



Digital, AI and
Innovation Hub

Towards AI for all

What it means for democratic governance, development and public institutions

Ben Bertelsen, Manager &

Maria Giulia Vitagliano, Programme R&D Manager

Digital, AI and Innovation Hub, UNDP

September 15, 2026

We believe that digital technologies – including AI – have tremendous potential to accelerate sustainable development

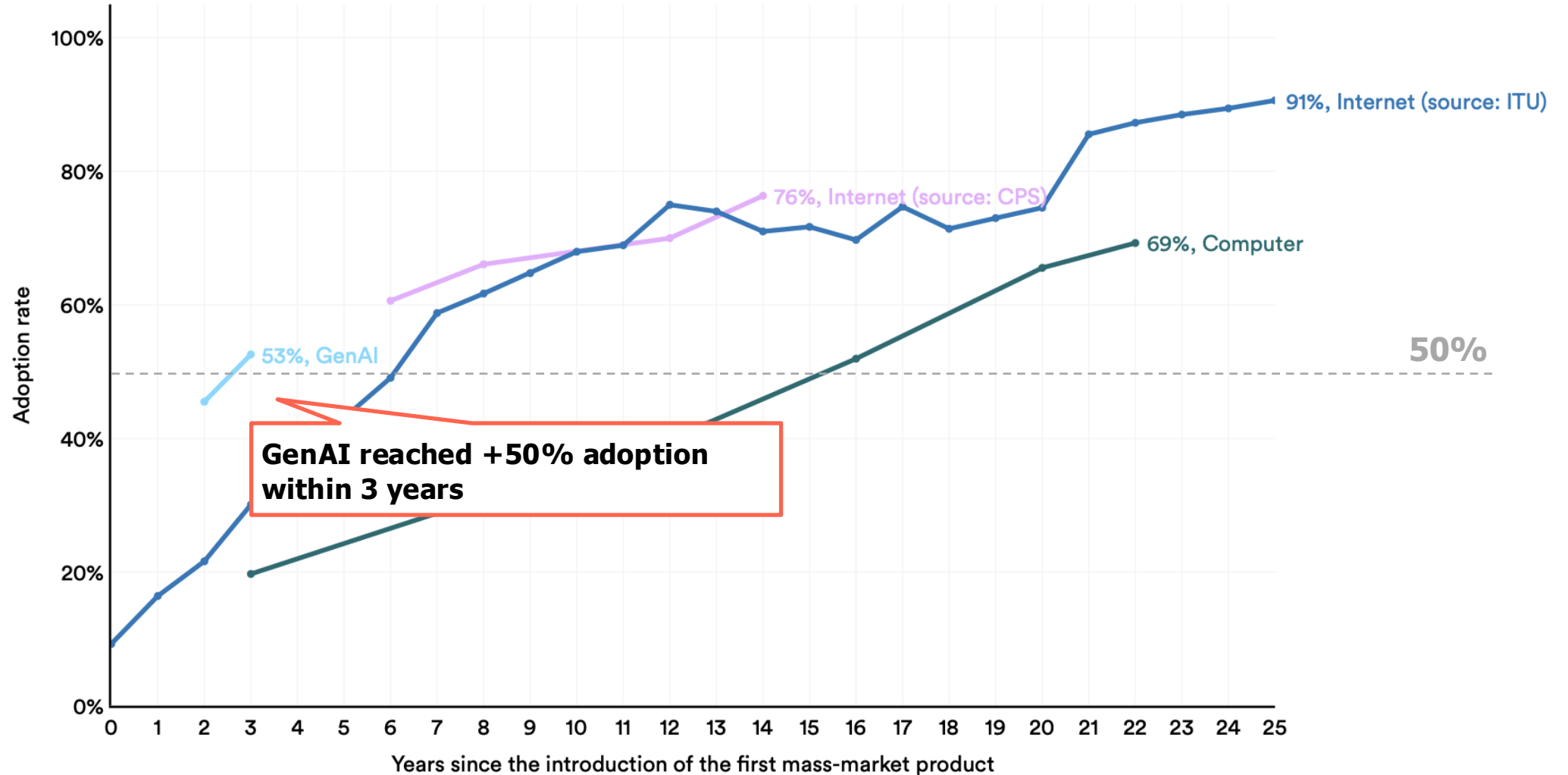


**70% of
SDG targets**
can directly
benefit from
the use of
digital
technology

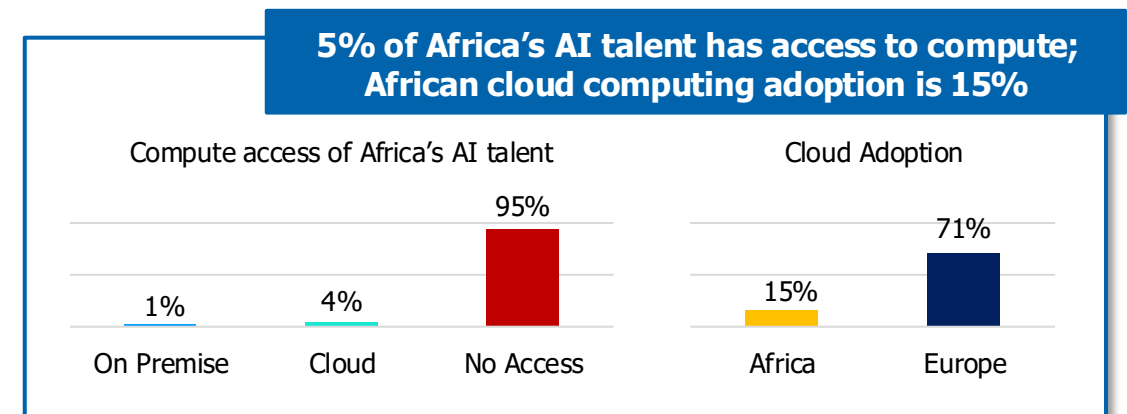
