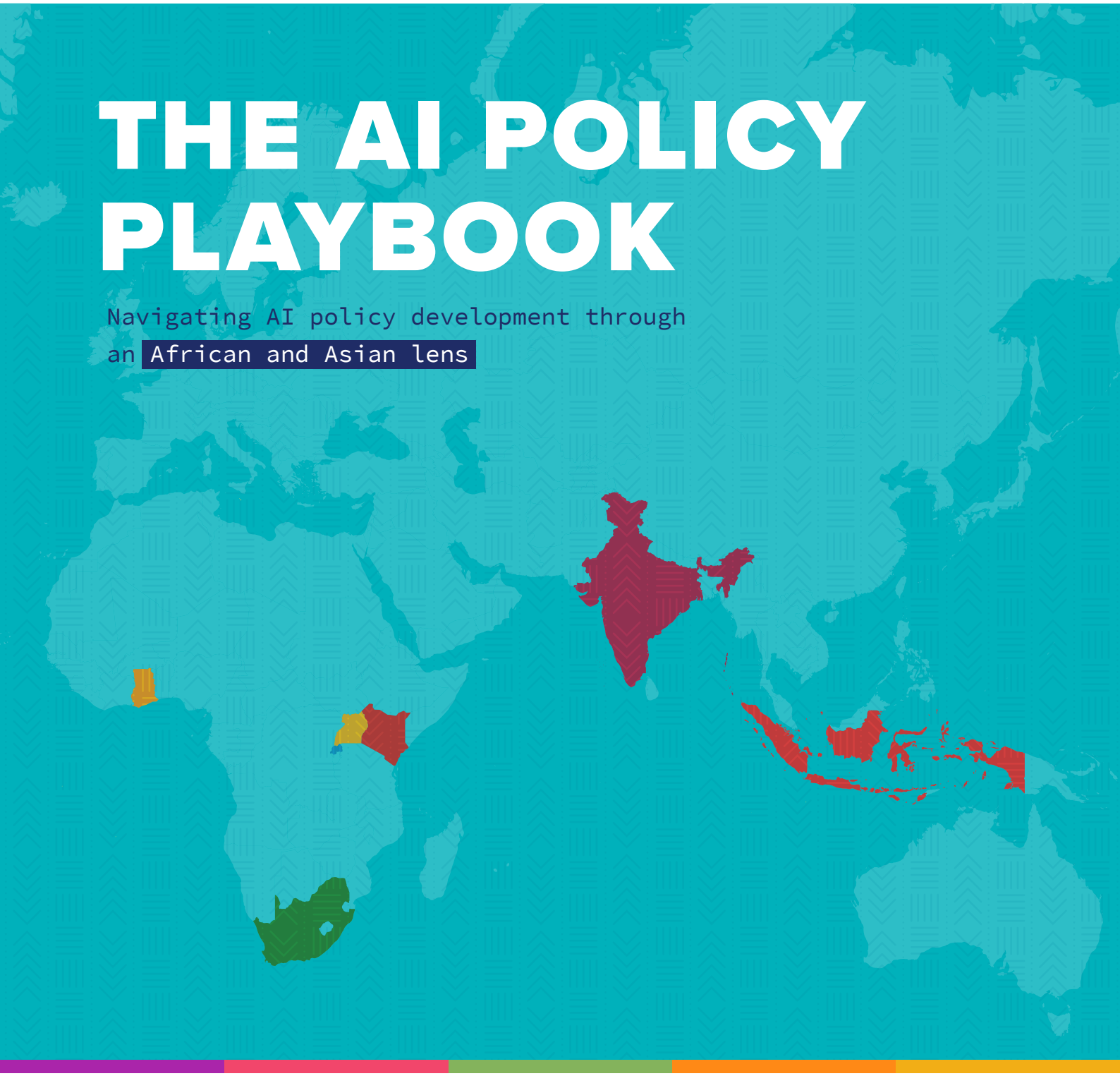
german cooperation
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

Implemented by
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

AI Policymaker Network

THE AI POLICY PLAYBOOK

Navigating AI policy development through an African and Asian lens



FAIR FORWARD
Artificial Intelligence for all.

digital. global

Published by

AI Policymaker Network & Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

Registered offices of GIZ
Bonn and Eschborn, Germany

Global Programme Digital Transformation
FAIR Forward – Artificial Intelligence for All
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32 + 36
53113 Bonn, Germany
T +49 228 44 60-0
F +49 228 44 60-17 66
E fairforward@giz.de
I www.giz.de

Responsible

AI Policymaker Network & GIZ FAIR Forward – Artificial Intelligence for All

Deshni Govender – AI Advisor and Country Focal Point South Africa (deshni.govender@giz.de)

Nadine Dammaschk – AI Advisor (nadine.dammaschk@giz.de)

Golo Rademacher – AI Advisor (golo.rademacher@giz.de)

Authors

Aubra Anthony (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace)

GIZ FAIR Forward: Deshni Govender, Nadine Dammaschk, Golo Rademacher, Kim Willet, Gustavo Fonseca Ribeiro, Sheila Kibughi

Production

Design, editing and proofreading:
Design for development (www.d4d.co.za)

February 2025

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Artificial intelligence's (AI) global impact is pushing countries to develop effective, innovative, and impactful policies. However, the international discourse on AI remains concentrated in certain geographical regions and is not yet adequately diversified in thought and practice. Consequently, around 20 government officials across six countries (Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Telangana State in India, and Uganda), working on AI policy co-founded and launched the Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network in Cape Town in March 2022.

The Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network was born from a capacity-building and peer-learning programme in 2021, curated specifically for AI policymakers of six countries from those regions. At the launch event for the Network in Cape Town, policymakers expressed their desire to continue their cross-border peer exchange on driving local AI innovation, understanding AI ethics and delving deeper into how AI can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for their countries. In 2024, Indonesia also joined the Network.

Since its 2021 launch, the Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network ("Policymaker Network" or "Network") has convened regularly in virtual and in-person meetings. It includes regular exchanges and engagement between policymakers across the member countries and in global fora. For its members, the cross-regional network offers a valuable platform to explore different aspects of responsible and open AI and empower each other through mutual learning and joint advocacy. Discussions are driven by the rich and diverse experiences of these countries on AI policy and governance processes that support responsible and open AI ecosystems in Africa and Asia.

The mission of the Network is to promote the trajectory of open and responsible AI at the national and global levels by acting as a support network and collective voice for African and Asian policymakers. In this regard, this playbook is an invitation from the Network to the governments and partners in Africa, Asia, and globally to learn from the Network's own experiences of AI policymaking.

The Network affirms that the time to act on AI is now. It hopes to inspire government officials and policymakers globally with this playbook and the lessons drawn from African and Asian contexts. The playbook aims to help policymakers navigate AI policy processes while documenting peer learning to promote an agenda around contextual, participatory, and tailored policymaking.

The Africa-Asia AI Policymakers Network and this playbook have been supported by the initiative "FAIR Forward – Artificial Intelligence for All" (FAIR Forward). FAIR Forward is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

FAIR Forward strives for a more open, inclusive, and sustainable approach to AI internationally. To achieve this, FAIR Forward works with its seven partner countries (Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda) and pursues three main goals:

1. Improve access to training data and AI technologies for local innovation
2. Strengthen local technical know-how on AI
3. Develop policy frameworks for responsible AI

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

4IR	4th Industrial Revolution
AI	Artificial intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
C4IR	Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution
CSIR	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DDCT	Department of Digital and Communication Technologies, South Africa
DSTI	Dept of Science, Technology, and Innovation, South Africa
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPSDD	Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development Data
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICT	Information and communication technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IoT	Internet of Things
IP	International protocol
MINICT	Ministry of Innovation and ICT, Rwanda
MoCDTI	Ministry of Communications, Digital Technology and Innovations, Ghana
MoICDE	Ministry of ICT and the Digital Economy, Kenya
MoICT&NG	Ministry of ICT and National Guidance, Uganda
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RURA	Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMMEs	Small, medium, and micro enterprises
STRANAS KA	National Strategy for AI, Indonesia
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
TFS	The Future Society
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGP	United Nations Global Pulse

INTRODUCTION: COUNTRIES' SELF-DETERMINATION IN SHAPING THEIR AI ECOSYSTEMS

Artificial intelligence (AI) is often described as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, AI offers new opportunities for countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and presents unprecedented avenues for economic and social development and environmental protection. On the other hand, it can create substantial harm if left untethered. Simultaneously, economies might risk being left behind from meaningfully participating in the intensifying AI competition, especially when they face historical and systemic barriers.

Those barriers include a lack of access to locally relevant training data, insufficient AI computing power, shortages in capacity and skills, as well as a lack of policy frameworks to guide the responsible use of data and AI development. It is also crucial to recognise how global inequalities shape AI development in global majority countries and affect the range of available policy tools in a country. Therefore, countries at risk of being left behind face the challenge of actively shaping their AI ecosystems while balancing potential dependencies on other countries at the forefront of AI advancement.

