The Global Majority AI Agenda:

The Path to Shared Prosperity Is Anchored in Equity and Sustainability

2024 GLOBAL ACTION FORUM REPORT

GLOBAL ACTION FORUM
CAS STRATEGIES & DIPLOMATIC COURIER

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The Global Majority AI Agenda

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

This report outlines an affirmative and representative vision for a Global Majority[1] Artificial Intelligence (AI) Agenda, emphasizing the need for equity[2] and sustainability[3] in AI development and governance.

In preparation for the French AI Action Summit, an assortment of Global Majority policymakers and subject matter experts convened at the Global Action Forum, a meeting designed to discuss the current state of AI innovation ecosystems, enablers, and investment infrastructure. This report synthesizes the key insights from the Forum into three high-level recommendations for France's Special Envoy for Artificial Intelligence overseeing the Action Summit. This includes (1) hosting a Global Majority track at the French AI Action Summit; (2) establishing an AI Investment Infrastructure (AIII) mechanism; and (3) introducing new governance mechanisms to complement the Action Summit's existing efforts.

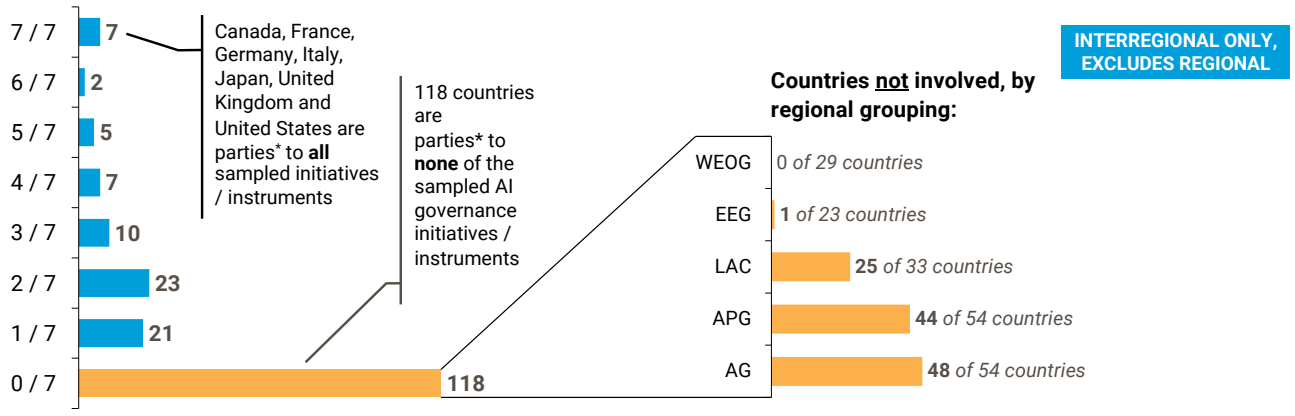
Introduction

The ideal of shared prosperity in the global human community is undermined by entrenched power imbalances and the absence of a large number of countries from critical decision-making processes and fora. For there to be genuine global collaboration, global leaders across industry and government must be intentional in redressing lack of inclusivity and inequities across the AI tech stack as well as governance mechanisms.

Humanity will be much better off if the existing and coming AI wave lifts all nations rather than the alternative of smaller, less wealthy nations being left to compete on an uneven playing field with rules that are written by and unjustifiably favor larger, wealthier, more powerful nations.

Representation in seven non-United Nations international AI governance initiatives

Sample: OECD AI Principles (2019), G20 AI principles (2019), Council of Europe AI Convention drafting group (2022–2024), GPAI Ministerial Declaration (2022), G7 Ministers' Statement (2023), Bletchley Declaration (2023) and Seoul Ministerial Declaration (2024).



Per endorsement of relevant intergovernmental issuances. Countries are not considered involved in a plurilateral initiative solely because of membership in the European Union or the African Union. Abbreviations: AG, African Group; APG, Asia and the Pacific Group; EEG, Eastern European Group; G20, Group of 20; G7, Group of Seven; GPAI, Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence; LAC, Latin America and the Caribbean; OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; WEOG, Western European and Others Group.

Source: *Governing AI for humanity: final report*. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/governing_ai_for_humanity_final_report_en.pdf

These statements are not virtue signaling; we have seen these lessons play out through the evolution of the internet and social media. Anything short of true global cooperation on AI—including AI governance as well as innovation—will leave us without a full view of the threat and opportunity landscape. Our futures are inextricably linked as the impact of these technologies are borderless; the risks and opportunities they present are shaped by the societies with which they interact. Without an approach that prioritizes inclusion, tech will always be playing catch-up, bolting on mitigations, failing to break poverty traps, and realigning incentives to meet a widening list of stakeholders.

This challenge is magnified by a perception that the global AI supply chain is the latest manifestation of a colonial past, a manifestation that sustains the Global Minority seeking to get rich off the data and creativity of Global Majority[4] countries, driving differing and lower levels of trust and engagement with developing countries. Additionally, there is perpetuation of an overly simplistic and harmful "consumer vs. producer" binary narrative. This report recognizes that AI innovation happens along a spectrum and all roles along that spectrum are valuable and necessary. However, it is important to emphasize that, cementing a "skew" between who feeds in on the upstream side versus who benefits from application on the downstream side isn't the right outcome.

Fundamentally, the Global Majority underpins the global AI economy. Human labor for data annotation and content moderation—critical for training AI systems—relies significantly on workers from East Africa, Latin America, and South and Southeast Asia. Western corporations at the forefront of AI innovation heavily depend on Global Majority countries for natural resources like tantalum, cobalt, and tungsten, which form the graphics processing units (GPUs) powering large-scale AI development. Centering the needs, risks, and opportunities unique to Global Majority countries is essential especially when framed against the changing global demographics with an increase in youth population concentrations.[5]

This strategic positioning of the Global Majority contrasts with the stark reality that 118 UN member states have yet to participate in global AI governance *(see graphic above)*. That is the dichotomy that catalyzed an effort to identify opportunities to open the dialogue and invite more countries into the work in a meaningful way. The collective work we do now will directly impact the global orientation on how AI and other emerging technologies impact us all.

