



Annual Report

2023

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Message from the CEO

Dear Friends, 

When I started Hello World back in 2013, the digital divide wasn't on everyone's lips as it has been for the past few years. It wasn't a 'fashionable' cause. The UN had yet to make the internet a human right (2016) and COVID lockdowns hadn't begun - which crucially opened everyone's eyes to the fact that so many remained offline, without a voice.

As you will see from this report, 2023 has been our most exciting and impactful year yet. There is so much more attention to digital inclusion and the gaps created if communities are unconnected. Over the past 12 months we have had more interest in our model than ever before.

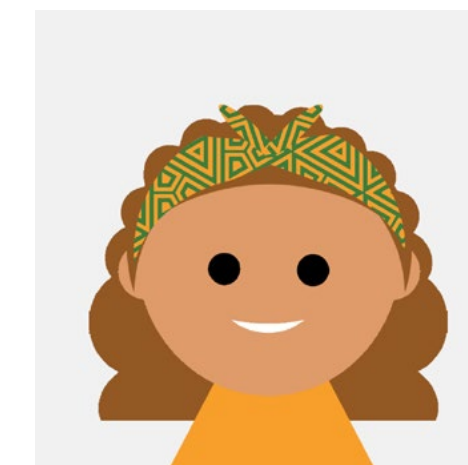
At the start of 2024 I am proud that Hello World is working in partnership with more than 100 communities around the world, reaching over 120,000 people to deliver high-speed internet, solar power, hardware, software, engineering training and so much more.

But now, looking ahead: although there are more people, organisations and charities than ever focussing on digital inequality, we still have a long way to go. One-third of the global population still does not have access to the internet. Universal connectivity goals are lagging and I'm worried that we're too focussed on masking the stats with work that isn't meaningful and doesn't effect change. Change, to us, is community-led work. Providing power, devices, knowledge, education, access to programmes, training and the skills and digital literacy to change one's life. We know this method works. Our impact measurement speaks for itself.

I'm starting to feel more confident that it doesn't matter what area of human rights work you're a part of, raising the bar and alleviating those in poverty simply isn't possible without the internet. Self-determination is possible with the internet.

I hope that, in a few year's time, I'll be out of a job because the need for Hello World will have evaporated. I hope that an organisation or company will put communities first in a bid to close the digital divide meaningfully, respectfully, and in a way that will last. I really don't think we're that far away from it becoming a reality. But, until then, I'll be here, expanding Hello World into new countries every year.

This year it's all go — in the second week of January we returned to Abuja to launch Hello World's expansion across Nigeria, heralding a new community partnership model, and next we're off to launch in Burundi. Our expansion and growth is exciting but, as you know, the funding environment remains a challenge, which is why we are so grateful for your continued support.



Katrin McMillan

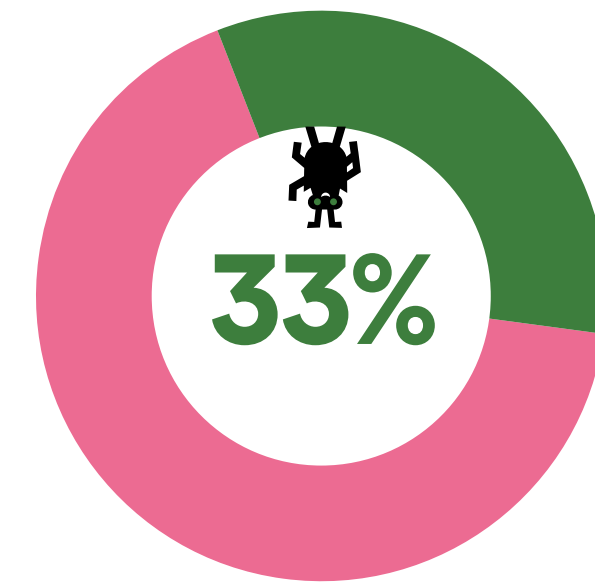


About us

Hello World seeks to bridge the digital divide, working side-by-side with marginalised communities to build

Hello Hubs: outdoor, internet-connected, solar-powered structures with rugged public touch screens and world class educational software.

Our mission and driving vision is to alleviate poverty. Co-creation is at the heart of what we do. By partnering with communities from the outset and listening, we adapt our support to the needs of the community. They direct their own education, skills-building and problem-solving.



of the world still does not have access to the internet. That's nearly 3 billion people.

1 in 6 children are out of school - that's 244 million children.



Two thirds of the world's school-aged children do not have internet connection in their homes.

The gender gap in mobile internet access is huge -

900 million women are still not accessing mobile internet.



Check out [our new film](#) to see how Hello World was born!



A Hello Hub is...



