

AI for Good Global Summit Snapshot

Accelerating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

2024



AI for Good Global Summit 2024

Since 2017, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) has been dedicated to establishing a platform and ecosystem for the advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and technologies in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its AI for Good Platform and its AI for Good Global Summit. The 2024 edition of the AI for Good Global Summit took place on May 30th and 31st and was organized by ITU in collaboration with over 40 sister UN agencies and co-convened with the government of Switzerland.

The Summit was preceded by the AI Governance Day on May 29th which acknowledged that while AI's potential benefits are significant, the associated risks require careful consideration. A forthcoming report on the effective governance of AI tools and technologies will be issued separately.

The Summit took place in the context of the [United Nations' recent adoption of its first resolution on AI](#), which emphasizes the importance of developing 'safe, secure, and trustworthy AI systems' in compliance with human rights and international

law. Member states and stakeholders were urged to develop regulatory and governance frameworks for the responsible use of AI. Furthermore, the resolution acknowledged the challenges encountered by developing nations in keeping pace with technological advancements and called for support to bridge the digital divide and enhance digital literacy.

Addressing AI's dual facets - its promise and potential risks - was a common theme of the discussions held in Geneva. This requires a concerted effort from governments, international organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society. This highlights the importance of an inclusive approach to frameworks, where governance is seen as an enabler rather than an inhibitor of technological progress.

The Summit also emphasized the importance of celebrating the positive advancements of AI, particularly in the areas of accessibility, climate and health, while ensuring that these advancements benefit people across the world.



The 2024 Summit in numbers

As the leading action-oriented platform for utilizing the potential of AI to address some of the world's most pressing challenges, the AI for Good Global Summit this year featured a comprehensive program of expert panels, technical workshops, and networking sessions designed to explore how AI can contribute to societal well-being, economic growth, and sustainable development.

700+
speakers over
the Summit's
three days

35,000
Neural Network users
from 103 countries

43%
of attendees
were female

100+
exhibitors showcasing
cutting-edge
technologies

5,000+
in person attendees

147
countries in
attendance

The 2024 Summit in words



"AI can be a game-changer for the SDGs, but transforming its potential into reality requires AI that reduces bias, misinformation, and security threats instead of aggravating them. We need global coordination to build safe and inclusive AI that is accessible to all."

António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations



"We're all here because we care about which future we get. Everyone in this room wants the AI for good. And we can still choose the future that we want, but we have to actually see the risk clearly, so we know the kinds of choices that we need to make to get to that future."

Tristan Harris
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Center for Humane Technology (CHT)

"In 2024, 2.6 billion people remain offline, excluded from the AI revolution, without a voice. This digital and technological divide is no longer acceptable. The AI revolution is our moment and responsibility to write the next chapter in the great story of humanity and technology. And to make it safe, to make it inclusive and to make it sustainable."

Doreen Bogdan-Martin
Secretary-general of the International
Telecommunication Union



"Diverse efforts need to be coordinated at a global level because governance is broader than regulation. We need to reduce the fragmentation - whether its among UN agencies, governments or regional bodies - to ensure that we have standards that we can all comply with around AI governance."

Her Excellency Emma Inamutla Theofelus
Ministry of Information and
Communication Technology, Namibia



"Ensuring that AI respects democratic principles and human rights is a task of the global community. The AI for Good Summit is an example of transversal United Nations-collaboration that provides a useful blueprint for AI governance. AI for Good is a movement that is based in Geneva but has global ambition and a global outreach."

Alexandre Fasel
Swiss State Secretary Federal
Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA)



"Deep fakes and the spread of fake information, the consequences of which can be dire, affect social harmony, public safety and the credibility of our institutions. As we embrace AI advancements, we must also develop robust measures to safeguard against misuse. It is crucial to establish ethical guidelines and regulatory frameworks to ensure AI is used responsibly."

His Excellency Zunaid Ahmed Palak
Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications
and Information Technology, Bangladesh

"When I think about of the fact that we have less than 10 years to solve some of the world's biggest problems with the SDGs, there is no other opportunity than to turn to technology to do that. Technology can act as the great connector. Everyone has a role to play, and this is what I love about the AI for Good platform."