This begs the question: How can smaller and/or less resourced countries bridge the "AI divide" and exercise agency in a rapidly evolving digital landscape?

The upcoming French AI Summit presents an unparalleled opportunity to explore the answers to this question. The French President's Special Envoy, overseeing the planning of this Summit, has promised to both broaden the conversation figuratively in substance and literally in the stakeholders invited. Most importantly, the Summit promises "concrete action."

SHIFTING DEMOGRAPHICS

The Global Majority* stands at a critical juncture.

In Africa, the sheer scale of the youth demographic is staggering. With a median age of just 19.7 years, Africa is home to the world's youngest population. In 2024, an estimated 60 percent of the continent's 1.4 billion people are under the age of 25.

Similarly, in Latin America and the Caribbean, youth unemployment hovers around 16 percent, highlighting an immense reservoir of untapped talent. These demographics indicate the potential for an expanded labor pool for AI training/development, new opportunities for AI adoption supporting local contexts, and potential for new consumer markets.

*Note: *The term "global majority" is becoming increasingly popular because it is used to describe the fact that all of these ethnic groups make up 85 percent of the world's population. Some say that the language we use plays an important part in tackling racial inequalities, and that the more positive and empowering term "global majority" can help disrupt white supremacy culture and ideology. This term has replaced "Global South" in many discussions.*

The Global Action Forum: Setting a Global Majority Agenda for AI Innovation

Hosted on October 21, 2024, the Global Action Forum was scoped to focus on the intersection of policy and practice by interrogating how to effectively support the creation of self-sustaining AI innovation ecosystems across the world while also driving toward equitable and inclusive multi-stakeholder global AI governance.

The Forum featured contributors from Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria, South Africa, Chile, Jamaica, Brazil, Barbados, Peru, India, and Singapore, along with participation from a range of civil society and industry leaders representing the Brookings Institution, Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Atlantic Council, Mozilla Foundation, Google, and Kyndryl, among many others. This convening was uniquely intergenerational thanks to the participation of a Girl Security Student Fellow. Additionally, officials from the office of the French President's Special Envoy for AI, French government, United Kingdom government, United States Department of State, United States Agency for International Development, National Endowment for Democracy, and United Nations Development Programme were in attendance. Given close partnership with the team supporting the French President's Special Envoy for AI, the Global Action Forum was designated as an official "On the Road to the French AI Action Summit" event.[6]

The Global Action Forum discussions were focused on three key concepts, intentionally defined at the outset:

1. **AI Innovation Ecosystem:** This describes a dynamic, interconnected network of various entities, including companies, academic institutions, government bodies, and non-profit organizations. Within this ecosystem, participants collaborate and compete to develop cutting-edge products and services, while collectively advancing their capabilities around a shared set of AI-enabled technologies, knowledge, and skills.

2. **AI Ecosystem Enablers:** These are the inputs or underlying infrastructure necessary to sustain and support AI development, adoption, and governance within a particular domestic or regional context. This can include physical infrastructure like internet connectivity and compute, or other types of enablers like software licenses, data availability, or a specialized workforce. A full list, refined by participants of the Global Action Forum, can be found in Appendix A.

3. **AI Investment Infrastructure:** This refers to a global mechanism designed to foster AI innovation ecosystems within countries worldwide by creating a comprehensive shared global resource that integrates financial investments, robust infrastructure, and targeted training, all of which are crucial to facilitate access to AI enablers in order to catalyze AI innovation and cultivate thriving markets. This resource should be managed by an independent governance structure. The United Nations high-level AI Advisory Board recommended the "creation of a global fund for AI to put a floor under the AI divide…to catalyze local empowerment for the SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals]." This new framing recognizes the same need; however, the Global Action Forum and this report make clear that financial support is not a sufficient solution. The support is inclusive of advancing the SDGs but not exclusively proposed to advance the SDGs.

> *"'AI for the Global Majority' we're missing the point. For AI to deliver benefit, it must be AI for, from, and by the Global Majority. The Global Majority is a majority, but not a monolith: AI ecosystems will look different for every country and region."*
>
> **—AUBRA ANTHONY, SENIOR FELLOW, TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS PROGRAM, CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE (US)**

Harnessing the Collective Expertise

To meaningfully push the conversation forward, the Global Action Forum's first convening strategically chose two cross-cutting governance topics for further discussion, outlined below. These topics were informed through formal and informal dialogue with Global Majority attendees prior to the Forum, high-level discussions with the French President's Special Envoy for AI's team, and a critical evaluation of current global AI governance discourse in existing high-level international forums including the G20, OECD-GPAI, and the United Nations, among others.

The Global Action Forum was intentional about placing the policy priorities of Global Majority attendees at the center of the conversation. To this end, the Forum's planning team surveyed attendees prior to the convening using a mixed-methods approach, combining rank-choice questions and short-answer qualitative prompts to assess three broad questions. These included:

- **Key Policy Priorities:** The survey most directly aimed to uncover Global Majority countries' key policy priorities at the state-level. Survey respondents emphasized they were broadly concerned about ensuring their voices contributed to more inclusive global AI governance decision-making and exploring mechanisms to bolster capacity-building (talent development and technical upgrades) domestically for AI innovation. Other priorities included incentivizing AI for good in the Global Majority, mitigating ways AI development and deployment may impact human rights, and improving the regulatory landscape.