The AI Policy Playbook outlines essential components for policymakers to consider when cooperating to chart their own AI paths and developing context-specific AI governance frameworks to support responsible[1] and open AI ecosystems in Africa and Asia. This playbook and its lessons, drawn from African and Asian contexts, are aimed at government officials and policymakers[2] in these geographies more broadly. Audiences in other parts of the world can also gain meaningful and more diverse perspectives on how AI policy development can be approached, facilitating the cross-pollination of ideas. The playbook:

- Covers different forms of AI policy and governance, like national strategies and guidelines for AI;[3]
- Offers a practical, first-hand reference for AI policymaking[4] in member countries of the AI Policymaker Network; and
- Guides the readers with lessons learned and on-the-ground insights from local policymakers and practitioners.

The processes illustrated in this playbook have been structured and supported by AI Policymaker Network and the GIZ project, FAIR Forward – Artificial Intelligence for All. The formulation of these policies was rooted in understanding how to fortify the local AI ecosystems, enabling AI's development and deployment in a manner that yields tangible benefits for each country. This playbook will first introduce major lessons learnt and key findings that several countries shared. Then, it will present the policy processes in each country before concluding with final thoughts.

The AI Policy Playbook aims to provide orientation against the backdrop of a worldwide movement towards the governance and regulation of AI. Within the United Nations (UN) system, the world came together in 2021 to adopt a universally accepted framework for AI governance: the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s Recommendation on the Ethics of AI.[5] This set the first globally accepted framework for principles to govern AI. Following that, the international community is building a Pact for the Future[6] to give new life to the SDGs after 2030. With its growing importance, digitalisation is part and parcel of this process. The Pact includes the Global Digital Compact,[7] an international cooperation agenda that aspires to guarantee an open, free, and secure digital future for all – with a section reserved for the governance of AI. As such, it seeks to create a framework for countries to cooperate towards shared goals.

The African Union (AU) is also charting its way toward AI policies. In 2023, it developed a conceptual framework for AI, which provided the foundation for the Continental AI Strategy, created in 2024. The Continental AI Strategy aims to leverage the benefits of AI for African social and economic development while defining the legal and regulatory safeguards needed to protect users and societies at large. The Strategy is based on a multisectoral and multistakeholder approach.

1. In this playbook, responsible AI refers to AI systems whose development and deployment has been guided by operationalised normative principles (e.g. do no harm, fairness, accountability) to measure and mitigate harms or ethical risks by AI systems. An example for a framework that contains guiding principles for responsible AI is the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI (UNESCO 2021). At the same time, countries and regions (like the AU) are also creating their own principles that reflect their respective contexts.

2. In this playbook, policymakers refer to actors who impact the design, drafting and implementation of AI policy and governance processes. The playbook is especially designed for policymakers from the public sector, such as government officials but also politicians and policy advisors. At the same time, it also holds relevant insights for representatives from academia, civil society, or the private sector who engage in AI policy processes and activities.

3. Regulatory processes and laws are not covered in this report.

4. As the discussed countries have not started implementation of their AI policies (as of June 2024), this playbook focuses on the drafting of AI policies and preliminary ideas and concepts to consider for implementation.

5. UNESCO, Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (SHS/BIO/PI/2021/1, 2022) https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380455.

6. United Nations, Zero Draft of the Pact for the Future (co-facilitators of the UN Summit, 2024) pursuant to UNGA Res 76/307 and UNGA Dec 77/568 SOTF-Co-Facilitators-Zero-Draft_Pact-for-the-Future-circulation.pdf (un.org)

7. United Nations, Global Digital Compact (2024) https://www.un.org/techenvoy/global-digital-compact.

In comparison, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) published the ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics[8] that aims to harmonise the region's approach to governing AI. Within the Asia-Pacific region, most countries, such as India, seem to adopt principle-based guidance. On the other hand, countries like China focus on introducing laws to regulate AI, illustrating the diverse approaches to AI governance within the region.

Supranationally, the European Union (EU) has enacted a regulation on the subject: the EU AI Act.[9] The EU AI Act applies a risk-based approach by matching the stringency of compliance requirements to the level of risk associated with an AI system. It aims to ensure that AI systems in the EU market will be "trustworthy" and adhere to existing EU laws and fundamental rights.

Ultimately, effective policy is informed by evidence and data on technology adoption and impact. This requires ongoing research around the broad supply and demand-side characteristics of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and, now, on AI-specific elements. In addition, countries can benefit from peer learning about existing policies and approaches while carefully assessing whether and how they might want to adapt and/or localise those policies and/or learn from others for their regions. The African Observatory on Responsible AI is an important resource for policy actors and intermediaries to identify and explore what peers are implementing.[10]

8. ASEAN Secretariat, *ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics* (2024) ASEAN-Guide-on-AI-Governance-and-Ethics_beautified_201223_v2.pdf.

9. See European Commission, *Overview of the EU AI Act* (June 2023) https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698792/EPRS_BRI(2021)698792_EN.pdf.

10. See the Policy Map on the African Observatory on Responsible AI.

Image credit: GIZ

METHODOLOGY: CREATION OF THIS PLAYBOOK

The AI Policy Playbook is a collaborative effort of the AI Policymaker Network, supported by GIZ's FAIR Forward - AI for All project, and outlines AI governance processes advanced by each national AI ecosystem.[11]

11. An AI ecosystem refers to localised cooperation systems that work cohesively to promote and adapt AI in various domains and sectors through collaboration, innovation or knowledge, and resource sharing. Actors of an AI ecosystem are diverse and include policymakers, entrepreneurs, researchers, industry, civil society actors, citizens, and/or advocacy groups.

This playbook is unique. It is a blend of outcomes and outputs from the different initiatives of national ecosystem building, policy discussions and capacity building, grounded with the following elements:

- Interviewing policymakers in the partner countries involved in the processes;
- Reviewing the policy processes and extracting operational and practical elements that were critical components for effective policymaking;
- Highlighting individual case studies and country examples that support a stipulated process or recommendation, including failures or shortcomings; and
- Extracting recommendations and/or solutions (from policymakers, service providers, and country practitioners) on what could be improved in the process (pre- and post-policy activity), and takeaways for implementation smart hacks.

Analysis of the above information revealed the following shared, **insightful themes for AI policymaking:**

1. The development of AI ecosystems should follow the needs of each country.
2. AI policymaking initiatives should be pragmatic, concrete, and operational by design.
3. A diverse stakeholder group should shape AI policy.
4. Policymakers and their constituents should build sufficient AI familiarity and capacity.

These themes are not exhaustive but rather provide a foundation to commence the policymaking journey.

The playbook includes the following sections:

Overall key findings and recommendations that several countries shared (see Key Findings)

Insights into AI governance and policy processes in each country (see Country Pages)

Overview of quick tips gained from the illustrated AI governance processes (see Quick Tips)

Map of the AI policy landscape in each of the member countries of the AI Policymaker Network (see Annexure)

Image credit: GIZ

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

While there exists divergences in the rate of digital maturity across global South nations, unified experiences create throughlines across the partner countries in their AI policy quests. Following the journeys across the seven countries, the key findings are summarised below.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AI ECOSYSTEMS SHOULD FOLLOW THE NEEDS OF THAT COUNTRY.

When and how to approach AI policy development will differ for every country. Thus, it should not follow a universal or predetermined formula. Rather, it should be tailored to each country's needs, considering aspects like the maturity and needs of the local AI ecosystem, the existing policy and regulatory landscape as well as timing.

Governments can adopt diverse approaches to promoting responsible AI use, design, and development.[12] Some proactively seek to achieve this through policies or other building block regulations (e.g. data protection regulations or non-discrimination laws) or through interoperable digital infrastructure (e.g. data sharing platforms). Some countries hesitate to develop AI-specific policies without these building block regulations in place. Some may prioritise practice-oriented guidance and self-regulation in key sectors (e.g., the private sector or academia) as a first step to govern AI.

While having all the foundational components in place is helpful, developing an AI ecosystem should not be hindered by the absence of certain elements. Instead, adopting an iterative, adaptive approach is important, progressively building and refining the ecosystem as the context changes. Delaying the development of an AI ecosystem until every aspect is perfectly consolidated risks the country lagging in science, technology, and innovation.

AI POLICYMAKING INITIATIVES SHOULD BE PRAGMATIC, CONCRETE, AND OPERATIONAL BY DESIGN.

AI policies should build on the findings emerging from the needs analysis within countries, keeping the local political viewpoint and a technical perspective in mind. They should be operationally achievable within the national fiscus of a country. This will support effective drafting and implementation. It will ensure a lasting impact at the national level and when conveying national priorities globally. **A central learning is that the AI policy course will be sustained if the responsibility lies with institutional entities and officials that can carry their expertise across multiple governments.** Political buy-in and accountability can be created through tangible examples of the value of AI, broader digital policy goals, and actionable implementation plans.

DIVERSE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS SHOULD SHAPE AI POLICY AND BE TRULY HEARD.

