives to ensure that COs can be directed to the right teams for support on digital education work.
- Support and provide critical input to the design for major Giga events in 2024-2025 in close collaboration with the Giga Country Engagement team.
- Review existing UNICEF programming documents to assess school connectivity indicators and propose enhancements.

In UNICEF Panama Country Office (20% of time)

- Act as a primary Giga focal point for coordination of all non-contracts related Giga work of relevant government counterparts, UNICEF Country Office, and International Telecommunication Union.
- Work closely with the Giga Connectivity specialist and Country Engagement team to identify non-procurement related Giga work in Panama.
- Support UNICEF Panama CO's implementation of Giga non-procurement activities, including the deployment of Giga software tools for real-time monitoring of internet connectivity in schools in Panama.
- Work with the Giga team to adapt the developed tech tools to the needs of Panama and coordinate and mediate between all key stakeholders to achieve the results.
- Identify and compile lessons and results from previous connectivity initiatives in Panama, especially those related to school connectivity, and integrate these insights into Giga programming and planning.

Description of assignment

#	Tasks	Deliverables/Outputs	Delivery deadline
1	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities")	CO relevant Giga materials developed in Spanish for Giga technical processes under all 3 pillars of work.	Month 1
		Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (including links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
2	Specific to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities")	Document with lessons learnt and results from previous connectivity initiatives in Panama as well as next steps for Giga programming in Panama	Month 2
	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities")	Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries).	



3	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities).	Document summarising Giga's interactions with other UNICEF digital education initiatives in Latin America (such as Learning Passport)	Month 3
		Document compiling websites with publicly available government data on the geolocation of schools in countries in LACRO (through desk review and calls with relevant COs)	
		Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (including links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
4	Specific to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	One country level work plan reviewed or developed for Panama.	Month 4
	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Country level work plans reviewed or developed for 1 or 2 official Giga LACRO countries. Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
5	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	School connectivity stakeholder analyses completed in 2 LACRO countries.	Month 5
		Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
6	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Prepare a case study on Giga's work in one LACRO country, highlighting equity elements.	Month 6
		Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
7	Specific to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities).	Prepare 1 blog on Giga's work in Panama (this deliverable aligned with the 'specific to Panama CO' box.	Month 7
	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities).	Prepare 1 blog for another other Giga official countries in LACRO. Summary monthly report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
8	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Review 1 regional partners' plans and 1 country/government school connectivity plans and create 2 short advocacy notes to support the inclusion of equity in those school connectivity plans.	Month 8
		Summary 2-month report on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	

9	Specific to both LACRO and to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Represent Giga for at least 1 in country missions and at least 1 conferences or workshops (in Panama and region), provide mission reports and next steps.	Month 9
	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Summary monthly reporting on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
10	Specific to both LACRO and to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Document that appraises connectivity monitoring data in Panama and in 2-3 LACRO Countries.	Month 10
	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Summary 2-month reporting on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
11	Specific to LACRO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Document that reviews school connectivity indicators in existing UNICEF programming documents with suggestions for improved ones.	Month 11
		Summary 2-month reporting on Giga activities and support in LACRO (with links to meeting notes and Trello entries)	
12	Specific to both LACRO and to Panama CO (Refer to the section outlining the "Key Responsibilities)	Lessons learned write- up. Final handover report	Month 12

To qualify as an advocate for every child you will have...

- A master's degree in technology, business administration or management, public relations, international development, or other relevant fields, a first level university degree in combination with two years additional qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- A minimum of 5 years of relevant professional experience in project management, management consulting, tech startups, international development, or a relevant field.
- Experience in facilitating engagements with an array of partners at the national/regional level, *i.e., government entities, telecommunication regulator and companies, international development organizations, or civil society, etc.*
- Ability to understand new tech concepts and their relevant use cases.
- Experience with successfully pitching new ideas to a variety of investors/government entities with varying interests.
- Strong familiarity with the cultural and political context of Panama and LACRO
- Proven capacity to work with collaborative teams across different locations and with different technical skills.
- Strong writing and communication skills and the aptitude to handle competing messages and priorities with multiple audiences.
- Ability to translate complex ideas from various fields into unified, clear guidance.
- Familiarity working with quantitative and qualitative statistics and government data is desired: census, EMIS, location data, etc.
- Experience working in complex, resource poor contexts is a plus.
- Fluency in English and Spanish is required. Knowledge of another official UN language (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian) is an asset.



Travel:

- The consultant is expected to travel to Geneva one time (1 trip), for a stay of 4-5 nights.
- The consultant is expected to travel to Latin American countries three times (3 trips) for a stay of 4-5 nights.
- The consultant is responsible for arranging his/her own travel, including visa and travel insurance.

Payment details and further considerations

- Payment of professional fees will be based on the submission of agreed deliverables. UNICEF reserves the right to withhold payment in case the deliverables submitted are not up to the required standard or in case of delays in submitting the deliverables on the part of the consultant.
- The consultant is responsible for his/her own health and travel insurance.
- The consultant is responsible for arranging his/her own travel, including visa. For non-Panamanian nationals applying, UNICEF will facilitate the process for obtaining local permits (for the consultant only).
- The consultant is expected to be physically present at the Panama Regional office at least twice a week for meetings and collaborative activities.

How to apply:

- Interested applicants are required to submit a financial proposal with an all-inclusive fee. Please see the financial proposal template.
- Financial proposal must include travel costs (economy class) and daily subsistence allowance, if travel is required as per TOR and any other estimated costs: visa, travel/health insurance.
- **Applications without a financial proposal will not be considered.**

For every Child, you demonstrate...

UNICEF's values of Care, Respect, Integrity, Trust, Accountability, and Sustainability ([CRITAS](#)).

To view our competency framework, please visit [here](#).

UNICEF is here to serve the world's most disadvantaged children and our global workforce must reflect the diversity of those children. The UNICEF family is committed to include everyone, irrespective of their race/ethnicity, age, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, socio-economic background, or any other personal characteristic.

UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for consultants/individual contractors with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the selection process and afterwards in your assignment.

UNICEF has a zero-tolerance policy on conduct that is incompatible with the aims and objectives of the United Nations and UNICEF, including sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination. UNICEF also adheres to strict child safeguarding principles. All selected candidates will be expected to adhere to these standards and principles and will therefore undergo rigorous reference and background checks. Background checks will include

the verification of academic credential(s) and employment history. Selected candidates may be required to provide additional information to conduct a background check.

Remarks:

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and advance to the next stage of the selection process.

Individuals engaged under a consultancy or individual contract will not be considered “staff members” under the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and UNICEF’s policies and procedures, and will not be entitled to benefits provided therein (such as leave entitlements and medical insurance coverage). Their conditions of service will be governed by their contract and the General Conditions of Contracts for the Services of Consultants and Individual Contractors. Consultants and individual contractors are responsible for determining their tax liabilities and for the payment of any taxes and/or duties, in accordance with local or other applicable laws.

The selected candidate is solely responsible to ensure that the visa (applicable) and health insurance required to perform the duties of the contract are valid for the entire period of the contract. Selected candidates are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the assignment. It does not apply to consultants who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their consultancy contracts.