

## Leading Global Artificial Intelligence Governance from Outcomes to Impact

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### ABSTRACT

The proliferation of high-level events on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in recent years has contributed to a global AI governance framework that marginalises many developing countries' priorities. The India-AI Impact Summit, as the first AI summit of its kind to be held in the Global South, has shown how the views, needs and concerns of the developing and least developed nations can be placed at the heart of the global AI agenda.

Through the lens of the India-AI Impact Summit, this policy brief underscores the need to build synergies between AI summit outcomes, UN-based discussions and multistakeholder initiatives. It posits how coherence among these diverse processes can be advanced through the work of the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance under the UN. The brief concludes with recommendations for building greater convergence on global AI governance that supports sustainable development in the Global South.

**KEYWORDS:** Artificial Intelligence (AI), India-AI Impact Summit, Global AI Governance, Global Digital Compact, Multilateralism, Sustainable Development

*La multiplication des événements de haut niveau consacrés à l'Intelligence artificielle (IA) ces dernières années a contribué à la mise en place d'un cadre mondial de gouvernance de l'IA qui marginalise les priorités de nombreux pays en développement. Le Sommet « India-AI Impact », premier sommet de ce type organisé dans les pays du Sud, a montré comment les points de vue, les besoins et les préoccupations des pays en développement et des pays les moins avancés peuvent être placés au cœur de l'agenda mondial de l'IA.*

*À travers le prisme de l'India-AI Impact Summit, ce rapport sur les politiques souligne la nécessité de créer des synergies entre les résultats des sommets sur l'IA, les discussions menées au sein des Nations unies et les initiatives multipartites. Elle expose comment la cohérence entre ces divers processus peut être renforcée grâce aux travaux du Panel scientifique international indépendant sur l'IA et du Dialogue mondial sur la gouvernance de l'IA sous l'égide des Nations unies. Le rapport se termine par des recommandations visant à renforcer la convergence en matière de gouvernance mondiale de l'IA afin de soutenir le développement durable dans les pays du Sud.*

**MOTS-CLÉS:** Intelligence artificielle (IA), Sommet « India-AI Impact », gouvernance mondiale de l'IA, Pacte numérique mondial, multilatéralisme, développement durable

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### KEY MESSAGES

- The India-AI Impact Summit showcased how the priorities of developing countries can be integrated into global AI discussions;
- Effective implementation of the UN Global Digital Compact, including through the new International Scientific AI Panel and Global Dialogue on AI Governance needs to build on the momentum of the AI Impact Summit;
- Building coherence among different global AI governance processes with equitable inclusion of Global South stakeholders is key to making AI work for sustainable development.

La proliferación de eventos de alto nivel sobre la Inteligencia artificial (IA) en los últimos años ha contribuido a crear un marco de gobernanza mundial de la IA que margina las prioridades de muchos países en desarrollo. La Cumbre India-AI Impact, al ser la primera cumbre sobre IA de este tipo celebrada en el Sur Global, ha demostrado cómo las opiniones, necesidades y preocupaciones de los países en desarrollo y menos adelantados pueden situarse en el centro de la agenda mundial sobre la IA.

Desde la perspectiva de la Cumbre India-AI Impact, este informe sobre políticas subraya la necesidad de crear sinergias entre los resultados de las cumbres sobre IA, los debates en el marco de las Naciones Unidas y las iniciativas de múltiples partes interesadas. Plantea cómo se puede fomentar la coherencia entre estos diversos procesos a través de la labor del Panel Científico Internacional Independiente sobre IA y el Diálogo Global sobre la Gobernanza de la IA en el marco de las Naciones Unidas. El informe concluye con recomendaciones para lograr una mayor convergencia en la gobernanza global de la IA que apoye el desarrollo sostenible en el Sur Global.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** Inteligencia artificial (IA), Cumbre India-AI Impact, Gobernanza mundial de la IA, Pacto Digital Mundial, Multilateralismo, Desarrollo sostenible

近年来，高规格人工智能会议的频繁举办推动了全球人工智能治理框架的形成，但这一框架却将许多发展中国家的优先事项边缘化。作为首个在“全球南方”举办的此类人工智能峰会，“印度人工智能影响峰会”展示了如何将发展中国家和最不发达国家的观点、需求和关切置于全球人工智能议程的核心位置。