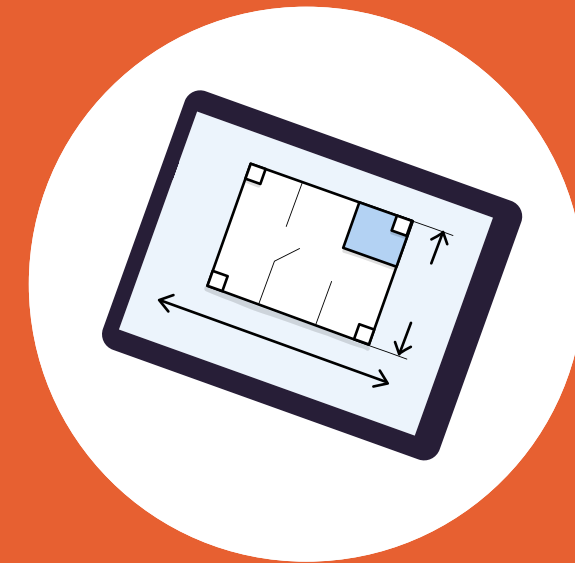
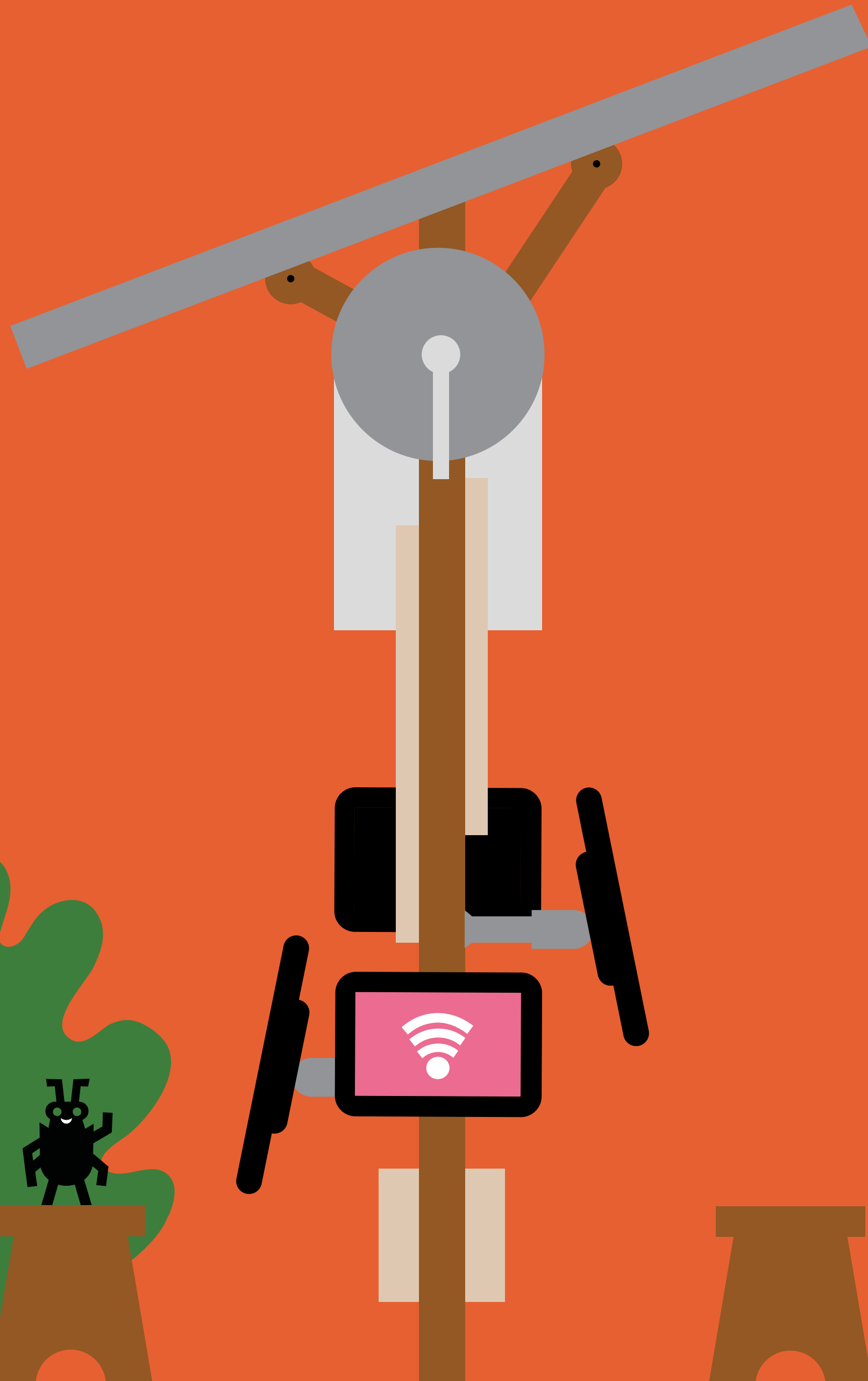
1.
Robust and modern hardware through 8 rugged tablets and Hub infrastructure



