

Human Choices in the Age of AI: Towards AI-Augmented Human Development

Source : Human Development Report 2025 oleh UNDP¹
Author : Hosea Immanuel Latumahina
Editor : Achmed Faiz Yudha Siregar

Introduction: Shifting the Lens to Demand-Side of AI

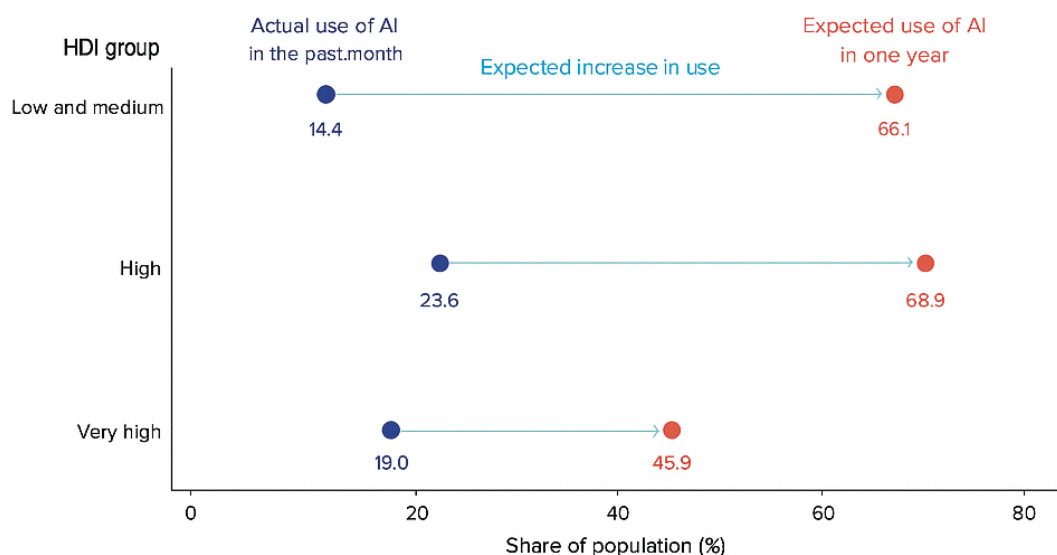
Public discourse often emphasizes the supply side of AI, who develops the technology and why they develop it. But, this report reframes the debate by urging attention to the demand side: how AI is used in daily life, how it enhances people's agency, and how it reshapes the everyday experience of development.

The key reason to consider the user side of AI is that historically the impact of technological innovation on improving productivity and increasing living standards has depended on complementary changes in the organization of economic activity, not simply replacing older technologies with newer ones. Another reason is that people expect AI to be a growing part of their lives.

A global survey in Human Development Report 2025 found that AI use is already substantial for about 20 percent of respondents at all Human Development Index (HDI) levels. But even more stunning, at least two-thirds of respondents in low, medium and high HDI countries expect to use AI in education, health and work, the three HDI dimensions, within one year.

¹ United Nations Development Programme. (2025). Human Development Report 2025: A Matter of Choice: People and Possibilities in the Age of AI. New York: UNDP. Tersedia di: <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/global-report-document/hdr2025reporten.pdf>

Figure 1.1 Two-thirds of survey respondents in low, medium and high Human Development Index countries expect to use artificial intelligence (AI) in education, health and work within one year.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

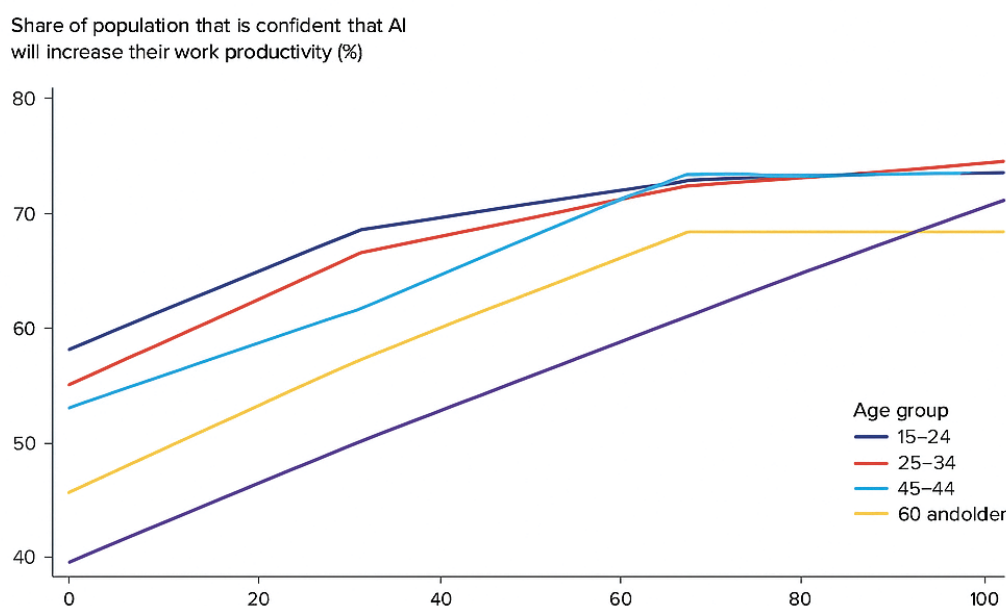
AI invites new ways of exploring how economies at all income levels can harness its potential to advance human development. But the task is particularly urgent for low- income and many middle- income countries, given that the pathways that created jobs at scale and reduced poverty over the past two to three decades, based on expanding manufacturing industries and exporting to international markets, are narrowing.

AI as an Enabler of Human Development, Not a Replacement

This report underscores that Artificial Intelligence (AI) should not be framed as a substitute for human capabilities but as a tool that can expand human agency, creativity, and innovation. While AI excels at data-driven tasks, prediction, and pattern recognition, it cannot replace human judgment, empathy, or authentic creativity.

This highlights the importance of positioning AI as an augmentation mechanism, where technology strengthens human decision-making and enriches the space of human choice rather than narrowing it. The role of choices represents opportunities to make AI work for people. This is particularly important because most survey respondents in this report are confident that AI will make them more productive at work, and this confidence increases as AI use rises.

Figure 1.2 Respondents confident that artificial intelligence (AI) will make them more productive at work, and the more AI is used, the higher the share of respondents reporting feeling confident.

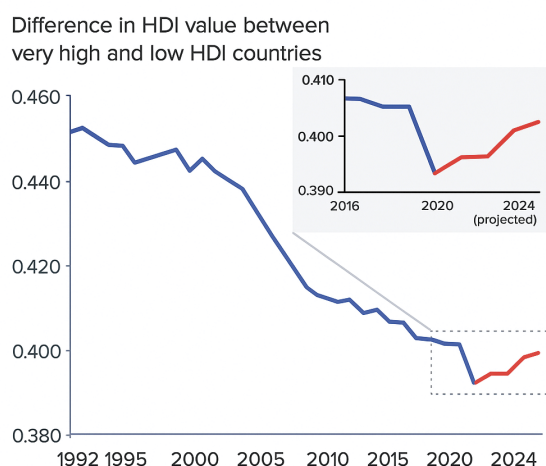


Source: Human Development Report (2025)

The Adoption of AI still Remains Global Inequalities and Divergence

Human Development Report 2025 also highlights AI's adoption still remains global divergence. High-HDI countries are positioned to capture disproportionate benefits, while low-HDI countries risk being left further behind due to gaps in infrastructure, skills, and institutional capacity. At the same time, AI could serve as a bridge, enabling knowledge transfer and skill enhancement if governance is inclusive.

Figure 1.3 Low Human Development Index countries are being left further behind.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

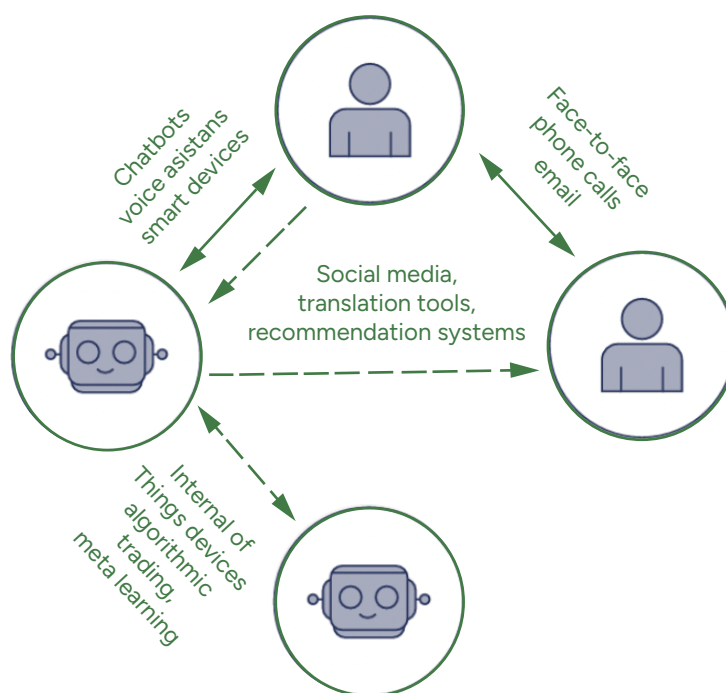
The widespread expectation of AI adoption signifies urgency: inclusive governance, equitable access, and digital literacy frameworks are essential to ensure that public optimism is translated into positive development outcomes. And the key is to frame AI as a tool for reducing global divides, through multilateral cooperation, equitable technology transfer, and inclusive digital policies.

Integration of Artificial Intelligence within Societal Systems



AI is no longer confined to specialized domains but has become embedded in everyday life, shaping communication patterns, political discourse, educational systems, and healthcare provision. As AI mediates human interaction, filters information, and influences relationships, they function less as neutral tools and more as active participants in the social fabric.

Figure 2.3 Interactions between and among humans and artificial intelligence.



Source: Human Development Report based on Brinkman and others (2023), 2025.

