**Forum:** United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD)

**Issue:** Addressing the Challenge of Developing Economies Lagging Behind Advanced

**Chairs:** Yasmina Abboud, Basma Nafouri, & Malak Alomari

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# Introduction

The relationship between wealthier and poorer countries with artificial intelligence is a complex and complicated issue. This document aims to research the cooperation between these two economically different countries using AI and provide recommendations for promoting global peace and sustainable development. AI threatens to deepen the divide, as wealthier countries with well-established digital infrastructures increase their economic growth. Whereas, impoverished countries struggle with scarce technical education and insufficient funding for AI research and infrastructure. Addressing this issue is essential not only for the future of these countries but also for fostering inclusive global AI- progress. By establishing AI in developing countries, helping in economic growth, eliminating the digital divide between advanced countries, and tackling local dilemmas such as developing attainable healthcare access.

# Definition of Key Terms

**Digital Infrastructure**

Networks, servers, and other technology required for digital activity, such as cybersecurity frameworks and data storage facilities, which are essential for AI development.

**Advanced Countries**

Countries with high income, high standards of living, and advanced technology.

**Developing Countries**

Countries with poor income, low standards of living, and less advanced technology.

**G20**

An intergovernmental group consisting of 19 sovereign countries, the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU).

## Background Information

Over the years, the gap between developing countries and advanced countries in using AI is rooted in the inconsistency in infrastructure. Advanced countries have had the resources and financial stability to build digital frameworks permitting AI growth. In contrast, developing countries face difficulties including scarce internet access, minimal knowledge on technology, limited skilled professionals on hand, hindering their ability to utilize AI effectively. This gap can lead to economic inequality, as advanced countries experience economic growth following the growth of AI. A study conducted in 2024 by the International Monetary Fund, showcased that advanced countries are are exposed to AI nearly 40% of the time while developing countries are exposed to AI nearly 26% of the time, as a result developing countries are less ready to seize AI's advantages leading to a digital divide as well as economic inequality.

## Previous Attempts To Resolve This Issue

There are countless efforts addressing this global issue however 4 main trials stood out :

1. **Google's TensorFlow**

   In 2015, Google launched TensorFlow, an open-access library developed by the Google Brain team, to help people learn how to build and utilize machine learning models easily, supporting deep learning;

2. **Facebook's Express Wi-Fi Program**

   Facebook's Express Wi-Fi Program directed to partner with local businesses to provide affordable internet access and maintain Wi-Fi infrastructure in developing countries. Unfortunately, in 2022, Express Wi-Fi was shut down;

3. **MIT RAISE**

   MIT RAISE (Responsible AI for Social Empowerment and Education) , launched in 2020, aims to support research and educational programs for K-12 students to make AI more inclusive;

4. **The Technology Bank**

   The Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) was established in 2018 to strengthen developing countries with their science technology innovation (STI) in order to fast-track their development to improve the lives of their people.

## Possible Solutions

1. **Investing in Digital Infrastructure**

Sparking job growth by allowing companies along with small businesses to widen their markets and customers using social media. Furthermore, investing in these foundations for digital growth can lead to economic growth by allowing access to global markets, and obtaining educational resources to enhance digital literacy.

2. **Fostering a Suitable Environment for Developing a Better Digital Infrastructure**

   Increasing digital literacy through education and training programs allowing citizens to acquire the skills necessary to use digital technologies;

3. **Partnership with Advanced Countries**

   Advanced countries can enable access to modern technology such as data centers, AI tools, collaboration on research, creating a joint infrastructure between advanced and developing countries. Moreover, advanced countries can lead internships/scholarships to help train future developers, engineers, data scientists, and other AI specialists from developing countries.

# Major Parties Involved

**United States**

- The United States has implemented the use of AI in the workplace to widen the racial wealth gap between black and white households by $43 billion by 2045;
- Researchers calculate that with the growth of AI the annual US GDP growth will increase between 0.5 - 1.5 over the next 10 years.

**China**

China being among the top 3 countries for AI usage, estimated to gain $600 billion annually if AI growth spreads to new sectors in China.

**United Kingdom**

- The United Kingdom has an opportunity to gain £550 billion in the next 10 years as well as the opportunity to have an average societal Return on Investment (ROI) of 5:1 -for every extra £1 spent the economy can grow by £5;
- The United Kingdom stands to gain £400 billion in economic value by 2030 and achieve major productivity gains across sectors of the UK.

**Canada**

- Canada became the first country to globally launch a national AI strategy and invested over $2 billion since 2017 to support AI research and innovation;
- Canada has invested $2.4 billion from the Budget 2024 to secure Canada's AI advantage.

**India**

- India showcases a high-powered IT industry worth $250 billion, serving many of the world's banks, manufacturers and firms;
- Reporters predict that India's AI services will be worth $17 billion by 2070.

## Timeline of Key Events

| Date | Description of Event |
| --- | --- |
| 2017 | Canada launched the world's first national AI strategy ensuring Canada's position as a world leader in AI. |
| 2021 | UNESCO launched the "Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence" in order to protect human rights and dignity. |
| 2021 | G20 countries established a set of principles for AI stressing on transparency, fairness, and inclusive AI development highlighting the need for infrastructure and resources for developing countries. |
| 2022 | The Digital Public Goods Alliance (DPGA) expanded their efforts to assist the distribution of digital public goods that are accessible to developing countries. |

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| **2023** | 40 UN Sister Agencies hosted The AI for Good Global Summit assembling keynote speakers, performances by AI-inspired artists, and researchers to discuss AI deployment for all nations. |

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