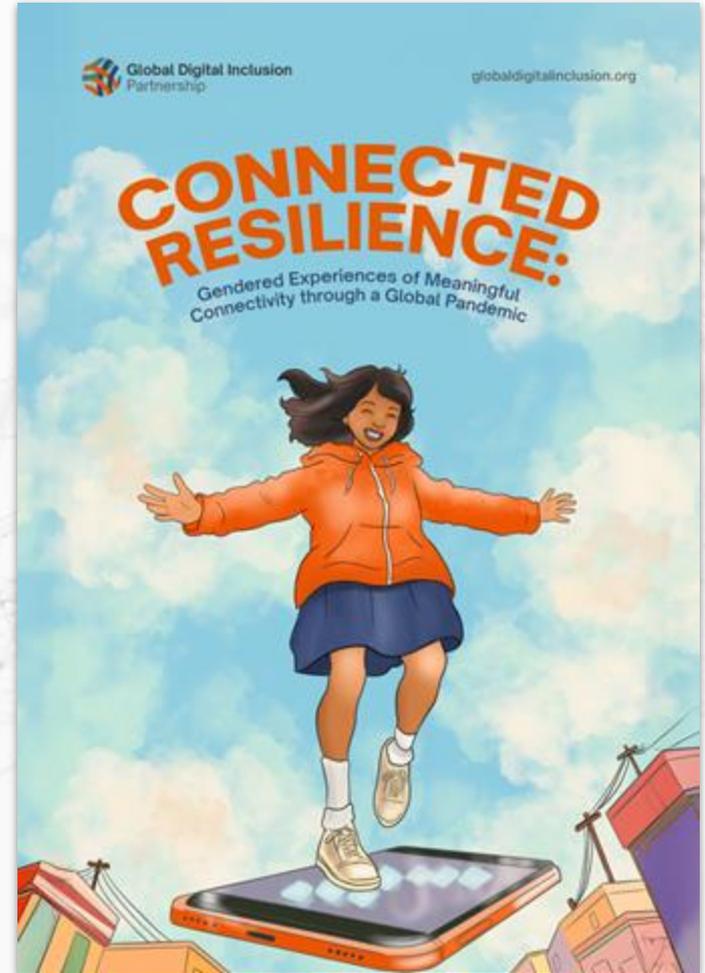

Connected Resilience

Gendered Experiences of Meaningful Connectivity through a Global Pandemic

24 October 2024



**Global Digital Inclusion
Partnership**

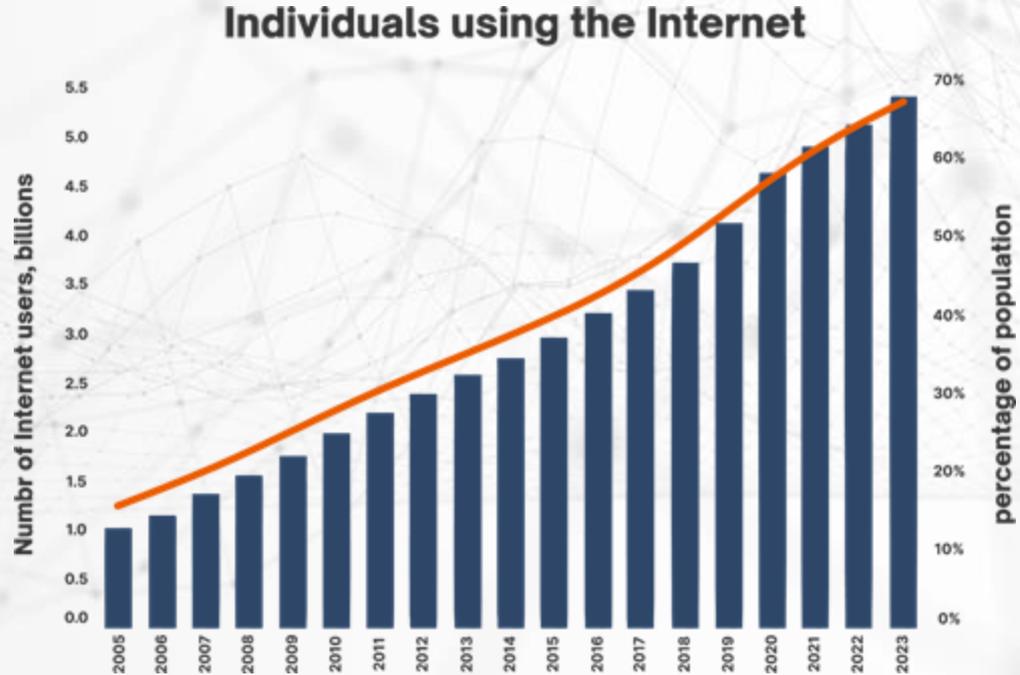


The past years have made it clear that **meaningful connectivity** is now a **basic requirement for all**.