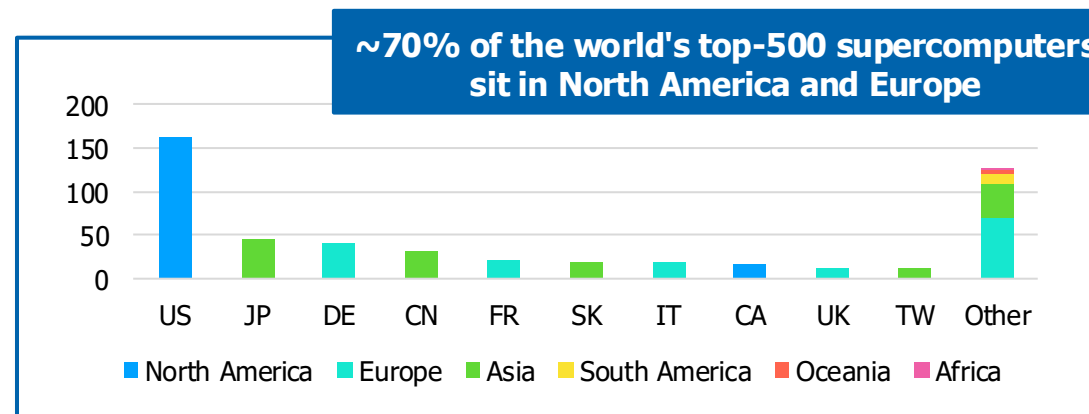
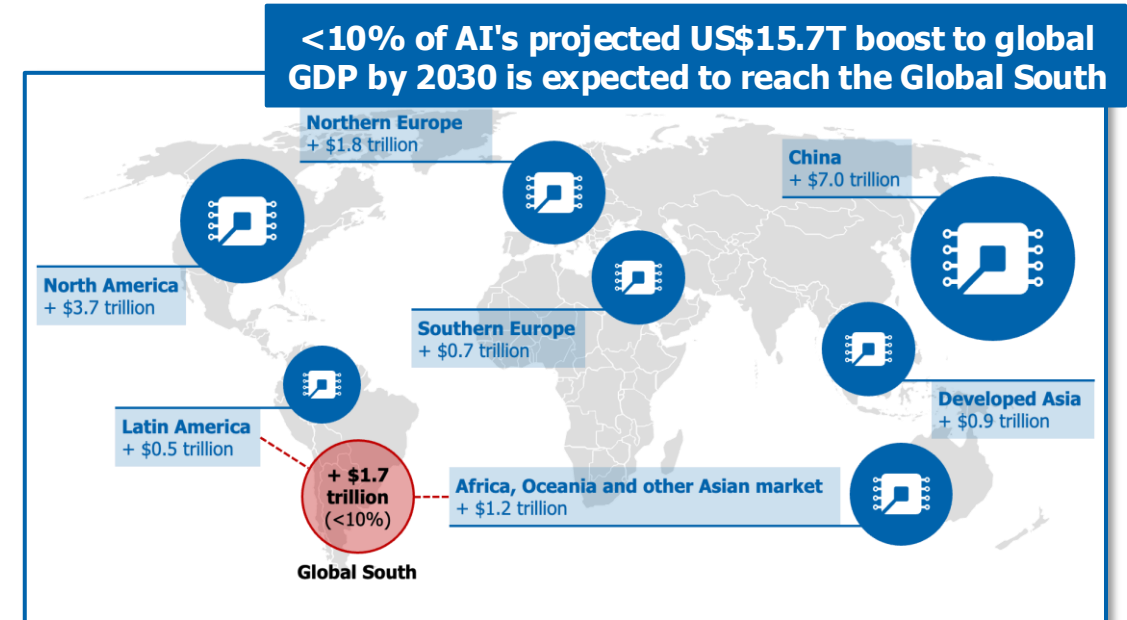
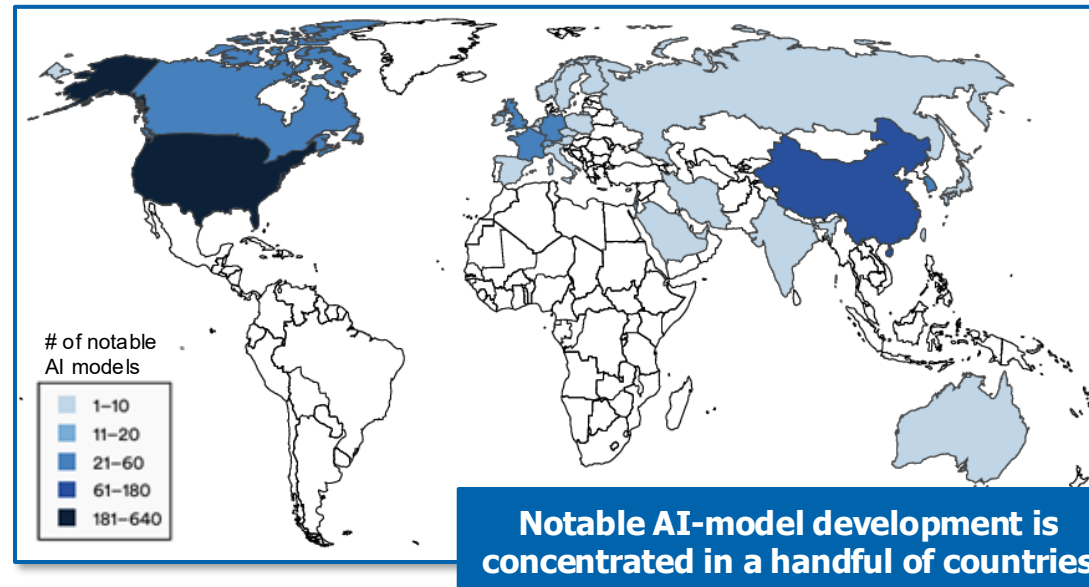
Compared with earlier transformative technologies, generative AI's adoption has been rapid after its mass market introduction