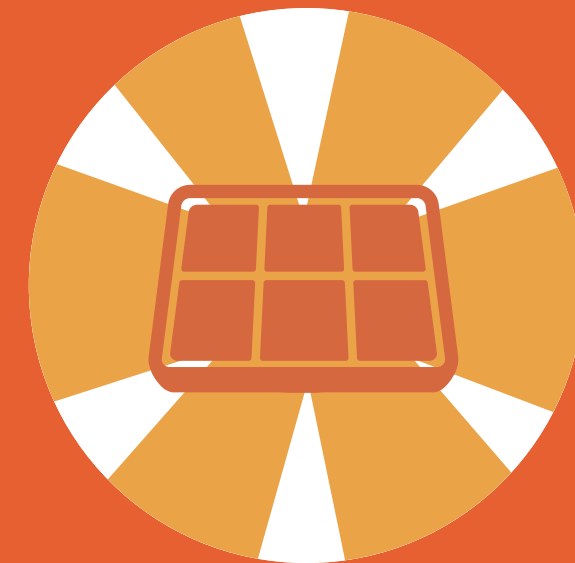
2.
World-class educational software in local languages for the whole community



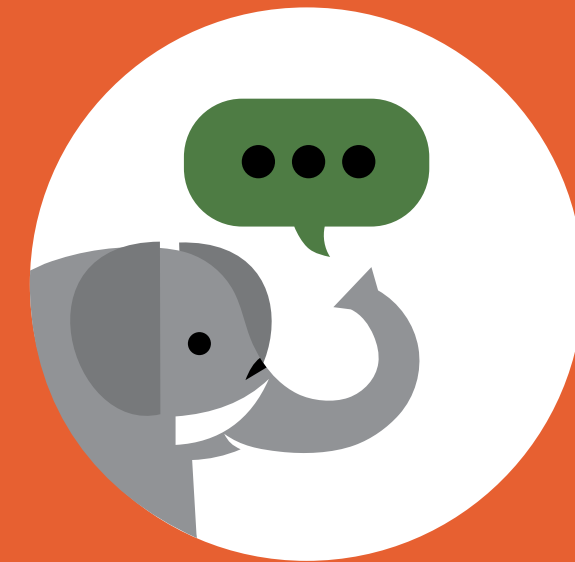
3.
Free Internet empowering knowledge, connection and communication



