



CENTER FOR GLOBAL AI INNOVATIVE GOVERNANCE

Progress Report on the AI Capacity-Building Action Plan for Good and for All

Center for Global AI Innovative Governance

October 2026



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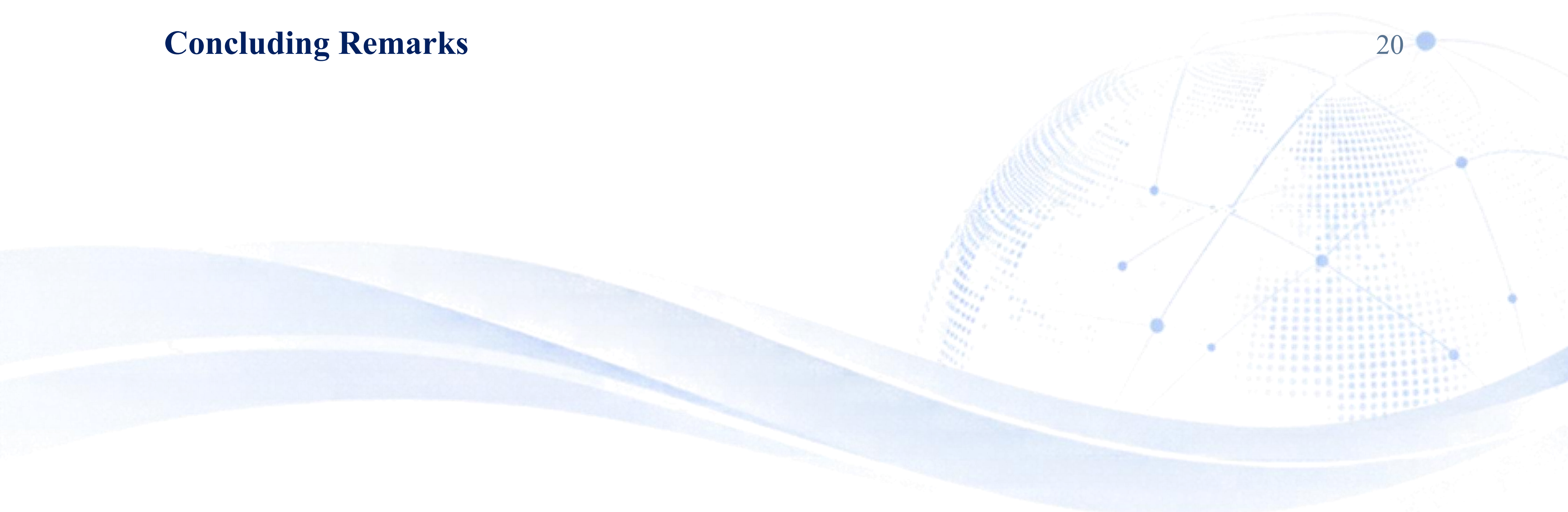
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Contents

Foreword	1
01 The Accelerating Evolution of the AI Divide: A Contemporary Imperative for Inclusive Capacity Building	2
(1) Weak Industrial Foundations and Innovation Systems Hinder AI Adoption across Sectors	3
(2) Gaps in AI Literacy and Shortages of Skilled Personnel Constrain Technology Absorption and Follow-on Innovation	3
(3) Data and Language Divides Reduce the Visibility of Local Knowledge	4
(4) Gaps in AI Safety and Governance Capacity Heighten Concerns over Marginalization	4
02 The Launch and Evolution of the AI Capacity-Building Action Plan for Good and for All: From Consensus on the Initiative to Cooperation Mechanisms	5
(1) Capacity Building Becomes an Important Component of the Multilateral AI Agenda	5
(2) The Group of Friends Provides a Solid Channel for Articulating Needs and Connecting Partners	6
(3) Cooperation Shifts from Short-Term Exchanges to Integrated Capacity Building	6
(4) Cooperation Expands from Bilateral Projects to Multilevel Partnership Networks	7