While the government should drive AI policy development, it should also be people centred. As a general-purpose technology, AI affects many areas (from agriculture and health to energy and education) and, consequently, affects people differently, even within a given area. This means policy development should meaningfully engage a wide range of stakeholder groups. The private sector, academia, and civil society offer valuable perspectives to help ensure AI policy reflects practical and communal considerations. These sectors should be inclusively represented by their various constituents at different decision-making levels. The same applies to the representation and inclusion of representatives from marginalised groups.

Broad stakeholder engagement strengthens policy development but is also critical to lay the foundations for successful policy implementation. Such engagement with stakeholders has also proven to be a good way of ensuring that an AI policy is closely aligned with a human-rights-based approach, which is more likely to lead to safe, secure and human-centred AI.[13]

12. UNESCO *Consultation paper on AI regulation: emerging approaches across the world* (2024) https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000390979

13. For more information on inclusive AI policy design, see UNESCO, *Multistakeholder AI Development: 10 Building Blocks for Inclusive Policy Design* (2022) https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000382570.).

POLICYMAKERS AND POLICY INFLUENCERS SHOULD BUILD SUFFICIENT AI FAMILIARITY AND CAPACITY.

There is general acceptance that policymakers are not technical AI specialists or practitioners (nor will they become this), but they are required to communicate, work, and establish effective contacts with AI specialists and practitioners to shape AI development meaningfully. Therefore, AI policy development should go hand in hand with peer learning and capacity-building measures. This ensures that relevant stakeholders are equipped to implement, influence, and advise on AI policy and participate meaningfully in the process when crucially tasked with developing regulations for the use of AI. Each task requires some technical understanding of how AI works and impacts its deployment environment.

Therefore, there is a widespread need for capacity building to understand the reasons behind policy development, the intricacies and scope of the AI landscape, and the additional policies, frameworks, capacity, and resources necessary for fostering a robust AI ecosystem. The stakeholders should include:

- relevant government stakeholders (executive branch at leadership levels and within line ministries as well as the parliamentary and judicial branches of government); and
- specific sectors in society (e.g. academia, civil society, private sector) who contribute to the policymaking process as policy influencers,[14] through advising policy actors or via decision-making roles in respective policymaking frameworks or bodies (e.g. industry bodies, NGOs, etc.).

14. This term refers to actors (individuals or entities) with power (either monetary or citizen backing) that can significantly influence how policy is shaped or implemented. Policy influencers include think tanks, charities, citizen associations, non-governmental organisations, advocacy groups, trade unions, large corporations and/or political agents.

Image credit: GIZ

DEEP DIVE: CHALLENGES AND PROPOSALS BASED ON KEY FINDINGS

Across the board, governments and stakeholders recognise that AI policy is far more than just a vehicle to control, promote, advance, or restrict AI. Effective and forward-thinking AI policy can be the difference between countries exerting greater control over their broader digital ecosystems or being passive recipients of a progressing technological society. Through policy, countries can strategically define their priorities for leveraging AI to benefit their people, economy, and advancement of SDGs globally.

While many challenges in the policymaking journey are universal, countries whose processes are presented in this playbook have adopted different approaches. This playbook recounts insights into how the respective countries have navigated these challenges, working within their ecosystems and with peers (e.g. through counsel within the AI Policymaker Network) for responsible and beneficial AI adoption.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AI ECOSYSTEMS SHOULD FOLLOW THE NEEDS OF THAT COUNTRY.

Context and localisation are paramount in ascertaining how AI policy should be crafted to meet each country's unique needs. Taking external inspiration from countries with enacted policies is a helpful starting point, but local and contextual grounding is critical for advancing the local AI ecosystem. For some countries, this can also mean orienting their AI policy plans to current AI policy developments in their regions (e.g., the AU).

It is advisable for countries to critically reflect on how to navigate potential geo-political pressures to adopt (all or in part) the first policies that have emerged in certain regions (e.g., the EU, China, or the US). While key components of AI regulation are likely to be shared across contexts, it is still critical for local policymakers to assess how such components can be meaningfully localised and where they should differ to get AI policy right for their people. However, while emerging technologies are fluid in nature and thus perceived as a daunting task to regulate, this should not be the case. The malleable nature of technology and continuous advancements in the field should inspire innovative policy processes that aim for iteration rather than regulatory perfection.

AI policies do not exist in a vacuum. They should reflect the particularities of a country's digital ecosystem and general policymaking.

Across Africa and Asia, countries are at different junctures concerning individual AI trajectories. However, AI is far from the first step on each country's digital journey, as digital infrastructure is the foundational component to advance AI adaptation and adoption in a country meaningfully. Additionally, for AI policy to be effective, it should build on existing local policies and legislative building blocks. This includes existing ICT governance, data protection, international protocol (IP), consumer protection, competition/antitrust laws and cybersecurity as starting points.

Proposals for an AI policy should promote regulatory cohesion and strive to find an equilibrium between complementing existing policy concepts while opening new pathways for policy directions that expand on the existing landscape. When the aim is to expand the regulatory universe with AI policy using existing policy foundations, it is important to consider how this can be done while preserving the layers of cultural and context-sensitive development that went into drafting the foundational policy structures. To the furthest extent practical, policymakers should first (or simultaneously) develop building blocks or foundational legislation to spur a thriving digital ecosystem. Such legislation also lays the foundation for responsible AI development, which includes data protection, anti-discrimination laws and cyber security.

Also, AI policy should be aware of the digital ecosystem it is meant to govern. The first considerations would be the current state of internet connectivity, data flows, and land infrastructure. It should consider necessary infrastructure investments for successful AI evolution to address existing gaps and those that might appear in time.

Additionally, AI policymaking should seek out existing pockets of expertise in the country. This expertise can be found in industry, academia, and/or the public sector and can help springboard activities such as incubators, accelerators, innovation, and sandboxes (this could even extend to sector-specific working groups). The insights from these pockets of expertise can assess the benefits, risks, challenges, and gaps emanating from experimenting for sustainable development and provide a solid foundation on which to craft AI policy and assess the maturity of an AI ecosystem.

Additionally, national AI policies should follow national policymaking standards.

In Ghana, for example, the Ghanaian National Artificial Intelligence Strategy followed the National Public Policy Formulation Guidelines. Identifying such templates can support meeting all national legal requirements.

It is critical that AI policy is not standalone. It should build on a foundation of policies that govern and regulate aspects of data protection, ICT infrastructure (like spectrum auctioning, internet connectivity, cloud, etc.), electronic communications, cybersecurity and data strategies, and other policies beyond ICT, like non-discrimination laws. These foundational policies can help to safeguard a country's policy environment against unpredictable technological progress and attacks and enhance digital development. AI policy enhances the value and extent of these existing policies and governs the speed, direction, and extent of technological advancement.

AI policies should be grounded on robust local assessments.

Start with an assessment of the national landscape. Such an assessment informs policy developers about how AI is positioned in the context of the local country.

For example, Rwanda and Ghana undertook analyses of their countries' strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats – SWOT profiles – regarding AI. This included analysing where AI can be best leveraged and where safeguards might be most important. They also undertook economic analyses to ensure opportunities were seized and risks identified and addressed. In this regard, they analysed the status quo of the AI ecosystem in terms of skills, data, ICT infrastructure and governance, and how the private and public sectors were using AI. In Ghana and Rwanda, combining these static assessments with participatory workshops proved valuable to inform a more dynamic understanding of the local context, including priorities and challenges faced across different stakeholder groups.

Policy is not the only path to progress.

Pushing AI policy at a politically unfavourable time, even where a government, in principle, supports the development of an AI policy, may delay meaningful policy development action in the near term. Examples of unfavourable times are periods preceding or after elections or before a ministerial reshuffle in parliament. These critical events bind or redirect government resources toward key political figures or periods of mass citizen protests or impending civil revolution. Also, winning AI policy champions,[15] particularly in the government, is generally a recommendable approach but can become a capacity challenge if key government actors are pulled in many directions or have to balance many conflicting priorities.

Policy development actions can be fruitful where action is taken during an advantageous policy window. However, when political cycles prevail or AI policy champions are too few in a given government, consider that policy represents just one way to shape an AI ecosystem. In these situations, non-governmental stakeholders can work towards building greater strategic coherence within a country's AI ecosystem.

15. These would ordinarily be key individuals or groups who advocate for and/or have the power to drive the development and implementation of AI policies at the right levels. They could be policymakers, technocrats, or even politicians who have a keen interest in AI. They can exist at various levels of government (e.g. national or subnational) or other sectors (public sector, industry, academia, civil society). Their roles can include contributing to the development of AI policies, advising key policymakers on latest AI developments and how to navigate them, or advocating for AI policies to be passed and implemented.

In 2022, there was broad recognition from government, industry, academia, and civil society in Kenya that it was important to actively shape the Kenyan AI ecosystem. However, with upcoming elections in 2023, key actors from the Kenyan AI ecosystem perceived that the timing was not optimal to commence an AI policy process. Instead, the stakeholders adopted the approach that AI can be shaped in the short term through practical, operational guidance for AI developers and users. They developed a practitioner's guide with concrete recommendations on approaching shared priorities such as funding acquisition for AI innovation, promoting robust data privacy and rights protections, and fostering collaborative engagement to strengthen Kenya's AI ecosystem. An essential aspect of AI policy development is understanding when policy is the right tool and when it is not.