Speed of AI adoption by technology

Source: The Project on Workforce at Harvard, 2025 | Chart: 2026 AI Index report



AI – especially at the frontier – is highly concentrated to select regions and countries



UNDP is the UN's lead agency on development, working >170 countries to help people build better lives while protecting the planet



Training, Copilot rollout and network activations are transforming how we work, reaching thousands across UNDP



15,346

Active users on **Copilot Chat** since it launched for all UNDP in May



3,000

Copilot licenses distributed as part of AI Sprint, with **99% active users**.

54% Female 46% Male
75% Global South 25% North



5,202

Participants in **Copilot dedicated training and specialized sessions** from 131 COs



2,019

Members on the **AI Network** on Viva Engage with **1,722 community content views**.



5,013

Colleagues enrolled on the **AI Horizon Foundations** course with a **51% completion rate**



859

Leaders in the **AI Horizon Accelerator for Leaders** cohort with **49% active learners**

Across UNDP, there are more than 100 examples of AI being actively used to accelerate progress on the SDG targets

AI Initiatives at UNDP ☆

AI Initiative Type: AI Tool or Solution ✕

AI Initiatives at U... All Items RBA RBAP >



Title
ABADEI Chatbot

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
ABADEI project implemented by...



Title
AI for Sustainable De...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

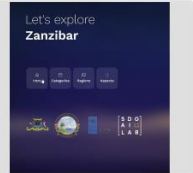
Description
This project proposes an AI-powered platfor...



Title
AI for Sustainable De...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

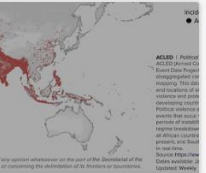
Description
UNDP Morocco's suite of AI initiatives aims t...



Title
AI for Tourism

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
Tourism stands as a priority for sustainabl...



Title
Crisis Risk Dashboar...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
The Risk Anticipation Hub is developing...



Title
AI4Mulberry

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

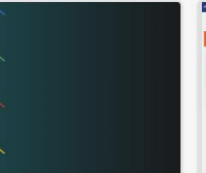
Description
A lot of letters (requests, complaints...



Title
Artificial Intelligence...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

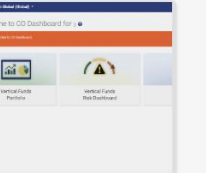
Description
System developed to search inside more...



Title
Automated Scoring S...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
United Nations Volunteers (UNV)...



Title
Chat GPT AI applicat...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
By applying the Chat GPT technology, PIMS...



Title
DiCRA - Data in Clim...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

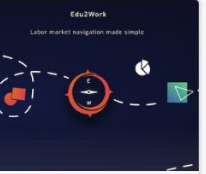
Description
Data in Climate Resilient Agriculture...



Title
Digital Social Vulner...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

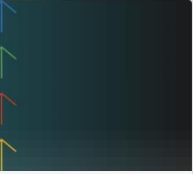
Description
The Digital Social Vulnerability Index is ...



Title
Edu2work

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
Edu2Work platform was created in response t...



Title
Entity extraction and...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
It will OAI investigators to go through identi...



Title
EVA.ai

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
EVA.ai is a key talent management platform...



Title
Fair Digital Finance S...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
UNDP Morocco's Accelerator, Morocco...



Title
Frontier Technology ...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
Frontier Technology Radar for Disaster Ris...



Title
Foresight AI - GenAI ...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

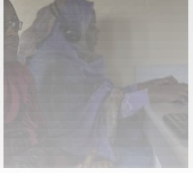
Description
As an innovation team, we're always looking...



Title
Future Signals Platfo...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

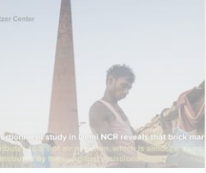
Description
The Strategy & Futures team have created th...



Title
Gender Social Media ...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

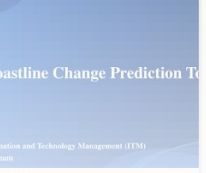
Description
The Gender Social Media Monitoring Tool...



Title
GeoAI for Air Pollutio...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
The GeoAI platform demonstrated how...



Title
GeoAI for coastline e...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
The project is an experiment of GeoAI i...



Title
Identifying electricit...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

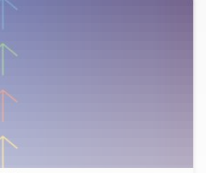
Description
UNDP, in partnership with University of...



Title
Illegal Dumpsite Det...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
In Guatemala, the implementation of...