- **Assessing National Commitment to AI Governance:** The survey sought to assess whether conversations surrounding AI governance were prioritized within the participants' home country. On a five-point Likert scale,[7] the survey results predominantly (nearly 60 percent) signaled a tone of neutrality, indicating that the work was only somewhat being prioritized nationally. As evidenced in the Introduction, the stakes for inclusive and equitable governance are too high for indifference or limited prioritization, reemphasizing the need for initiatives like the Global Action Forum to stand-up coordination mechanisms to facilitate ongoing, active engagement with international counterparts.

- **Expanding National Contributions to Global AI Governance:** Finally, the survey provided Majority countries with the opportunity to spotlight specific existing policy initiatives and programs originating within their country that attendees believed would both successfully advance a global AI governance priority and be a replicable and scalable concept for other Global Majority Countries. Numerous case examples were shared and circulated, including India's Digital Public Infrastructure[8] and the Nigeria Artificial Intelligence Research Scheme.[9]

From these conversations, two topics resurfaced repeatedly and were selected as thematic issues for further discussion during two breakout sessions:

- **AI Ecosystem Funding Initiatives:** Although many nations would like to mobilize their resources to play an active role in AI development and utilization, only a few nations, such as the United States, United Kingdom, China, and countries across the EU, have the resources and capacity to do so. Currently, there's an emerging yet fragmented landscape of public[10] and private[11] support for countries seeking to build an AI Innovation Ecosystem. This session synthesized discussions around how Global Majority countries are navigating AI ecosystem funding initiatives and existing in-kind or technical support provisions characterized to build stronger AI ecosystems. This discussion took place against a background of increasing desire from the Global Minority and the international governance community to establish shared infrastructure or pooled funding to bolster national and regional AI Innovation ecosystems globally.

- **Building Sustainable AI Ecosystems:** To effectively support the development of AI Innovation Ecosystems worldwide, the architecture of AI investment infrastructure must consider the realities of the communities it seeks to serve, particularly the unique challenges faced by developing countries. The session discussed how AI investment can support industrial and post-industrial development in a sustainable and environmentally conscious manner, advancing UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contributing toward creating sustainable business models.

The two breakouts, coupled with a discussion on AI enablers, surfaced myriad insights, actionable proposals, and steps for future research.

The following chapter summarizes the key insights from the Forum and and provide recommendations for the French President's Special Envoy for AI in the buildup to the French AI Action Summit.

Key Insights from the Forum

The Global Action Forum surfaced important insights that should inform any country's approach to global AI governance and innovation, whether a Global Majority or Global Minority country.

AI Enablers Should Be Context-Driven

It is critical to ensure the Global Majority is not treated as a monolith, avoiding uniform prioritization of AI enablers. Instead, Global Majority countries should invest in AI enablers that serve as catalyzers of rapid AI growth for their country's national contexts and reality. Additionally, understanding thriving local or regional industries and the necessary changes in labor laws is an important step necessary for prioritizing AI enablers to unlock innovative potential. For example, Caribbean countries have uniquely banded together to produce regional approaches to AI governance through initiatives such as the The Caribbean AI Initiative and the resulting United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap.[12]

Digital Partnerships Can Help Avoid Exploitative Practices and Reimagine Economies

Stakeholders also highlighted the need to create **participatory, reciprocal digital partnerships and collaborations** that are not extractive or exploitative. For example, in the context of data, when Global Minority governments and tech companies propose data-sharing and open data collaborations with the Global Majority, concerns often arise regarding equity, reciprocity, and the risk of extractive practices. Attendees of the Forum repeatedly emphasized data governance, in particular, the desire to maintain control over their own data in the absence of long-term benefits for their countries.

The **data landscape** sparked debate, with participants reflecting on the question of whether data should be treated as a freely accessible resource[13] or a valuable commodity. This underscored the tension between open data access and the need for Global Majority countries to retain ownership and benefit from their data. Currently, the gains that the Global Minority companies make from incorporating Global Majority datasets far outweigh the compensation received by Global Majority countries. Participants stressed the importance of robust data governance frameworks that protect individual privacy and ensure equitable benefit-sharing. They also highlighted the opportunity for smaller countries to contribute to global datasets, emphasizing the need for inclusive data collection and sharing mechanisms.

Participants underscored the need for a **reimagined education system** that fosters interdisciplinary AI expertise and supports continuous upskilling and reskilling. Concerns about an exodus of talent signal a need to make investments in retention. There was a clear call to move beyond siloed approaches and equip individuals with the skills needed to navigate the complexities of AI. Ideas shared included enforcing fair labor compensation for talented people working for global corporations in low and middle-income countries and equitable trade agreements that enable global majority countries to launch their knowledge-based industries.

"Cross-border data flows are central to international commerce and innovation, but digital trade has not yet adapted to accommodate trade agreements that allow Global Majority countries to "barter" their data and natural resources like tantalum, cobalt, and tungsten for AI infrastructure. This shift in policy will call for smaller and less resourced nations to more equitably engage from an economic and policy perspective. There are tough questions on the value of data and how this model can work but we need to get creative about collaboration and creating more equitable models for engagement and exchange."

—CAMILLE STEWART GLOSTER, CEO, CAS STRATEGIES, LLC (US)

Physical Infrastructure Presents Geopolitical as well as ROI Challenges

On **infrastructure**, discussions centered around the physical infrastructure required for AI development, particularly the tension between Western and Chinese approaches. More specifically, attendees highlighted the geopolitical trade-offs faced by countries with limited connectivity receiving or seeking support from either regime. There was a strong desire for solutions that enable countries to "leapfrog" technological barriers without having to choose sides.