HRH Princess Beatrice



We stand at the crossroads of technology and humanity. Where innovation works for a purpose. AI holds the promise of levelling the playing field, improving access to essential services and fostering inclusivity. AI for Good began as a vision, it has since transformed into a mission. It provides us with tools that are essential to empower communities to make informed decisions and also drive sustainable development.

Dr. Ebtessam Almazrouei
Founder and CEO of AIE3 and
Chair of AI for Good Impact Foundation



Day 0 - Governance Day

Despite the rapid advancement in AI capabilities, the development of technologies designed to govern these systems is lagging. According to ITU's recent readiness survey conducted at the beginning of 2024 across its 193 member states, 85% of member states do not have any AI regulations or policies in place.

"AI Governance Day" took place on May 29th. The morning session convened 200 government leaders, policymakers, researchers, and technologists and focused on three themes: the AI governance landscape and its evolution, how to implement AI governance frameworks, and the importance of inclusion and trust.

Afternoon sessions, open to the public, included panel discussions on the state of play of major global AI governance processes, AI safety and risk, the dilemma of open source versus proprietary AI models, the role of AI standards, and how the UN system can be used to advance global AI governance efforts.

The focus of the day was how to move AI governance forward from principles to implementation. In the rapidly evolving AI landscape, a paradox has emerged: while regulation often trails behind technological advancements, technology also struggles to keep pace with increasing regulatory demands.

The discussions centered around the need for global consensus and international cooperation in implementing AI governance frameworks. The complexity of national and regional governance of AI makes political solutions on a global level challenging, but essential. Emphasis was placed on the standards and their trustworthiness, including the need for equitable and human-centric standards for the safe application of AI.

Lastly, building trust and accountability was deemed crucial for ensuring the successful implementation of AI governance frameworks, which should also consider varying needs and contexts rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.



Spotlight on innovation: AI and accessibility

Accessibility for all

One of the highlights at the AI for Good Summit were the innovations showcasing how technology and inclusive solutions are transforming accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Pioneering brain-machine interface (BMI) companies and innovators were present to demonstrate the expanding potential of BMIs in reinstating communication abilities and restoring individual mobility for people with neurological disabilities and injuries. Such advancements, fueled by AI and Generative

AI tools and technologies, will reshape the future of movement and communication, elevate physical and cognitive abilities, and most critically, bridge accessibility gaps. These innovations and their potential to change lives underscore the importance of ethical considerations and regulatory frameworks to ensure the responsible use of AI.



Exoskeleton revolutionizing movement for the mobility impaired

Inspired by his experience with paralysis in his own family, Nicolas Simon founded the French startup Wandercraft to develop an AI-powered exoskeleton aimed at transforming the lives of individuals with mobility impairments. Using robotics and AI, the exoskeleton assists walking with a motion sensor detecting intentions and movements and a hand-operated joystick for movement control. This innovation enabled paralympic tennis player Charlotte Fairbank, with complete paraplegia, to walk again after 16 years. She attested to the health benefits of the exoskeleton, including improved blood flow and bone density, and expressed her hope for AI and the technology to potentially help people like her to walk again.

Empowering silent communication for locked-in syndrome patients

Vasco Pedro, CEO of Unbabel, demonstrated how Halo, a wearable device, uses AI and large language models (LLMs) to enable silent communication for individuals with locked-in syndrome, such as those suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Locked-in syndrome is a rare neurological disorder that leads to paralysis of all voluntary muscles except for those controlling eye movement. In a live demonstration, a patient named Luís Oliveira communicated with the audience. Wearing a non-invasive neural interface in the form of a headband fitted with an electromyogram (EMG) sensor, Luís's bioelectrical signals were turned into speech using Halo and projected using his voice which was recreated using OpenAI's new voice LLM.