本政策简报以“印度人工智能影响峰会”为视角，强调了在人工智能峰会成果、联合国框架下的讨论以及多利益相关方倡议之间建立协同效应的必要性。简报提出，可通过联合国下设的“人工智能独立国际科学小组”和“人工智能治理全球对话”的工作，推动这些不同进程之间的协调一致。简报最后提出了相关建议，旨在就支持“全球南方”可持续发展的全球人工智能治理达成更广泛共识。

**关键词:** 人工智能 (AI)、印度人工智能影响峰会、全球人工智能治理、全球数字契约、多边主义、可持续发展

## I. Introduction

Over the last few years, a large number of high-level summits and events have been organised around the world to focus on different facets of artificial intelligence (AI) governance. These have been convened by country groupings like the Group of Twenty (G20), Group of Seven (G7) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates), by international organisations and United Nations (UN) agencies, and by other relevant stakeholders in global AI governance, including think-tanks, academia and civil society.

The most recent instance of a large AI Summit with global convening power was the [India-AI Impact Summit](#), which took place in New Delhi from 16 – 20 February 2026. It continued the series of high-level AI summits, which commenced with the [United Kingdom AI Safety Summit](#) in 2023, followed by the [AI Seoul Summit](#) (2024), and the [France AI Action Summit](#) (2025). The AI Impact Summit was the first of its kind to be held in the Global South. It sought to move towards a future where the benefits from the use of AI would be equitably shared with all of humanity.

India's successful hosting of the AI Impact Summit brought attention to the need to democratise AI resources, propagate more equitable access to and use of AI, and reduce digital divides within and across countries. By placing the concerns and priorities of Global South nations and stakeholders at the core of its discussions, the Summit provided an inclusive, democratic space to strengthen international cooperation on AI and advance shared priorities in global AI governance.

While the AI Impact Summit and its preceding summits have produced several actionable outcomes, to realise their full potential and turn them into meaningful real-life impact needs effective implementation supported by all stakeholders. However, the plurality of national and regional approaches to AI has created a fragmented system for global AI governance, characterised by discussions in multiple fora with overlapping agendas, advancing competing and sometimes contradictory regulatory approaches, and delivering outcomes that in some instances have led to the marginalisation of developing countries' priorities. Addressing this requires ensuring complementarity and coherence between summit outcomes, UN-based processes and other multistakeholder initiatives, as this is key to advancing inclusive and equitable approaches to AI across all its different dimensions and impacts on sustainable development.

This policy brief therefore looks at the issue of building synergies and ensuring complementarity through the lens of the recently concluded AI Impact Summit, and highlights its key outcomes. It then explores how these outcomes, particularly those relevant to global AI governance, can be operationalised at the multilateral level. In this context, it details the development and role of new mechanisms established under the UN Global Digital Compact. The brief concludes with some final observations and recommendations for building convergence on AI governance for supporting sustainable development in the countries of the Global South.

## II. The India-AI Impact Summit

The AI Impact Summit was a defining global inflection point for advancing a model of inclusive and democratic approaches to AI grounded in the needs, concerns, and priorities of the Global South.

The AI Impact Summit anchored the discussions on AI in the three *Sutras* or guiding principles of people, planet and progress, with the aim of ensuring a future where AI advances humanity, fosters inclusive growth, and safeguards the planet. These were then translated into concrete areas of action identified as the seven *Chakras* or pillars for global cooperation, spanning economic development, human capital, inclusion, trust and safety, science, resilience and innovation, and democratising AI resources. Together, they provided a comprehensive framework for enabling stakeholders to coordinate AI strategies for maximising collective benefits and addressing shared challenges.



Source: by author

The summit witnessed the largest participation of stakeholders till date for such an event, with over half a million participants attending in-person and nearly a million views on online platforms.<sup>1</sup> It brought together delegations from more than a hundred countries and international organisations. It also convened the entire spectrum of global stakeholders and leading figures in the field of AI, including representatives from Big Tech companies, academia and think tanks, as well as start-ups and students.

On AI policy and governance, the AI Impact Summit hosted a series of plenaries and high-level panels, touching upon a wide range of issue areas such as AI safety, innovation, labour and job markets, climate change, gender and inclusivity. There was specific focus on the governance of AI at the global level and means to harness AI to drive development in the Global South. Speakers across the board stressed the need to more proactively engage innovators from developing and least developed countries as co-creators instead of consumers of AI, strengthen South-South cooperation, build inclusive governance systems, and better integrate the role of science in global AI governance.