Additionally, participants raised the issue of how smaller, less-resourced states struggle to justify high upfront infrastructure investments critical for a prosperous AI innovation ecosystem. These investments rapidly depreciate in value due to the fast pace of technological advancement, yielding a low ROI despite the steep costs. This compounds the capacity challenges Global Majority countries face for building the necessary computational hardware, especially data centers. Participants agreed that creative solutions were needed to develop shared infrastructural resources when possible, such as with cloud-based agreements, regionally hosted data centers that serve multiple countries locally (for example, the Caribbean), and data hubs for optimizations in geographic areas (for instance, a small building placing a small load on the power grid of a small nation) to ensure real-time capability and data stewardship.

Align Novel AI Efforts to Ensure Responsible AI Development

Regarding **domestic policy and governance**, participants stressed the importance of national AI strategies that align with a country's values and priorities, with human rights as a core component along the entire AI development-deployment cycle. These strategies should outline goals and necessary investments to foster AI innovation while addressing potential risks and harms. Participants emphasized aligning novel AI strategic efforts with independent oversight bodies to ensure ethical and responsible AI development. Multi-stakeholder consultations involving technical communities and civil society organizations can play a vital role in ensuring that AI systems are developed and used to protect human rights and prevent their use for repression under authoritarian regimes. The processes and institutional mechanisms must be suitable for each country's context so as to prevent misuse.

Finally, on **global governance and collaboration**, there was a clear consensus on the need for equitable representation, multi-stakeholder engagement, and a stronger coordination of existing efforts. For example, connecting ongoing conversations across the Global Minority (G7, Safety Summits) with those arising from the African Union's efforts[14] as well as UN,[15] UNESCO,[16] and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)[17] work. Participants emphasized the importance of harmonizing or coordinating regulations and standards, recognizing the diverse needs and perspectives of different countries. They also highlighted the potential of South-South[18] collaboration to be a key driver in realizing economic gains and the importance of promoting and preserving democratic values in the context of AI.

Additionally, countries recognized the need to prioritize UN Sustainable Development Goals and environmental sustainability as a component of AI governance conversations. Importantly, participants cautioned against repeating the mistakes made in advancing climate goals, such as investing in small initiatives that do not scale or make meaningful impact.[19] For example, if data centers are offshore and increase the carbon output of the host country, governments need to establish paradigms that make sure that the host country and commissioning country work together to mitigate or offset that carbon footprint. This requires new carbon footprint models that have data regarding data center locations to be used for decision-making.

Recommendations for the French President's Special Envoy for AI

To drive meaningful progress at the upcoming AI Summit, we propose three strategic recommendations focused on inclusivity, innovation, and governance. Together, these initiatives aim to foster equitable participation, catalyze development, and enhance international oversight in the AI domain.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Host a Global Majority dedicated track at the French AI Action Summit

In order to elevate the perspectives of Global Majority countries, the AI Action Summit must organize a cross-cutting track at the French AI Action Summit dedicated to highlighting the distinct AI-related needs of Global Majority countries across all five themes of the summit. This track should include a panel discussion with diverse representatives from regions such as Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean to share their perspectives to build from the findings of the Global Action Forum. Additionally, the track should include dedicated sessions focused on "South-South" learning and networking across all five themes. CAS Strategies and participants from this Forum are eager to help identify and weave in greater opportunities for Global Majority voices to be heard throughout the summit's agenda.

"Convening with international stakeholders at the Global Action Forum showed me just how far we are from truly inclusive global AI governance but gave me hope that these issues will be understood by governments and institutions at the frontier of AI development. While much progress is needed to increase equitable participation in AI research, development, and governance, Global Majority countries are demonstrating that they will play a significant role in advancing efforts within these domains."

—CHINASA OKOLO, SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION, BROOKINGS INSTITUTION (Nigeria & US)

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Establish an AI Investment Infrastructure (AIII) mechanism that accelerates the development of AI Innovation Ecosystems across the Global South

Financial resources alone will be insufficient to build effective AIII. Investment infrastructure instead must foster self-sufficient markets within countries and encourage safeguards that allow for more equitable benefits from AI. The goal must be to empower a diverse committee of local stakeholders to invest and create innovative products and services while improving shared AI technologies, knowledge, and skills. This recommendation outlines a comprehensive framework for an AI Investment Infrastructure (AIII), including a (1) broad yet non-exhaustive set of focus areas or "foundations," (2) data considerations and tools, (3) a series of targeted actions to enhance its impact and scalability, and (4) an overarching roadmap for financing the initiative.

These measures provide a unique opportunity to prioritize projects that promote democratic values, safety-by-design principles,[20] shared resources, and locally owned and operated startups. Additionally, this is an opportunity to support existing collective efforts integrating environmental protections to enable local officials to prioritize projects that align with sustainable development goals. This intentional and multifaceted approach will ensure that AIII empowers countries to develop their own sustainable AI ecosystems that mitigate risk and raise our collective security and economic opportunity.

The following recommendations should be considered as the French build out their plans for an AI Investment Infrastructure as part of the Public Interest AI workstream:

1. INCLUDE AI INVESTMENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOUNDATIONS

To accelerate the development of AI infrastructure that promotes equity and better unlocks opportunity for all nations, AIII should include seven "foundations" or focus

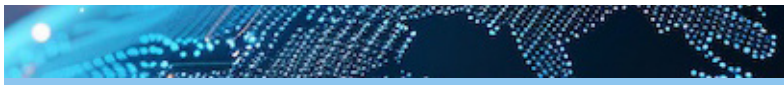
areas to channel resources and concentrate resources. These seven foundations reflect the five technical foundational AI enablers collectively agreed upon by the attendees of the Global Action Forum as inputs and underlying people and policy infrastructure necessary to sustain and support AI development, adoption, and governance *(see Appendix A for the full list of AI enablers).*

a. **Connectivity:** internet connectivity and improved latency; closing connectivity gaps in rural pockets where there are specific use cases for AI solutions
b. **Compute:** data centers that support AI computational activities; on-site data centers to increase agency, flexibility, and geopolitical independence for local stakeholders
c. **Software Licenses:** model use permits; software to manage GPU usage
d. **Manufacturing:** capacity to produce hardware inputs, such as chips, to support AI growth and sovereignty
e. **Energy:** sustainable resources to power AI development (data centers); renewable energy access
f. **Data Creation, Curation, and Governance**: a framework for data creation, curation, and governance that centers on public agency and ownership of data as well as mutually beneficial data-sharing.
g. **Talent Development:** a framework for training (including upskilling and reskilling), recruitment, retention, and the education infrastructure to support knowledge evolution.

2. FACILITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL OPEN DATA SHARING ARRANGEMENTS

An effective model for AI Investment Infrastructure must recognize the need for countries to benefit from data-sharing that supports models owned and operated by other countries. Lest open data trigger concerns of extraction, prioritization should be given to methods that preserve agency of data subjects and data originators (e.g., indigenous communities sharing indigenous knowledge with cultural or community significance without compromising their agency over that data and their ability to protect it).

a. **Data-Sharing Frameworks and Privacy Enhancing Techniques:** Incorporate mechanisms, such as data licensing regimes or data trusts, that help ensure Global Majority countries receive equitable benefits and protections when sharing their data to support AI development. Mechanisms to consider:
    i. **Data Licensing Regimes:** Implement clear and enforceable data licensing agreements that outline acceptable terms of use, ownership, and benefit-sharing.
    ii. **Data Trusts:** Establish independent entities to manage and govern data on behalf of Global Majority communities, ensuring fair representation and equitable distribution of benefits.
    iii. **Smart Contracts:** Utilize technically supported (e.g., blockchain-based) smart contracts to automate and enforce data-sharing agreements, ensuring transparency and accountability.
    iv. **Differential Privacy:** Implement techniques that allow data to be shared and used for AI training while preserving individual privacy.
    v. **Federated Learning:**[21] Leverage a machine learning technique that allows multiple entities to train a model together while keeping the data decentralized. This is different from traditional machine



"Globally, we must decide if we are treating data like air or oil."

—CORDEL GREEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JAMAICAN BROADCASTING COMMISSION, CARIBBEAN AI INITIATIVE (Jamaica)

learning, which stores data in a central location. Federated learning keeps raw training data on each user's device, enhancing user's privacy. Federated learning processes data at its source, allowing users to gain insights from combined information in decentralized data sets. Federated learning allows for updating parameters in a distributed manner.

vi. **Secure Multi-Party Computation (SMPC):**[22] Foster SMPC settings, enabling groups to compute functions collaboratively while preserving the confidentiality of their private inputs, thereby promoting data-sharing practices that uphold privacy standards.

b. **Improved Access to Data:** Explore ways to further democratize data sets (e.g., subscriptions) to level the playing field and avoid power concentration dynamics.

i. **Federated Learning:** Develop techniques that allow AI models to be trained on decentralized data, without the need to centralize or share raw data.

ii. **Data Commons:** Create shared data repositories where individuals and organizations can contribute and access data under fair and transparent terms.

iii. **Flexible, Open-data Licensing:** Create flexible licensing agreements such that data shared within open-data collaboratives create equitable arrangements for data ownership, usage rights and restrictions, and liability, among others.

c. **Verifiable Data Collection:** Establish a framework for data collection that centers the use of the data and allows stakeholders to test against that data to determine accuracy and efficacy without relying on a nuanced understanding of the model. Common Voice by Mozilla has employed many of the techniques below to crowdsource an open-source dataset of voices to support building voice applications.[23] A framework for data collection centered on data use and enabling stakeholder testing could include:

i. **Clear Use-Case Definition:** Before collection, explicitly define the intended AI application(s) and required data types.

ii. **Metadata Richness:** Capture extensive metadata (source, collection method, demographics, potential biases) alongside data. Important to note, the capture and processing of metadata also require strict data protection measures and human rights safeguards.

iii. **Ground Truth and Benchmarks:** For supervised learning, include robust, diverse ground truth data for model training and evaluation. Establish clear performance benchmarks tied to the use-case.

iv. **Accessibility and Testing:** Provide stakeholders (not just model developers) access to datasets and tools for independent testing and validation against benchmarks.

v. **Explainability Layer:** While not requiring full model understanding, offer insights into key factors influencing model decisions (feature importance, data influence).

vi. **Feedback Loop:** Enable stakeholders to provide feedback on model performance and potential biases (leverage bias modeling), incorporating this into iterative data collection and model improvement.

vii. **Governance:** Open-access datasets require strict data protection measures and human rights safeguards.

This framework prioritizes transparency, enabling stakeholders to assess AI systems based on their intended use and measurable outcomes, even without deep technical expertise.

d. Conduct a Pilot Project Focused on Data for Locally Defined Public Interest: While conversations during the Global Action Forum pointed to the benefits of all seven foundational enablers, the dialogue pointed to the need to create a regional pilot that demonstrates the localized benefits of AI Investment Infrastructure. For the AIII, this report suggests focusing on strengthening local data resources, including the agency of local actors to define and assess data quality, diversity, and accessibility. Focusing on these critical data bottlenecks as a pilot project ensures a strong foundation for AI development, directly impacting countries' ability to arrive at greater model performance, scalability, and inclusivity.