4.
Engineering training enabling communities to build, maintain and replicate Hubs



5.
Solar power is often a community's only power source

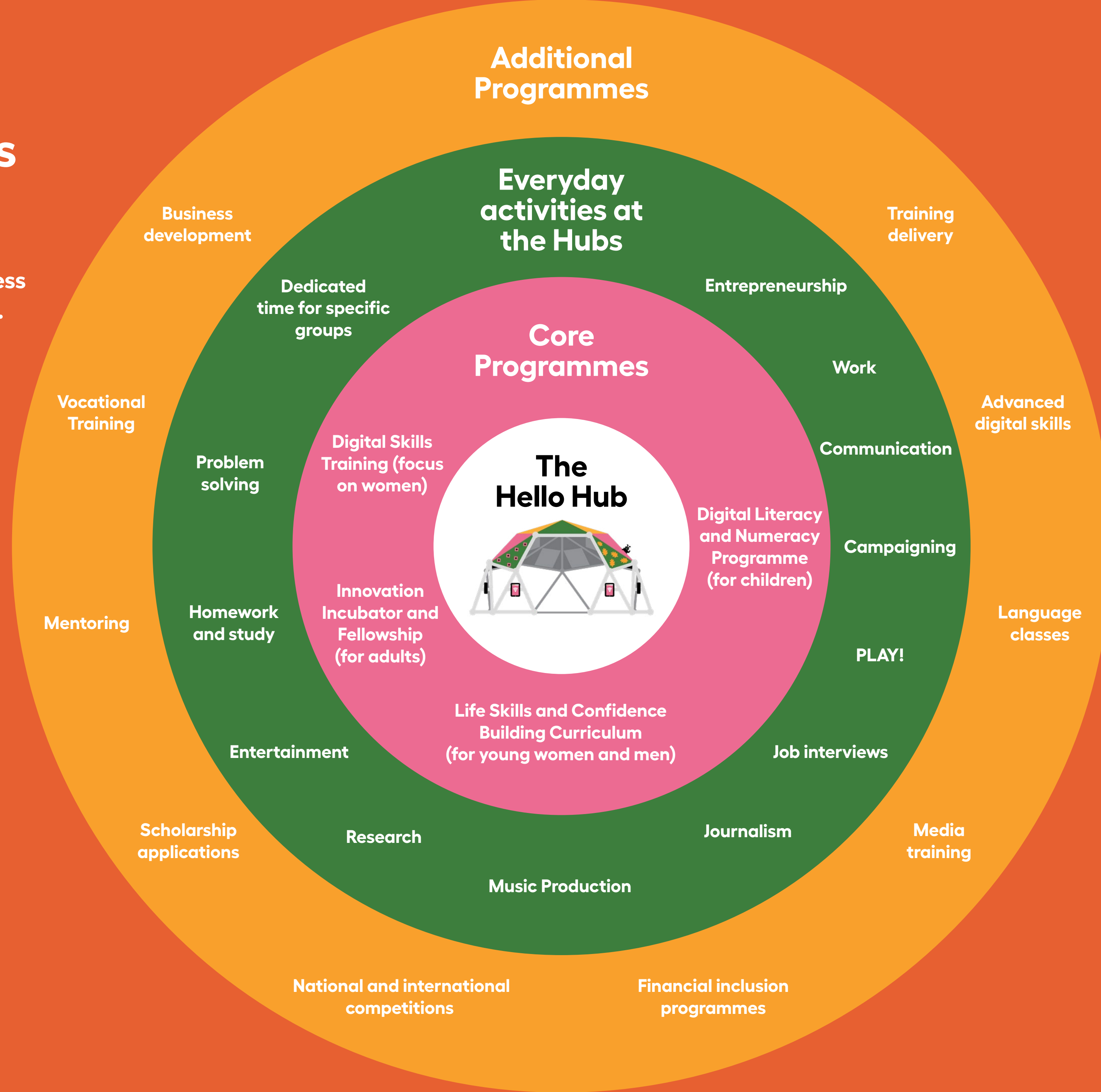


6.
Core Programmes to support digital skills and inclusion

What happens at a Hub...

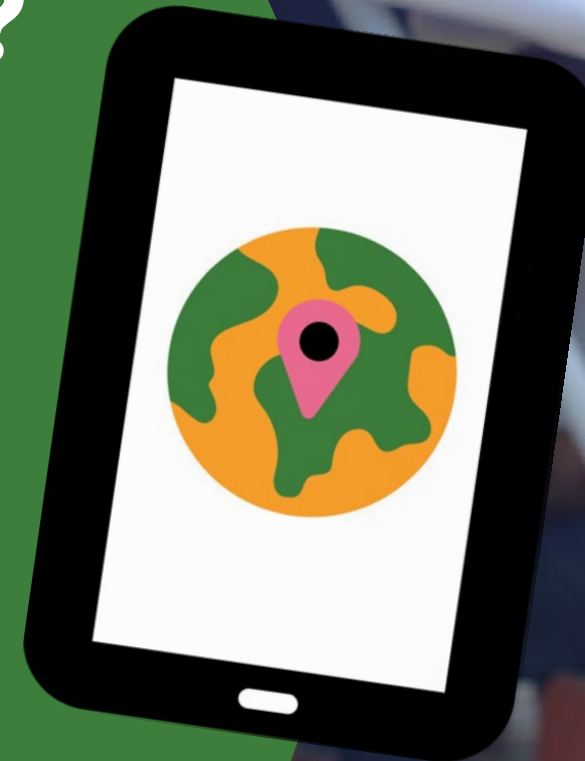
Hello Hubs are used in countless ways across each community. Learning and skills building arise spontaneously around Hubs and many communities access online programmes.

We also deliver core programmes at each Hub to build digital skills and increase meaningful and inclusive access.



“Do you know what you have done for these girls’ futures? You have connected them to the world and, hence, opened up opportunities for them. There is so much that they can know.”