03 Ten Actions: Translating Opportunities for All into Capacity for Development	8
(1) Actively Promoting North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation	8
(2) Advancing Cooperation on AI Model R&D and Sectoral Applications	9
(3) Tapping the Potential for Cooperation on Green Development, Climate Change and Biodiversity	10
(4) Building Platforms for International Cooperation and Fostering an Open and Open-Source Ecosystem	11
(5) Advancing Short- and Medium-Term Education and Training, Joint Education Programs, and Study Visits and Exchanges	12
(6) Strengthening Support for Human Resource Development through Training and Seminars	13
(7) Promoting Public AI Literacy and Protecting the Digital Rights of Women and Children	14
(8) Developing Language Corpora and Preserving Linguistic and Cultural Diversity	15
(9) Improving Data Governance Systems and Promoting the Fair and Inclusive Use of Data	16
(10) Strengthening Strategy and Policy Exchanges and Jointly Enhancing AI Safety and Governance Capacity	17
04 Lessons from Two Years of Practice	18
(1) Access to Technology Is the Starting Point; Independent Development Is the Goal	18
(2) Demand-Driven Approaches, Joint Consultation and Co-Development for Project Delivery	18
(3) Data, Models, Talent and Governance Must Be Advanced in a Coordinated Manner	19
(4) Openness and Open Source Are the Prerequisites for Inclusive Development	19
Concluding Remarks	20



Foreword

Artificial intelligence is expanding humanity's capacity to understand and transform the world at an unprecedented pace, while reshaping global economic and social structures as well as the conditions for development. Technological progress has lowered some barriers to AI adoption, yet it has not automatically narrowed the gaps among countries in computing power, data, talent, industry and governance. For many developing countries, AI not only represents a new opportunity to accelerate modernization, but could also be a new factor in widening the digital divide.

In September 2024, China proposed the AI Capacity-Building Action Plan for Good and for All (the Action Plan), which is centered on five visions—Promote AI and Digital Infrastructure Connectivity, Empower Industries Through the AI Plus Application, Enhance AI Literacy and Strengthen Personnel Training, Improve AI Data Security and Diversity, and Ensure AI Safety, Reliability and Controllability—and sets out ten actions. The Action Plan aims to help all countries, especially those in the Global South, acquire on an equal footing the capabilities needed to access, apply and govern AI and to benefit from it on an ongoing basis.

Over the past two years, the need for strengthening AI capacity building has become increasingly urgent across the international community. Multilateral consensus has gradually taken shape, cooperation mechanisms have been continuously improved, and a series of new practices and new experience have emerged in areas including open-source models, industry applications, education and training, corpus development, data governance and risk governance.

This report provides an interim review of the situation, progress and practices during the first two years of the Action Plan's implementation, summarizes the experience gained, and offers an outlook for the future.

01 The Accelerating Evolution of the AI Divide: A Contemporary Imperative for Inclusive Capacity Building

The rapid development of AI technology does not mean that all countries start from the same position. World Bank data shows that high-income countries account for 77% of global colocation data center capacity, 87% of AI models and 91% of venture capital investment. The African continent accounts for less than 1% of global data center capacity and has fewer than 1,000 chips available for training AI models. These trends indicate that while access to AI technologies is expanding, the resources underpinning technological R&D, deployment and continuous iteration remain highly concentrated.

The UNCTAD Technology and Innovation Report 2025 further notes that fewer than one-third of developing countries have formulated AI strategies, and 118 countries are not represented in major AI governance initiatives. The *Global AI Governance Index (2026): Perspectives from the Global South and Capacity Building*, published by the Center for Global AI Innovative Governance, emphasizes that, against a backdrop where global AI capacity is highly concentrated in a small number of countries, whether the dividends of AI can be broadly shared is becoming a key measure of governance quality. Many countries do not lack the willingness to develop AI; rather, they face multiple constraints including weak foundational conditions, difficulties in translating technology into practical applications, insufficient talent supply, limited data representativeness and lagging governance capacity. These countries' concerns about being excluded from technological progress and rule-making are translating into concrete demand for strengthening capacity building and safeguarding development autonomy.

The five visions put forward in the Action Plan—Promote AI and Digital Infrastructure Connectivity, Empower Industries Through the AI Plus Application, Enhance AI Literacy and Strengthen Personnel Training, Improve AI Data Security and Diversity, and Ensure AI Safety, Reliability and Controllability—are both cooperation objectives and a basic framework for observing the current AI divide.

(1) Weak Industrial Foundations and Innovation Systems Hinder AI Adoption across Sectors

Model capabilities can only be translated into development outcomes when embedded in real production and public service processes. In many developing countries, agriculture, health care, education, manufacturing, energy and public governance remain in the process of digital transformation, with limited operational data, inconsistent equipment standards, and a lack of stable collaboration mechanisms among research institutions, enterprises and government departments. Even when models are available, they often cannot be readily adapted to local languages, regulations, industry processes or cost constraints.