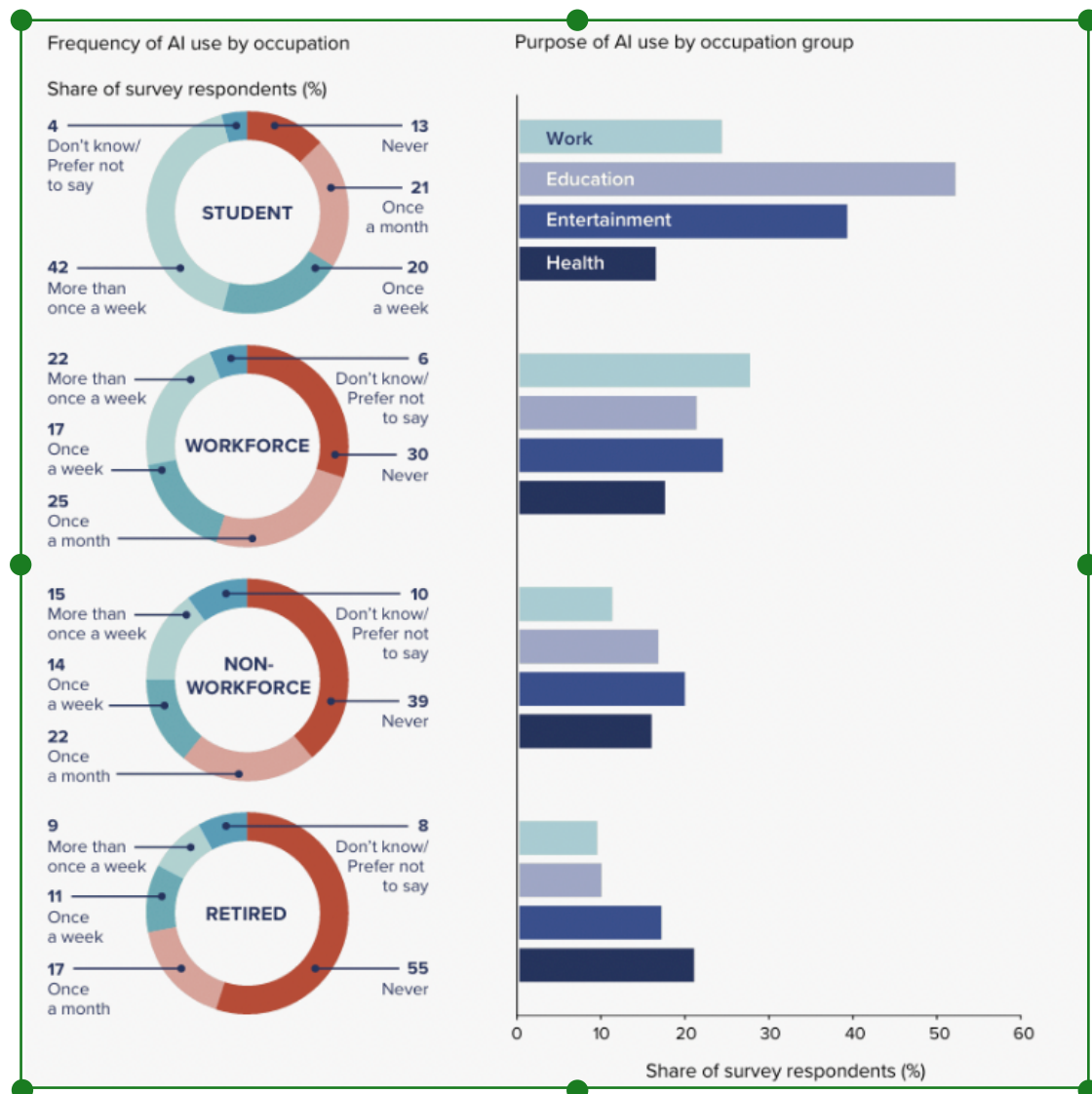
This embeddedness carries both benefits and risks. On the one hand, AI enhances efficiency and accessibility of services; on the other, it amplifies the potential for manipulation, reinforces biases, and undermines trust when systems operate without transparency. Addressing these challenges requires deliberate socio-technical integration.

Embedding AI responsibly in society means ensuring that design processes, deployment practices, and governance structures reflect democratic values and serve the broader public interest. Only through transparency, inclusivity, and accountability can AI systems contribute to equitable and sustainable social outcomes.

Differentiated AI use across Life Stages

AI usage demonstrates differences across life stages, reflecting both institutional structures and socioeconomic contexts. According to Human Development Report 2025, nearly half of students report using AI tools multiple times a week for learning and academic assistance. Workers also integrate AI into their professional tasks, with about one in four relying on AI to enhance productivity, optimize workflows, and support creative or administrative functions.

Figure 3.1 Interactions between and among humans and artificial intelligence.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

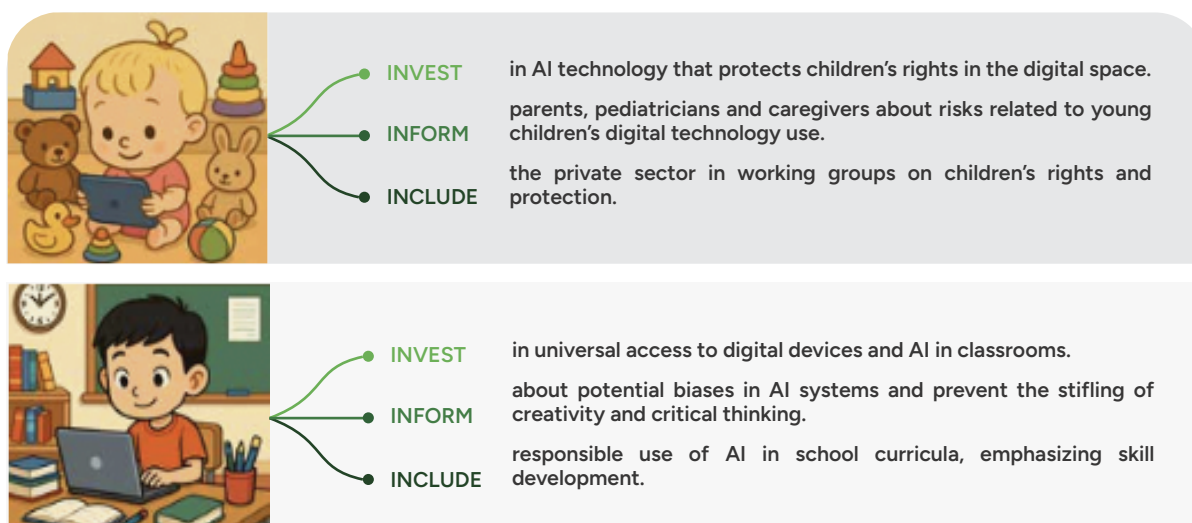


By contrast, only 15 percent of non-working adults and 9 percent of retirees report regular AI use, often limited to entertainment, communication, or basic health applications. These disparities reveal how AI can simultaneously function as a tool for empowerment and as a driver of exclusion. Individuals embedded in institutions such as schools and workplaces benefit from structured opportunities to adopt AI, while others remain at risk of digital marginalization. The differentiated patterns highlight that AI is not inherently equalizing; without deliberate policy action, it can widen capability gaps across social groups and life stages.

Policy Imperative through the “Three I’s”

The life-stage approach outlined in Human Development Report 2025 emphasizes three critical policy imperatives: invest, inform, and include. Investment forms the foundational layer: universal access to electricity, affordable internet, and digital devices must be secured alongside capacity-building initiatives that strengthen digital literacy and technical skills. Informing individuals about AI’s benefits and risks is equally vital, as informed users are better equipped to make conscious decisions about how and when to engage with AI systems. Finally, inclusion extends beyond access to technology; it entails ensuring representation of diverse demographic groups, including women, minorities, older populations, and marginalized communities, in the design, governance, and deployment of AI systems.

Figure 3.2 Invest, inform and include for people- centred artificial intelligence (AI).





INVEST

in public-private partnerships to make AI-powered social media safe for adolescents.

INFORM

about AI-powered social media's addictive features and susceptibility to social comparison.

INCLUDE

adolescents in the critical evaluation of social media and other AI-powered products.



INVEST

in subsidies for companies that offer human options to make sure nobody is left behind.

INFORM

about role modeling responsible AI use to influence future generations.

INCLUDE

explanations about how AI products and algorithms work to strengthen adults' agency.



INVEST

in access, training and support for older adults to empower them to navigate AI applications.

INFORM

older people about AI innovations, highlighting applications in their areas of interest.

INCLUDE

older people in the development of AI products so that their needs are adequately reflected.

Source: Human Development Report (2025)

Early Childhood: Balancing Access and Risk

AI in early childhood introduces a delicate balance between opportunity and risk. Limited access may exacerbate inequality by denying children from disadvantaged backgrounds the benefits of early digital learning tools. Conversely, excessive exposure to AI-driven content or devices risks undermining physical health, cognitive development, and emotional well-being.

Human Development Report 2025 highlights the dual role of AI in this context: it can safeguard children's rights by enabling educational programs, child protection mechanisms, and digital safety systems, yet it also poses threats such as over-surveillance, privacy violations, and inappropriate content exposure if left unregulated.

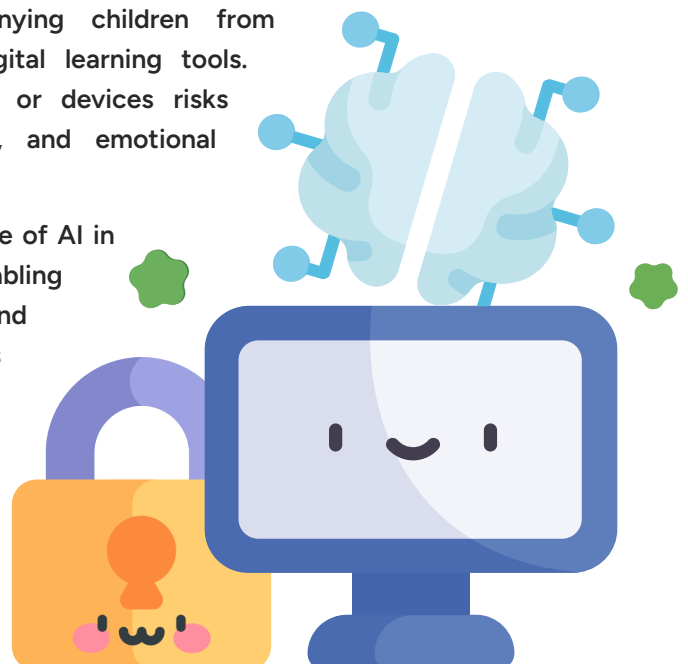
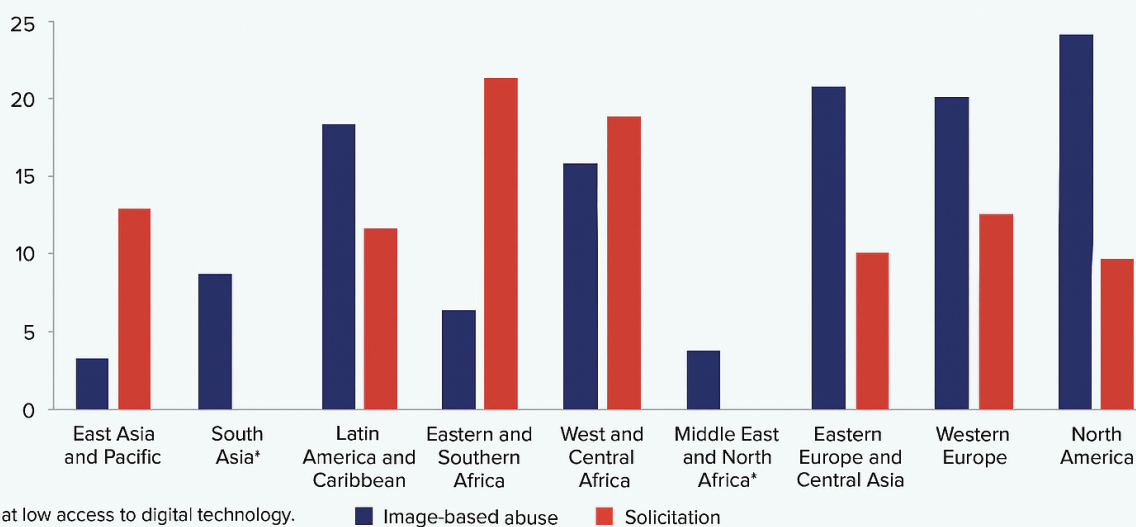


**Figure 3.4 Artificial intelligence
can violate children's rights or protect them.**

Online child sexual abuse can take several forms, from sharing sexual images or videos to online solicitation consisting of unwanted or pressured sexual interactions.¹ Such is common even in regions with low access to digital technologies (box figure 1)—and sharply on the rise in many African countries.² While solicitation is more common among adolescents, most image-based abuse (around 85 percent) affects prepubescent children, including infants and toddlers.³ The younger the child, the more likely the abuse is to be image-based. The majority of images show female children.⁴ Abusive images are refined and reproduced by artificial intelligence (AI)—powered apps, multiplying the violations of children's