Female Hello Hub User, Uganda



Our Highlights

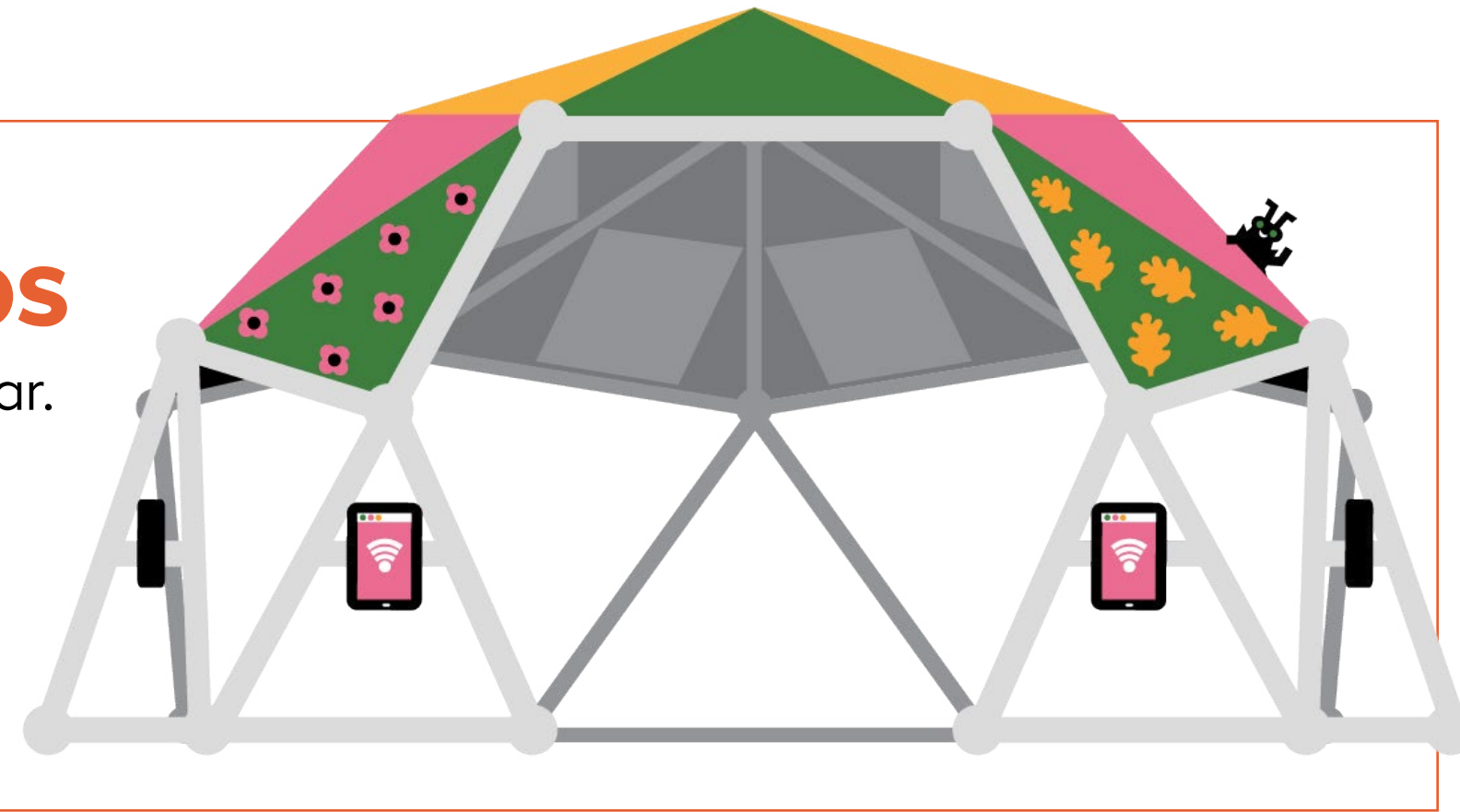
Our most successful year yet

We have had so many Highlights in 2023.

32 new Hello Hubs

in Uganda and Nepal across the year.

That's **more than 40,000 people** connected over the course of **12 months**.



We have expanded our reach in refugee settlements across Uganda to 18 Hubs.

We delivered an exciting partnership with with the United Nations Refugee Agency.



New partnerships

are underway to scale our reach and train partners in our model to connect more marginalised communities.



We pledged

to continue our commitment to refugee connectivity at UNHCR's Refugee Forum.



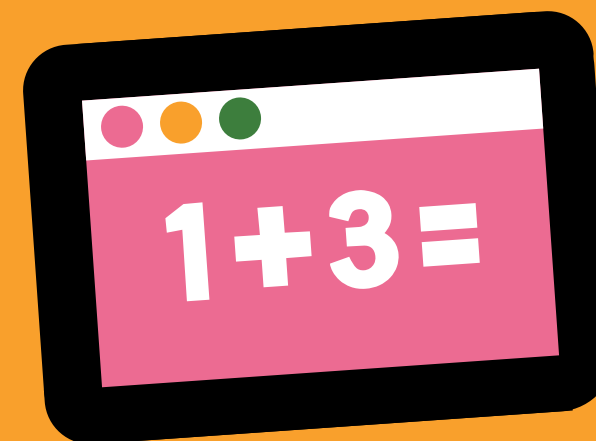
We were thrilled

to win the The Andan Prize for Innovation in Refugee Inclusion for the **second year** running.



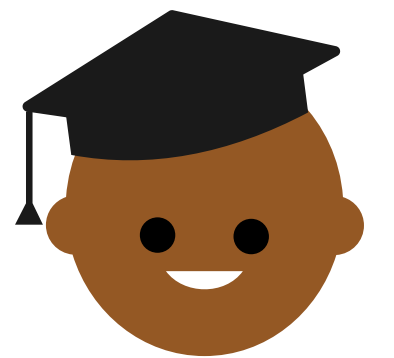
We launched

Hub Heroes to 14 new communities, reaching **420 out-of-school children** with literacy & numeracy education.



We increased our offering

at each Hub, developing three core programmes from the ground up.



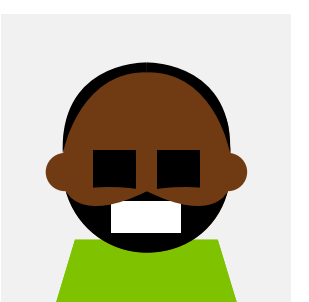
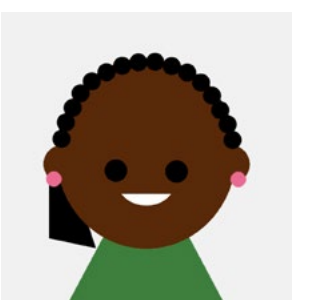
We invested further

in community-driven problem-solving, and designed innovation training for launch in 2024. We are working with communities on sustainability plans for every Hub.



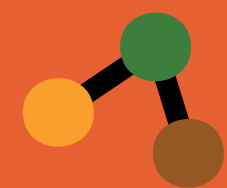
Finally, we expanded

our senior leadership team, appointing Fiona Komugisha as our Director of International Programmes and Implementation and David Mugerwa as Director for International Technology and Engineering.