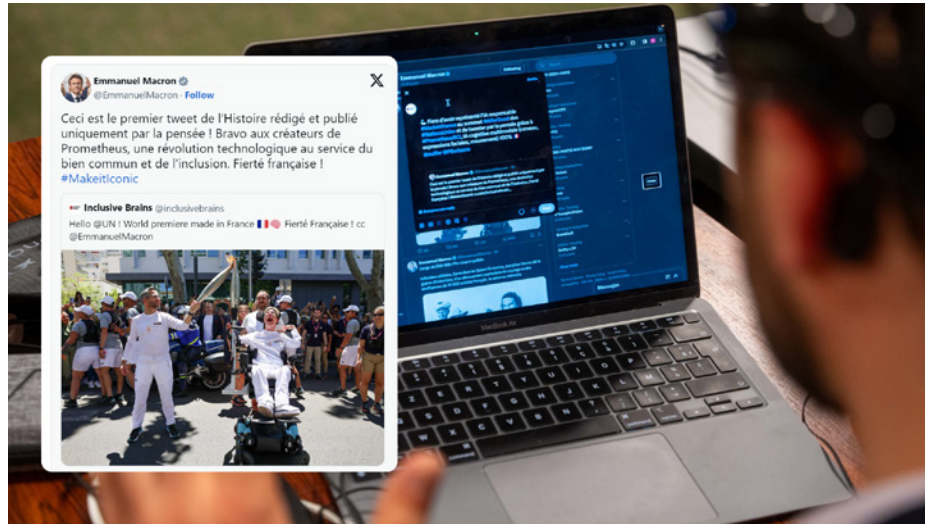


Innovative AI suitcases for the visually impaired

Dr. Chieko Asakawa, an IBM Fellow who lost her eyesight at 14, shared her journey of overcoming mobility challenges, particularly when traveling. Her experience inspired the creation of an AI-integrated suitcase developed for visually impaired individuals to create greater autonomy. Designed to resemble a regular piece of luggage for safety reasons and to be more socially accepted, this suitcase encases an advanced AI perception and control system with sensors, an RGB camera, and a general purpose (GP) computer for image analysis to detect obstacles and navigate surroundings safely. The handle's sensor-equipped design detects movement when held, which stops when released.

Elevating abilities with adaptive AI

Inclusive Brains combines generative AI models and neural interfaces to assist individuals with disabilities excluded from the workforce and education. These multi-modal cognitive AI agents integrate brain waves, movement, voice intonation, and physiological data to enable people to perform tasks and participate in the workforce more effectively. Showing how this innovation works, the company's co-founder and CTO Paul Barbaste sent a tweet to French President Emmanuel Macron using only mental and physiological commands. Macron responded and congratulated Inclusive Brains for its achievement and the historic milestone in thought-controlled communication.



Empowering the blind with AI

dot.Lumen is dedicated to transform mobility for the visually impaired with haptic feedback technology. Haptic technology uses vibrations and touch to communicate sensations to a user. With over 330 million visually impaired individuals globally, guide dogs are not a scalable solution to support the need. Inspired by the technology used in self-driving cars, CEO and founder Cornel Amariei and his team introduced a headset that uses haptic cues to guide users indoors and outdoors. Able to avoid obstacles, identify objects of interest and guide the users in an urban or rural setting, the headset does not require internet connectivity or pre-mapping the environment. The glasses, expected to launch early next year, will integrate with maps and public transportation to guide users to their destinations.

Innovation Factory

As part of the AI for Good Innovation Factory, four finalist start-ups were invited to the Summit in Geneva to present their innovative AI-powered solutions in a four-minute pitch session in front of a live audience at the Frontier Stage as the closing event on Day One of the Summit. The event, which followed a year-long search for top AI and robotics start-ups, featured entrepreneurs addressing global challenges such as water waste reduction, continuous learning, and mobility and accessibility. Taylor Shead, an entrepreneur from the United States and Founder and CEO at Stemuli, was awarded the winning prize by the panel of judges.



Redefining education through generative gaming

Stemuli uses an AI-powered generative metaverse gaming platform to transform education and continuous learning through immersive experiences. It aims to bridge gaps in the education system by using AI and machine learning to personalize learning experiences based on individual interests, delivering customised career-relevant educational pathways that inspire curiosity and drive skill development. Stemuli is dedicated to using technology to create a more inclusive and accessible educational environment, particularly for underserved communities. AI for Good Innovation Factory is a