Yet, **too many women**, too many of the world's impoverished, and too many people living in rural communities remain **unconnected, underconnected, and left behind**.

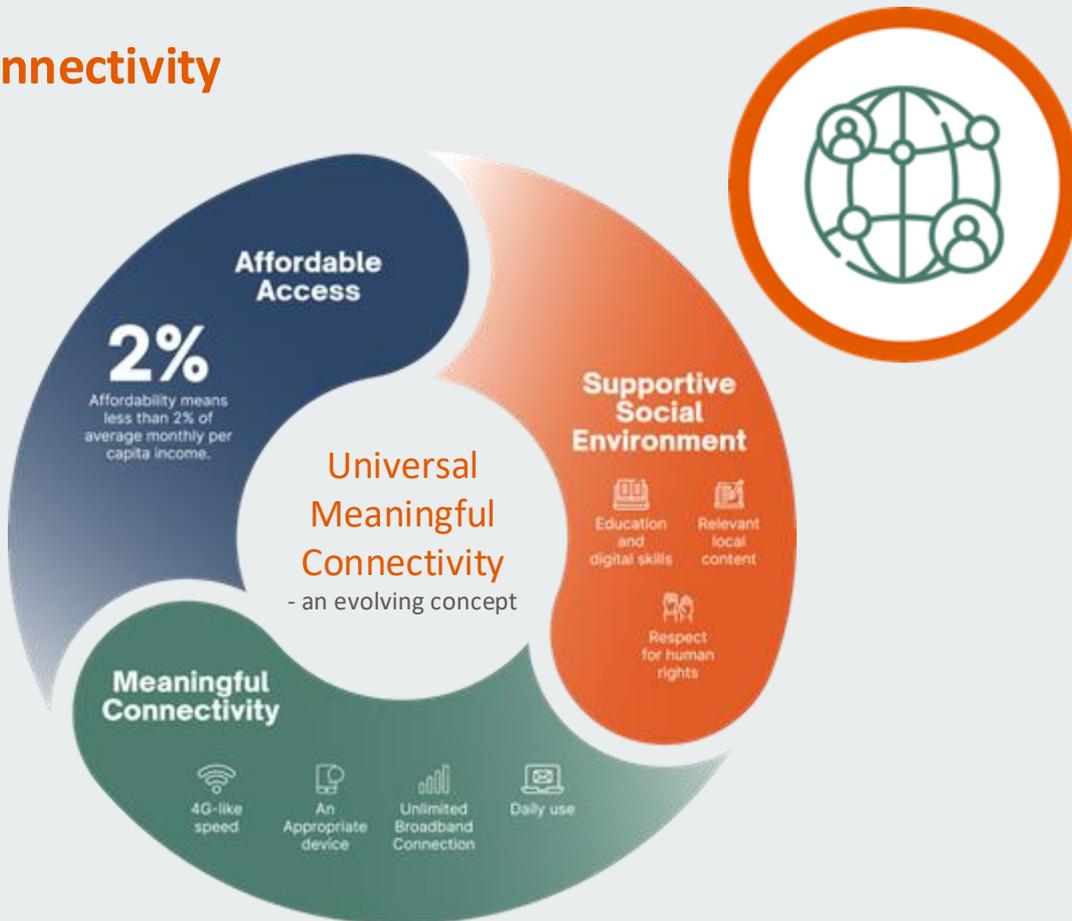


Internet use around the globe has seen **exponential growth** over the past few decades and the **pandemic** significantly **increased internet usage worldwide**.



Importance of Meaningful Connectivity

Meaningful connectivity is crucial for women to **learn, earn, access** government and financial services, and **connect** with family and communities, thereby also saving essential time and money in transport costs.



Women from remote indigenous villages in India face **immense challenges** to participate in public forums and access information, due to reliance on costly and intermittent public transport, scarce mobile connectivity and dependency on men for mobile devices.