3. TAKE TARGETED ACTION TO IMPROVE REACH AND SCALABILITY OF AIII

a. Elevate and center the unique risks, harms, and opportunities for Global Majority countries:

i. **Secure Representation Commitments:** Encourage Global Minority countries attending the summit to pledge their support for broader inclusion of Global Majority countries in international AI governance forums. Promote increased bilateral cooperation and assistance to empower Global Majority nations in AI.

ii. **Ensure Accessibility:** Provide necessary support, including travel assistance and visa facilitation, to enable the participation of senior leaders and ensure that more Global Majority representatives can fully engage in the AI Action Summit and other fora for developing and governing the contours of AIII. This will require taking quick action, given the extended lead times often required for visa support. Considering opportunities for hybrid or virtual participation would further support accessibility.

iii. **Stimulate Local Research and Development (R&D)**: Local R&D allows for the development of solutions that are tailored to the unique challenges of the locale, creates new data sets, can expand the local talent pool, and increases innovative potential leading to more relevant and impactful applications. Ensure AI Investment Infrastructure advocates for increased investment in research and development within Global Majority countries, harnessing local talent and expertise. To effectively stimulate R&D, encourage the development of mutually productive partnerships between major tech companies and academic institutions (such as universities or high schools) in these regions with Global Majority countries to facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building. Examples of possible models for collaboration include:

- **Joint Research Projects:** Fund and facilitate collaborative research projects that address local challenges and leverage the expertise of both universities and tech companies.
- **Technology Transfer and Commercialization:** Support the transfer of technology and research findings from universities to tech companies for commercialization and local impact.

- **Mentorship and Training Programs:** Establish mentorship programs where experienced professionals from tech companies can provide guidance and training to students and faculty in Global Majority universities. This is an excellent opportunity for members of the diaspora to support countries where they have ties.
- **Innovation Hubs and Incubators:** Create spaces where academia, civil society, and tech companies can collaborate on innovative projects, access resources, and receive support for startups.
- **Curriculum Development:** Collaborate on the development of AI and technology-focused curricula that align with industry needs and prepare students for future careers.
- **Open-Source Initiatives:** Encourage tech companies to contribute to and support open-source projects that benefit Global Majority countries.
- **Knowledge Exchange Programs:** Establish partnerships between companies that are mutually beneficial for Global Majority and Global Minority companies, such as the partnership between conversational AI firm Clinc Inc., based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and Guyanese firm V75 that helped build over 90 percent of Clinc's deliveries to clients such as the Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation (OCBC), U.S. Bank, and Barclays.[24]
- **Transition Programs:** Bring together stakeholders to support transitioning existing capabilities to new markets. For example, the "AI for EW4ALL sub-group" is a partnership between the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ITU-WMO-UNEP [UN Environment Programme] Focus Group on AI for Natural Disaster Management, Google, Microsoft, GSM Association, and Group on Earth Observations. It was established to leverage AI to enhance capacities and effectiveness of the Early Warning for All initiative by working with partners and key stakeholders to develop strategies to scale EW4ALL with AI applications.[25]

These initiatives could help to build capacity, foster innovation, and create a more vibrant AI ecosystem in Global Majority countries and in general.

b. Promote Equitable Benefits-sharing Norms Led by the Global Majority: The Action Forum should empower the Global Majority to create and circulate norms around benefits-sharing arrangements that acknowledge the sociotechnical realities of Global Majority countries. For example, Global Minority countries should factor in training time when providing compute credits, maximizing the impact of technical assistance and creating new models for procuring infrastructure resources that better align to Global Majority country resources such as digital trade agreements that exchange data for other resources.

c. **Develop Regional Sandboxes.** To ensure the development of both a scalable and adaptable framework that generates increased international investment confidence, creating a regional pilot/sandbox that demonstrates the localized benefits of AI Investment Infrastructure will be critical. A taskforce or representative appointed to manage the program should begin by identifying critical factors that would identify countries willing and strategically positioned to conduct a pilot program and support local leaders in driving the development; specific factors may include demonstrated political will to participate, sustainable funding mechanisms, and Information and communications technology infrastructure maturity, among others. A particular approach is regulatory sandboxes, which can bridge AI experimentation and regulatory alignment, creating a controlled environment that fosters responsible innovation while ensuring compliance with fundamental rights and ethical standards. Given conversations during the Forum, the regional context of the Caribbean checks many of these boxes and provides fertile ground for exploring a regional model for developing an AI innovation ecosystem. Essential for success will be identifying or exploring mutually beneficial open data sharing arrangements to support investment and innovation, and one such sandbox or pilot project may be the recommended data pilot mentioned above (recommendation 2.d). Countries such as Jamaica and Barbados can be the partners and champions for building a pilot because of the investments being made and the interest in innovation. This has the potential to be a good template for Small Island Developing States to have a Caribbean Sandbox to build on the Caribbean AI Road Map.

4. INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY INTO AI GOVERNANCE EFFORTS

Environmental considerations in global AI governance must reflect the shared but differentiated responsibility of nations, ensuring that the Global South has both ownership and influence over sustainable practices. Although AI's energy and resource demands often impact these regions disproportionately, solutions cannot rest with individual nations themselves, especially within the Global Majority.

a. **Explore economic mechanisms to incentivize environmental impact assessments for data center expansion:** Promote the incorporation of transparency and accountability into plans spearheaded by Global Minority companies or governments that support the AI Investment Infrastructure project and support the inclusion of environmental impact assessments into all relevant initiatives and deliverables associated with the summit. Consider requiring a commitment to provide environmental impact assessments and/or externalizing data about environmental impact as part of any commitments announced at the French AI Action Summit.

   i. **Audit existing facilities for AI expansion potential:** Explore a mapping exercise or audit that could be used to identify existing facilities that could be used and/or repurposed to advance expansion efforts through the AI Investment Infrastructure (energy or computing capacity such as nuclear reactors or data centers, respectively) and be made available to support other in-kind and financial donations. UNESCO's recommendations come with a readiness assessment that could help.[26]

   ii. **Incentivize solutions that rely on renewables and collaborations with Global Majority countries.** The high capacity for renewables in the Global Majority, particularly solar power, presents

KEY INSIGHT

Consider requiring a commitment to provide environmental impact assessments and/or externalizing data about environmental impact as part of any commitments announced at the French AI Action Summit.