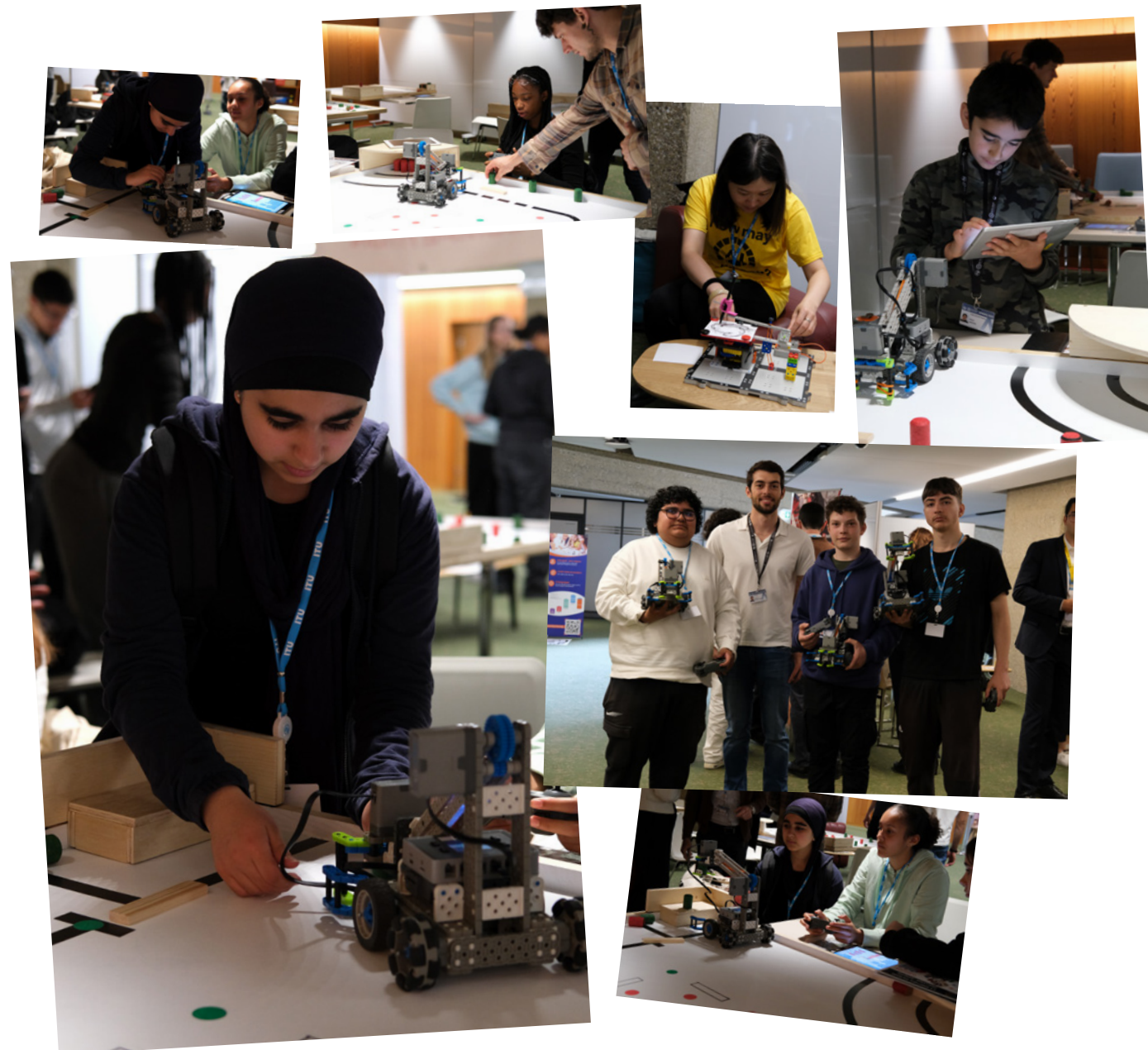
UN-led pitching/acceleration platform helping start-ups grow and scale their innovative AI-powered and SDG-driven solutions, by providing opportunities for business matchmaking, mentoring, fundraising and more. The program is open to any innovative start-ups using AI, machine learning, and advanced algorithms to achieve the UN SDGs. The event connects the finalists with world renowned AI experts and thought leaders to help scale their AI solutions globally. Learn more and pitch your start up today.

AI for Good Youth Zone

The AI for Good Youth Zone was an exciting part of the broader AI for Good Youth Program, hosting practical workshops and hands-on sessions focused on AI and robotics. Bringing together educators, students, and professionals, nine workshops were facilitated by 11 partners over two days attracting 300 participants, including kids and professionals.