UNCTAD identifies infrastructure, data and skills as three key pillars for developing countries to leverage AI. If any one of these pillars is missing, AI applications will remain confined to short-term demonstration stages. Advancing “AI Plus” across industries should begin with the practical needs of each region and country, integrating technology adaptation, process redesign, and ongoing operations and maintenance into a single project, rather than simply transplanting external solutions.

(2) Gaps in AI Literacy and Shortages of Skilled Personnel Constrain Technology Absorption and Follow-on Innovation

AI capacity building requires not only algorithm engineers but also professionals from diverse backgrounds who understand both the limitations of the technology and developments in its applications. ITU points out that basic digital skills are becoming widespread, but high-level skills such as online safety, problem-solving and digital content creation are developing more slowly. For many countries, a shortage of highly skilled professionals coexists with weak foundational literacy, and brain drain further undermines local research, engineering and governance capacity.

If training remains at the level of one-off knowledge transfer, or covers only a small number of technical personnel, it will be difficult to build sustainable local capacity. Strengthening AI literacy and talent development requires a tiered system spanning public awareness, vocational skills, and the development of R&D and governance professionals, with particular attention to enabling participation by women and children, persons with disabilities, and residents in remote areas, to ensure broad and inclusive capacity building.

(3) Data and Language Divides Reduce the Visibility of Local Knowledge

Data is an important foundation for training, evaluating and improving AI systems. However, global data resources are uneven in terms of digitization, availability and representativeness. The global language divide is becoming a major challenge in the field of AI. Mainstream large language models perform significantly better in English and a few other widely used languages than in other languages. Many less widely spoken languages, local knowledge and cultures, and the social experiences of developing countries have yet to be adequately incorporated into the training and evaluation of frontier models.

Data scarcity often goes hand in hand with concerns over data security. On the one hand, many regions of the world face inconsistent data standards, scattered data storage and insufficient digitization. On the other hand, the cross-border use of data continues to face obstacles related to personal privacy, commercial ownership rights and differences in regulatory policies. Improving data security and diversity requires coordinated efforts to develop standards, language resources and evaluation benchmarks, enabling all countries to participate in data governance and share in the value of data, thereby fueling AI development.

(4) Gaps in AI Safety and Governance Capacity Heighten Concerns over Marginalization

As AI evolves rapidly and its applications continue to expand, testing and evaluation, early warning of risks and emergency response are becoming increasingly important. Current trends indicate that advances in AI capabilities are outpacing improvements in AI governance tools. All countries, particularly those in the Global South, need to properly balance development and security.

Some developing countries are concerned that, in the age of AI, they will remain technology adopters, raw data providers and rule-takers, with limited opportunities to capture high value-added benefits or participate in global governance. These concerns reflect the Global South's call for equal participation, development autonomy and representativeness in rule-making. To ensure AI safety, reliability and controllability, capacity building for developing countries must be incorporated into global governance arrangements, so that AI safety governance supports and safeguards development rather than becoming a new technological barrier.

02 **The Launch and Evolution of the AI Capacity-Building Action Plan for Good and for All: From Consensus on the Initiative to Cooperation Mechanisms**

In the two years since the Action Plan began to be implemented, a clearer international consensus has emerged on AI capacity building: the AI divide cannot be bridged through market-driven diffusion alone; public investment, international cooperation and institutional arrangements must work together. With the United Nations as the main channel, China has worked to gradually translate consensus on principles into cooperation mechanisms and practical projects.

(1) Capacity Building Becomes an Important Component of the Multilateral AI Agenda

In July 2024, the United Nations General Assembly, at its 78th session, adopted by consensus the China-led resolution on “Enhancing International Cooperation on Capacity-Building of Artificial Intelligence” (A/RES/78/311), co-sponsored by 143 Member States. The resolution emphasizes respect for each country’s independent choice of its development path and encourages cooperation in areas such as policy exchanges, knowledge sharing and capacity building. In September of the same year, the Global Digital Compact was adopted at the United Nations Summit of the Future, further integrating efforts to bridge the digital and AI divides and support capacity building in developing countries into the global digital cooperation agenda.