The main outcome document from the AI Impact Summit is the [New Delhi Declaration on AI Impact](#)<sup>2</sup> (Declaration). As of March 2026, the Declaration has 92 countries as signatories. The Declaration emphasises the need to foster international cooperation and multistakeholder engagement while respecting national sovereignty. It focuses on establishing collaborative initiatives and setting shared ambitions, with the overarching objective of providing a shared global vision for AI for equitably sharing the benefits of AI across humanity.

In line with the key themes anchoring the AI Impact Summit, the Declaration is structured around seven key *Chakras* or themes for global cooperation: (a) democratising AI resources; (b) economic growth and social good; (c) secure and trusted AI; (d) AI for science; (e) access for social empowerment; (f) human capital development; and (g) resilient, innovative and efficient AI systems (see Figure 1). Recognising the role of AI in driving economic transformation, it emphasises the importance of open-source and accessible AI ecosystems and underscores the need for energy-efficient AI infrastructure.

The Declaration makes reference to the other key outcomes from the summit which build on the recommendations of the relevant working groups established for the AI Impact Summit and are aimed to deliver on each of these pillars. Accordingly, it takes note of: (a) the [Charter for the Democratic Diffusion of AI](#) to promote access to foundational AI resources; (b) the [Global AI Impact Commons](#) as a practical platform for the adoption, replication, and scale-up of successful AI use cases; (c) the [Framework for the Trusted AI Commons](#) to consolidate technical resources, tools, benchmarks and best practices; (d) the [International Network of AI for Science Institutions](#) as a platform to connect scientific communities and pool AI research capabilities; (e) the [Guiding Principles for Reskilling in the Age of AI](#); and (f) the [Guiding Principles on Resilient, Innovative, and Efficient Artificial Intelligence](#). The Declaration also takes note of the development of a voluntary and collaborative platform to facilitate exchange of learning, knowledge, and scalable practices to advance AI adoption for social empowerment.

<sup>1</sup> "India-AI Impact Summit 2026: Landmark Global Declaration and Major AI Investment Commitments", Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 2 March 2026. Available from <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2234343&reg=3&lang=1>.

<sup>2</sup> AI Impact Summit Declaration, New Delhi (February 18 - 19, 2026), 21 February 2026. Available from <https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/40809>.

**Figure 1 – The Seven Chakras or Themes for Global Cooperation on AI**



Source: [India-AI Impact Summit](#)

These key outcomes are complemented by the [Equitable AI Transitions Playbook](#), which offers a people-centred approach to supporting workers and communities navigate the opportunities and challenges of the AI-enabled economy; and the [Playbook on Advancing Resilient AI Infrastructure](#), which is intended to serve as a practical guide for policymakers, industry, and system planners and provides a coordinated, resource-conscious framework for scaling AI responsibly.

In addition, the [Alliance for Advancing Inclusion Through AI](#) was proposed as a voluntary, collaborative platform to foster trustworthy, inclusive-by-design AI that empowers people in all their diversity and advances “concrete initiatives that harness AI for inclusion and social empowerment. This includes expanding equitable participation in social and economic activities, access to services, and opportunities across languages, abilities, genders, geographies, and cultures”.

The [New Delhi Frontier AI Impact Commitments](#)<sup>3</sup> also follow on similar lines, and seek to champion inclusive and multilingual AI by bringing together frontier AI companies and domestic innovators to advance inclusive and responsible AI. Its two commitments relate to ‘Advancing understanding of real-world AI usage’ (which is expected to provide data-driven insights to support policy-making), and ‘Strengthening multilingual and contextual evaluations’ (which aims to ensure the effectiveness of AI systems across languages, cultures and real-world use cases). Given the aspirational language of the Declaration, the implementation of these commitments is sought to be assessed through participating entities reporting their progress through established mechanisms, such as the [Hiroshima AI Process \(HAIP\) Reporting Framework](#), which is a voluntary reporting framework to encourage transparency and accountability among organizations developing advanced AI systems.