Title
INFORM-Warning

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
INFORM is a multi-stakeholder forum for...



Title
iVerify System

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

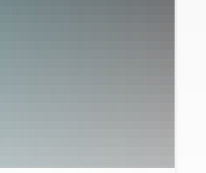
Description
iVerify is a programme support package, wit...



Title
NDC Analytics App

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
We use the UN LinkedSDGs API to...



Title
Mapping UNDP proje...

AI Initiative Type
AI Tool or Solution

Description
We use the UN LinkedSDGs API to...



Global Processes and Engagement to position countries' priorities

HAMBURG
SUSTAINABILITY
CONFERENCE



भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE



G20

SOUTH AFRICA 2025



European
Union



G7 ITALIA
2024



G7 2025
KANANASKIS



How UNDP Collaborates on Digital in multilateral frameworks



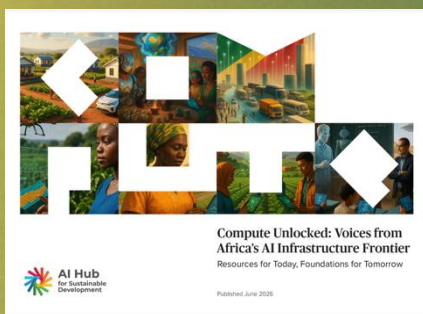
WHY IT MATTERS

When countries coordinate digital policy at international level, it directly affects who gets investment, training, and access — that's why UNDP works to ensure developing countries are represented in these discussions.

KEY MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **Hamburg Sustainability Conference:** Brings together decision makers and leaders from politics, business, science, and civil society to accelerate joint action toward the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- **G7/G20:** Supporting dialogue on inclusive digital transformation and AI governance.
- **European Union:**
 - Global Gateway – Partnering to boost digital connectivity, infrastructure, and innovation across regions.
 - EU AI Strategy – Working together to shape an ethical, inclusive, and human-centric approach to AI.
 - AI for Public Good – Engaging with the EU AI Act and the AI Office to harness AI for sustainable development and social impact.

Unlocking financing and market opportunities through new models of development cooperation



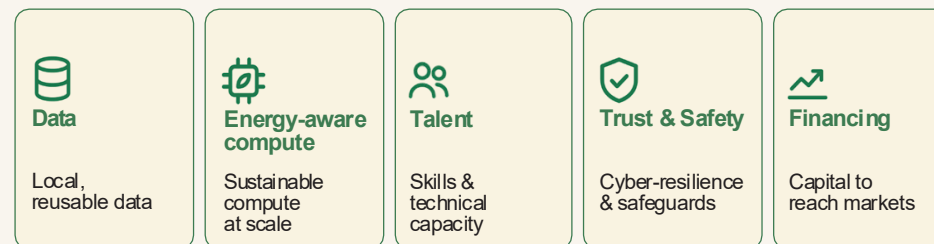
*Compute Unlocked: Voices from Africa's
AI Infrastructure Frontier (June 2026)*

A flagship AI Hub brief showing what
becomes possible when access to
compute reaches African Innovators
building in language, health, agriculture
and infrastructure.

Resources for today, Foundations for tomorrow

Italy and UNDP connect African innovators with
Italian, G7 and global partners, creating pathways
from AI capability to markets, investment, jobs and
stronger local ecosystems.