No one-size-fits-all approach will work. Seek a context-relevant policy strategy for your window of opportunity.

Navigating the format of AI policymaking can take different forms. For example:

- Self-regulatory or industry-steered approaches can provide practical guidance to sectors on how to approach AI development (e.g. voluntary ethical or procurement guidelines).
- Strategic policy approaches can set national priorities for leveraging AI for socio-economic development or position the country as a regional/sector leader (e.g. national AI or data strategies).
- Regulatory approaches can govern AI development (e.g. EU AI Act).

Additionally, how multistakeholder processes are set up can be approached differently:

- Top-down (strategic policy or regulatory approach): The policy process is led by the ministry or a delegated ministry agency, usually involving engagement from industry, civil society, and academia representatives.
- Bottom-up (industry-led or self-regulatory approach): Activity is led by stakeholders in the AI ecosystem (e.g. from industry, civil society, or academia) where policymakers are engaged in the process, next to other stakeholders.
- Blended (policy recommendations or directives): Horizontal governance is managed through collaborative partnerships between government agencies[16] and actors from civil society, industry or academia while involving other significant stakeholder input from the ecosystem.

The approach and timing policymakers consider fitting for their contexts differ. Some policymakers may hesitate to develop law or regulatory policies for a technology that is still relatively untested and continuously developing. Others recognise that, even if AI is not yet commonplace in their country, it is a responsibility to shape and steer the local value AI can deliver. Among others, this can be achieved by prioritising foundational components, like data protection and interoperable digital infrastructure, through policy. **There is some concern that waiting until AI is "integrated locally" will prove too late to navigate the AI journey meaningfully.** By then, the "rules" might already be set *de facto* by those developing the technology's trajectory far away, ushering in its own set of challenges and dependencies. For example, many contributors are concerned that recent advances in generative AI like ChatGPT and other large language models are leaving African and Asian languages behind.

16. Institutions that are mandated by a national or provincial government and are responsible for oversight or administration of a specific sector, field, or area of study. They are (usually) politically neutral and operate as partly independent entities (e.g. Data Protection Commission, Ghana; Human Sciences Research Council, South Africa; and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa).

The "right" timing for policy development is an ongoing debate; notwithstanding, timing is critical. Moving too quickly to "keep up" may result in premature AI policy adoption and implementation within a country's rapidly evolving digital landscape. It may inhibit innovation, exclude areas that should be regulated, or cement approaches not responsive to local challenges. Conversely, delaying the establishment of appropriate policies could leave the government ill-prepared for strategic priorities, dissuade strategic collaborative foreign partnerships or hinder essential digital infrastructure investments (such as connectivity, workforce development, or data systems strengthening).

To address this, governments should prioritise regular stakeholder engagement (such as discoursing with industry sectors and society impacted by proposed bills and draft policies). Additionally, instead of attempting to concretely legislate fluid AI technology, policymakers can consider agile AI policy frameworks that allow for periodic reviews. Given the field's continuous evolution, updates can be effected when relevant changes occur. Alternative governance options would be that policymakers focus on governing its diverse applications and uses[17] and consider flexible regulatory instruments and/or approaches like controlled testbeds, innovation hubs, or experimental clauses and sandboxes.

Lastly, **acknowledging that there is no precise "right" time for developing AI policies, governments can instruct their existing regulatory bodies to assess how AI influences activities within their areas of oversight.** Based on these assessments, the regulatory bodies can then take action to address the implications of AI within their respective domains.

17. AI might require different regulatory requirements depending on whether a) it is used in different sectors (e.g. healthcare, finance, agriculture); b) how AI output (e.g. predictions or AI-generated text) might impact decision making; or c) the negative impact that AI can have on individuals or social groups (e.g. AI systems that impact loan decisions vs systems that mainly support summarising documents).

Image credit: GIZ

AI POLICYMAKING INITIATIVES SHOULD BE PRAGMATIC, CONCRETE, AND OPERATIONAL BY DESIGN.

Throughout the policymaking process, it is important to build a supportive stakeholder network with actors who have the mandate, willingness, and capacity to deliver and whose voices should be considered. Peer learning through tangible case studies can convey more effectively how policies and stakeholders can promote AI adaptation within a country. The same principle applies to regional stakeholders. For example, data-sharing agreements can facilitate regional cooperation between different AI ecosystems, while ethical AI development guidelines or standards for AI adaptation within a specific sector (e.g. agriculture or health) can provide orientation nationally or, if created in cooperation with policymakers from other countries, beyond borders. Ultimately, it's crucial that the final policy document outlines clear paths for achieving its goals, considering necessary resources and milestones.

Build with pragmatism and political viewpoints in mind.

Policy priorities for one administration will not always remain a political priority under evolving political leadership. If AI policy is instituted under one government administration, maintaining momentum and cementing progress can be an uphill battle once a new administration arrives with its own agenda.

There are two avenues one can take when working towards long-term national goals and safeguarding national interests through transitional periods:

- One avenue is for policymakers at ministerial and public-private working group initiatives (e.g. state agencies, ministerially mandated working groups, or industry engagements) to build familiarity with and capacity for AI. Creating a strong and enduring civil service and civil support sector is crucial for policymaking continuity across different government administrations. This ensures that policymaking remains stable and effective, notwithstanding political or administrative changes.

- Another avenue for sustaining a policy initiative is to work with government officials from a state agency, together with policymakers from the private sector, academia and/or civil society in a cooperative partnership. In this method, parliamentarians and/or ministers stay involved and informed as steering partners. **In South Africa, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) is facilitating the AI policymaking journey, with support from specific ministerial and industry actors involved at a steering committee level and supported by FAIR Forward.** CSIR is a key government agency with the capacity and resources to facilitate significant policy projects and is not directly impacted by political and/or consequent changes in government administration. This partnership builds for the longevity of AI as a priority rather than tying efforts and outcomes to one administration.

Tangible case studies and concrete facts can convey the value of AI policy.

Believing in the necessity of governing AI to navigate its risks and benefits is critical for government and industry leadership to justify the need for policy. Leaders who appreciate this often become champions for the development of AI policy and, consequently, catalyse governmental buy-in, parliamentary support, and budget allocation for policy development and implementation.

Where governments have limited AI familiarity, conveying the need for and value of AI policies in establishing beneficial conditions for AI evolution in any given country can be challenging. Several interviewees cited the importance of clearly communicating key aspects of why AI policy is needed through concrete stories, use cases, and cost-benefit calculations. **For example, C4IR Rwanda did an internal study on the potential economic impact of AI in Rwanda. This contributed to a clearer understanding of the technology's potential value in different sectors during the drafting process of Rwanda's National AI Strategy.**

Tangible and locally relevant use cases for AI risks and benefits matter to high-level government stakeholders and decision-makers when pushing for developing and implementing AI policy. For example, when seeking support, it is important to demonstrate AI's practical, shared, and near-future value for different sectors and how it intersects with the priorities of ministries involved in various sectors (e.g. trade, education, health, and agriculture). Showing the benefits of AI has helped partners win champions across different arms of the government.

During stakeholder engagements for the policy development process in Rwanda, participants identified numerous opportunities of AI applications to improve performance and efficiency or expand access to goods and services across sectors including tax administration, agriculture, health and banking. Exemplary use cases from the stakeholder engagements in Rwanda include:

- In agriculture, weather data can be used to predict the harms of climate change and droughts and optimise irrigation.
- In health, diagnostic tools can predict infectious diseases, diabetes, and cancer occurrences.
- Sector-agnostic applications such as chatbots can raise key operational efficiencies.

Such tangible examples can support getting buy-in and winning champions, whose support can be critical for the success of AI policy initiatives.

Build AI policy for action.

To ensure that AI policy is actionable, avoid making it too broad or including too many activities. Instead, prioritise a few objectives. For example, a policy could prioritise supporting small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) in building AI applications, implementing capacity building on emergent technologies and AI in school curricula, or amplifying research and development within universities.

Moreover, developing an actionable AI policy depends deeply on the buy-in of involved stakeholders and jointly detailing how a policy might be implemented. **For example, the Rwanda National AI Policy[18] explicitly assigned responsible entities for policy implementation, calendared a schedule for the progress of activities, identified desirable outcomes, metrics and methods to measure their progress, and incorporated additional mandates needed for coordination of the policy's implementation.**

18. Republic of Rwanda Ministry of ICT and Innovation, *The National AI Policy: Summary* (2022) National AI Policy Summary II (minict.gov.rw).

Budget allocation is critical for delivering on AI policies.