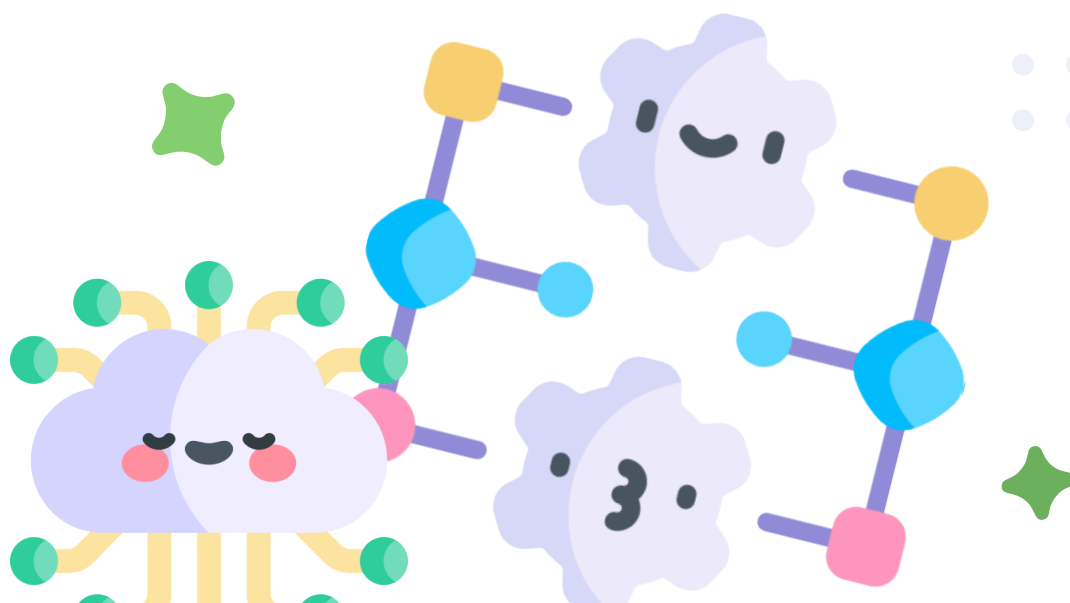
Box figure 1 Online child sexual abuse occurs even in regions with low access to technology

Children under age 13 affected in the past year, 2024 or most recent year available (%)



Source: Human Development Report using data from Childlight (2024), 2025.

The early years are particularly sensitive since developmental trajectories established during this stage shape lifelong capabilities. Hence, ensuring responsible AI integration in early childhood requires rigorous regulation, child-sensitive design, and strong parental and institutional oversight.

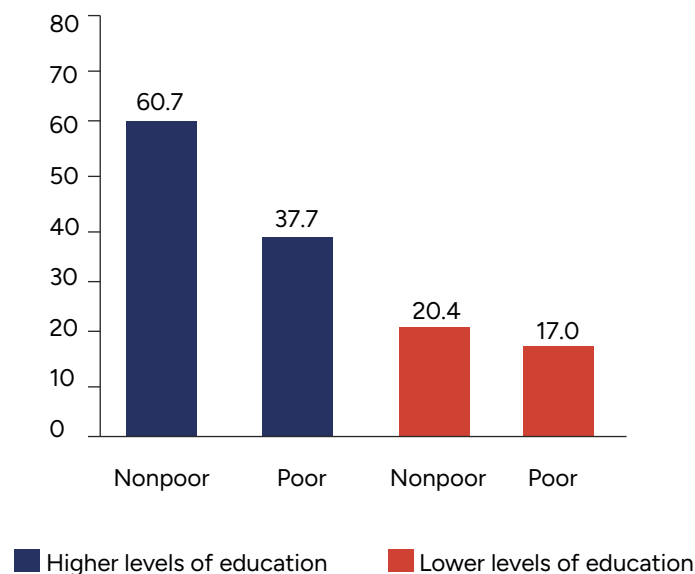


School Age: Opportunities, Inequalities, and Regulation

During the school years, AI increasingly serves as both a learning enhancer and a source of inequality. AI-powered educational applications have the capacity to personalize instruction, adapt to students' learning paces, and provide access to resources otherwise unavailable in traditional classrooms. Such opportunities can significantly elevate educational quality. However, disparities in access, whether due to economic status, geographic location, or institutional infrastructure, mean that not all children benefit equally.

Figure 3.5 Multidimensionally poor people with little education lack access to the internet.

Access to internet (% of population ages 19-64)



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

Students from disadvantaged households risk being left behind, amplifying existing educational divides. Furthermore, the reliance on digital tools raises pressing concerns over data ownership, security, and ethical use. If left unchecked, educational data could be monopolized by private technology companies, undermining the autonomy of students and schools. Regulatory frameworks must therefore safeguard students' rights, enforce data protection, and ensure that AI systems deployed in education are equitable, transparent, and accountable.

Adolescence: Digital Immersion and Mental Health Risks

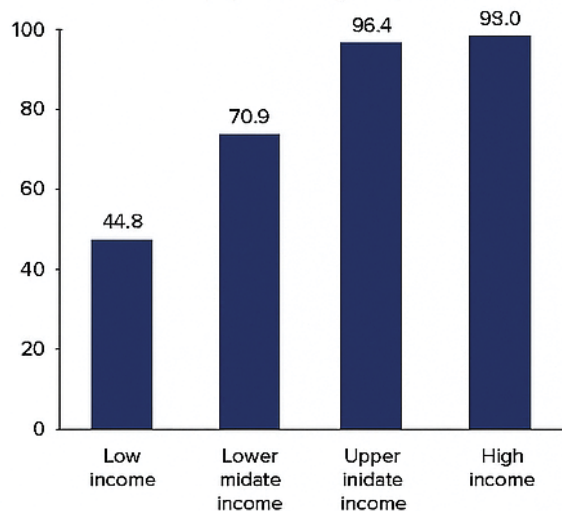


Adolescence is marked by heightened engagement with smartphones and social media, much of it mediated by AI. Recommendation algorithms and AI-driven moderation systems influence what adolescents see, how they interact, and the communities they join. Human Development Report 2025 points to issues such as emotional manipulation, polarization, disinformation, and a heightened sense of isolation, all of which disproportionately affect certain groups of adolescents. The risks are not uniform but vary depending on socioeconomic context, identity, and levels of resilience.

Figure 3.6 Artificial intelligence on social media undermines agency and drives emotions for some young people so far.

Box figure 1 Most young people in high- and middle income countries use the internet..

Internet users (% of population ages 15–24)

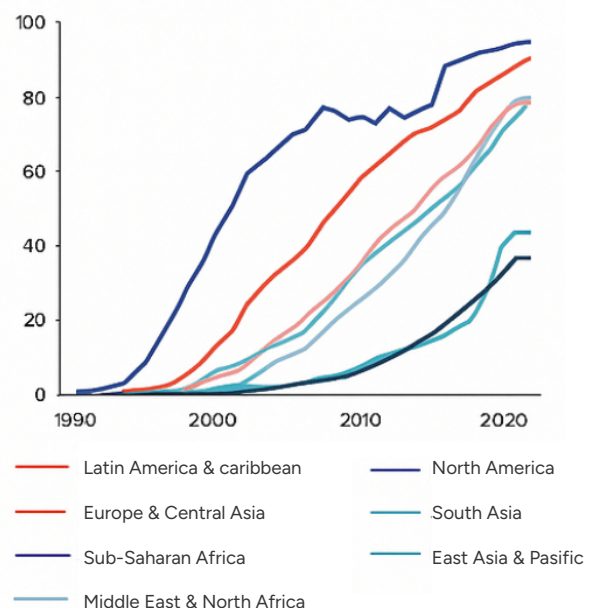


Note: Data are from the most recent year available.

Source: Human Development Report Office using data from ITU (2024b)

Box figure 2 ...but others will catch up soon if trends persist

Internet users (% of population)



Source: Human Development Report Office using data from World Bank (2024a)

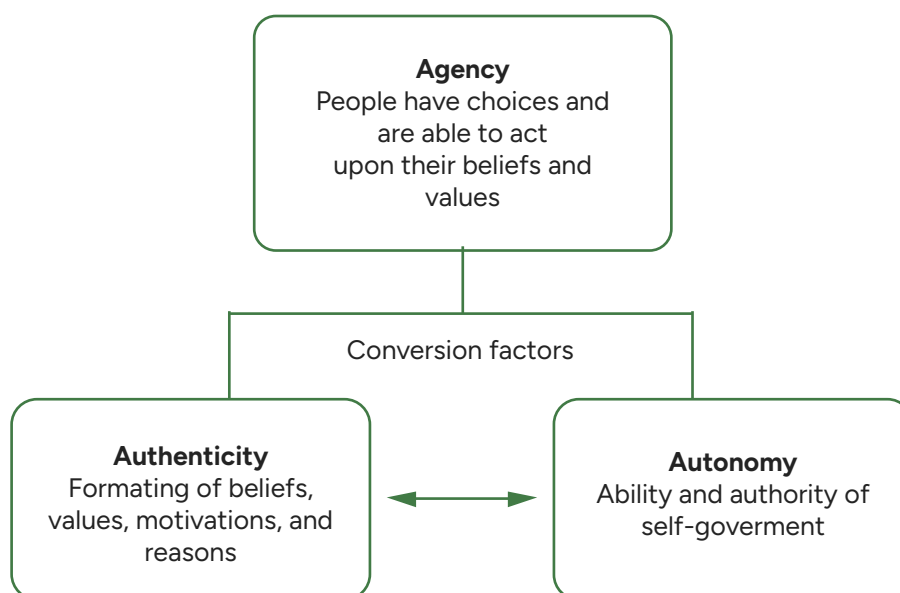
Source: Human Development Report using data from ITU (2024), 2025

The interplay between AI systems and adolescent development underscores the need for evidence-based, contextualized interventions. Effective policy responses must extend beyond regulation to include digital literacy programs, parental guidance, and public health strategies that strengthen adolescents' capacity to engage with AI responsibly.

Semi-Autonomous Adulthood: Productivity, Surveillance, and Overlapping Identities

For adults, AI shapes both economic and social participation. In professional settings, AI tools enhance productivity by automating routine tasks, supporting creative processes, and enabling new modes of work. These benefits are often coupled with greater flexibility and efficiency. However, the integration of AI into workplaces also introduces structural challenges. Algorithmic management, performance monitoring, and digital surveillance raise concerns over agency, authenticity, and autonomy of humans.

Figure 3.7 Disentangling autonomy, authenticity and agency in the digital space.