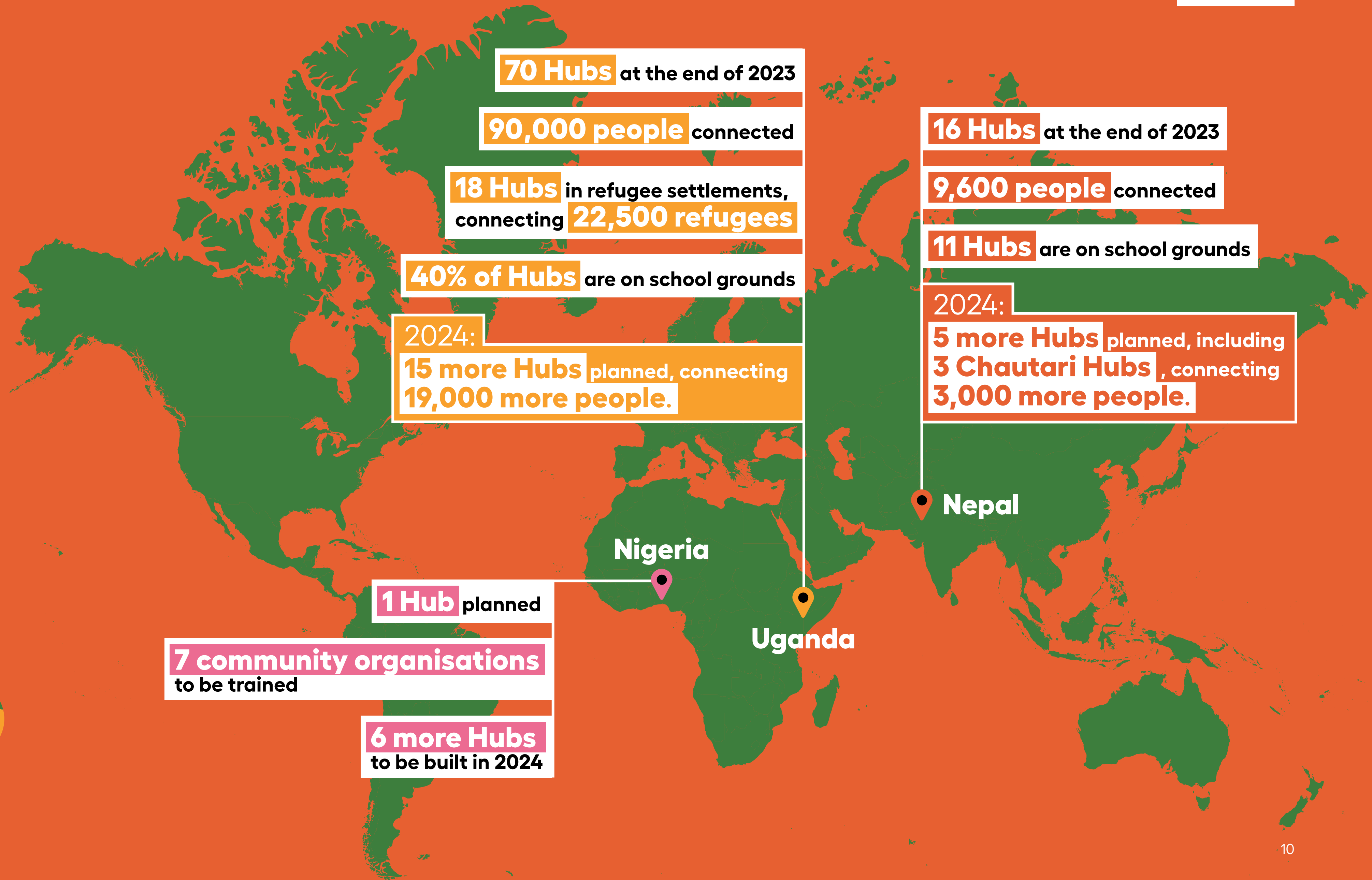


Our Reach

● **86**
Hubs at the end of 2023,
reaching over
100,000
people



● **32**
Hubs built
in 2023
=
40,000
people connected
in 2023





“I sent my son to Dubai in search of a better livelihood. I miss my son immensely. To bridge the physical distance that separates us, I rely on the Hub’s internet connectivity to talk to him. The Hello Hub in our community has become a lifeline, connecting separated families like ours.”

Female, 49, Ichok Hub, Nepal



Our Work in 2023

Partnering to Scale

We know the digital divide is immense so we need partners who can help us scale. Community based organisations and larger organisations who share our mission are crucial if we are to expand our work.

Last year two new partnerships were formed which have been a huge success. The sharing of knowledge, ideas and methods allows us to grow and adapt more quickly.



UN Refugee Agency

We partnered with UNHCR in Uganda to revitalise a disused ICT centre in Bidibidi refugee settlement. Hello World's experience and local focus ensured that community engagement was at the heart of this process. We also integrated a Hello Hub at the ICT center. The partnership had a profound impact in a short period of time.



The Hub

is of value to the community, with close to 1,000 people using the site and 9 in 10 users frequenting the Hub more than twice a week.



80 people completed basic computer skills training and results show a significant increase in digital skills (on average **47% increase**).