The Youth Zone provided interactive and collaborative learning experiences, covering topics from AI EdTech robots to disaster robotics and autonomous vehicles. The "Robotics for Good Youth Challenge" allowed participants to use robotics and coding to solve real-world challenges, emphasizing the role of robotics in humanitarian initiatives. Workshops by EPFL provided hands-on

experience with AI, computer vision, and machine learning, demonstrating how smart cars detect and analyze their environment. Overall, the "AI for Good Youth Zone" provided a dynamic and engaging platform for participants to learn, collaborate, and explore the exciting world of AI and robotics.



Canvas of the Future

The Canvas of the Future AI Art Contest, in partnership with Shutterstock, invited global artists and AI enthusiasts to create visual artworks reflecting a sustainable future in line with the UN SDGs. Baris Gencel, Lanvin Group's Director of Digital Transformation and Innovation in Shanghai, garnered attention with his piece "Faces of Extinction of Species: Our Faces, Their Faces." Symbolizing the interconnection between humans and endangered species, Gencel's piece, chosen from nearly 100 entries across 37 countries, effectively captured the environmental crisis, blending human and animal imagery. His art is a powerful call to action, urging us to recognize our role in preserving Earth's diverse ecosystems.



Spotlight on announcements:

New initiatives to bridge the AI divide

Global standards for watermarking and deepfakes

During the Summit, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) announced their collaboration on a global standard for AI watermarking, multimedia authenticity, and deepfake detection. This initiative, supported by a multistakeholder coalition, aims to ensure safety, trust, and authenticity in the rapidly advancing AI landscape. It provides a platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. The joint effort will identify gaps in existing AI standardization and ensure the effective translation of AI governance principles into practical and actionable standards. As AI and generative AI technology continue to evolve, the proliferation of misinformation and deepfakes can erode trust in these technologies, institutions, and the very foundation of our societies. International standards will play a crucial role in supporting government efforts to address these challenges through policy measures and regulations.



AI for Good Impact Initiative

Launched at the Summit, the AI for Good Impact Initiative aims to accelerate and scale AI-driven solutions equally across all SDGs and regions through global collaboration. With over US\$2 million in financial commitments already secured, the Initiative will connect AI innovators with problem owners and provide funding for promising solutions

addressing each of the SDGs. Through AI for Good regional programming, projects, challenges, competitions, research, reports, policy guidance, best practices, and capacity building, the Initiative is poised to make a significant impact by harnessing AI's potential to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

In addition to financial support, the AI for Good Impact Initiative seeks cloud and computing resources, inclusive data sets, particularly for the Global South, knowledge sharing, thought leadership, and expertise across all sectors to drive its success and build AI capacity globally." Find out more about the AI Impact Initiative and discover how you can get involved.