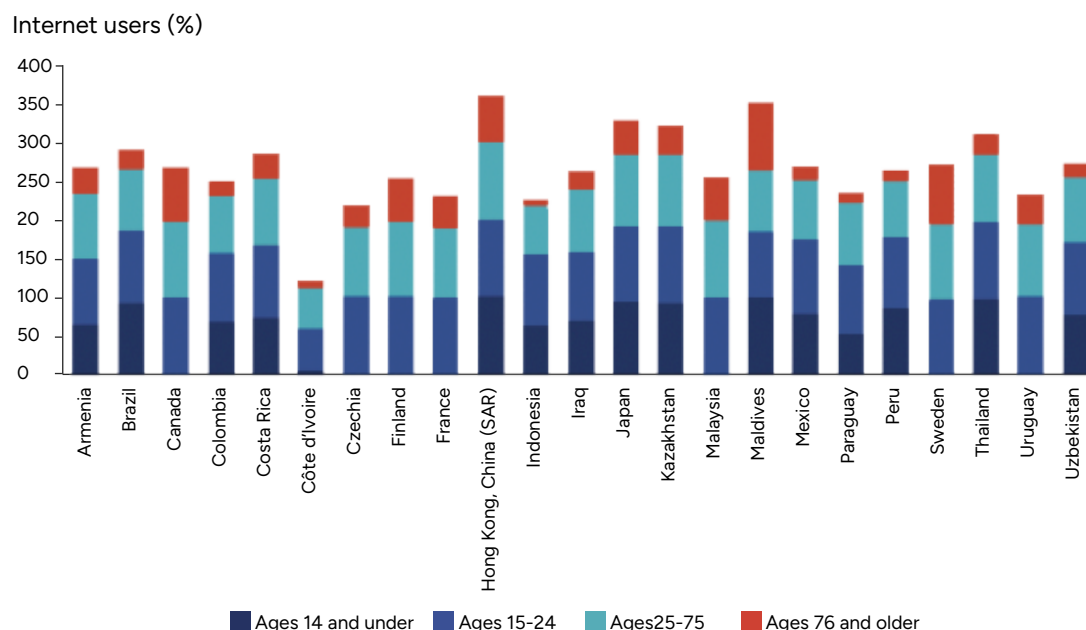


Source: Human Development Report (2025)

Older Age: Digital Inclusion for Health and Independence

AI holds significant potential to improve quality of life in older age. Predictive health monitoring, remote care systems, and AI-powered virtual assistants can extend independence, reduce healthcare burdens, and promote active aging. Yet, digital exclusion remains a pressing barrier: older populations often face low digital literacy, limited access to devices, and design features that fail to account for age-related needs.

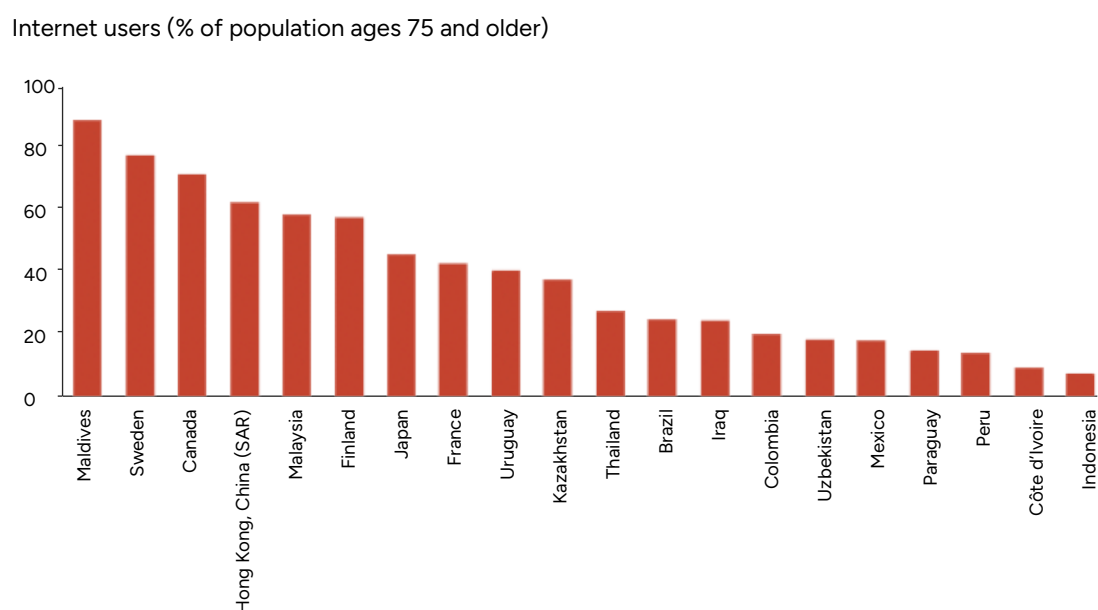
Figure 3.9 Very little internet use among older people.



Source: Human Development Report, using data from ITU (2024), 2025

When these barriers persist, AI risks reinforcing marginalization rather than alleviating it. Conversely, inclusive approaches, such as age-sensitive design, training initiatives, and accessible infrastructure, can empower older adults to harness AI for health and well-being. As populations age globally, bridging the digital divide in later life becomes an essential component of equitable human development.

Figure 3.10 Stark variance in internet use among older people across countries with different Human Development Index levels.

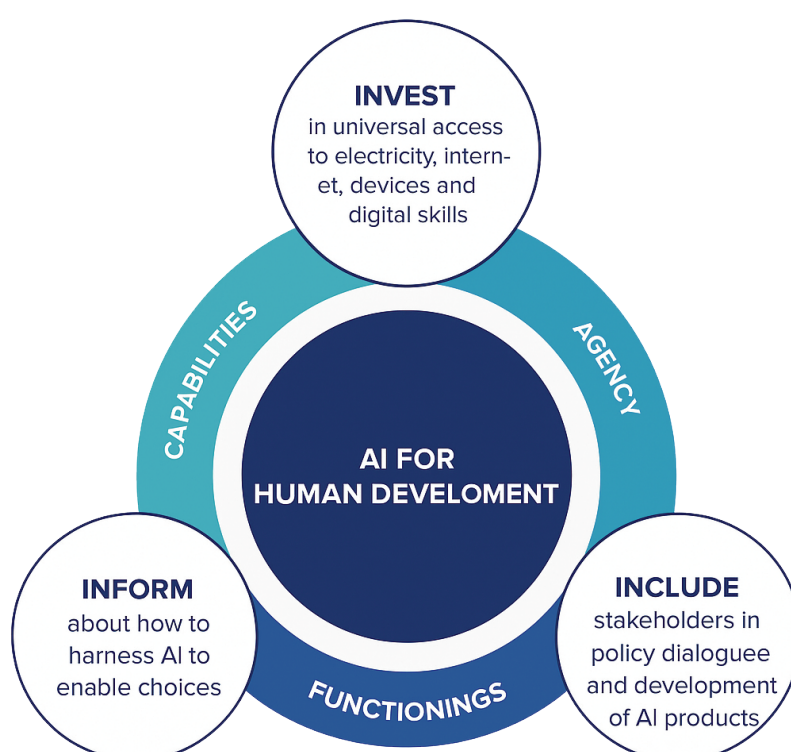


Source: Human Development Report using data from ITU (2024), 2025

Multistakeholder Cooperation People-Centered AI

The challenges and opportunities of AI across life stages cannot be addressed by governments alone. Effective governance to harnessing AI for human development needs the concept of **Invest, Inform, and Include**.

**Figure 3.11 Harnessing artificial intelligence (AI)
for human development: invest, inform, include.**



Source: Human Development Report (2025).

It also requires multistakeholder cooperation that integrates the perspectives of policymakers, private sector innovators, academic researchers, and civil society actors. Aligning regulatory frameworks, infrastructure development, and innovation pathways with values of equity, inclusivity, and sustainability is crucial, to reducing the intergenerational divides, exacerbating inequalities, and enhancing the collective resilience across societies.



Narratives as Determinants of AI's Role in Human Development

Human Development Report 2025 argues that framing narratives about how AI can advance human development is crucial at a time of momentous changes in policies, institutions and regulations. A narrative centred on advancing human development can inform crucial decisions that will have implications in the years, perhaps decades, to come.

The narratives about AI, and the processes around them, should focus not just on what AI can do but also on how it can enhance people's capabilities. Framing narratives this way can support power realignment and harness the opportunities for AI to advance human development. By situating narratives within a human development framework, Human Development Report 2025 stresses the need to consciously construct discourses that expand human agency, dignity, and collective well-being.

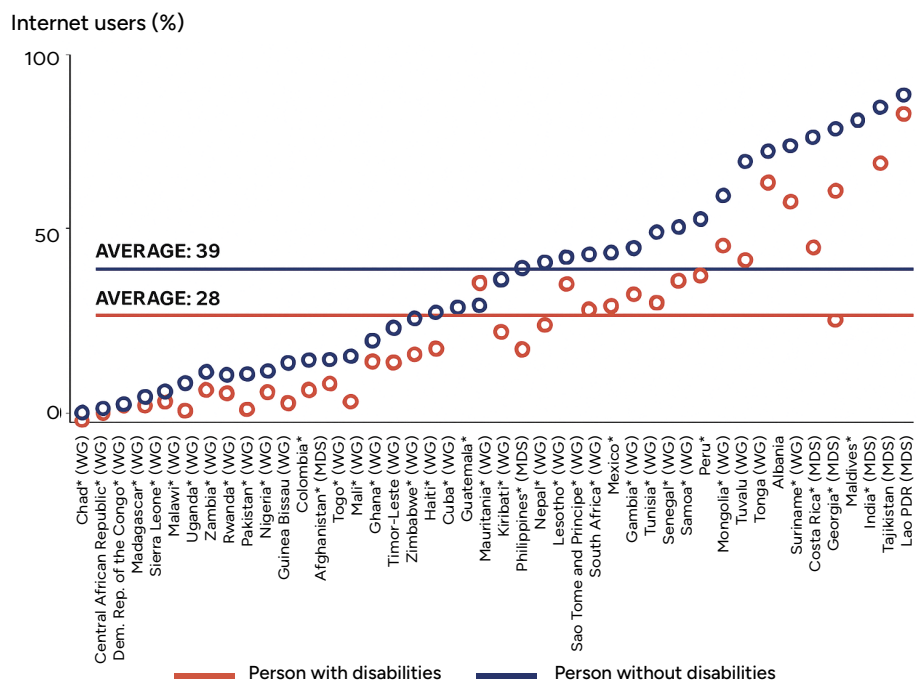
Case Narratives: AI and Human Development in Practice

1. AI and People with Disabilities

AI provides an example of dual potential in its impact on people with disabilities, both opportunities and risks. On one hand, assistive technologies such as live captioning, image recognition, and text-to-speech systems significantly enhance independence, accessibility, and social participation. On the other hand, AI systems designed without inclusivity in mind risk deepening exclusion. More than 2.5 billion people also still need access to assistive technologies. But access remains highly unequal around the world. Similar inequalities can be observed in the case of information and communication technologies. People with disabilities also have lower digital skills because accessible digital literacy training remains limited.



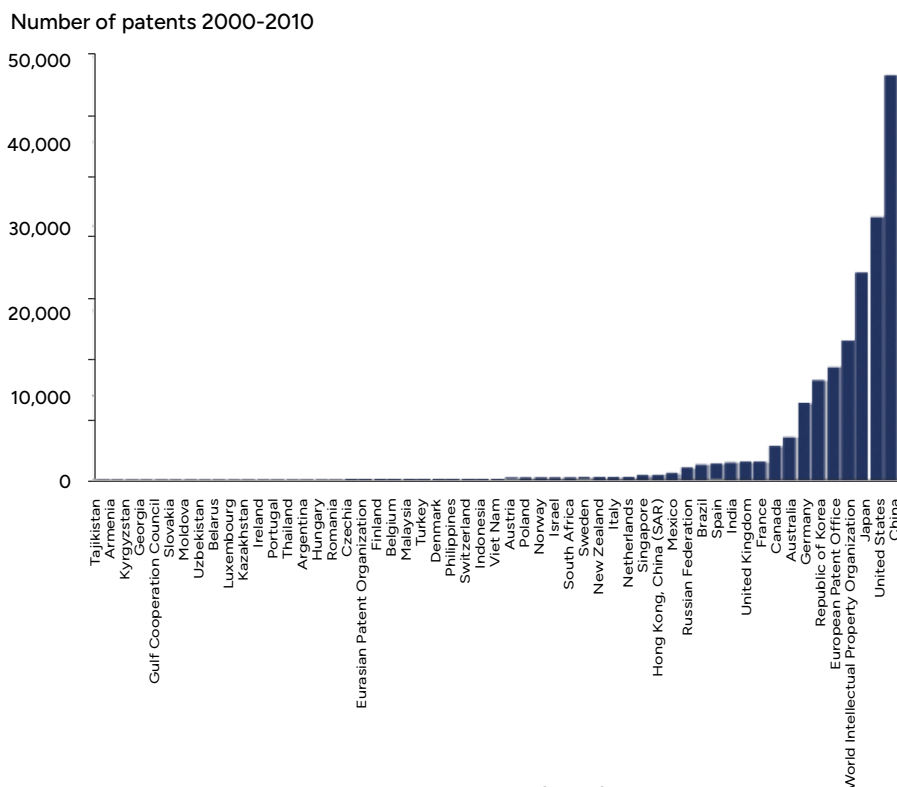
Figure 4.1 People with disabilities face inequalities in internet use.