The AI Impact Summit thus served as an important entry point for stakeholders to provide their own perspectives for shaping the global AI agenda. It succeeded in bringing the global discussions on AI to the masses, increased awareness about its multidimensional impact and sparked a conversation on the need for AI that promotes benefits for all. Its strength lay in its inclusivity and championing of Global South voices, by allowing for the participation of diverse stakeholders and providing a platform where their perspectives could be heard at scale by global leaders and policymakers. The Declaration encapsulated this approach as it identifies and articulates the key priority areas for the Global South, which can be moulded and refined at the multilateral level, thereby setting the stage for further action.

<sup>3</sup> “Championing Inclusive and Multilingual AI for the Global South, India Unveils New Delhi Frontier AI Commitments”, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, 19 February 2026. Available from <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2230201&reg=3&lang=1>.

### III. Elevating the AI agenda in the multilateral discourse

The discussions at the AI Impact Summit have underscored that shaping the future of AI cannot be left to fragmented and isolated actions by individual States and stakeholders. Instead, a collaborative, multistakeholder approach grounded in international cooperation and geared towards achieving common objectives is necessary to equitably share the benefits of AI and other emerging technologies with all of humanity. Implementation of the [Global Digital Compact \(GDC\)](#), with its UN-derived mandate and convening power, presents the most viable pathway towards realising this goal.

The AI Impact Summit itself was clearly linked to the ongoing multilateral processes on AI governance and GDC implementation. It spotlighted ongoing initiatives mandated by the GDC - [the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI](#) (Panel) which focuses on generating shared scientific evidence on the impact and development trajectories of AI; and the [Global Dialogue on AI Governance](#) (Dialogue) which seeks to provide an inclusive platform to “discuss international cooperation, share best practices and lessons learned, and to facilitate open, transparent and inclusive discussions on AI governance”. The Terms of Reference for both mechanisms were adopted by the General Assembly through [Resolution 79/325](#) in August 2025.

In New Delhi, the UN Secretary-General also called for the establishment of a US\$ 3 billion [Global Fund for AI](#) (Fund) which would finance initiatives to build digital skills, data capacity, affordable computing power and inclusive ecosystems in developing countries<sup>4</sup>. Emerging from the [recommendations of the High-level Advisory Body on AI](#), it was included by the Secretary-General in his 2025 report to the UN General Assembly on [innovative voluntary financing options for AI capacity-building](#). The report suggests that this Fund “would help ensure that all countries secure a minimum irreducible AI capacity across skills, compute, data and models, alongside the establishment of a national AI strategy and engagement with international collaboration”<sup>5</sup>.

#### 3.1. The Independent International Scientific Panel on AI

The Panel has been set up to shape the global evidence-base for scientific assessments of AI, its risks, opportunities and impacts, especially for sustainable development and bridging digital divides. Accordingly, it is mandated to “issue evidence-based scientific assessments synthesizing and analysing existing research related to the opportunities, risks, and impacts of artificial intelligence” and to “contribute to informing and improving capacity-building efforts on artificial intelligence”<sup>6</sup>. Some commentators have compared it to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as it would “amass and analyse current knowledge on AI and its impacts... [while] its findings might be similarly influential in guiding government actions”<sup>7</sup>.

The forty panel members were approved by the UN General Assembly through a vote on 12 February 2026<sup>8</sup> (with 117 in favour, 2 abstentions, and 2 against). Serving in their personal capacity for a three-year term, the Panel members “have backgrounds in core technical AI expertise; applied AI, safety and infrastructure experience; and AI policy, ethics and impact”<sup>9</sup>. At its first meeting, held virtually on 3 March 2026, Maria Ressa of the Philippines and Yoshua Bengio of Canada were elected as the Panel’s co-chairs.

The Panel should play an important role in identifying emerging trends and possible risks of AI, reduce global asymmetries in AI access and impact, and guide efforts towards making AI technologies responsible, affordable and trustworthy<sup>10</sup>. Through this effort, it is well-positioned to provide rigorous and independent scientific insights that enable all countries to engage with AI on an equal footing.