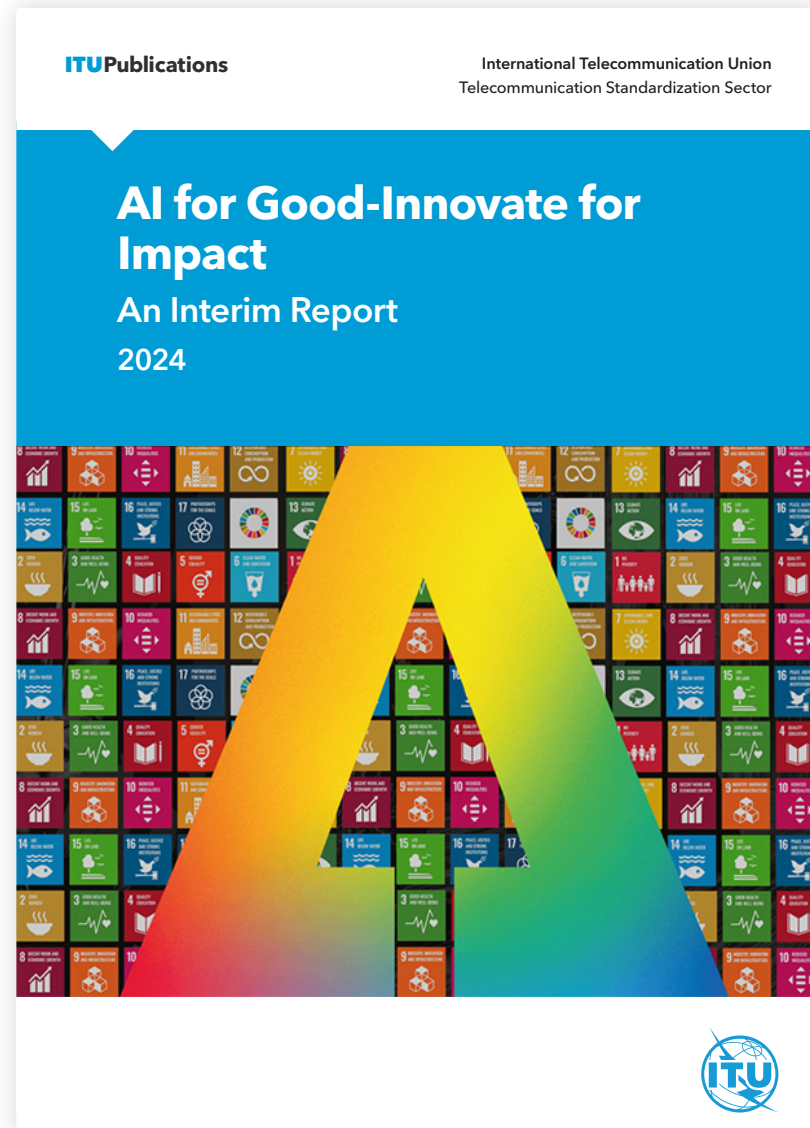
<https://aiforgood.itu.int/impact-initiative/>



AI for Good - Innovate for Impact

The AI for Good platform aims to address global challenges by facilitating the sharing of AI tools and technologies and expertise worldwide. The Innovate for Impact initiative seeks to promote equal access to AI and its benefits through collaborative capacity building. It nurtures aspiring talent dedicated to leveraging AI to achieve the SDGs and brings together scholars and experts from around the world to discuss and analyse these AI enabled use cases. In February 2024, we issued two open calls simultaneously for AI use cases and AI scholars.

The call received 219 submissions for use cases from 38 countries. A set of criteria was used to assess the use cases encompassing clarity and completeness, justification, alignment with AI for Good objectives, and evaluation against specific metrics. Thirteen scholars were selected from 118 applications from 38 countries for the AI Scholar Programme. An interim collection of 40 use cases was released in May 2024 at the Summit, [which can be found here](#), and a final collection is scheduled for release in July 2024.