Source: UNDESA (2024), 2025.

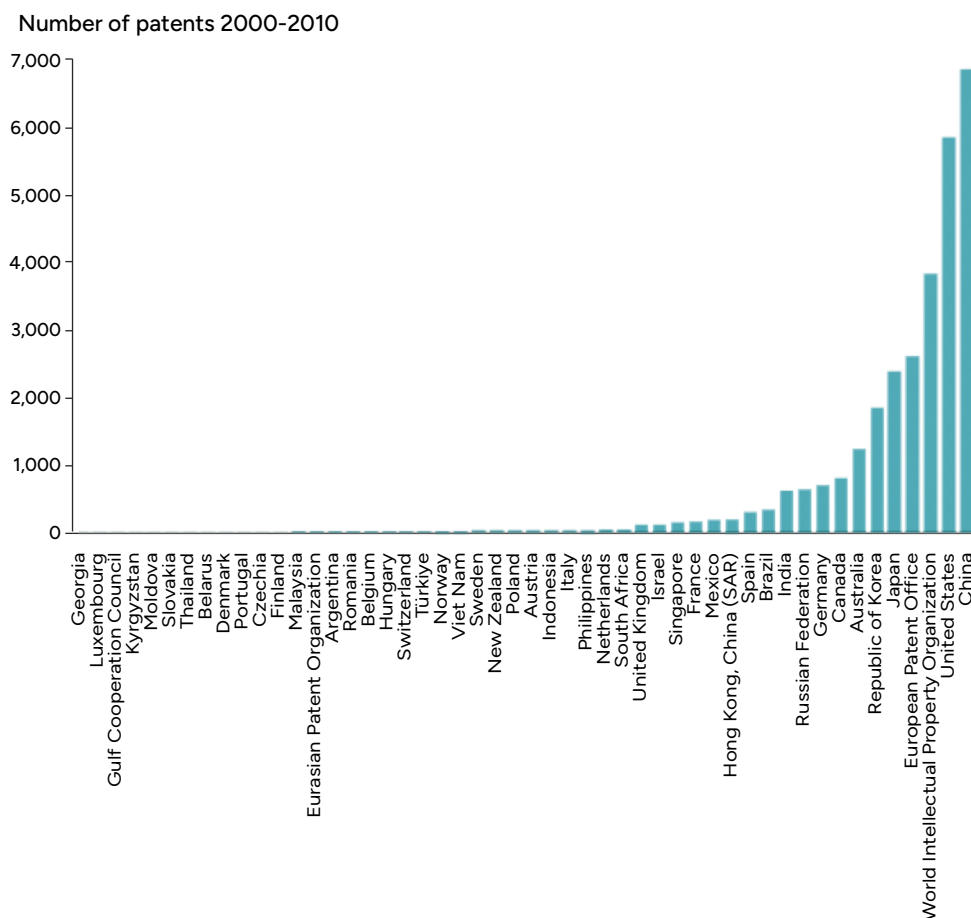
Moreover, most of the technologies, where people with disabilities depend are manufactured in a handful of countries. Most of the patents for both conventional and emerging assistive technologies are filed in high or very high HDI values.

Figure 4.2 Most patents for conventional assistive technology are filed in just a handful of countries.



Source: Human Development Report based on data from WIPO (2021), 2025.

Figure 4.3 Most patents for emerging assistive technology.



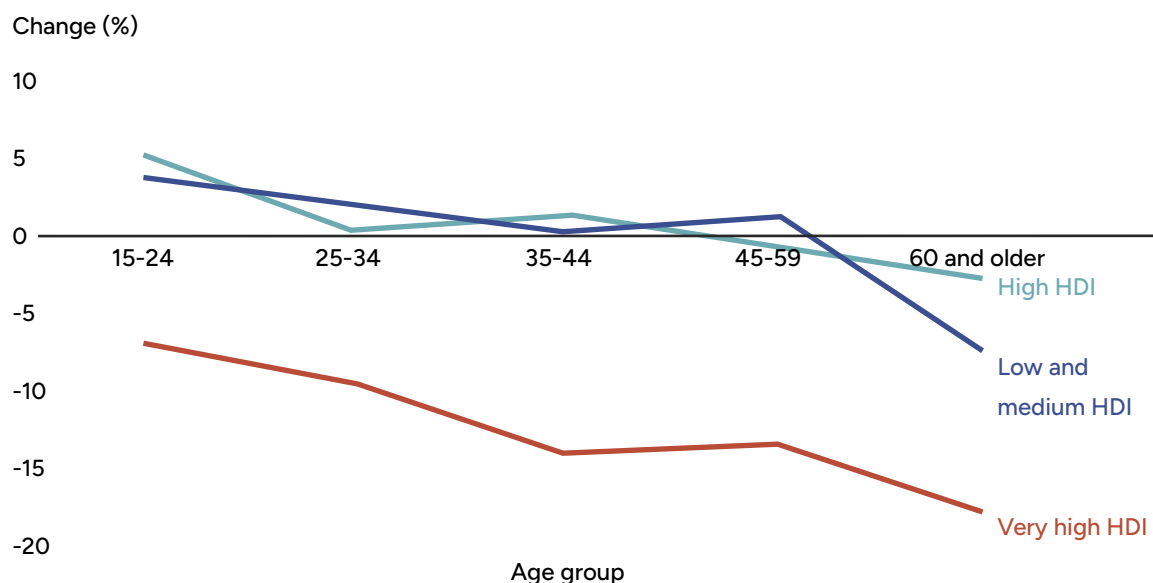
Source: Human Development Report based on data from WIPO (2021), 2025.

2. AI dalam Sistem Keamanan

Care technologies, as well as policies around age care, also need to be informed by an understanding of older people's preferences, beliefs, expectations and fears regarding AI. Older people across HDI levels expect to have less choice and control over their lives as AI technologies become further integrated into daily life. Trust in AI technologies is lowest among older people. Only 48 percent of older people, as opposed to 68 percent of younger people, express confidence that AI technologies are currently designed to act in the best interest of society.



Figure 4.4 Older people expect to have less choice and control over their lives as artificial intelligence technologies become more integrated into daily life.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

Human Development Report 2025 argues for reframing care as central to human flourishing, positioning AI as a complement that strengthens human connection rather than substituting for it. Narratives that value care as a social good ensure that AI technologies in this domain advance dignity, empathy, and collective well-being.

3. AI, Gender Equality, and Bias

AI both reflects and reproduces social inequalities. The intersection between AI and gender equality illustrates how narratives can perpetuate or challenge structural inequalities. Biased datasets, discriminatory algorithms, and exclusionary design choices risk reproducing gender-based disparities.

Women's marginalization from the technological community has a profound impact on the design, features and use of technologies. The underrepresentation of women and girls in STEM and their lower digital skills persist globally. On average, 35 percent of STEM graduates are women, a share that has changed little over the past decade. Women's representation among STEM graduates is higher in some countries than in others.

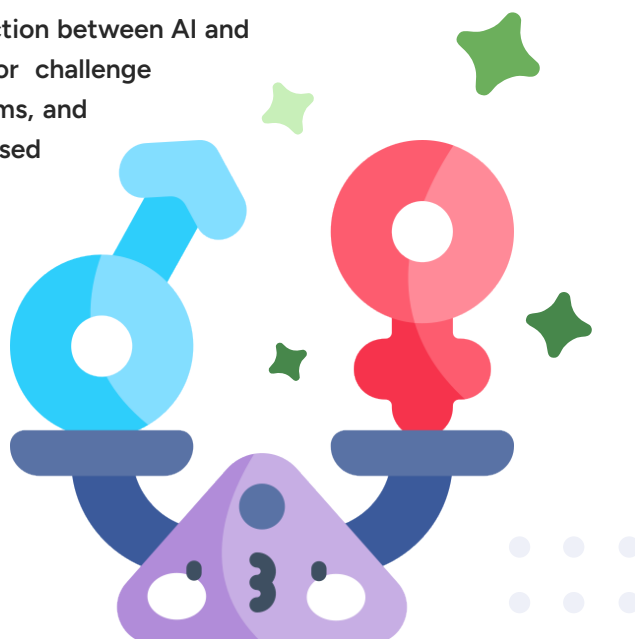
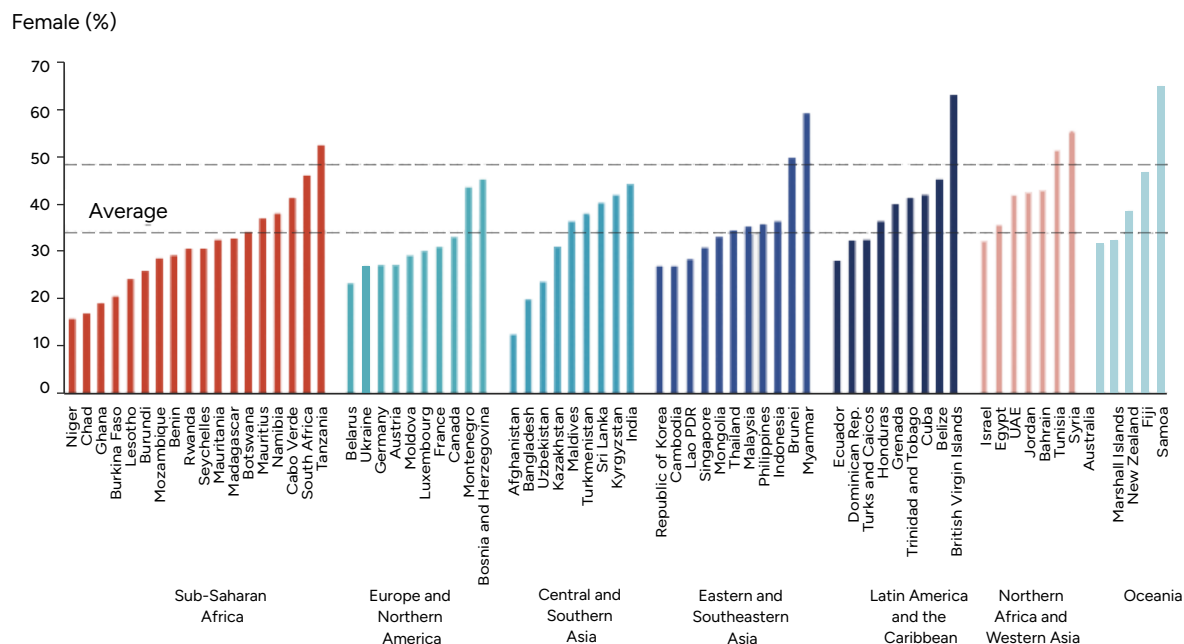
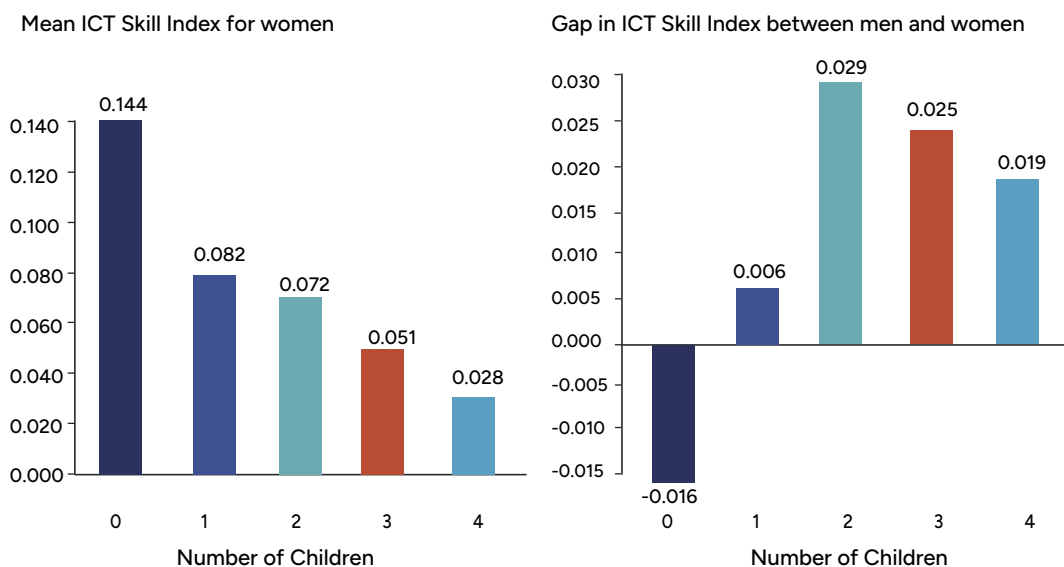