Against this backdrop, China released the Action Plan, translating broad principles into a concrete agenda for cooperation through its five visions and ten actions. The Action Plan helps make capacity building a key priority for promoting equity in development, strengthening the representation and voice of developing countries, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

(2) The Group of Friends Provides a Solid Channel for Articulating Needs and Connecting Partners

On December 3, 2024, China and Zambia co-hosted the inaugural meeting of the Group of Friends for International Cooperation on AI Capacity-Building at United Nations Headquarters in New York, with representatives from more than 80 countries and UN agencies in attendance. On May 5, 2026, the Group held a thematic meeting at UN Headquarters, bringing together more than 120 representatives from over 50 countries and international organizations. China also co-hosted the high-level “Geneva Dialogue: Solidarity for AI Governance,” actively advancing the implementation of the UN General Assembly resolution on international cooperation on AI capacity building.

Since its establishment, the Group has identified the needs of participating parties through institutionalized thematic meetings and exchanges on projects, helping establish links among governments, international organizations, enterprises, universities and research institutions. Its value lies not only in presenting cooperation initiatives, but also in providing a standing channel for developing countries to articulate their needs in infrastructure, talent development, AI applications and governance. This lays the groundwork for a mechanism to match these needs with available resources and expertise, informing the design of subsequent projects.

(3) Cooperation Shifts from Short-Term Exchanges to Integrated Capacity Building

Early international cooperation on AI focused largely on individual technology demonstrations, exchanges at conferences and short-term training. As projects progress, more cooperation initiatives have begun to integrate cloud services, models and data, and understanding of policies and rules. In this process, cooperation platforms such as application cooperation centers and open-source communities are becoming interconnected with solutions for different sectors. Participants are also expanding beyond technical personnel to include policymakers, educators, communicators and industry practitioners.

This shift shows that inclusiveness does not mean the unconditional provision of a single technology product. It means helping partners build comprehensive capacity to apply and govern technologies. Only by involving local institutions throughout the project lifecycle can external resources be translated into lasting capacity.

(4) Cooperation Expands from Bilateral Projects to Multilevel Partnership Networks

Over the past two years, government departments, UN agencies, regional organizations, enterprises, universities, research institutions, industry associations and civil society organizations have participated in international cooperation on AI capacity building in increasingly diverse ways. Bilateral cooperation allows projects to be tailored to specific national conditions. Regional platforms facilitate the sharing of infrastructure and solutions, while multilateral mechanisms provide a common platform for policy and regulatory coordination, knowledge sharing and consolidation, and resource mobilization.

These multilevel partnership networks are becoming more integrated. Some countries still seek to erect higher technological barriers, while information sharing between some projects remains limited, and stable links among identified needs, funding channels and evaluation standards have yet to be established. Nevertheless, separate initiatives are gradually taking shape as a sustainable cooperation framework in which projects and resources can be readily identified and combined. The reach of projects and the efficiency of resource use continue to improve.

03

Ten Actions: Translating Opportunities for All into Capacity for Development

The ten actions set out in the Action Plan cover infrastructure, models and sectoral applications, green development, cooperation platforms, education and training, human resources assistance, public AI literacy, language corpora, data governance, and AI safety and governance. Together, they establish a comprehensive pathway from access to technology to the capacity for independent development. Over the past two years, China has brought together resources through various forms of cooperation, producing a body of concrete cases that can be examined and used to draw lessons. These experiences can inform and support wider efforts to advance inclusive AI development worldwide.

(1) Actively Promoting North-South, South-South and Triangular Cooperation

International cooperation on AI capacity building requires an open mindset that transcends geographical boundaries and fosters mutual benefit and win-win cooperation. Building an open and shared open-source ecosystem can lower the costs of accessing and using AI products, enabling countries at different levels of AI development to draw on open tools for local research and development, scientific research practices and talent development, thereby helping bridge the AI divide.

Case 1

FlagOS: Delivering Open, Diverse and Affordable Collaborative Options for Global Users

FlagOS is an open-source, unified AI system software stack developed under the leadership of the Beijing Academy of Artificial Intelligence (BAAI) together with Peking University, Tsinghua University, the Institute of Computing Technology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, more than ten chip manufacturers and other member institutions. Designed to enable “develop once, migrate across chips, run everywhere,” it supports chips from 21 manufacturers, making it one of the AI system software stacks with the widest chip support in the world, and it is fully open source. FlagOS 2.0 adds operator libraries for six major domains, bringing the total number of operators to 1,454 and creating the world’s largest multi-chip operator library.