All policies have budgetary implications for initial development and implementation. AI policy typically calls for actions that require significant investment in aspects like capacity to support the policy's implementation, monitoring within government, or infrastructure investments for AI delivery at the state or provincial level (e.g. digital connectivity, cloud resources, or access to mobile devices). AI policies very rapidly intersect with other broader digital and ICT investment policies and strategies, which often struggle due to insufficient funding and resourcing allocations. In particular, decision-makers with a financial mandate should note the implications of AI, as well as the optimal resources needed to achieve a particular mandate. Dedicated training on how to shape the activities from a policy perspective would help in achieving appropriate forecasting and planning at a fiscal level.

An AI policy should involve an appropriate plan for the mobilisation and long-term sustained provision of funding to favour and not stall implementation. This funding and implementation plan should align and enhance (not compete with) existing digital and ICT investment policies and strategies. It should feature budgetary decision-making and lines of future support from actors like the public and private sector, academia, civil society or international organisations and development agencies. This includes that actors specify the costs of certain activities of the implementation plan, how these activities would be financed and how they might also create a more sustainable revenue stream.

AI policies should encourage, if not prioritise the use of open-source AI in development and implementation. Using open-source technology reduces development costs while simultaneously accelerating innovation and reducing dependencies on vendors. Robust AI policies are those that have mastered the delicate balance between open collaboration and proprietary advantage, enabling allocation of resources more efficiently, while still promoting safe, secure and trustworthy AI.

Context is local and international: Develop AI policy to voice a country's national priorities on an international stage.

AI policy can prioritise local incentives or signal an indication for international collaboration. For example, investment in innovation and research, data sharing collaboratives, upskilling the national workforce, or positioning and protecting local industry regarding the international supply of AI-critical resources are points where local and international issues intersect. AI policy will invariably need to prepare for multiple scenarios of investment, partnership, or competition and adjust accordingly. Countries should develop their diplomatic strategy on AI ecosystems so that they can meaningfully articulate their national priorities in multiple international forums.

Given AI's economic potential, policymakers are compelled to support AI development. This often requires working with, attracting investment from, or even facing off against different dominant AI players at the industry or government level. In such complicated terrain, it can be difficult to ensure that policy or regulations simultaneously promote equitable inclusion and responsible use and deployment of AI that benefits the public and economy. Balancing innovation and growth with rights protection and preservation necessitates considering domestic dynamics and foreign influences.

In 2022, there were reports of violations of the rights of workers in the AI sector and the gig economy. Notably, there were growing concerns about violations of local and international labour laws by powerful tech companies – one example making international news was the plight of click workers in Kenya.[19] In general, while big tech has contributed to the local upskilling of talent and youth,[20] it is also important to strengthen the establishment of local AI markets. An overly strong dependency on foreign tech companies can create disadvantageous bargaining positions that emerge from global inequalities and limit local innovation, rendering national AI ecosystems as recipients of technology rather than creative producers of AI systems.

In this context, AI policy can set more favourable conditions for interactions with such international players. On one hand, it can be a mechanism of human rights protection for citizens (e.g. click workers at home and gig workers in the local areas) through ethical labour standards. On the other hand, AI policy can prioritise the local development and promotion of digital public good[21] as a means to support the sovereignty of local AI ecosystems. This counters the power concentration of AI development and reduces barriers for local AI innovators. In turn, this supports self-reliance even as global interdependencies shift. Indeed, countries may find it difficult to decide between importing AI or developing it internally. Accordingly, a national policy can set these priorities coupled with corresponding action items and, consequently, actively and purposefully influence these dynamics.

19. Time *OpenAI Used Kenyan Workers on Less Than $2 Per Hour to Make ChatGPT Less Toxic* (2023) https://time.com/6247678/openai-chatgpt-kenya-workers/

20. GIGA, *Digital Africa: How Big Tech and African Startups Are Reshaping the Continent*, GIGA Focus Africa, No 6 (2022) ISSN 1862-3603 Digital Africa: How Big Tech and African Startups Are Reshaping the Continent (giga-hamburg.de).

21. Open for Good Alliance, *Open-Source AI Data Sharing: yes! Data Colonialism: no!* (2023) Open-Source AI Data Sharing: yes! Data Colonialism: no! | by Open for Good Alliance | Medium

Image credit: GIZ

DIVERSE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS SHOULD SHAPE AI POLICY AND BE TRULY HEARD.

For a field as complex and far-reaching as AI, the implications and consequences of AI policy will be felt across all societal and economic sectors, particularly by citizens. Inclusive multistakeholder engagement and subsequent support are key for buy-in, longer-term ownership and commitment to AI policy implementation, as well as for ensuring responsible development and use of AI. Among other formats, multistakeholder engagements can be achieved through consultation workshops, virtual or in-person. These engagements can help to form a general buy-in to national AI policies. In Telangana (India), for example, the final draft of the AI Procurement Guidelines was published on the government website for a month to give the public a chance to comment on it and to provide feedback or concerns.

When drafting AI policies, be sure to involve key representatives from stakeholder groups. These do not only have to be the key or most senior decision-makers in their field. Aim for representatives whose roles intersect at critical junctures (across sectors or divisions within an organisation) or who can provide impactful, practical input into AI design and deployment operationally. This, in turn, will yield valuable input into key policy areas. Their contributions in raising priorities, concerns, and needs can drive buy-in and policy mandates and lead to more effective AI policies.[22]

It is also pertinent, when inviting stakeholders to participate in such a process, to publish fair and known criteria for inclusion into the policy advising process. This serves to follow basic procedures of administrative justice and reduce the chance of regulatory capture by a certain group or regulatory oligopoly from stakeholder representatives.

Balancing inputs from a diverse range of stakeholders can be difficult, especially when they have different interests and levels of authority. However, the examined partner countries have successfully navigated these challenges and recommend the following measures.

Include groups with diverse knowledge of the local AI and ICT ecosystems as well as those impacted by AI policies.

Before commencing with policy drafting, it is recommended that key players of the local AI and ICT ecosystem, as well as relevant domains and advocacy groups, be mapped. This mapping should include representatives from the public and private sectors, academia, and civil society. The stakeholder mapping should identify:

- people who are relevant for the implementation on the ground; and
- people whose work and life may be impacted by an AI policy.

Their priorities and insights can inform how policy takes shape and could be implemented smoothly in a given sector while ensuring that policies consider diverse concerns and priorities for responsible AI development.

For instance, if an AI policy suggests investing in precision agriculture, this needs the Ministry of Agriculture's support. If such proposals (e.g. using AI for food security) are part of AI policy discussions, key partners from impacted sectors should be actively involved via workshops or drafting exercises to ensure their needs are catered for. In the case of precision agriculture, the following actors could be engaged: officials from the Ministry of Agriculture, commercial farming organisations, smallholder farmers, retail chain stores, or buyers for agricultural organisations. Other supply chain partners like seed and fertiliser producers, farming equipment suppliers, and trade/labour union representatives may also be involved.

22. Some guidance on the principles to follow for multistakeholder consultations and how to identify the stakeholders is available in *Multistakeholder AI development: 10 building blocks for inclusive policy design* (UNESCO, 2022).

The same engagement applies to other sectors that are directly impacted (e.g. the health sector). For example, if a decision is made to automate public health records, the stakeholder group should include the Ministry of Health, medical staff from public and private hospitals, private health insurance organisations, civil society groups representing rural communities, and ICT and information security teams. These diverse groups offer different perspectives to the discussions, which is critical for inclusive participation and the operational effectiveness of policy.

Beyond the sectors, **policymakers must cast a wider net to guarantee diverse voices in the policymaking process, including those of marginalised groups such as people with disabilities. This imperative was underscored during an AI capacity-building programme for Indonesian policymakers (2023 to 2024). To achieve this goal, deliberate efforts were made to ensure gender balance (e.g. for the closing event, 54.5% of the participants identified as female and 45.5% as male) and diverse participation from both attending policymakers and facilitators.** Moreover, the inclusion of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the training programme significantly enhanced the diversity of perspectives and participant profiles. This not only enriched the overall experience but also elevated the quality of peer learning, making it more insightful and valuable.

In relation to the content, the programme included sessions that emphasised prioritising disability inclusion and the inclusion of other marginalised groups as essential components for the development of ethical AI policies (e.g. a session on AI for disability that includes disabled people's perspectives and expectations of AI). Policymakers who participated in the programme appreciated this approach, recognising its value in sensitising them to the importance of incorporating diverse and marginalised voices to enhance the impact of stakeholder engagements.

To further improve inclusivity and accessibility in policy spaces, policymakers should prioritise engagement with marginalised groups, ensure gender inclusion, provide accessibility support, and incorporate inclusive sessions into capacity-building programmes. Recommendations from the AI capacity-building programme include:

- establishing cross-ministerial training programmes;
- mapping and embracing the AI ecosystem;
- establishing AI policy committees;
- prioritising government support for AI implementation; and
- facilitating collaboration between various institutions and sectors.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers can create more inclusive and impactful AI policies that consider the diverse perspectives and needs of all stakeholders, including marginalised groups.