"There is a need to establish global economic and carbon footprint models that allow decision-makers to adequately conduct data center expansion around the globe. These models are critical to the next 20 years of not just climate modeling, but also disaster risk reduction around the globe."

—NEWTON CAMPBELL, JR., AI & ENVIRONMENT EXPERT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, EVERYTHING LIVES LLC (US)

a significant opportunity to support the development of a vibrant and sustainable AI innovation ecosystem.

b. Invest in the creation and sustenance of talent pipelines throughout the Global Majority. The creation of shared AI Investment Infrastructure to support countries seeking to build or expand their AI innovation ecosystem must make significant investments in talent as part of the model. Talent is an essential AI enabler. Every country must invest in this enabler to achieve their goals, and the work starts at the beginning of the education journey. The following features should be considered as part of the AIII being built.

   i. **Support Efforts for Talent Retention:** Explore commitments from tech companies to support in-country talent retention (i.e., commitment not to poach talent for a period after providing training in support of country objectives).

   ii. **Prioritize Training Programs:** See training recommendations (recommendation 2.a.iii and recommendation 5.c.).

   iii. **Incentivize academic exchanges as part of the AI Investment Infrastructure you champion during the Summit:** Proposals could include half time in host countries and half time in their home country.

   iv. **Champion education access and workforce development to explore the next frontier of talent:** Creating education and workforce opportunities is particularly important in rural and remote areas outside of city centers.

5. FINANCING MUST RELY EQUALLY ON GOVERNMENTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Balancing funding sources promotes sustained financing and may support a "checks and balances" mechanism. Financing structure must include not only money but also in-kind support, training, information exchanges, etc., to reach the desired end state. It will require reimagining and coordinating some of the existing ad hoc support efforts while encouraging more sustainable models and mechanisms to provide AIII resources to countries. AIII must account for all the needs of the country being supported to provide a holistic package of services, resources, and funding to avoid nations missing critical AI enablers.

a. Facilitate mutually beneficial AI ecosystem funding initiatives and in-kind/technical support for the Global Majority that foster self-sufficiency. This means restructuring development aid so that instead of funding rigid projects, initiatives should focus on broader principles and desired outcomes to allow for adaptable outputs that can be easily integrated into existing national efforts.

b. Craft and publish a "theory of change" strategy for AI development assistance: Similar to successful models in digital finance, the Global Action Forum should work with countries to inform the evolution of development aid in a way that supports progress toward self-sufficiency. A dedicated session to explore the challenges and opportunities could inform strategy development. The strategy should include specific desired outcomes, not just outputs, and have built-in metrics to measure progress.

c. Training must be a priority for any funding or infrastructure model. This is a great opportunity to be expansive in how we think about vulnerability and digital literacy. Digital media/information literacy is needed for transformational AI work. This will help with governance and capacity-building; it's bottom-up and top-down.

Often compute and other in-kind support are provided without adequate considerations for the training needs. For example, countries expressed disappointment when compute credits were exhausted on training, leaving them unable to use AI in support of the mission. Consider requiring that training resources be a mandatory part of all support grants. The funding model should contemplate investing in and scaling the existing first-class capabilities in Global Majority countries. For example, the Schmidt Futures Rise program as part of their Next Einstein Forum invests in top local talent by providing professional development and resources to enable them to be of service in their communities.[27] It's important to note that programs like these should not replace programs that seek to make the system more equitable.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Champion new global governance mechanisms as part of Track 5, Global AI Governance of the French AI Summit

The French AI Action Summit is an important venue to reimagine and refine global governance mechanisms because of the broad attendance from civil society and industry as well as the more inclusive attendance from states. The following recommendations are important to advancing more inclusive global AI governance.

1. MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH.

Work must expand beyond state-centric frameworks to truly understand impact and drive toward the desired outcomes. Establishment of a multistakeholder body inclusive of government, civil society, industry, experts, and individuals for broader AI governance conversations.

KEY INSIGHT

Consider requiring that training resources be a mandatory part of all support grants.

"Multistakeholder governance ensures AI policy legitimacy by balancing diverse perspectives, fostering inclusivity, and aligning innovation with fundamental rights."

—THIAGO MORAES, SPECIALIST ON DATA PROTECTION AND AI GOVERNANCE, NATIONAL DATA PROTECTION AUTHORITY (Brazil)

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) employs a similar multistakeholder model is a collaborative approach to internet governance. ICANN brings together governments, private sector entities, technical experts, civil society, and individual users to make decisions about the Domain Name System (DNS) and other critical internet infrastructure. Unlike state-centric models, ICANN's framework is designed to ensure no single entity—state or otherwise—has undue control. It emphasizes transparency, consensus-driven processes, and inclusivity, reflecting the global and decentralized nature of the internet. While the model is not perfect because balancing power dynamics within ICANN remains a challenge, particularly ensuring equitable representation for smaller or marginalized groups. There are a lot of lessons to be learned from it's operating model. Championing the creation of such a body that is tailored to this specific challenge can create a more equitable place to center discussions that includes all stakeholders and supports the transparency and information sharing across other bilateral and multilateral efforts that is currently missing.

2. REIMAGINE AI [_____] INSTITUTES.

With the understanding that AI Safety Institutes are in theory well-positioned to address the security threat posed by foundational models,[28] explore an AI Safety Institute like body that addresses gaps and harms unique to Global Majority countries of all sizes and that can interface with AI Safety Institutes. How can this network expand and evolve to meet the needs of Global Majority countries? In light of the recent efforts to align and further define the role of AI Safety Institutes, the French AI Summit is a good opportunity to build upon the work existing AI Safety Institutes have begun.