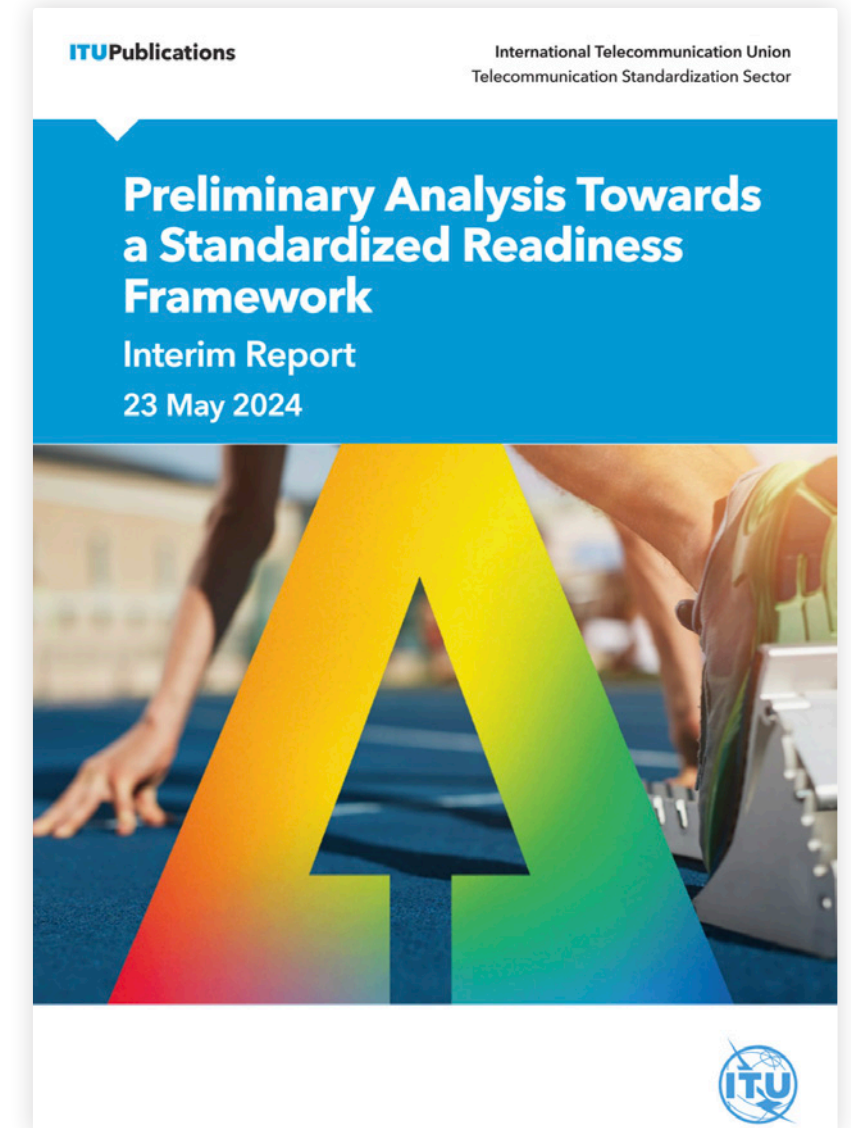


AI Ready - Standardized Readiness Framework

Prior to the Summit, an interim report entitled "Preliminary Analysis Towards a Standardized Readiness Framework" was issued. This report aims at developing a framework to assess AI readiness and the potential benefits of AI integration. Through the analysis of 16 case studies across different domains including transportation, agriculture, disaster management, and health, seven key factors identified for AI readiness were identified:

1. Availability of open data
2. Access to research
3. Deployment capability and infrastructure
4. Stakeholder buy-in through standards
5. Developer ecosystem created via open source
6. Data collection and model validation through Sandbox pilot setups
7. Storage and computing via Core Cloud and Edge Cloud

Over the coming months, the study will be scaled to include a wider range of case studies and scenarios across diverse domains and regions. These insights, together with the findings from the interim report, will inform the establishment of the "ITU AI for Good Infinity framework for AI readiness," a multi-dimensional, practical and evolving framework. [Learn more about the use cases and readiness factors.](#)



Spotlight on challenges: What needs to be considered?

While AI holds the potential to change our world, it presents significant challenges, including technical issues like data quality and interpretability, ethical concerns such as bias and privacy, social impacts including job displacement, and regulatory hurdles. Being mindful of AI's current shortcomings is crucial to channeling its transformative power responsibly and equitably, especially in developing countries where infrastructure gaps and economic disparities exist. Below are only some of the challenges that need to be addressed collectively if the AI revolution is to benefit us all.

In addition to using AI to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, many of these challenges were the catalyst for creating the AI for Good platform such as comprehensive regulation, capacity building, and democratizing access. While we have made progress in standards setting, knowledge sharing, and funding mobilization, there remains work to be done.

More urgently, we are off track in achieving the UN SDGs by 2030. But AI can get us back on track with some studies suggesting that AI can positively impact progress on 70% of the SDGs. AI can enhance diagnostic accuracy, improving healthcare outcomes (SDG 3), AI tools can track biodiversity and combat deforestation (SDG 15), AI-driven precision farming techniques can improve food security (SDG 2), personalized AI-powered learning experiences can make education more accessible (SDG 4), and AI can drive the innovation and productivity necessary to accelerate economic growth (SDG 8). Currently across the UN system, AI is being used in nearly 400 projects covering all the SDGs, twice as many efforts and initiatives as this time last year. In our forthcoming Impact Report, we will detail specifically how AI enables more effective and equitable progress toward these global objectives.

Technical Challenges

1. How can we support those countries with infrastructure limitations to ensure they benefit from the deployment of AI technologies?
2. How can we ensure high-quality, relevant, and representative datasets specific for training AI models.
3. How do we bridge the technological knowledge gap and the limited availability of skilled professionals with expertise in AI and related fields?