Figure 4.5 Only 35 percent of graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics are women.



Source: UNESCO (2024), 2025.

Figure 4.6 Women's information and communication technology skills decline and the gender gap in skills widens.



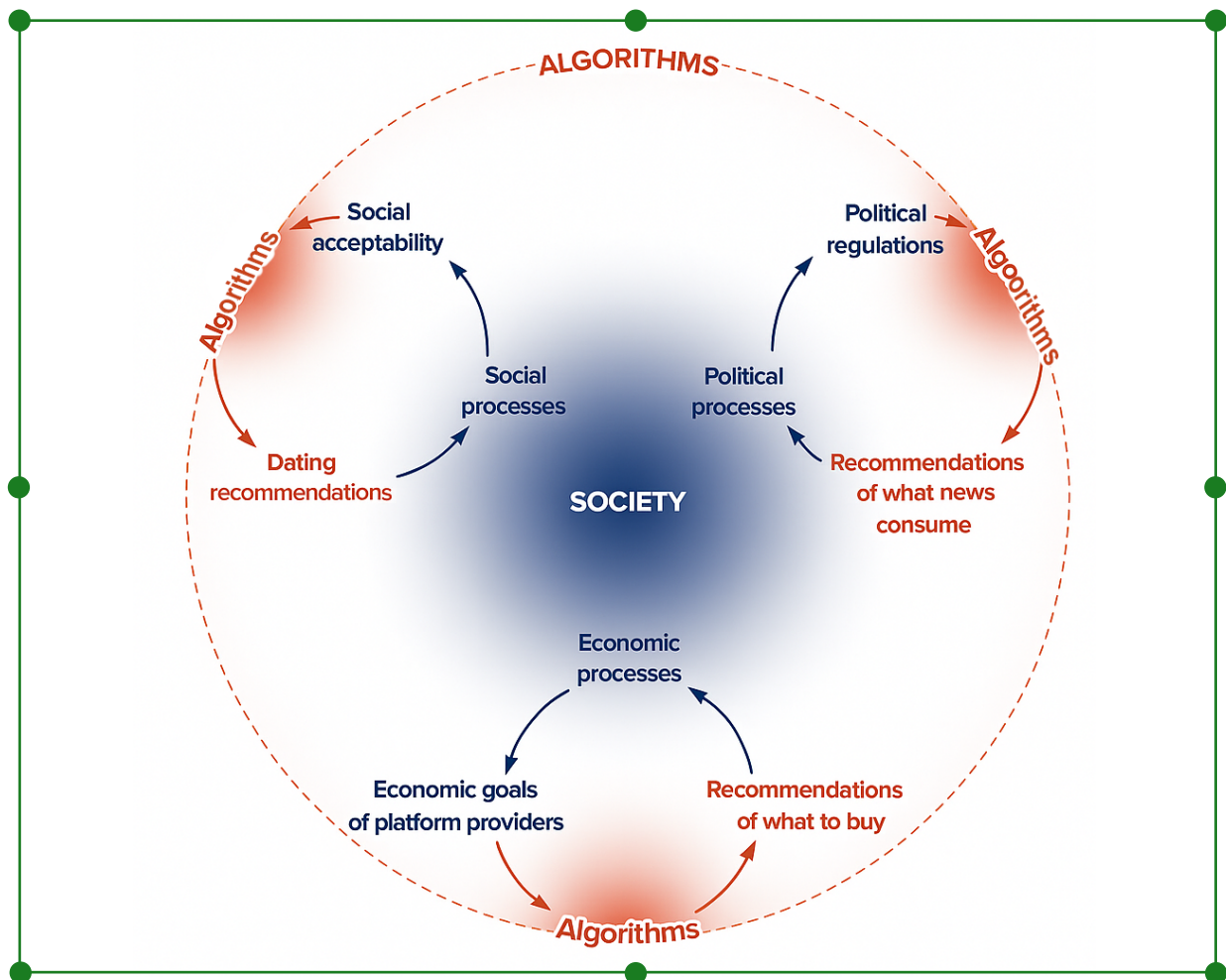
Source: Human Development Report (2025)

Yet, when framed differently, AI can be mobilized as a tool for equity, identifying patterns of discrimination, challenging stereotypes, and supporting gender-inclusive policies. Human Development Report 2025 highlights that realizing this potential requires deliberate narratives that foreground fairness, accountability, and diversity.

Algorithms, Social Choices, and Power

Algorithmic intermediaries are subtly shaping the fabric of society and influencing human relations and behaviour in ways both profound and unseen. To examine in detail how AI “power over” is manifested, take the recommender systems widely deployed in web search and digital platforms. This type of AI is one of the most consequential ways that AI algorithms mediate and influence human relations, interacting with social, political and economic processes, shaped by and shaping economic incentives, regulations and social norms.

Figure 5.3 Recommender algorithms show how artificial intelligence is shaping social, economic and political processes.



Source: Wagner and others (2021), 2025.



Power Asymmetries and Dependencies in the Global AI Race

The concentration of AI capabilities also maps onto global inequalities. This report highlights that only a handful of countries dominate AI research, infrastructure, and innovation, leaving others dependent on imported technologies. Insights from this report highlight gaps across low- and several middle-income countries along various dimensions.

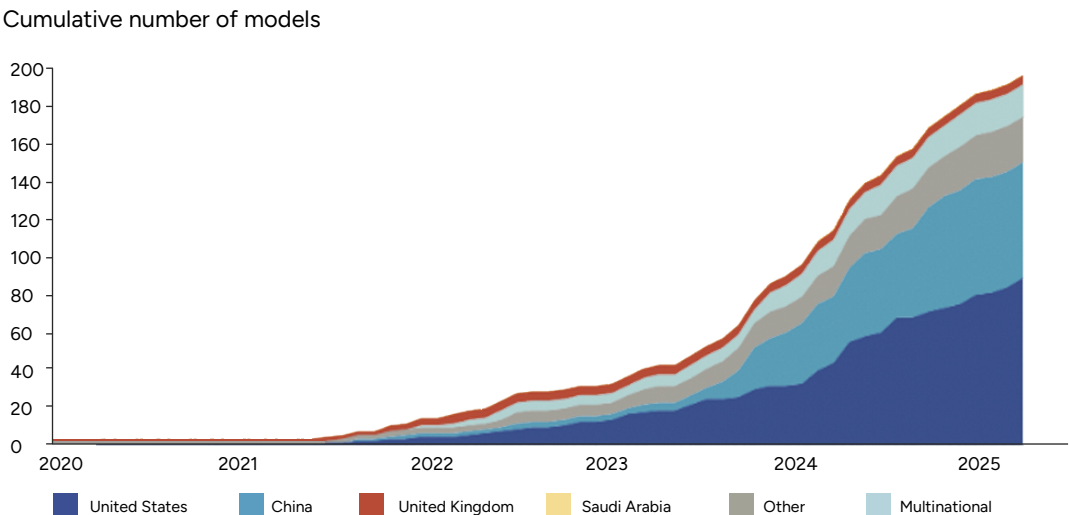
Table 5.2 Gaps across country income groups based on popular artificial intelligence (AI) metrics.

Global AI Vibrancy Tool	Government AI Readiness Index	AI Preparedness Index	Global AI Index
Highlights gaps in AI activity, development and impact across countries.	High-income countries traditionally lead due to mature tech sectors.	Wealthier economies (advanced and some emerging markets) are better prepared for AI adoption.	China and the United States dominate across investment, innovation and implementation.
Among 36 evaluated countries, only India (ranked 4th) is lower middle income showing low AI vibrancy in lower-income countries.	2024 data show low- and middle-income countries improving in governance, ethics and data strategies potentially closing gaps.	Considerable variation exists, with low-income countries lagging.	The next eight countries are closer in rank, with India as the only low- or middle-income country in the top 10. The remaining 73 countries trail behind.

Sumner: AIPI 2025; Oxford Insights 2023; Stanford Institute for Human- Centered AI 2025; Tortoise Media 2025.

Most large- scale AI models today are developed by organizations based in the United States, China, and the United Kingdom. Only a small fraction originates from other countries, including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and very few are created through international collaborations. Investment is also concentrated in the United States and China.

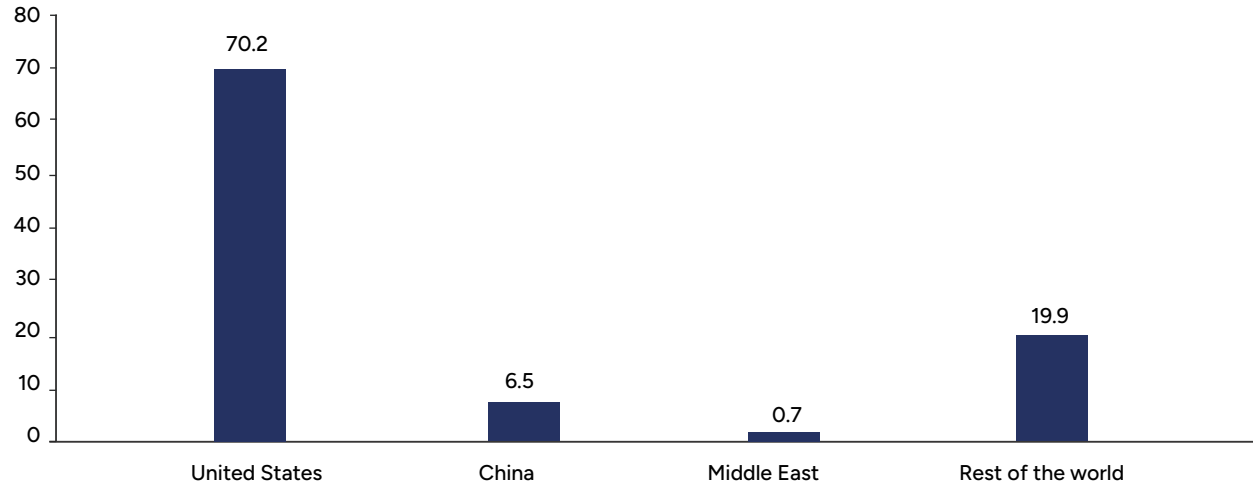
Figure 5.5 The majority of today’s large- scale artificial intelligence models are developed by organizations based in the United States, followed by China and the United Kingdom.