In general, best practices from partner countries emphasise the need for inclusive stakeholder engagements that encourage diverse perspectives. In these engagements, each group should have equal opportunities to voice questions or raise unusual and sometimes unconsidered concerns. Such platforms help to identify and explore opportunities and gaps in an AI policy drafting process. Among others, this includes cross-group engagement, providing academics the opportunity to exchange ideas with industry representatives, for example. Additionally, interviewed policy partners recommend hosting workshops focused on specific sectors (e.g. industry or academia-specific workshops), domains (e.g. agriculture or health) or advocacy (e.g. youth involvement, climate change, or disability). These smaller group engagements can allow for identifying more nuanced issues and solidifying a common position before bringing it to larger policy discussions. This approach ensures a thorough exploration of different stakeholder priorities to impact AI policies.

Engage stakeholders strategically across different levels of seniority.

High-level government officials and other key representatives from politics, industry, academia, or civil society can impact policy drafting and implementation through their participation and authority in decision-making. Often, though, they have competing priorities and time constraints. Thus, requiring their intense engagement at the initial drafting stages can be ineffective or even counterproductive.

Despite their time constraints, it is crucial to keep high-level officials and partners updated on the core ideas of the drafting process, even if they are not directly involved. This ensures they understand the topics and the scope of policy development, which is vital for successful policy development and implementation. At the same time, it allows them to voice their ideas and opinions on viability, fostering their support and buy-in.

Mid-level government officials often have more time and technical expertise to offer in the drafting process. While at their level, they may not have the oversight to gauge the viability of different policy options or have the mandate to determine the policy scope and scale, they fully comprehend how the operations of a policy within the ministry unfold. Thus, their position and scope of participation should be carefully considered for appropriateness and operational impact.

Striking the right balance of engagement between different seniority levels and commitment can help to achieve both meaningful inputs and political viability. Some countries managed this challenge by frequently briefing and building the capacity of higher-level officials. Mid-level officials with technical expertise then represent their offices in interagency and cross-sectoral deliberations and workshops.

In Uganda, the 4th Industrial Revolution Task Force was instrumental in advising policy processes like the National Strategy on 4IR.[23] The Task Force was established by the Office of the Prime Minister and comprises a diverse range of experts from the public, private, and academia. Though the majority of the Task Force's members were high-level representatives of their sectors, their level of leadership ensured impactful advisory processes because of their networks and decision-making power. At the same time, their commitment to the process and clearly defined working plans with time-bound deliverables contributed to the efficient advisory of this Task Force. This commitment is also reflected in the fact that even if the Task Force members faced conflicting priorities that impeded their availability, they ensured suitable representation to represent them.

Ensure the right group size for the task.

Small, dedicated, and mandated core groups that feel committed to advancing the process are crucial to getting policies drafted, ensuring widespread stakeholder engagement and buy-in, taking policy drafts over key bureaucratic 'finish lines', and constantly initiating the required next steps. **In Rwanda, for example, a smaller, manageable, dedicated group of policymakers within the Ministry of Innovation and ICT (MINICT) and the C4IR ensured that the policy draft was finalised and approved by the cabinet. Without their continuous will and championship beyond the drafting process, the National AI Policy draft might have gathered dust.**

While lean project teams have been effective for quick progress, policymaking is a political process. For a responsible project team, it will be highly beneficial to engage a larger group, like an advisory team, steering committee, or ongoing working group. This broader engagement allows for feedback, revisions and support, leading to significant advantages.

23. Ministry of ICT Uganda, *National Strategy on 4IR* (2020) Executive-Summary-Ugandas-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf (ict.go.ug).

Provide the space for stakeholder engagement, physically and mentally.

In Ghana and Kenya, it proved helpful to organise specific drafting retreats for 2–3 days during critical times of the drafting process. These retreats were organised close to the capital city but with enough distance to create a new environment. This ensured that input actors would not be easily distracted by day-to-day responsibilities but could instead focus in-depth on discussions and reviews for the policy or guidance draft. Additionally, these retreats provided the space for group-dedicated discussions (e.g. between sectors or domains). Through those retreats, the quality and depth of engagements increased dramatically compared to asynchronous and/or online feedback alone. Thus, while asynchronous feedback remains a powerful collaborative tool, consider creating an environment which stimulates and excites engagements from key stakeholders.

With conflicting priorities, it may be otherwise challenging to obtain inputs on policy drafts from key stakeholders and policy influencers. This is especially prevalent when seeking continuous, asynchronous feedback from actors who are not part of the core project group. Oftentimes, if not for a retreat, reviews of policy drafts might unintentionally get deprioritised and waiting for feedback can stall the drafting process.

Image credit: GIZ

POLICYMAKERS AND POLICY INFLUENCERS SHOULD BUILD SUFFICIENT AI FAMILIARITY AND CAPACITY.

In the fluid and unpredictable field of AI, building greater familiarity and technical expertise within governments and those who champion AI policies is crucial. Often, AI can be a new and complex topic for policymakers, particularly in the public sector, but some technical understanding of AI can go a long way to ease their fears and allow them to communicate and advocate for AI policies authoritatively. It also enables them to engage meaningfully with AI practitioners in the industry to develop robust policies and economic strategies and differentiate between the actual potential and limitations of AI from the hype surrounding it. Thus, building AI capacity empowers policymakers – at leadership and working levels within ministries and key society stakeholders – and allows policy champion groups to attribute higher relevance to AI policies and push them within the political agenda when appropriate. In addition to planning for human capacity, planning for financial resources and operational capacity is essential to effective policymaking.

Formalise responsibilities within the government to promote AI capacities and advocacy.

An option to incentivise AI capacity building amongst policymakers is to establish dedicated technical roles within the government and ministries that will oversee AI development in a country. Such roles can be filled by hiring external technical experts or promoting existing officials from within. **In Rwanda, before commencing policy development, the role of Chief Digital Officers (CDOs) was established within each line ministry. The CDO's role is to support effective coordination on topics pertinent to digitalisation, including AI.**

Policymakers in the public sector will additionally be incentivised to advance AI policy if its development and implementation are associated with their role's key performance indicators. Explicitly formalising AI-specific responsibilities and roles can increase the public sector's capacity to deliver on AI policy and implementation. At the same time, it is important to ensure that the responsible persons can develop the necessary competencies to ensure they can effectively exercise these roles.

Include capacity-building components within engagements for AI policy processes.

AI policy development offers a prime opening for policymakers to be exposed to how:

- relevant economic and social issues relate to AI;
- AI affects citizens, stakeholders, and organisations differently; and
- they can contribute to navigating continuous learning of AI through policy.

In this regard, AI policy processes should include elements for building institutional and individual capacities. They ensure that participating policymakers from different sectors are better placed to assess the implications and opportunities around AI for their sectors. For example, such capacity building allows actors from civil society to advocate for the responsible use of AI more tangibly.

Different capacities and interests of involved actors should be considered to ensure policies can be suitably implemented. There are different skills and processes involved with policy drafting, implementation, and development. This requires tailoring capacity-building efforts depending on which officials are engaged at what stages. If policies are already being implemented in a particular sector, training can assist in identifying how to apply AI meaningfully (e.g. health or education).

Capacity development initiatives, however, go further than just upskilling stakeholders involved in the policymaking process. For instance, the public sector may create new roles (e.g. chief digital officers), oversight bodies (e.g. data protection authorities) or departments within existing institutions (e.g. responsible AI offices). These upgrades can support the effective administration of foundational policies, the effectuation of AI-specific policies, and public engagement with non-governmental stakeholders.

- **In Rwanda, policymakers from different sector ministries (e.g. agriculture, health, transport, education) took part in a week-long AI crash course where they were familiarised with basic knowledge of the technology, potential applications, and key governance and policy questions related to AI.** Thereby, they were enabled to better contribute to policy development. However, the biggest benefits of capacity building may ultimately yield at the stage of policy implementation. After all, sector ministries play an important role in implementing AI policy measures and consequently shaping its effect on the AI ecosystem. At this stage, implementation will go smoother and be more robust and operationally efficient as the relationships have been built and capacities developed for effective implementation.

- **Before developing the AI Procurement Guidelines in India, the state government of Telangana held a two-day interdepartmental workshop.** This workshop had the following objectives: first, to build capacity in responsible AI governance and development for policymakers across sectors and hierarchy. The aim was to reflect on the potential and risk of AI applications in government. The second objective was to deliberate possible policy frameworks to enable the responsible governance of AI. This ideation, coupled with capacity building, resulted in the idea of developing the AI Procurement Guidelines.

  Furthermore, the Telangana government ensured that the final guidelines included accessible background information and an introduction to responsible AI. This enables users – government officials – to understand how to follow the protocol, why the AI Procurement Guidelines were created, and why they are important.

Tailor capacity building and peer-learning exchange to local and cross-country needs.

Capacity building for policymakers, particularly from the public sector, should be targeted and practical to countries and affiliated regions. No country is an island. As such, when representatives of countries improve their capabilities together, it encourages collaboration within the region. Additionally, it can influence participating policymakers to uphold aligned standards for AI development, influencing regional progress (e.g. EAC, ECOWAS, SADC). Locally and regionally aligned capacity building facilitates an essential exchange between policymakers, fostering peer learning in societies that face common challenges and can benefit from a collaborative approach. Such capacity building and collaboration can empower governments to confidently voice their concerns and perspectives on the international policy development stage.