As an important technical foundation for open AI computing infrastructure worldwide, FlagOS not only improves the efficiency of model deployment, but also allows dispersed and heterogeneous AI computing resources of different generations around the world to be reorganized, scheduled and used, thereby lowering the computing barriers to AI innovation and AI education. FlagOS helps developers complete model migration, adaptation, validation and deployment at minimal cost, and supports multi-chip deployment of more than 90% of mainstream open-source large models. It has become one of the world's largest open-source software stacks, with 200,000 users worldwide.

In July 2026, FlagOS was recognized as an outstanding global AI for Good case at the AI for Good Global Summit hosted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for advancing open AI computing and education programs for developing countries worldwide.

(2) Advancing Cooperation on AI Model R&D and Sectoral Applications

Harnessing AI for poverty reduction, health care, agriculture, education, energy and industrial manufacturing requires integrating foundation models, domain knowledge, operational workflows and local data. Over the past two years, cooperation in these areas has gradually shifted from demonstrations of general-purpose models to applications in specific stages of production, with clearer distinctions among model research and development (R&D), system integration and on-site operations and maintenance.

Case 2

Large AI Models Help Improve Railway Operations and Maintenance in South Africa

South Africa was among the first countries on the African continent to develop an extensive railway network, and its railway system has a history spanning more than a century. Once one of Africa's busiest passenger rail networks, it faced mounting safety and security risks due to aging infrastructure, slow locomotive replacement and conventional protection measures. Chinese technology company Huawei partnered with the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) to bring Chinese AI solutions to the continent.

Drawing on Huawei's big data platform and DeepSeek AI technologies, PRASA is developing a three-layer capability framework comprising a digital hub platform, a smart operations center and a smart mobility ecosystem. The digital hub platform provides a unified data foundation that supports intelligent operations management and connects with the wider smart mobility ecosystem, enabling comprehensive AI integration across railway operations, management and passenger services. The smart operations center integrates core data from train dispatching, ticketing systems, security monitoring and emergency response to make operations management more intelligent.

The local application of large AI models has improved knowledge management across South Africa's railway system. Knowledge retrieval efficiency has increased by more than 90%, saving employees an average of 1.5 hours a day previously spent on unproductive searches. Operations and maintenance costs are expected to fall by at least 30% in the future.

(3) Tapping the Potential for Cooperation on Green Development, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Many developing countries face shared challenges in operating and maintaining clean energy facilities, managing climate-related risks and natural disasters, and conserving ecosystems. These are also areas in which artificial intelligence can swiftly deliver tangible public benefits. Cooperation in these areas should promote the safe and efficient operation of energy infrastructure, while connecting satellite- and ground-based observations, forecasting models, risk knowledge, warning dissemination and emergency response into an integrated chain.

Case 3

MAZU: Bridging Gaps in Disaster Preparedness through AI-Powered Early Warning

On July 26, 2025, the China Meteorological Administration (CMA) launched MAZU, China's solution for Early Warnings for All. It donated MAZU-Urban agents for urban multi-hazard early warning to representatives of Djibouti and Mongolia, and pursued cooperation with Ethiopia, Pakistan, the Solomon Islands and other countries on cloud-based early-warning systems. Tailored to the needs of different countries, MAZU provides customizable, easy-to-deploy tools, complemented by training programs, visiting scholar opportunities and professional exchanges.

To date, MAZU has been deployed in eight countries, including Pakistan and Djibouti, while its cloud-based version is used by more than 50 countries. In response to the severe mudslides along the China-Nepal border in August 2026, the CMA promptly developed and delivered a customized version of MAZU for Nepal. Over the past two years, the CMA has conducted 19 related training programs for a total of 525 participants. This experience shows that building early-warning capacity requires an integrated approach encompassing observation, models, personnel, equipment maintenance and response mechanisms.

In July 2026, at the 2026 World AI Conference and High-Level Meeting on Global AI Governance (WAIC 2026), President Xi Jinping announced that China would enable 30 countries to use the AI-powered meteorological warning system, or MAZU, to safeguard homes around the world.

(4) Building Platforms for International Cooperation and Fostering an Open and Open-Source Ecosystem

Platforms for international cooperation can bring together government needs, private-sector technologies, university research and financial services, thereby reducing the cost that individual countries would otherwise incur to build a full range of capabilities on their own. Open-source communities provide developers in developing countries with access to models, tools, datasets and evaluation methods. Such access, however, needs to be supported by training and localization.