Source: Epoch AI (2024), 2025.

Figure 5.6 Most global investment in artificial intelligence (AI) flowed to the United States in 2024.

Notable global AI investment flows (\$ billions)

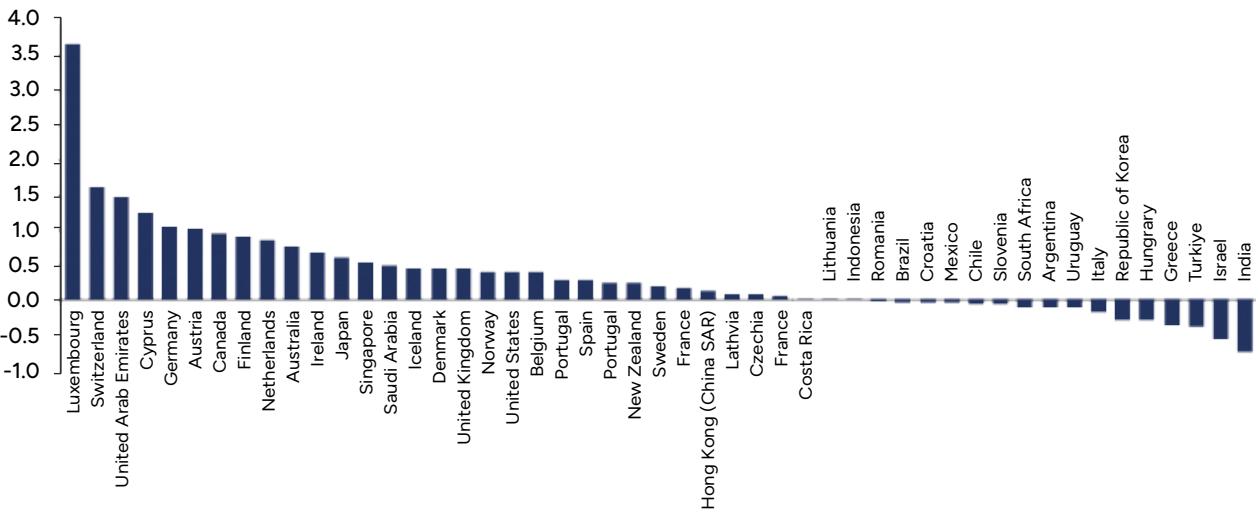


Source: Lucidity Insights (2024), 2025.

There is also a stark divide in AI talent between low- and middle-income countries on the one hand and high-income economies on the other. High-income countries such as the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States leverage existing infrastructure and funding to attract talent, while emerging economies face an uphill battle. This entrenches a cycle where innovation clusters in wealthy countries, risking leaving others further behind in AI innovation, supply and deployment.

Figure 5.7 Artificial intelligence (AI) talent has been flowing towards high- income countries.

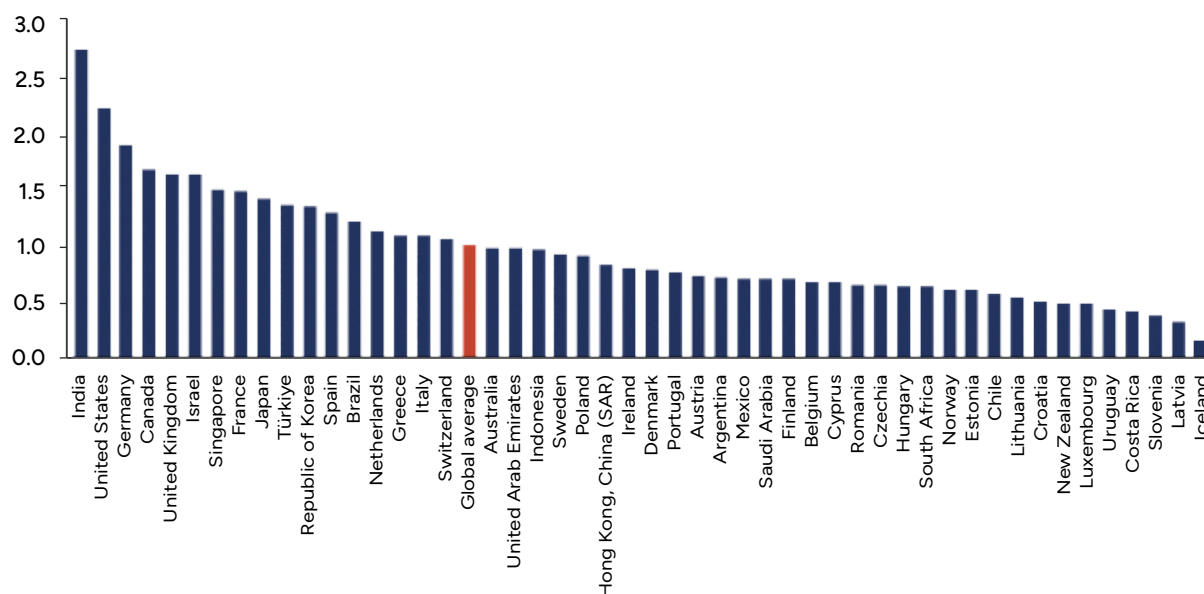
Net AI skills migration, 2023 (per 10,000 LinkedIn members)



Source: OECD (2025)

Figure 5.8 India has the highest self-reported artificial intelligence (AI) skills penetration.

Cross-country AI skills penetration



Source: OECD (2025)

Without interventions, global disparities in AI capacity risk entrenching a bifurcated world: one of AI producers and standard-setters, and another of dependent consumers. Narrowing this gap requires international cooperation, investments in capacity building, and inclusive multilateral governance that treats AI not as a zero-sum competition but as a global public good.

Reimagining Choices in the Age of AI

Complex social, ethical, and political challenges cannot be resolved solely by algorithms; rather, they require frameworks that place human agency at the core. Reimagining choices in the AI era thus means rejecting technological determinism and affirming the role of collective decision-making in ensuring AI serves as an instrument to expand human freedoms and capabilities.

This report bridges micro- and macro-level evidence and analysis to put forward a framework for AI-augmented human development. Detailed policies and interventions need to attend to both the context in which AI is deployed and its affordances. Three strategic directions to inform more detailed actions: **building a complementary economy**, **driving innovation with intent**, and **investing in capabilities** that count.



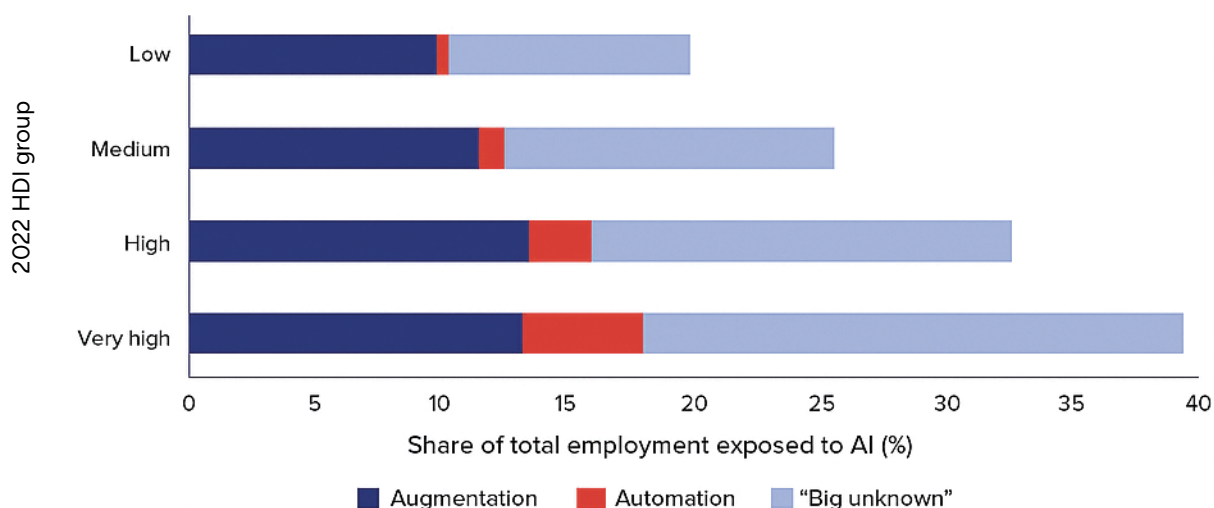
Membangun Ekonomi Komplementaritas

Building a Complementarity Economy

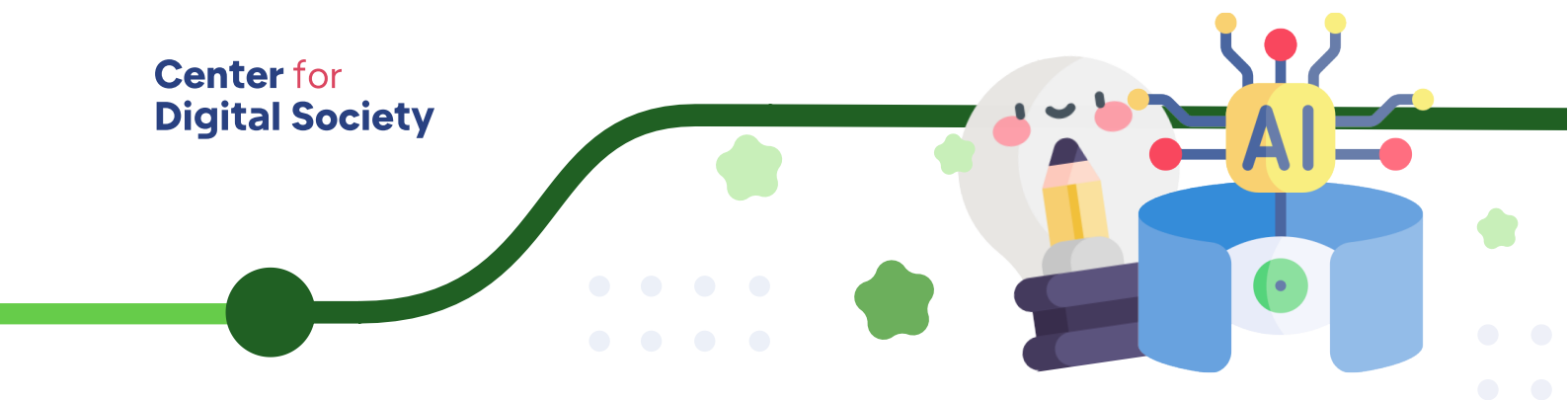
The concept of a complementarity economy is a cornerstone of AI-augmented human development. AI should not be seen merely as an automation tool that displaces human labor but as a technology that complements human work. But, complementarity requires fundamental preconditions, including access to electricity, internet connectivity, cloud infrastructure, and digital literacy. In their absence, AI will deepen divides between those with access and those excluded.