In late 2021, FAIR Forward organised a virtual peer-learning capacity-building programme across FAIR Forward's partner countries. The government officials who participated in the programme have been involved in digital, data, and AI policy development within their countries.[24] The exchanges between policymakers who participated in this cross-country training programme proved so fruitful that they decided to launch the Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network.[25] The original training material has been adapted for several local contexts and is available as an open educational resource[26] for any government wishing to implement the programme.[27]

Use evidence to inform policymaking.

Policy should be informed by evidence and data on technology adoption and impact. This requires ongoing research around supply and demand-side characteristics of ICTs broadly, and now on AI-specific elements. In addition, countries can benefit from benchmarking and considering whether and how to localise policies from other regions. The Policy Map of African Observatory[28] on Responsible AI is an important resource for policy actors and intermediaries to identify and explore what peers are implementing.

As an example, the methodology to develop Rwanda's National AI Policy comprised consultations with multistakeholder actors in workshops and through surveys; interviews with domain-specific experts; desk research on existing digital policies and relevant stakeholders; validation of findings with international experts; and analyses of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the Rwandan ecosystem.

24. This programme is available via a *Handbook for Implementing a Capacity Building Programme for Policy Makers on AI* and as the freely available e-learning course *AI for Policymakers.*

25. FAIR Forward, *Launching the Africa-Asia Policymaker Network on Responsible AI* (2022) FAIR Forward: Launching the Africa-Asia Policymaker Network on Responsible AI | BMZ Digital.Global (bmz-digital.global).

26. HSRC and GIZ (eds), *Handbook for Implementing a Capacity Building Programme for Policy Makers on AI* (2022) GIZ-AI-Handbook-FINAL.pdf (bmz-digital.global).

27. You may wish to explore further resources, *Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation Competencies for Civil Servants* (UNESCO, 2022) unpacks the AI and digital transformation competencies needed in the public sector. Other useful resources include: *Global Toolkit on AI and the Rule of Law for the Judiciary* (UNESCO, 2023) and *User Empowerment through Media and Information Literacy Responses to the Evolution of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI)* (UNESCO, 2024).

28. For more information on the policy map, please refer to this link. (https://policy.africanobservatory.ai/)

Image credit: GIZ

EPILOGUE OF AI POLICY: WHAT COMES NEXT?

AI poses benefits and challenges. AI tools and systems have integrated themselves deeply into the lives of most people, both knowingly and unknowingly. To harness the potential of AI while simultaneously addressing its risks, AI should be governed, and a responsible AI approach should be at the centre of such governance.

The journey of AI governance, whether through policy development or other governance methods, is complex and nuanced and requires a tailored approach for each country, even if countries might face similar technical and infrastructural challenges. The key recommendations that emerged from the policy development journey of each partner country highlight the importance of the following ground rules:

1. Development of AI ecosystems should be sensitive to the context and needs of a country.
2. AI policymaking initiatives should be pragmatic, concrete, and operational by design.
3. A diverse stakeholder group should shape AI policy and be truly and meaningfully heard.
4. Policymakers and policy influencers should build sufficient AI familiarity and capacity.

However, AI policy processes do not end with finalising the draft policy. **New policies often face the challenge that, once drafted, they are not implemented as funding and resources are lacking or were not considered in the drafting process.** Thus, building for implementation from the outset is essential. Policies are written documents, but they have to be translated into action. Without considering the feasibility of policy aspirations from the beginning, the policy will not amount to much more than words on a page.

Additionally, policymaking processes require raising awareness and sharing the policy after its adoption. This is crucial to ensure the policy is understood and accepted by a wide range of critical stakeholders and policy influencers – a key to its successful implementation. This can be achieved through stakeholder workshops, media campaigns, or online activities. It is also crucial to have a process for monitoring the implementation and impact of the policy from the start. This includes developing a meaningful and measurable impact logic and considering and agreeing on responsible institutions for priorities and action items, their resource needs, and who and where this information will be submitted to.

Ultimately, there is no single template for developing AI policy. **As this paper illustrates, each represented partner country adopted a different approach to governing or plans to govern AI.** Even within regional groups, these approaches can vary vastly, with some prioritising a bottom-up approach for guidance on AI and others focusing first on developing a policy. In this regard, from the main recommendations, it cannot be emphasised enough that the needs and context of each country are paramount when drafting policies of any nature.

Notwithstanding variance, while each country has its own approach to governing AI, certain common ingredients for successful AI policy drafting shine through all these processes:

- strong political will and intent for AI policy;
- intersectional industry consulting, including sectors and advocacy groups for input; and
- a proactive approach to shaping AI governance.

These elements highlight the need for an inclusive, responsible, AI-focused and proactive approach to AI governance. **The way AI has embedded itself into the lives of citizens and is impacting citizens is defining a new wave of policymaking. The AI policy processes presented in this playbook also illustrate that the global majority countries are claiming independence and self-determination for their futures, with respect to technology. They may take inspiration from other countries for AI governance but notably adapt global concepts to their specific needs.**

The proactive approach of the partner countries, as well as motivation from other countries, indicate that most countries are critically aware that the development of AI (e.g. use and adoption of AI by a government, along with upskilling of citizens) affects income, wealth inequality, and economic growth within a country. AI policies should position countries to move toward enabling and pro-accountability futures. For the transformative field of AI, the global community should strive to craft policies that are fluid enough to anticipate developments in AI and proactively shape these developments in a way that enables responsible innovation and stakeholder accountability. This way, AI can be developed and used in a manner that benefits all and contributes to a sustainable and inclusive future.

AI POLICY QUICK TIPS

To this point, the Policy Playbook underscored the shared experiences of Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Telangana State in India, and Uganda in the development of their AI ecosystems through policymaking. This section synthesises the recommendations stemming from the previous chapters for a succinct understanding of the main lessons.

1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF AI ECOSYSTEMS SHOULD FOLLOW THE NEEDS OF EACH COUNTRY.

Policy for the people – ensure policy matches local priorities and ecosystems.

- Start with a thorough analysis of the status quo. Take stock of the unique strengths and weaknesses in your country, as well as those beyond your department and sector, and prioritise the most important challenges to enable sustainable and consistent AI development.

Assess and address likely obstacles.

- Choices about how a policy's implementation is coordinated can have a significant impact on a policy's ability to withstand political transitions. Generally, policy requires plenty of political will to advance. Still, if a policy's implementation is overly tied to certain political actors, its progress can be hindered by transitions in political leadership.

Timing is "everything".

- Ensure that the timing for starting an AI policy process responds to the needs of the local AI ecosystem. The timing should consider aspects like the maturity of the AI ecosystem and what kind of policies are required (e.g. national strategies, ethical guidelines vs regulations, or election cycles).

Don't rush the process.

- Policy development processes take time! Allow sufficient time for the policy process to unfold so the policy represents a variety of views and is actionable. As an approximate timeline, plan at least 12 months for drafting, including stakeholder engagements, 9 months for validations, and another 6 months for the approval processes, consecutively.

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

2. AI POLICYMAKING INITIATIVES SHOULD BE PRAGMATIC, CONCRETE, AND OPERATIONAL BY DESIGN.

AI policies can promote national self-determination on AI.

- AI policies could be a tool to define national priorities and embed human rights-driven protection mechanisms, such as labour rights in a platform or gig economy or ensuring international vendors do not engage in extractive practices of local AI training data.
- AI policy can determine the extent of autonomy and agency given to technology companies and citizens. One example is the collaborative use and support of open-source AI for the public sector, which encourages innovation and reduces vendor lock-in.

Build and budget for AI policy for action.

- Ensure that the policy is actionable; avoid making it too broad or including too many activities. Instead, prioritise a few objectives and activities tailored to the needs of a certain country, such as building SMMEs, capacity-building, or increasing research within universities. Moreover, include elements for actionability in the policy's design by detailing activities, responsible entities for implementation, schedules, desirable outcomes or metrics for success, and methods for measuring progress.
- AI policy typically calls for actions that require budgeting and may intersect with broader digital and ICT investment policies. Thus, AI policy should plan for the mobilisation and sustained provision of funding towards its implementation. Instead of competing, such a plan should align with and enhance existing digital and ICT investment policies.

Tell the story of AI!

- Be ready with prototype or demonstration cases to socialise the potential of AI and the reasons AI policy is needed. A story better facilitates an informed discussion across multiple sectors, even when levels of AI knowledge and familiarity differ.

3. A DIVERSE STAKEHOLDER GROUP SHOULD SHAPE AI POLICY.

Understand the motivations of key decision-makers.

- High-level leadership may not be interested in a specific technology or a digital solution. What is important to them is the impact the technology can have at an economic and societal level. Make sure you develop a clear narrative on this, for example, by demonstrating the expected contributions of AI to key development indicators.
- As digital topics are cross-cutting, it is important to include sector ministries and their sectoral priorities in the process. Be prepared to answer hard questions on the relevance of AI for their sector.
- High-level decision-makers may not have time to engage consistently throughout the policy development process, but they should have access to consistent briefings and information on where the process stands. Key decision points should be highlighted as appropriate.