Case 4

World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization: Making AI an International Public Good

On July 16, 2026, the Signing Ceremony of the Agreement on the Establishment of the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization (WAICO) was held in Shanghai. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, and representatives of a number of countries and international organizations attended the ceremony. Representatives of 29 countries, including China, Brazil, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Laos, Malaysia, Pakistan, Russia and South Africa, signed the Agreement at the ceremony, making their countries founding members of WAICO. Brunei, Viet Nam, Georgia, Tanzania and five other countries subsequently signed the Agreement, bringing the number of founding members to 38. WAICO is the world's first intergovernmental international organization dedicated to artificial intelligence.

Headquartered in Shanghai, WAICO follows the purposes of the UN Charter, upholds the vision of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits, and adheres to the people-centered principle. It aims to promote international cooperation and global governance on artificial intelligence and ensure the healthy, orderly development of artificial intelligence in a beneficial, safe and fair direction for the benefit of all humanity.

(5) Advancing Short- and Medium-Term Education and Training, Joint Education Programs, and Study Visits and Exchanges

Cooperation in education should both impart knowledge of artificial intelligence and help partner countries develop curricula, teaching staff, practical training environments and certification systems. Short-term training is well suited to building a rapid understanding of tools and practices, while joint education programs, teacher development and inter-institutional cooperation can help foster a sustainable talent pipeline. These two modalities should be designed in a coordinated manner and tailored to the education systems and needs of different countries.

Case 5

ScienceOne: Expanding AI-for-Science Training Internationally

The Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) launched ScienceOne in July 2025 and upgraded it to version 2.0 in 2026. The model is intended to combine general-purpose AI with specialized scientific capabilities and provide more reliable, comprehensive support for research. The ScienceOne project assembled a dataset of eight million high-quality scientific reasoning data entries to train the model to reason based on chains of knowledge and evidence.

Through the Science Lecture Series of the Alliance of National and International Science Organizations for the Belt and Road Regions (ANSO), the ScienceOne team has delivered lectures for researchers at the Alliance's 96 member institutions. Sessions cover practical use of ScienceOne, machine learning, deep learning and the fundamentals of large models. The series aims to improve researchers' AI literacy and practical skills and foster an open, shared, platform-driven ecosystem through international collaboration.

The ScienceOne team also provides training in AI-assisted scientific research for researchers from the Global South through UNESCO's Remote Access to Lab Equipment (UNESRALE) Initiative. More than 400 people applied for the first cohort. UNESCO and the ScienceOne team selected 20 early-career scientists in chemistry, biology, physics and related fields for intensive courses and practical instruction. The courses taught participants to use AI research tools and methods and supported cross-border research cooperation and capacity building.

(6) Strengthening Support for Human Resource Development through Training and Seminars

Training programs for policymakers, managers and technical professionals can enable participants to share development experience, identify cooperation needs and establish professional contacts. Linking policy discussions with technical instruction and needs assessment can also create pathways to subsequent training cooperation, policy dialogue and application projects.

At WAIC 2026, President Xi Jinping announced that China would provide developing countries with 5,000 opportunities in AI training and seminar programs over the next five years to support AI development and capacity building.

Case 6

Workshop on AI Capacity Building: Narrowing Digital and AI Divides in the Global South

The Workshop on AI Capacity Building is a flagship program under China's implementation of the UN General Assembly resolution on enhancing international cooperation on AI capacity building and the Action Plan. The first workshop opened in Shanghai in September 2024. UN Secretary-General António Guterres attended and addressed the opening ceremony. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has organized four workshops to date, hosted by universities including Tsinghua University, Peking University and East China Normal University. Lectures, discussions and field visits introduce representatives from Global South countries to developments in AI technology and its applications, with the aim of narrowing the AI divide.

The workshops have drawn more than 100 government officials and experts from over 60 countries and regional organizations, and have been warmly received by participants. Their agenda covers global governance, technology, sectoral applications and capacity building, giving participants a forum to compare policy approaches and discuss cooperation needs.

(7) Promoting Public AI Literacy and Protecting the Digital Rights of Women and Children

Safe and effective use of AI depends in part on public literacy. Education should cover more than basic tool use: it should address how to assess the reliability of information, protect personal data, recognize algorithmic bias, safeguard children online and use AI responsibly. Women, children and other vulnerable groups may face overlapping barriers involving devices, language, education and social norms. Program design should account for these barriers and include targeted participation and protection measures.