#### 3.2. The Global Dialogue on AI Governance

The Dialogue is intended to serve as a platform to “discuss international cooperation, share best practices, and facilitate open, transparent and inclusive discussions on AI governance... involving governments and all relevant stakeholders”<sup>11</sup>. This includes the development of safe and secure AI systems, supporting capacity-building efforts, addressing socio-cultural implications, interoperability [of governance approaches](#), respecting human rights, ensuring human oversight for AI, and development of open-source software

<sup>4</sup> “From India, Guterres calls for \$3 billion fund to ensure AI benefits all”, UN News, 18 February 2026. Available from <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/02/1166996>.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations General Assembly, Innovative voluntary financing options for artificial intelligence capacity-building, Report of the Secretary-General, A/79/966, 2 July 2025, para 37. Available from [https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/sites/www.un.org.digital-emerging-technologies/files/A\\_79\\_966-EN.pdf](https://www.un.org/digital-emerging-technologies/sites/www.un.org.digital-emerging-technologies/files/A_79_966-EN.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> United Nations, Terms of reference and modalities for the establishment and functioning of the Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence and the Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance, UN General Assembly Resolution 79/325, 27 August 2025. Available from <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/79/325>.

<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Gibney, “UN creates new scientific AI advisory panel: what will it do?”, *Nature*, 26 February 2026. Available from <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-026-00542-8>.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations, “General Assembly Appoints Artificial Intelligence Panel, Names Joint Inspection Unit Members, Notes Article 19 Arrears”, GA/12751, 12 February 2026. Available from <https://press.un.org/en/2026/ga12751.doc.htm>.

<sup>9</sup> United Nations, “UN Independent International Scientific Panel on AI, Panel Members”. Available from <https://www.un.org/independent-international-scientific-panel-ai/en/panel-members>.

<sup>10</sup> Danish, “Engaging the UN Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence for the Global South”, *SouthViews* No. 307, 16 April 2026 (Geneva, South Centre). Available from <https://www.southcentre.int/southviews-no-307-16-april-2026/>.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, Terms of reference and modalities for the establishment and functioning of the Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence and the Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance, UN General Assembly Resolution 79/325, 27 August 2025. Available from <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/79/325>.

and open data.

The inaugural session of the Dialogue will be held on 6-7 July 2026 in Geneva, adjoining the [AI for Good summit](#) and [World Summit on the Information Society \(WSIS\) Forum](#). The Dialogue is being co-chaired by [Estonia and El Salvador](#), who are tasked with identifying the main topics for discussion and subsequently drafting a co-chairs' summary.

The Dialogue was officially launched in September 2025 in New York. Its first edition in Geneva will include a multi-stakeholder plenary meeting with a high-level governmental segment, presentation of the Panel's report, and thematic discussions. Following consultations with member states and stakeholders, the co-chairs published a roadmap in February 2026 of the key steps leading up to the first Dialogue. The co-chairs have also released proposals for thematic clusters for the Dialogue. These include AI opportunities and implications (societal, cultural and economic); bridging AI divides (capacity-building, access and digital foundations); safe, secure and trustworthy AI; as well as human rights and human oversight over AI. The preparatory process for the Dialogue has seen active participation by developing countries and Global South stakeholders who are putting forward their priorities to shape the agenda and to set the tone of the discussions at the Dialogue. This was also clearly visible during the informal consultations held by the co-chairs.

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During the initial round of consultations in January 2026, the Group of 77+China (G77) highlighted its concerns regarding the lack of digital infrastructure, connectivity and skills in developing countries.<sup>14</sup> It emphasised that the Dialogue should help enhance countries' understanding and knowledge of how AI technologies can be developed and deployed in ways that are inclusive and development-oriented, while providing a platform for meaningful and inclusive discussions and engagement on the broader implications of AI. The need to maintain a strong intergovernmental focus was also re-iterated.

The next round of stakeholder consultations was held in [New Delhi](#) on the sidelines of the India-AI Impact Summit, where the presence of many representatives from developing and least developed countries enabled active participation in the Dialogue's preparations. This was followed by an informal consultation in March, where the co-Chairs emphasised the value of providing inputs to the preparatory process for the first Dialogue.

### **3.3. Building synergies around AI priority areas at the multilateral level**

The work of the Dialogue will be informed by the scientific evidence-base and analyses generated by the Panel. Building on its analyses, the Dialogue represents a vital opportunity to foster true multilateral collaboration on global AI governance which firmly embeds the views and priorities of the Global South. Both these processes under the GDC are intended to be complementary and mutually-reinforcing, with the Dialogue creating a space to reflect on how scientific evidence can inform policy-making in AI governance.