9 in 10 basic computer skills trainees feel more confident either in their ability to use a computer, seek gainful employment or gain a better understanding of online security risks.

95% of all respondents say their quality of life has improved because of the Hello World Hub's service.

The community was fully engaged in developing a community-led sustainability plan for the ICT centre with the support of Hello World.

Training in Nigeria

Our very first Hub was piloted in Nigeria back in 2012. Twelve years later, we have taken our Hello Hub model back to Nigeria in partnership with the Association of Progressive Communications (APC), the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) and seven community organisations from across the country. In 2023 we worked closely with our partners to design the training programme and prepare for the Hub build in Dakwa community on the outskirts of Abuja. This partnership launches a new approach to scale for Hello World - training partner organisations in our community-engineering methodology so that they can scale our work and adapt it to suit their own country and community contexts.

Inclusive Programmes

In 2023 Hello World developed three core programmes to better support digital inclusion and increase the value and accessibility of the Hub in the community.

1. We launched Hub Heroes

in 14 new communities, reaching 420 out-of-school children with literacy and numeracy education.

Early results show that 85% of the children increased both their literacy and numeracy skills.

2. Our life skills curriculum

was taught by our trained Community Support Officers in 49 communities in 2023 reaching more than 1,500 young Hub users. The programme teaches confidence, employability skills and awareness of rights.

3. Our basic digital literacy skills course,

endorsed by the UNHCR, was launched in the Bidibidi refugee settlement. The pilot taught 40 men and 40 women, predominantly refugees from South Sudan, how to type, open an email, search for information online and stay safe on the internet.



Once a Hub is built, communities can...



Stay in touch with family



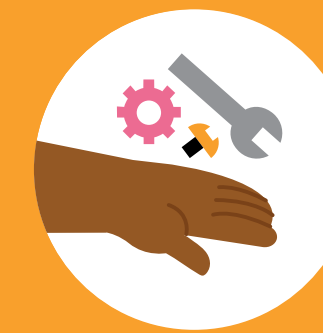
Raise their voices



Advocate for their rights



Educate themselves



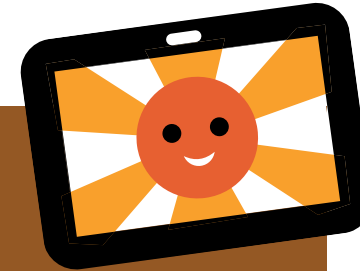
Solve problems



Start businesses

Innovation and Sustainability

Innovation has always been at the heart of Hello World. We have invested time this year in developing programmes and approaches that support and empower communities to problem-solve and we have adjusted our Hub design to meet community needs.



We have extended our sustainability approach through the continuing development of our **How to Guide**, which teaches new organisations about our model and how to adapt it to their context. Our How to Guide is freely available to anyone via [our website](#).

We are developing plans and in ongoing discussions with communities about how best to secure the future of their Hubs. This will be a key focus for us in 2024.

We are exploring revenue generation streams for the Hubs, including data sales and other site uses.

We developed a new Hub model called a Chautari Hub for piloting in 2024 in Nepal. Taking inspiration from the native Chautari tree, popular with travelers and spiritual gatherings, this new Hub will be a stripped back rendition. A simple outdoor structure with a roof, this lite Hub will provide Wi-Fi to the surrounding area so people can congregate, chat and connect - just as they do under Chautari trees.

We have devised an innovation incubator to be launched in the heart of Hello Hub communities. From early in 2024, Hub communities will take part in a 3-month innovation challenge. Our expert innovation fellows will mentor participants through a curriculum which helps them to identify, pilot and scale solutions for pressing environmental, economic and social challenges within their communities. Winning solutions will be supported to be developed, making Hub communities more sustainable, able to generate revenue, provide jobs and more.

“As a teacher, coming to the Hub the free Wi-Fi has endless possibilities. I’ve started to explore and enhance my teaching skills through various apps available on tablets and the internet. It’s been a transformative experience, allowing me to provide better education to my students.”

Teacher at Shree Sarvodaya Secondary School, Nepal



“Thanks to the tablets and the free internet, I have learned a lot from Hello World. I didn’t know how to read or write at first, but now I can write my name and a few other people’s names. Thanks to Hello World, I can even read and write all the names. At least I can smile now.”

16-year-old Congolese refugee,
Nakivale refugee settlement, Uganda



Our Impact in 2023

Community Impact

Community feedback is one of the key barometers for judging our impact - our listening approach sets Hello World apart from peers when it comes to understanding impact. Communities tell us about the value of the Hub to them and describe how it has improved the quality of their lives. In this way we support communities to drive their own development with access to the internet and all that it entails.

The social benchmarks produced by our impact partner, [60_decibels](#) show that Hello World has continued to perform in the top quintiles of impact performance, compared with 1000s of other social change organisations, year-after-year.

In 2023 Hub communities told us:

Hello World Hubs

have had significant positive impact on users' lives in both Uganda and Nepal.

97% of respondents

said that their Hub had improved their quality of life.



Quality of Life Impact - Adults:

Q: Has your quality of life changed because of Hello World?