APPENDIX A: AI Ecosystem Enablers

Strengthening AI Ecosystems for the Global Majority: A brief overview of common AI ecosystem enablers

Note: This document was provided to Forum participants to inform the discussion and was refined based on the discussion.

WHAT ARE AI ECOSYSTEM ENABLERS?

AI ecosystem enablers can be broadly defined as inputs or underlying infrastructure necessary to sustain and support AI development, adoption, and governance. This can include physical infrastructure, like internet connectivity and compute, or other types of enablers, such as software licenses, data availability, or a specialized workforce. Some AI enablers are co-dependent. For example, the availability of datasets needed to train AI models may depend on favorable data privacy regulations; or the capacity to fine-tune locally appropriate AI models may depend on the availability of sufficient compute infrastructure.

ENABLERS IDENTIFIED BY IMPACTED STAKEHOLDERS AS"'NECESSARY":

A. Foundational Enablers

- **Connectivity:** internet connectivity and improved latency; closing connectivity gaps in rural pockets where there are specific use cases for AI solutions
- **Compute:** data centers that support AI computational activities; on-site data centers to increase agency, flexibility, and geopolitical independence for local stakeholders
- **Software licenses:** model use permits; software to manage GPU usage
- **Manufacturing:** capacity to produce hardware inputs, such as chips, to support AI growth and sovereignty
- **Energy:** sustainable resources to power AI development (data centers); renewable energy access

B. Data and Models

- **Usable training datasets:** cleaned and annotated digitally readable datasets that can be easily inputted into AI models or used to fine-tune models
- **Representative datasets:** datasets that represent contextual realities of the communities for whom AI solutions are being built; local language datasets
- **Model access and ownership:** Access to, or ownership of, open- or closed-source AI software, models, and/or necessary model information (e.g., model weights) to allow AI to be trained or tuned to local contexts, for example locally optimized or multilingual language models

C. Talent and Capacity

- **Specialized skill sets:** expertise to support entire AI value chain including data cleaning and labeling, training, and model development, tuning, and deployment; ancillary skills development including AI law, regulatory compliance, journalism and reporting, etc.

- **Institutional or curricular focus to enable AI skills:** embedding tech/cyber skills development at the curricular level so students can adapt to the changing technological landscape (for example, early age coding skills, AI ethics courses, critical thinking); enable and support a robust training ecosystem that allows for upskilling and right-skilling
- **Research and development capacity:** institutions in place to cultivate and support local AI researchers in both the public and private sectors
- **Retention programs:** efforts to address "brain drain" as AI researchers seek more stable or certain employment in foreign markets
- **Training existing labor market:** building upon existing industry insight by training the current workforce to use AI and innovate leveraging AI. Promotes stability of the workforce

D. Market Support

- **Financial investments in startups and innovators:** unlocking capital to support locally led AI innovation; incubation
- **Use case development:** developing AI intervention use cases that serve local needs; developing business blueprints that support lateral innovations (for example, image recognition AI solutions used to diagnose plant disease can also inform diagnostic applications for livestock)
- **Product–market alignment:** Infrastructure updates that allow users to fully realize the benefits of AI use (for example, opting not to use AI to streamline user interface with service provision until service provision has been moved from paper-based to digital)
- **Mentorship:** Sector-specific mentorship for AI practitioners building tailored solutions or startup mentorship to support AI entrepreneurs' navigation of AI business development
- **Consumer awareness/acceptance:** building consumer awareness and earning consumer trust to promote more informed and accountable AI adoption; user appetite for change

E. Governance and Accountability

- **AI policy:** Policies, strategies, and regulatory instruments to govern AI as appropriate for individual national contexts; AI strategy that prioritizes investment and guides public and private action
- **AI-complementary policy:** policies to promote access to other AI enablers. For example, educational policies that align to support AI skills development, policies to make data more readily available, workforce development or consumer protection policies
- **Robust data governance frameworks:** frameworks must protect privacy, ensure data quality, and promote relevant transparency of AI development and deployment; data governance approaches that embed or protect local priorities (for example, indigenous rights)
- **Data-sharing frameworks that support AI development:** datasets resilient to patchy data localization or privacy laws; datasets in critical sectors available for AI use

- **Ethics and rights preservation efforts:** articulation and adoption of ethical norms to inform AI development and use; alignment of existing protective statutes to AI-based work (data annotators/labelers) or AI consumption (consumer protection, anti-discrimination)
- **Risk evaluation:** identifying potential consumer and safety risks from AI use cases (for example, calls for AI safety institutes)
- **Empowered civil society:** civil society actors that help build community awareness around AI risks and work to push for AI accountability (for example, data rights activists, AI journalists or investigative journalists, think tanks)
- **Multilateral engagement on global governance:** ensuring local and regional needs and experience inform global governance and funding efforts; promoting international harmonization where possible or appropriate

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Endnotes

1 The term "global majority" is becoming increasingly popular because it is used to describe the fact that all of these ethnic groups make up 85 percent of the world's population. Some say that the language we use plays an important part in tackling racial inequalities, and that the more positive and empowering term "global majority" can help disrupt white supremacy culture and ideology. This term has replaced "Global South" in many discussions. United Nations. (2024). *Governing AI for humanity: final report.* https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/governing_ai_for_humanity_final_report_en.pdf; Anthony, A., Sharma, L., & Noor, E. (2024, April 30). *Advancing a more global agenda for trustworthy artificial intelligence.* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/04/advancing-a-more-global-agenda-for-trustworthy-artificial-intelligence?lang=en

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4 The term "global majority" is becoming increasingly popular because it is used to describe the fact that all of these ethnic groups make up 85 percent of the world's population. Some say that the language we use plays an important part in tackling racial inequalities, and that the more positive and empowering term "global majority" can help disrupt white supremacy culture and ideology. This term has replaced "Global South" in many discussions.

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