Inputs during the preparatory process were sought around several [guiding questions](#), which emphasised different elements of the form and substantive scope of the first iteration of the Dialogue. It also provided an opportunity for stakeholders to engage in the agenda-setting process and highlight priorities that the Dialogue should aim to address.

The Declaration at the AI Impact Summit provides some key guiding principles and priority areas that could be incorporated into the Dialogue. For instance, the tenets of democratising AI resources, employing AI for economic growth, and enabling access for social empowerment lie at the very heart of developing countries' concerns with the profusion of AI and digital technologies. Further, the focus on collaborative initiatives provides a useful starting point to foster the sharing of good practices, success stories, effective regulatory approaches and knowledge around the development and deployment of AI. These could be used as building blocks to generate more robust engagement on the financing and build-out of digital infrastructure, technology transfer, and capacity-building

<sup>12</sup> United Nations, Terms of reference and modalities for the establishment and functioning of the Independent International Scientific Panel on Artificial Intelligence and the Global Dialogue on Artificial Intelligence Governance, UN General Assembly Resolution 79/325, 27 August 2025. Available from <https://docs.un.org/en/A/RES/79/325>.  
<sup>13</sup> United Nations, Letter from the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations and the Permanent Representative of Estonia to the United Nations, 27 February 2026. Available from [https://www.un.org/global-dialogue-ai-governance/sites/default/files/2026-03/co-chairs\\_letter\\_to\\_all\\_member\\_states\\_-\\_global\\_dialogue\\_on\\_ai\\_governance\\_roadmap.pdf](https://www.un.org/global-dialogue-ai-governance/sites/default/files/2026-03/co-chairs_letter_to_all_member_states_-_global_dialogue_on_ai_governance_roadmap.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> G77, Statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China delivered at the initial informal consultations on the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, 13 January 2026. Available from <https://www.g77.org/statement/getstatement.php?id=260113>.

on AI in the Global South.

Towards this end, development-orientation, fair and equitable access to digital infrastructure, skills and resources, as well as targeted capacity-building efforts should be emphasised as a cross-cutting thematic cluster for the Dialogue<sup>15</sup>. It is particularly important that the notion of bridging digital divides moves to concrete commitments which acknowledge and address grassroots level issues surrounding access to digital infrastructure in developing countries.

The Dialogue should also consider the distributional impacts that AI is having on developing and least developed countries<sup>16</sup>. This is clearly visible in how the majority of Global South countries and stakeholders are being impacted by AI, but remain largely unable to influence how this technology is advancing and being applied. Certain communities have even higher vulnerabilities, for instance, tech workers such as gig workers and data labellers interact regularly with AI systems, yet have no influence on how AI adoption is changing their working conditions. Even in the private sector, small businesses and Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are relegated to being passive recipients of AI. Advancing the voice of the Global South in the Dialogue thus requires their effective participation in its agenda setting and discussions, bringing their concerns and priorities to the fore.

The Dialogue can thus be leveraged to promote coherence and complementarity among the different regional and multilateral processes on AI for effective implementation of their outcomes, preventing redundancy and overlaps, and allocating resources in an effective manner. Building on the outcomes of the AI Impact Summit, it should address the identified needs of developing countries for digital and AI transformation, and produce actionable pathways towards outcomes that support inclusive, sustainable development-oriented global AI governance. It should further strengthen engagement with developing countries and Global South stakeholders and ensure they can participate fully and equitably in the shaping of global AI governance.

At its core, equitable global AI governance must address the fundamental issue of access to AI. By its very nature, availing the benefits of AI is contingent on access to digital and technical infrastructure, such as broadband, hardware, high-performance compute, data centres, and the large amount of capital resources required to build, operate and maintain it (see Box 1). Ensuring access to financing for the build-out and maintenance of their AI infrastructure and digital ecosystems is a high priority for developing countries, and one that should be considered by the Dialogue as a cross-cutting theme in its deliberations.

At the same time, technology transfer and capacity building are indispensable to creating the conditions which allow developing countries to engage with and equitably benefit from AI. It is therefore essential that the Dialogue focuses on ensuring adequate means of implementation, backed by robust technical and financial support.