Programs for vulnerable groups should combine instruction with access to devices, language support, data protection and means of seeking redress. Schools, community organizations and public service providers can make this support available on a continuing basis.

Case 7

APEC Builds Women-Friendly AI

In April 2026, the APEC Digital Capacity Building Workshop on Women-Friendly AI was held at the China Institute for Innovation and Development Strategy. Government representatives from more than ten APEC economies, including Brunei, Canada and Indonesia, joined experts from international organizations, business leaders and academics. Participants discussed gender equality in AI, trustworthy product development and women's economic empowerment, and witnessed the release of the *APEC Women-Friendly AI Toolkit (Guidelines)*. The toolkit is built on five pillars: human-centeredness, safety and trustworthiness, inclusiveness, sustainability and broad accessibility. It sets out six steps for action: governance from data to algorithms, safety and privacy safeguards, women's participation in design, inclusive design, testing and feedback, and universal access. It provides technology developers, business managers and policymakers across the Asia-Pacific with practical guidance that can be applied and replicated.

In July 2026, APEC Digital Week was held in Sichuan, China. During the event, China hosted the Workshop on New Concepts and Approaches of AI Literacy Enhancement Actions for the Public. Participants exchanged practices and experience around two themes: expanding inclusive AI literacy education to help everyone bridge the digital divide, and strengthening safeguards for AI literacy to create a safe and healthy digital environment. The seminar supported continued efforts to improve AI literacy across the Asia-Pacific.

(8) Developing Language Corpora and Preserving Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

Developing language corpora requires more than collecting text. It also calls for compliant authorization procedures, quality control, annotation of cultural context, participation by local experts and multilingual evaluation. Open foundation models offer a new technical pathway for low-resource languages, allowing local institutions to continue training and developing applications on top of general-purpose capabilities.

Case 8

The Lao National Large Language Model: ASEAN's First National LLM for a Less Widely Used Language

The Lao National Large Language Model was deployed in September 2025, becoming ASEAN's first national model for a less widely used language to fully adopt a China-developed technology stack.

The model is a key project for Guangxi's AI cooperation with ASEAN. To address the scarcity of digital Lao-language corpora, underdeveloped digital infrastructure and digital economy foundations, and differences in linguistic expression and local customs, the Data Bureau of Guangxi worked with ten companies including China-ASEAN Information Harbor Co., Ltd. The model features fast Lao-language output and benchmark performance comparable to that of leading models in China and abroad.

The project developed a low-cost, replicable foundation model framework for ASEAN's less widely used languages. The framework has also been applied in foundation model research and development in Viet Nam, Thailand, Malaysia and other ASEAN countries.

(9) Improving Data Governance Systems and Promoting the Fair and Inclusive Use of Data

Developing countries need to decide, under their own laws and in the public interest, which data can be made openly available, which must be stored locally and which may be shared under trusted conditions. This will help them avoid being drawn passively into data value chains before they have adequate governance capacity.

Case 9

AI Security Operations Center: An Intelligent Solution for Data Security in Southeast Asia

In October 2024, an AI security operations center built by Sangfor Technologies for Srinakharinwirot University in Thailand was officially launched. Powered by the dual engines of XDR and Security GPT, the center reduced more than 10,000 daily alerts to just ten. Through a straightforward workflow, the technical team can assess and contain a high-risk incident within 30 seconds.

The center addresses the inefficiency of reviewing massive volumes of alerts and delays in responding to high-risk incidents. It provides 24/7 monitoring by cloud-based security experts and covers the full security operations lifecycle: detection, verification, containment, in-depth analysis and investigation, and protection policy updates. Together, these functions provide comprehensive security safeguards.

The solution has been deployed in Viet Nam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries, and is trusted by more than 5,000 customers.

(10) Strengthening Strategy and Policy Exchanges and Jointly Enhancing AI Safety and Governance Capacity

Countries differ in their stages of development, regulatory systems and tolerance for risk. Policy exchange is not intended to replicate a single governance model. Its purpose is to share methods for testing, evaluation, certification, regulation and emergency response, to help countries build governance capacity suited to the scale of their AI use, and to improve compatibility across institutional and technical standards.