Briefly on Methodology

We carried out interviews with policy makers, focus group discussions in **India, Mozambique, Nigeria, and the Philippines**, and surveyed over 6,000 women from **Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa, and Uganda**.

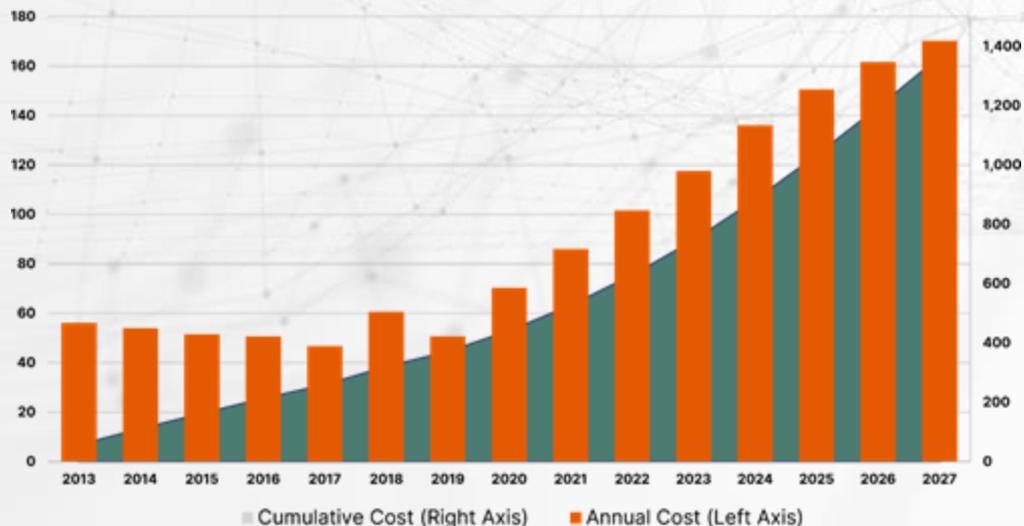


Persistent Digital Divide and Economic Impact

Countries face a potential loss of over **USD \$500 billion** in the next five years due to the digital divide (model with LLMICs).



**Annual and Cumulative Cost of Exclusion
(New Model), as MM**

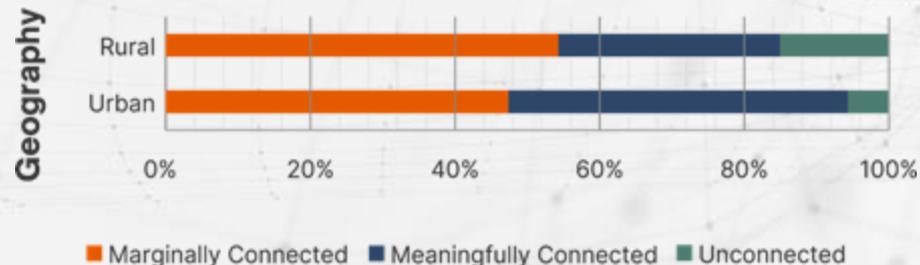


Disparities in Internet Access

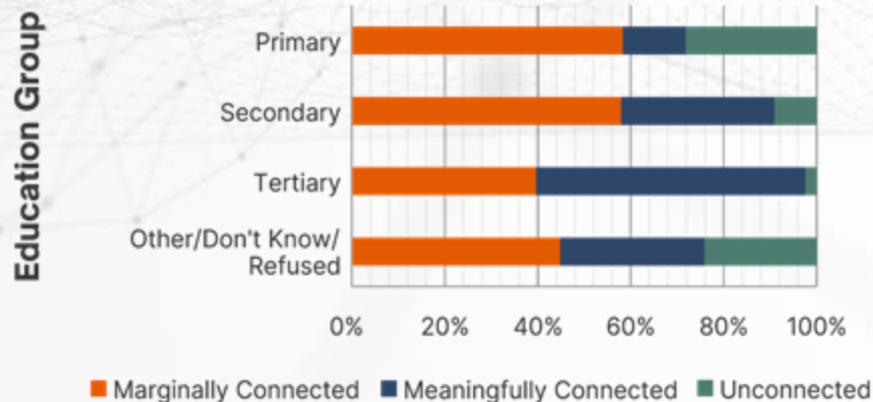
Internet access expansion has also **highlighted existing social disparities** in access to digital resources, exposing the stark realities of **digital inequality**.