The foundations AI needs to scale in Africa



**Five foundations. One partnership model. Built with Africa for jobs,
markets and local value.**

G7-ENDORSED

18 PARTNER COUNTRIES

1,000+
innovators

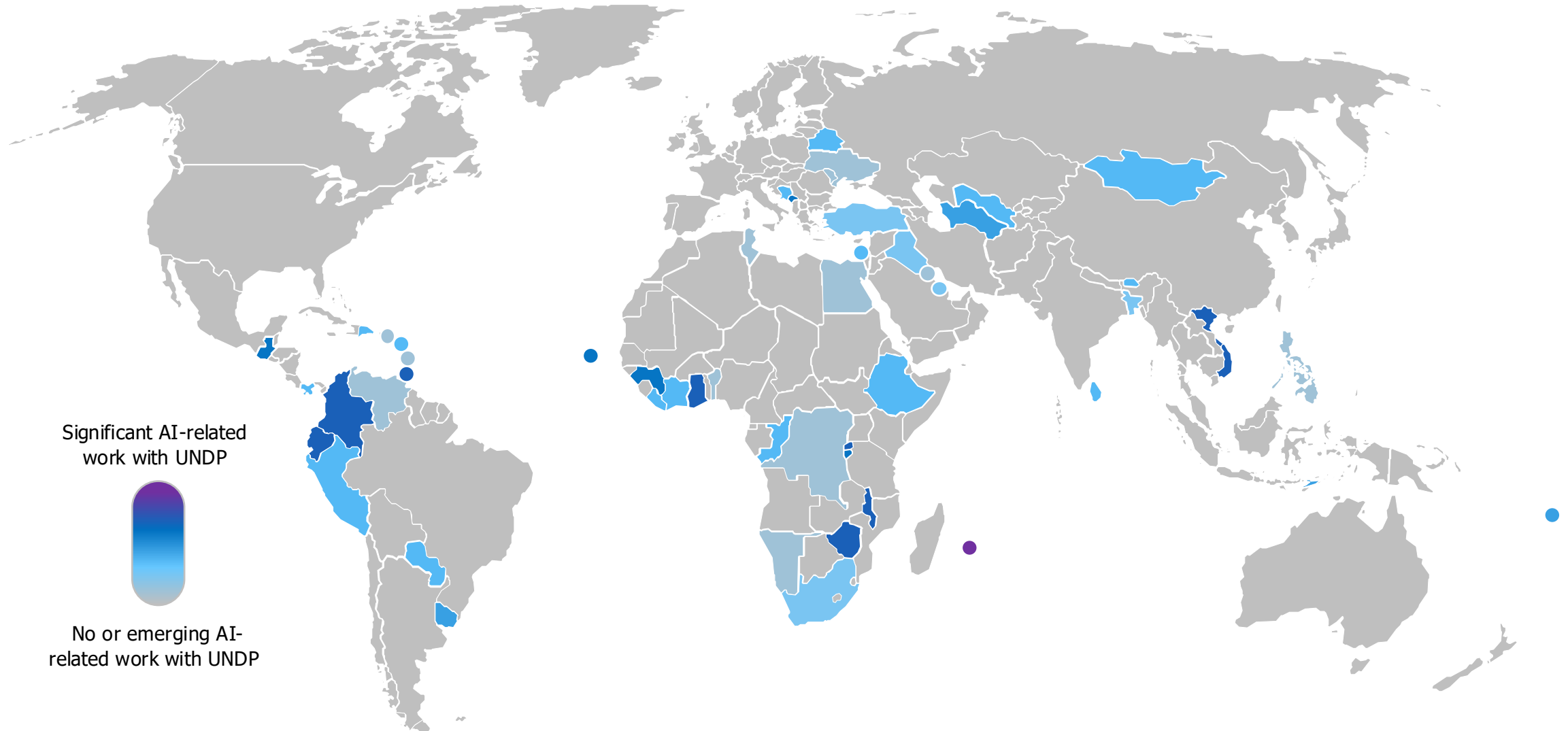
18
partner countries

60+
partnerships and
collaboration pathways

1.5M
GPU hours

US\$3M+
compute credits

How this translates to delivery: UNDP has supported 50+ countries – especially in the Global South – on Artificial Intelligence



Source: UNDP AI Landscape Assessments and other AI-related engagements

UNDP is addressing the 'AI equity gap' in 50+ countries to build the foundations for safe, inclusive, and responsible AI adoption



AI Readiness and Strategy

AI Landscape Assessments conducted in 26 countries, typically followed by strategy support (e.g., Ghana, Guatemala)

Double-click



Inclusive Data/Data Governance

Local language digitalization in West and Central Africa (Twi, Lingala), Nepal, Peru, Serbia, among others through the "Every Language Matters" Initiative



AI Capacity-building

AI Ministerial-level bootcamp for 100 senior officials in Ghana; Women's Digital Champions training in Ethiopia