When adequately supported, AI can also act as a “bridge” for marginalized communities, helping to close knowledge and skill gaps by making previously inaccessible resources available. Data on job exposure to AI seem to confirm this. Across HDI groups the augmentation exposure of current employment is higher than the automation exposure. Female employment shows higher job exposure to AI augmentation than male employment. But, the largest share of jobs exposed to AI falls into “a big unknown,” with potential for both augmentation and automation.

Figure 6.1 Across Human Development Index (HDI) groups the largest share of jobs exposed to artificial intelligence (AI) falls into “a big unknown”.

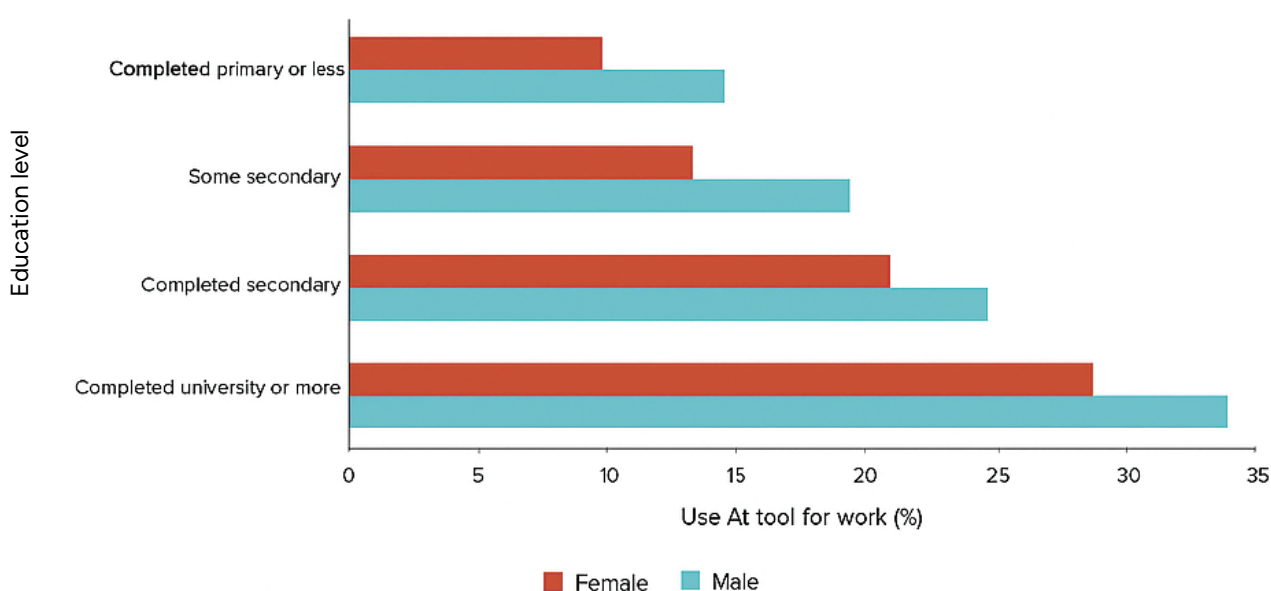


Source: Human Development Report Office using data from the International Labour Organization Harmonized Microdata Repository and the method described in Gmyrek, Berg and Bescond (2023), 2025



The survey points towards an expected increase in use of AI tools for work, even though a substantial share of people are still not using them. Men and people with greater levels of education report higher use of AI for work, across all HDI groups, highlighting the need for targeted policies to ensure that women and people with lower levels of education also benefit from labour-enhancing AI opportunities.

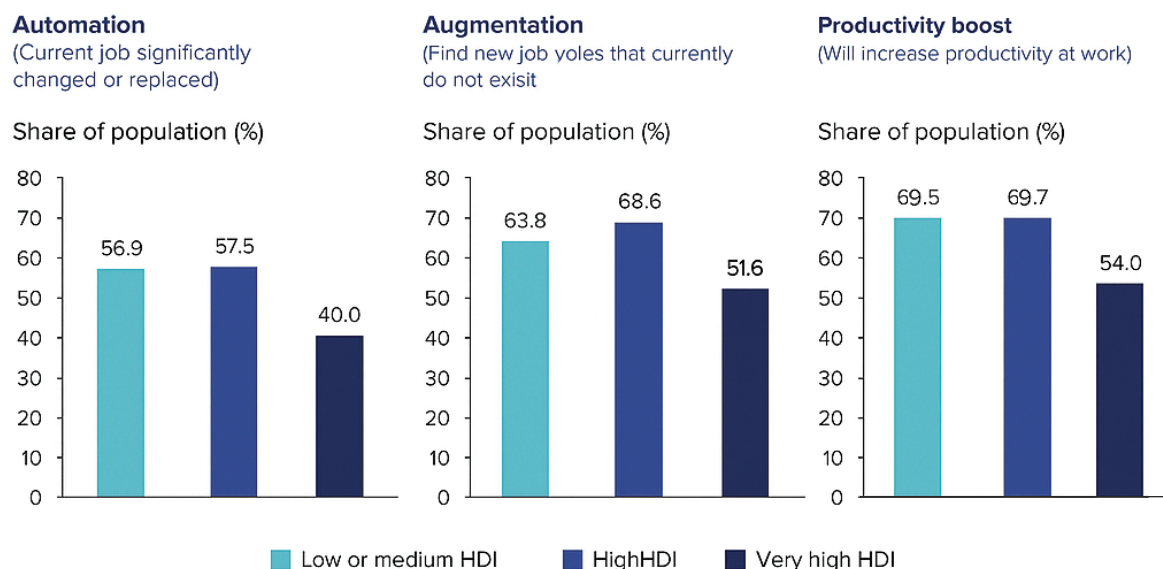
Figure 6.2 Men and people with greater levels of education report higher use of artificial intelligence (AI) for work, across all Human Development Index groups.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

According to the survey, about half of respondents expect AI to lead to job automation. But an even larger share, 60 percent, expect new opportunities for job augmentation to arise. People in low and medium HDI countries have higher expectations of shifts in the labour market than people in very high HDI countries. In low and medium HDI countries 70 percent of respondents expect that AI will help them increase their productivity at work, and 64 per cent expect that AI will help them find new job roles that currently do not exist, while 57 percent expect that their current jobs will be replaced due to AI.

Figure 6.3 Respondents in low and medium Human Development Index (HDI) countries expect labour market changes, through augmentation, automation and productivity boosts, with artificial intelligence.



Source: Human Development Report (2025)

The survey results also show that while respondents expect automation to take place across occupations, they also expect augmentation to occur. Almost 40 percent of clerical workers, an occupation that is typically portrayed as being at risk of AI automation, expect that AI will lead to transformational change of their jobs and perceive both augmentation opportunities and automation risks. Overall, 4 of 10 respondents from the survey expect to be affected by both augmentation and automation, so while they believe that their current jobs will be substantially changed by AI, they also expect that AI will create new job roles that do not currently exist.

Driving Innovation with Intent

Aligning socially desirable with privately profitable AI research and development is a transformative opportunity to advance human development. Driving innovation with intent means harnessing AI for science and technological innovation and steering AI towards human development through incentives, including novel AI benchmarks, and through multistakeholder partnerships. Yet, these benefits can only materialize under conditions of safe, transparent, and ethical integration. Ensuring that AI advances human development depends in part on aligning AI innovation incentives in different ways. That includes, for instance, avoiding creating innovation traps, which could undermine AI paths that advance human development. This could be achieved if AI research and development adopt a broader perspective seeking to align AI advancements with societal goals, pluralism and inclusion rather than being narrowly driven by contested or speculative pursuits.



Investing in Capabilities that Count

The foundation of human development in the AI era lies in investment in capabilities. Seizing AI's potential starts with shifting the focus in education from quantity to quality. AI may change cognition and the skills important to strive for. High-quality learning requires the ability to understand the world, critically assess large amounts of information, define objectives and apply knowledge in an ever changing and complex environment. Three core areas need attention as AI diffuses: critical thinking, creative thinking and relational thinking.

Critical thinking is vital for evaluating large amounts of information and making decisions that align with one's values and circumstances. Creative thinking, the cognitive process that generates, assesses, and improves valuable and original ideas is essential for adapting to evolving circumstances and setting new goals and priorities. Relational thinking is crucial for making decisions in a context of interdependence, whether with the people around (empathy, compassion), societies (responsibility, citizenship), or planet (recognition of our embeddedness in nature).

Strength and Weakness Analysis of the Report



Strengths:

The Human Development Report 2025 demonstrates several notable strengths that reinforce its position as a significant global policy document. First, the report provides a highly comprehensive and detailed discussion, capturing the multifaceted nature of artificial intelligence and its implications for human development. Second, it is firmly grounded in evidence, drawing on robust datasets, surveys, and empirical studies, thereby ensuring credibility and policy relevance. Third, the report employs a multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach, integrating social, political, economic, environmental, and technological perspectives. This breadth of analysis enables the Human Development Report 2025 to frame AI not simply as a technical phenomenon, but as a deeply embedded factor in broader human development trajectories.



Weaknesses:

Despite these strengths, the report also presents certain weaknesses that limit the clarity and coherence of its arguments. Some sections exhibit overlapping or redundant discussions, which may dilute the distinctiveness of each thematic strand. The overall structure of the document is at times less systematic, making it challenging for readers to follow the logical progression across chapters. Furthermore, the alignment position between narrative, argumentation, and supporting evidence, such as figures, tables, and graphics, could be improved. In several cases, data visualizations are not fully integrated into the flow of the narrative, resulting in weaker connections between empirical evidence and analytical insights.



Conclusion: Towards AI-Augmented Human Development

Reimagining choices thus requires shifting the debate away from technological determinism toward intentional, human-centred design. Human Development Report 2025 stresses that the future of human development will not be determined by whether AI replaces humans but by how societies choose to embed AI within social, economic, and political systems. With inclusive governance, transparent regulation, and collaborative decision-making, AI can serve as an instrument that expands human choices, strengthens agency, and supports sustainable development. It demands policy action that is grounded in human development realities of each country and centred around the three areas of action proposed in this chapter:

- 1) Pursuing a complementarity economy implies strengthening the networks that facilitate productive interaction between people and AI.
- 2) In innovation with intent, harness the potential of AI to be the invention of a method of invention, giving new wings to humans' perennial aspirations to understand and create.
- 3) And when it comes to capabilities that count, seize AI's opportunities to personalize education and medicine, expand access and adapt technology-enhanced service delivery to different local realities across groups and development contexts.

There are also many potential pathways in which AI can enhance human development, and those outlined above may not pan out

- 1) AI can enable people, organizations and firms to access not only information but also know-how.
- 2) There are more opportunities to generate positive spillovers from AI investments that spread across the economy.
- 3) AI opens new opportunities to expand trade in and increase the productivity of services. On trade AI lowers the language and culture barriers in international communication. On productivity and employment in services, strategies could include
 - a. Working with large incumbent firms to increase local employment.
 - b. Enabling smaller firms to access and use AI to enhance their productive capabilities.
 - c. Empowering workers directly, in firms or when self-employed, with access to AI in ways that complement low-skilled workers to make them more productive.
 - d. AI's flexibility can empower people to seek and iterate solutions to their problems or pursuits that are tailored to diverse and local contexts and even to the unique specificity of individual firms.
 - e. Access to AI does not require additional physical infrastructure; it is immediately accessible to those online.

If strategically guided, AI can enhance productivity, broaden inclusion, and open new frontiers of development while upholding principles of justice and equity. An AI-augmented human development framework offers a way forward that is dynamic and can adapt to rapid technological change while being grounded enough to ensure that AI advances translate into meaningful improvements in people's lives.