Ethical Challenges

1. How do we ensure that we are not exacerbating existing inequalities between those who have access to AI technologies and those who do not?
2. How can we ensure data privacy in regions with weak regulatory frameworks and varying levels of digital literacy?
3. How do we address biases in AI models that may not be representative of local populations and could reinforce social inequalities?

Economic Challenges

1. How can we ensure the economic benefits of AI are equitably distributed and do not widen the gap between the Global North and South?
2. How do we mobilize investment and funding in AI research and development from both public and private sector?
3. How do we facilitate local AI startups to access global markets and compete with established international players?

Regulatory and Governance Challenges

1. How do we develop comprehensive and context-specific regulations and standards for AI use?
2. How do we ensure coordinated policy responses at the national and regional levels to address AI-related challenges?
3. How do we guarantee that developing countries have a voice in international AI governance and standard-setting bodies?

Social and Environmental Challenges

1. How do we raise awareness and build trust in among those regions with less exposure to AI technologies?
2. How do we manage the environmental footprint of AI, particularly in regions already facing significant environmental challenges?
3. How can we effectively integrate AI into education systems to enhance learning outcomes while addressing access and quality disparities?

Security Challenges

1. How do we enhance cybersecurity measures to protect against threats and ensure AI systems are secure and resilient?
2. How do we prevent the misuse of AI technologies for surveillance, misinformation, or other harmful purposes?
3. How do we navigate the geopolitical implications of AI, including dependency on foreign technologies and potential for technological dominance?

Spotlight on the future: What awaits us.

In addition to hosting over 160 virtual events annually, the AI for Good platform will be convening its first regional summit in India in October 2024. Discussions within the UN ecosystem AI governance frameworks and harmonized standards will continue, particularly at the forthcoming Summit of the Future. At the United Nations Summit of the Future taking place in September 2024, the Global Digital Compact is expected to be agreed upon. This Compact, introduced in the UN Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda report, aims to create an inclusive framework to bridge digital, data, and innovation divides. A significant focus will be on the ethical regulation of AI, ensuring its development and use align with shared global values.

AI for Good Impact India

This inaugural regional event will benefit from India's strong focus on future innovations and digital inclusion, while boasting one of the largest start-up ecosystems in the world. The Summit will provide resources and training, support and visibility to those AI-powered solutions working toward achieving the SDGs. Indian entrepreneurs are encouraged to pitch their AI, machine learning, [or advanced algorithm-enabled solutions until September 13, 2024](#). The finalists will present in-person to an international panel of judges at the AI for Good Innovation Factory taking place during the Summit in India. Five hundred students from India will participate in the first national event of the UN-based educational robotics championship. This edition will focus on disaster response and is organized by the ITU in partnership with the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.



AI for Good Impact Report

In autumn, ITU and the Deloitte AI Institute™ will release the AI for Good Impact Report which will serve as both a vital resource for ITU member states and as an annual benchmark for industry and academia. This comprehensive report will provide an overview of how AI is being used to achieve the SDGs. It will include AI trends and indicators, drawing from Deloitte's latest research, focusing on trustworthy, responsible, and equitable AI. It will also delve into the role of governance frameworks and sustainable AI transformation, highlighting how AI can positively impact the SDGs while managing associated risks. With a keen eye on trends in AI, including trust and talent, gaps and governance, responsibility and ethics, this annual report will provide valuable insights and guidance for the evolving landscape of AI.

If you are keen to stay informed about AI for Good and our progress, we invite you to join the Neural Network, our AI-powered community networking and content platform. Here you will gain access to insightful talks, build connections with innovators and experts, and benefit from the latest updates on AI for Good initiatives. Help us continue shaping the future of AI for social good, accelerate progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals with AI tools and technologies, and most importantly channel the power of AI to create a better, more inclusive world for all.

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This report was written in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and Deloitte AG.

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The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), driving innovation in ICTs together with 193 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, and international and regional organizations. Established in 1865, it is the intergovernmental body responsible for coordinating the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoting international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, improving communication infrastructure in the developing world, and establishing the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems. From broadband networks to cutting-edge wireless technologies, aeronautical and maritime navigation, radio astronomy, oceanographic and satellite-based earth monitoring as well as converging fixed-mobile phone, Internet and broadcasting technologies, ITU is committed to connecting the world. Learn more: www.itu.int

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