Case 10

BRICS Strategic Alignment: International Cooperation on Global AI Governance

In July 2025, BRICS leaders issued the BRICS Leaders' Statement on the Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence. They agreed to develop guidelines for the responsible development, deployment and use of AI technologies in support of sustainable development and inclusive growth. The statement calls for global governance centered on the United Nations, supports meaningful participation by emerging markets, developing countries and the Global South, encourages policy exchange and dialogue, and emphasizes the need to balance development and security.

This was the first consensus document on global AI governance issued by BRICS at the leaders' level. It provides important guidance for AI cooperation among BRICS members and other countries of the Global South. Building on the statement, BRICS members can use platforms including the China-BRICS Artificial Intelligence Development and Cooperation Center to expand AI capacity building and practical cooperation and promote inclusive AI development in all countries.

04

Lessons from Two Years of Practice

Experience over the two years since the Action Plan was launched has yielded several common lessons. At their core is the need to give greater attention to both AI capacity building and the development of mechanisms for providing international public goods, integrate technical understanding with practical deployment, and connect short-term projects with long-term development.

(1) Access to Technology Is the Starting Point; Independent Development Is the Goal

Open-source models, cloud services and digital platforms have lowered the initial barriers to using AI, but they cannot replace the decision-making, research and development, and governance capabilities of local institutions. Genuine inclusion should enable partners to gradually develop application solutions and institutional paths suited to their own needs.

Every country has the right to choose, in light of its national conditions, its own development path for digital and intelligent technologies, including AI, as well as the AI products and services it adopts. Most countries neither need nor are able to build complete ecosystems for frontier models and chips independently. They can instead acquire key capabilities through open resources, regional sharing and international cooperation.

(2) Demand-Driven Approaches, Joint Consultation and Co-Development for Project Delivery

AI projects must begin with real needs. Differences in infrastructure, language and culture, industry workflows, legal systems and workforce structures mean that the same service solution may produce very different results from one country to another. Needs assessments should not end when a project begins; they should continue throughout project development, piloting and iterative upgrading.

Joint consultation and co-development require government departments, industry organizations, researchers and end users in partner countries to participate in setting objectives and selecting technical solutions. Capacity building projects can avoid becoming

idle or unsustainable only by integrating accumulated local knowledge and culture into AI application management processes. This is how they can develop service capabilities that operate over the long term.

(3) Data, Models, Talent and Governance Must Be Advanced in a Coordinated Manner

AI capacity building is an interdependent chain. Without high-quality data, applications cannot understand local contexts. Without skilled people, systems cannot be maintained or improved. Without governance, applications cannot earn trust. Splitting these elements into disconnected projects is likely to waste resources.

Project design should specify the minimum requirements for each element and how the elements connect. Model projects should develop corpora and evaluation capabilities. Projects applying AI in specific sectors should include process redesign and user training. AI governance cooperation should include risk testing of specific applications.

(4) Openness and Open Source Are the Prerequisites for Inclusive Development

Openness and open source are the prerequisites for narrowing the AI divide and achieving inclusive development. If AI tools are closed off and monopolized by a few countries or companies, the North-South gap will only widen further. Only by upholding openness, inclusiveness, open source and sharing, and by promoting open cooperation, can we lower the barriers to innovation, ensure that the fruits of open-source development benefit the Global South, and effectively safeguard the right to development in the course of AI-driven transformation.

Open cooperation therefore requires supporting knowledge frameworks, together with toolchains, testing environments and relevant support that still need to be built. Regional platforms, universities and companies can jointly provide services, helping local teams turn open resources into practical products and public services.

Concluding Remarks

Two years ago, the Action Plan addressed an increasingly urgent question: as AI rapidly reshapes development conditions, how can countries, especially those in the Global South, avoid being excluded from an AI-driven future because they lack basic capabilities? Over the past two years, capacity building has moved from a statement of principles toward practical action.

The AI divide is not a gap along a single dimension. It results from overlapping gaps in industry, talent, data and governance. Bridging the divide cannot be achieved through one training course, one model or one project. The five visions are needed to identify the challenges, and the ten actions to organize cooperation, so that developing countries can build capacity for independent and sustainable development.

China stands ready to work with the international community, take a people-centered approach and develop AI for the positive and for good, make full use of platforms such as the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization, and jointly provide more affordable, sustainable and replicable international public goods. Together, we can help ensure that AI truly becomes a mighty force that increases the well-being of humanity and advances human civilization.



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