At a broader representative level, it is also crucial to ensure that developing countries and Global South stakeholders have a fair and equitable chance to physically participate in global AI governance. As it stands, the Dialogue's first two iterations will take place in Geneva and New York, alongside existing UN meetings. Over and above the logistical and visa-related limitations that these venues present for participants, it is important to note that increasing both access and representation in these discussions would be better enabled by hosting the third and other future editions of the Dialogue in the Global South instead. India's hosting of the AI Impact Summit serves both as a useful precedent and successful pilot project.

With over 1.2 billion people [expected to reach working age](#) in developing countries in the next decade, this cohort will directly face the impacts and potential disruptions from AI in the economy and labour force. As the experience from the AI Impact Summit clearly demonstrates, holding such events in developing nations serves to maximise engagement with the stakeholders who will be both the primary users and the demographic most impacted by AI. Their lived experiences, concerns and priorities would be key inputs towards shaping an effective global agenda for AI governance. The multilateral system must capitalise on this vast and crucial resource base.

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<sup>15</sup> Processes relevant to access and capacity-building on AI are also taking place in other fora, such as the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), World Trade Organization (WTO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and others.

<sup>16</sup> See: South Centre Inputs to the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, April 2026. Available from <https://www.southcentre.int/south-centre-inputs-to-the-global-dialogue-on-ai-governance-april-2026/>.

**Box 1**

*Building, operating and maintaining data centres is very capital intensive. The upfront capital expenditure (capex) required to construct a data centre is high but varies across regions. In the Asia-Pacific region, [industry estimates suggest](#) that construction of a data centre costs between \$5-6 million/megawatt at the lower end. Others have [noted](#) that “building a data centre in Africa can cost 10-20% more per megawatt than the global average, with power train equipment—UPS blocks, medium-voltage switchgear, diesel generators—soaking up nearly half that outlay”. The operational expenditure (opex) is similarly high, with a large proportion spent on the electricity required to run the data centre. Developing and least developed countries face higher costs for energy generation and distribution. Harsher tropical climates also inflate the maintenance budgets for data centres by compelling shorter service intervals on components, often pushing costs to 15-25% above temperate-regions. Meeting these financial demands requires external support for developing countries, and the proposed Global Fund on AI could play a key role in this regard.*

**IV. Final remarks and recommendations**

The proliferation of different fora, institutions and processes on AI governance at the international level has fragmented discussions, which has created gaps in holistically addressing the multidimensional impacts of AI.

To reduce fragmentation and address representation issues in global AI governance, it is essential to promote greater coherence, both among existing UN initiatives and with other international fora discussing AI policy and governance. As [Geneva](#) prepares to host the next AI Summit in the first half of 2027, it would be useful to take stock of the road so far and reassess the different summits, their outcomes and implementation. This effort should embed the systematic engagement of developing countries and Global South stakeholders in future iterations of such events. This would deepen equitable representation, help to identify governance gaps and build greater continuity between the summits and other multilateral processes.

In the short term, it would be useful to identify common throughlines in the AI Impact Summit, the AI for Good Summit and the Dialogue, all of which are taking place in 2026. This would provide a more consistent and coherent approach to global AI governance. In this context, it is crucial to ensure that the momentum generated in New Delhi carries through the rest of the year to go beyond the symbolism of bringing the AI discussion to the Global South and instead creates concrete and tangible outcomes to enhance developing country participation in the emerging AI ecosystem.

Enhancing representation must be backed by concrete commitments. Future international events on AI governance must allocate financial and technical resources for enabling developing countries to participate meaningfully in AI discussions, as well as to address the barriers they face in their effective engagement. These events must act as inclusive platforms that allow developing countries to accelerate technological growth, showcase and encourage AI innovation, foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge-sharing.

Implementation of the different summit and UN outcomes remains an ongoing process. An important milestone will be the high-level review of the GDC, currently scheduled for 2027 during the 82nd session of the UN General Assembly. The outputs from the Panel, the Dialogue and the summits will be key to assessing how effectively the GDC has been implemented, and what future steps are required.

Over the long term, it is important to underscore that concerted and targeted technical assistance and capacity-building efforts that address the entirety of the digital ecosystem, from research, innovation and development to adequate enabling regulatory environments, are essential to ensure that creators and communities in the Global South are equipped to harness the benefits of AI for economic growth and sustainable development for all. The multilateral system should retain its central role in promoting progress towards these objectives.

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