Respondents highlighted

- the benefits of free internet access
- savings on data
- communicating with friends and family
- learning and accessing entertainment and information

65% of users

feel 'confident' they will be able to secure gainful employment because of skills acquired using Hello World Hubs.



Nearly 9 in 10 users

'strongly agree' that they feel welcome at the Hubs suggesting that Hello World is providing a conducive environment for internet access.

91% of respondents

in Uganda could not easily find a good alternative, suggesting that Hello Hubs are filling a gap.



3 in 5

Hello World Hub child users say the quality of their happiness has 'very much improved'.

Access to research and information was the top advantage reported in both countries.

Sustainable Development Goals

We are often asked to demonstrate our impact aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). When we are asked how we deliver specific outcomes we say that every day in Hello Hub communities we see the impact the Hub delivers towards the quality of life of people and entire communities.



Here's a snapshot of how Hello Hubs support the Goals:



End Poverty

Learning new skills, saving money on data costs, developing new income streams and livelihoods are all ways a Hello Hub helps people escape poverty.



Zero Hunger

At Hello Hubs people learn how to increase food security, learning new methods to grow, protect and harvest their crops and develop other farming and livestock care methods.



Good Health

Hub communities access up-to-date medical information, or learn simple medical care. Nurses and health workers have completed studies at Hubs. Hubs power and connect health centres.



Quality Education

Out-of-school children access educational software at Hubs and learners of all ages learn and develop skills via the internet. Hubs are used daily by teachers and full classes of children.



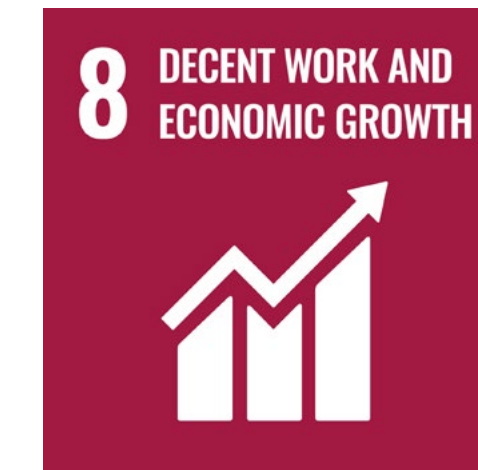
Gender Equality

Hello Hubs address the gender digital divide by tailoring programmes to empower women and equip them with digital skills and confidence to access information and to learn.



Clean Energy

Hello Hubs are energy-autonomous stations where solar energy powers each Hub all year round. Hubs often bring the sole source of reliable energy.



Decent Work

Thousands of people everyday use the Hub to develop their potential and livelihoods. Hub users have started businesses, learnt new skills, furthered their education and worked on-line at our Hubs.



Resilient Infrastructure

We are directly supporting the goal to deliver universal and affordable connectivity by 2030. Hello Hubs have connected more than 100,000 people with free internet access.



“I have been able to learn English since I am from Congo. I have also learnt how to make chapatis and now I can sell them and get money. With access to free internet and tablets, I am able to learn new things. I also get to communicate with my family members in Congo.”

Male, 36, Hub User, Uganda



The Year Ahead

Our Focus in 2024

2023 has been our biggest year and 2024 looks to be even more significant. Looking ahead our priorities are to:

1. Scale our partnerships:

We have exciting plans in place to launch partnerships and take us to new contexts and we will continue our focus on refugee connectivity.

2. Training and Our Model:

We will shift our efforts from building Hubs to partnering and training others in our model.

3. Sustainability and Innovation:

Sustainability plans for every Hub will be a key priority for us. We are investing in testing new Hub models at the request of our communities.

4. Programmes:

We will continue to invest in our core programmes across Uganda and Nepal. We will also explore expanding what we offer, with a particular focus on digital inclusion of women and girls.



Our Supporters and Partners

It's not just us and the communities. A huge thank you to all of our wonderful partners. Without our partnerships, we wouldn't be able to do the work that we do!

Implementing Partners

Uganda



Internet Service Provider



Nepal



Internet Service Provider



Funders



Governance

Financial Results for Year End 22 March 2022 are available [here](#).



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With thanks to...

With thanks to a number of individual givers and supporters throughout the year. A special thank you to Johnny Fenn who walked the length of Nepal in support of Hello World. Thank you to Nemo travel for the ongoing donations and to the M&C Saatchi World Services staff for making us their Charity of the year and putting on so many fun fundraising events!

“I have successfully submitted my CV for jobs at the Hub. I don’t have a smartphone, so it’s good to be able to contact my recruiters via email. I was also able to search for more jobs via the internet on Brighter Monday, one of the best websites for job adverts. None of us could afford smartphones, but now we have access to free internet.”

Male Hub User, Uganda



“I began utilising the Hub for medical research on various conditions affecting people worldwide, particularly focusing on diabetes and methods for its control and prevention. This research has been invaluable to me as a hands-on healthcare provider. It enhances my knowledge and aids me in treating patients effectively.”

Health Care Worker, Fort Portal, Uganda



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