Right-sizing Infrastructure and Energy-Aware Compute

130 innovators across 18 African countries on affordable compute infrastructure; now unlocked 60+ partnerships with 1,000+ innovators engaged --> Through the AI Hub's Compute Accelerator and Programmatic work



Cross-country collaboration

Mutual learning and exchanges across countries; experimental 'sandboxes'



AI Trust and Safety

Selected 17 organizations working across 33 countries to work on locally-relevant T&S initiatives

AILA: Reading AI Readiness Backwards

The report draws on **26 AI Landscape Assessments** across diverse country contexts to examine what AI readiness means once adoption is already underway. It identifies recurring patterns in how AI enters public systems, markets and institutions, and what countries need to steer adoption towards public value and sustainable development.

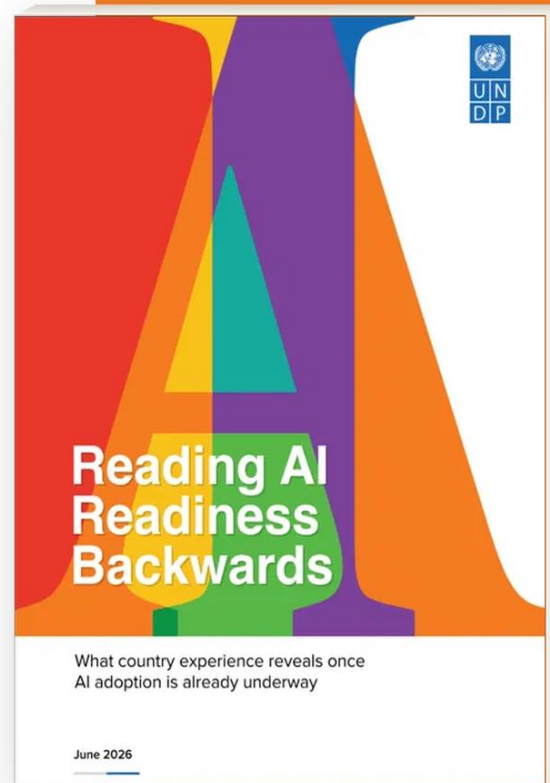


KEY INSIGHTS

- * **AI adoption is already underway, so read readiness backwards.**
Readiness is no longer about being prepared before adoption begins, it's about whether countries can shape AI as it already enters institutions, markets, and everyday services.
- * **The central risk is unmanaged adoption, not its absence.**
AI is embedding through procurement, vendor platforms, cloud services, and digital public infrastructure, often before the mandates, safeguards, and capabilities needed to steer it are in place.
- * **Governance becomes real at implementation, not on paper.**
Principles don't govern systems, procurement, data governance, oversight, redress, and lifecycle monitoring decide whether AI adoption delivers public value.



DOWNLOAD HERE



In country example insights:

Malawi

Political attention to AI is high, but implementation is constrained by gaps in delivery capacity, data governance, procurement and institutional coordination. The lesson: political attention is not the primary constraint; the harder task is building the institutional machinery needed to turn ambition into implementation.

Vietnam

AI is being incorporated into national priorities spanning research, digital transformation, socioeconomic development and competitiveness, while constraints remain around regulation, funding, data, infrastructure and workforce capacity. The lesson: AI ambition increasingly runs into interconnected implementation constraints that cannot be addressed through AI strategy alone.

AI Landscape Assessments in 26 countries show the same pattern: AI adoption is outpacing AI readiness, entering public systems before strategies and policies are in place

1

Political attention isn't the constraint

Visibility is common. Mandates, financing, coordination, and accountability are what's missing.

2

Adoption enters through systems, not strategies

Procurement, vendors, and workflows set AI's terms before any policy does.

3

Data determines implementation

Quality, interoperability, and governance decide if AI stays reliable and reusable.

4

Foundations determine agency

Compute, connectivity, talent, and capability decide whether countries can choose, not just use.

5

Ecosystems determine local value

Demand, startups, universities, and procurement decide if AI builds local capability or dependency.

6

Governance becomes consequential through implementation

Principles matter once they shape procurement, oversight, and redress in practice.

Thank you!



**Digital, AI and
Innovation Hub**