Connectivity Type by Geography



Connectivity Type by Education Level

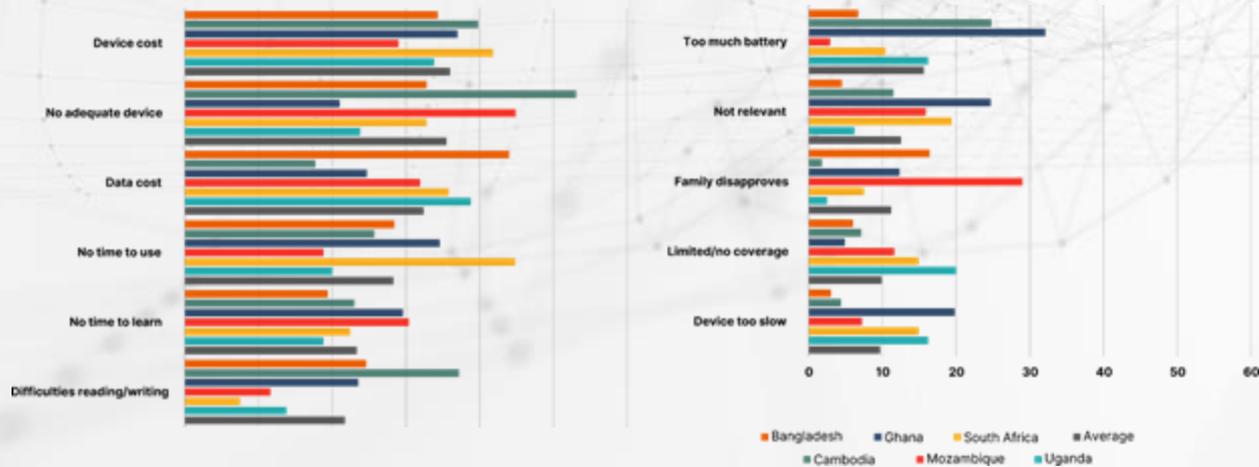


Systemic Barriers to Digital Inclusion

Women in underserved localities face restricted digital access due to a **lack of infrastructure, high costs of devices and data services, dependency on men for device usage, and limited time** due to income-generating activities and **unpaid care work**.



Reasons to not use internet, as % of non-user respondents



We propose four tiers of achievable solutions — and call attention to policymakers, investors, and the ICT sector at large to fast-track meaningful connectivity and inclusive digital development for all.



Deep Investments



Grand Visions



Easy Wins



Scalable Systems

Demonstration of Good Practice

 Community Networks

 Digital skills and peer-to-peer empowerment training for women

 Social Digital Basket

 GIFEC

 USAF device subsidy

 AU Digital Transformation Strategy and Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

 National Broadband Policy

 Digital Innovation for Women Advancem



Deep Investments



Grand Visions



Easy Wins



Scalable Systems

Pacific Digital Gender Scorecards (A4AI, 2022)

| | Samoa | Papua New Guinea | Tonga |
|---|-------|------------------|-------|
| Internet Access and Women's Empowerment | 6.5 | 4.4 | 7 |
| Affordability | 7 | 4.2 | 8 |
| Digital Skills and Education | 8 | 3 | 7.5 |
| Relevant Content and Services | 7 | 5 | 5.5 |
| Online Safety | 7 | 6.5 | 8 |

Pacific Digital Gender Scorecards: Recommendations

Collect and publish gender data in the technology sector

- Governments must commit to regularly collecting and publishing gender data in the technology sector to inform policies and assess progress towards closing the digital gender gap.

Adopt Meaningful Connectivity as the target for internet use (See ITU Universal MC Project)

- Governments should adopt meaningful connectivity as a new target for internet access, adoption and use.

Promote digital skills and ICT education for women and girls

- Governments and companies should invest in ICT education and digital literacy by supporting community-led and peer-driven digital skills and empowerment initiatives for women of all ages, focused on problem solving, group mentorship, information and data literacy, content creation, and leadership skills, in addition to technical skills.

Support women's participation in technology development, local content creation and ICT innovation

- Governments should create a national strategy to support technology education, innovation and leadership for women of all ages.

Safeguard the online privacy of women and girls

- Enforce laws that uphold privacy and personal data protection, ensuring that women's human rights protected offline are also protected online.

Thank you.



**Global Digital Inclusion
Partnership**

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