Ensure an inclusive process.

- Include different stakeholder perspectives in the policy development process to address varying societal needs and be cognisant of different perspectives on AI, as well as its effects, opportunities, and dangers from each stakeholder group.
- Involvement also creates ownership! Align the proposed actions to the ground realities of those responsible for or involved in implementing the policy.
- Stakeholder prioritisation should factor in minority and disadvantaged groups to draft truly inclusive AI policies that promote responsible AI development. Make appropriate allowances and space for such engagement.

4. POLICYMAKERS AND THEIR CONSTITUENTS SHOULD BUILD SUFFICIENT AI FAMILIARITY AND CAPACITY.

Formalise responsibilities.

- Establish dedicated technical roles within ministries that will oversee the fourth industrial revolution development of a country (e.g. for technical and digital topics like AI). If associated with their key performance indicators, it can incentivise policymakers to advance AI policy.

Capacity building has many shapes and sizes.

- Not all stakeholders need to be AI experts. Initially present key ideas in simple language and easy-to-digest concepts to build literacy over time. Ensure AI policy ideas are relatable to everyone's sector. Identify current challenges experienced by those sectors or groups and explain how AI might impact them.[29]
- It is important to jointly demystify AI and claims on AI. Current public discourse on AI is mostly focused on inflated expectations ("AI can replace doctors") or inflated fears ("AI will destroy all jobs"). It is, therefore, crucial to contextualise such claims and create public messages that are geared towards the realities of AI in the country.

Use evidence and peer exchange for continuous policy learning.

- Ensure ongoing policy learning and benchmarking by engaging policy actors in the regional sphere and global fora.
- Support evidence-based production and use for AI implementation, including through operational data, primary research, and the synthesis of local and global research.

29. Open Educational Resources can be a valuable tool in translating complex themes, such as AI, into understandable language for a variety of audiences. For example, atingi.org offers a variety of freely available online courses on AI.

THE COUNTRY VIEW: AI POLICY SNAPSHOT

AI policies, strategies, principles, guidelines (and more) have proliferated worldwide in recent years. Still, developing and implementing context-specific policy and governance frameworks remains a challenge and requires tailored policymaking. Thus, in the following pages, the playbook transitions from the collective perspective to a more focused exploration of each partner country. The country view illustrates the policy work completed or underway in the member countries of the AI Policymaker Network, grounded in the policy processes on which the AI Policy Playbook was based.

The country pages provide a comprehensive overview of:

- the AI governance process that the country has selected to pursue;
- key players involved in the policy drafting process;
- entities tasked with driving the policy creation and/or implementation;
- significant milestones on the journey; and
- best practice(s) per country.

These concise overviews shall serve as inspirations to initiate and frame local discussions around the development and adoption of AI to support the public good.

The links to the right, jump directly to a specific country page:


GHANA


INDIA


INDONESIA


KENYA


RWANDA


SOUTH AFRICA


UGANDA

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

© Renate Wefers via iStock

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

Regional affiliation
ECOWAS

2,260 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

33,787,914
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

1.9%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

GHANA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

Ghana developed a **National Artificial Intelligence Strategy**, including an action plan, as a roadmap for responsible AI adoption for sustainable and inclusive growth. The methodology adopted in the drafting process included multistakeholder engagements, SWOT analysis, peer learning on existing national AI policies, and alignment with the Ghana Ethical AI Framework that was led by the Data Protection Commission and supported by UN Global Pulse. As of February 2025, the strategy had not yet been officially enacted by the Ghanaian government. The current Minister of the (now) Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations (MoCDTI) has made a commitment towards the review of Ghana's draft National AI Strategy document via relevant stakeholder engagements to make it fit for purpose.

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

WHO IS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- Ministry of Communication, Digital Technology and Innovations Ghana (MoCDTI); and
- Data Protection Commission (DPC) with support from Smart Africa, GIZ FAIR Forward under the umbrella of the Digital Transformation Center (DTC) (and on behalf of BMZ), and The Future Society (TFS, service contractor).

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

Desk research
Policy analysis and stakeholder mapping

Workshops
4 multistakeholder workshops across sectors

Expert interviews
- 40+ key actors from Ghana
- Consultations with international experts

Peer learning
On AI policy, e.g., with Rwanda

Validation and iteration
Continuously through meetings, drafts, and workshops

SWOT analysis
Based on workshop and interview findings

Policy analysis
Of drafted AI Ethical Framework by UN Global Pulse

Review
Of national AI policies to identify ideas and blind spots

Implementation plan
Includes practical recommendations and detailed AI use case ideas

MILESTONES OF THE PROCESS

2021

Jan–Dec
MoCD decided to create a National AI Strategy

2022

Jan
Creation of a high-level technical working group

Feb
Start of drafting process

Feb
AI policy peer learning workshop between Rwanda and Ghana

March–May
Stakeholder involvement (via workshops, interviews, surveys)

June
Draft of National AI Strategy created

Aug–Oct
Validation workshops and interviews

Oct
National AI Strategy finalised

BEST PRACTICES

Thorough stakeholder engagement proved to be a critical success factor. The AI Policy Drafting process benefited from a diverse range of perspectives, including sector and domain representatives, as well as advocacy groups and gender-balanced participation.

For example, discussions around the education pillar were particularly robust, highlighting the need for early-stage empowerment of youth to foster AI readiness. The rigid nature of the existing education system was identified as a barrier. Given that most participants went through the education system themselves, it was a relatable issue to discuss and suggest solutions for.

Additionally, the level of expertise and domain-specific knowledge shared during the process was also noteworthy. For example, domain experts shared tangible stories regarding the potential use of AI in the health sector (e.g., to monitor the correct administration and billing of prescribed drugs in hospitals). These insights supported the understanding of how AI can be leveraged for the broader range of participants, ensuring targeted discussions.

Resources

The Draft Ghana National AI Strategy document and UNGP's Ghana Ethical AI Framework are not public documents yet.

Image credit: GIZ

© Partha Kar via iStock

REPUBLIC OF INDIA

Regional affiliation
N/A

2,481 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

1,438,070
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

0.9%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

INDIA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

The State Government of Telangana is drafting AI Procurement Guidelines for the Information Technology, Electronics, and Communications Department and for the rest of the government departments for procuring AI solutions. The Telangana government identified the AI Procurement Guidelines as a risk mitigation strategy. The guidelines are intended to provide public sector officials in India with a framework to implement at the time of conceptualising, assessing, and purchasing AI-based solutions and applications. The need for these guidelines was established during an interdepartmental workshop on AI governance.

The guidelines seek to address issues including – but not limited to – mixed results concerning the accuracy of AI systems; potential risks emanating from data privacy breaches; and lack of chain of responsibility for harms caused by the applications.

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

WHO WAS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- Information Technology, Electronics, and Communications Department, Government of Telangana (political partner);
- Nasscom (representatives of tech industry actors);
- With support from FAIR Forward, GIZ (on behalf of BMZ) and Digital Futures Lab (service contractor); and
- World Economic Forum.

WHAT WAS (AND IS) THE PROCESS?

Creating AI procurement guidelines originated as part of the AI Policymaker Network process. There was a capacity-building programme that eventually became the network, and the Telangana government was part of it. Participating government entities selected a topic to dive deep into, and Telangana picked AI procurement because they realised the existing IT procurement tools were insufficient in the face of challenges specific to AI. This was followed by a workshop with over a dozen government departments, culminating in the first draft of the guidelines.

The final draft of these guidelines is ready, and they will soon be put out for public consultation. Afterwards, the government will deliberate on how to adopt them as part of their procurement process (likely through beta testing).

Other states showed interest in creating similar guidelines.

MILESTONES

The AI Policymaker Network workshop: Telangana government was among the participants who engaged in an interactive peer learning session. Through this workshop, participants identified the key opportunities, risks, and governance frameworks to align AI with development gains in India. The Telangana government outlined current procurement processes and identified the need to develop AI procurement guidelines.

A draft of the **AI Procurement Guidelines** was prepared, capturing guidelines for setting up new institutional bodies and a detailed framework across a four-stage process: preparation, pre-procurement assessment, procurement guidelines, and post-procurement testing and monitoring.

An expert **stakeholder workshop** was held, with representatives from policy, legal, and technical fields to discuss and provide feedback on the procurement guidelines.

BEST PRACTICES

- The AI Procurement Guidelines recommend establishing a nodal agency to interface between government departments wishing to procure AI and an ethics committee to review assessment reports.
- In the pre-procurement stage, the nodal agency should prepare a comprehensive pre-procurement assessment report for review by the ethics committee. The report should clearly define the problem and challenges and capture opportunities assessment, as well as AI impact and risk assessments.
- It is recommended that procurement is done across a two-stage bidding process involving a technical bid and a financial bid.
- Post-procurement involves submitting proof of concept by the vendor and sandbox testing of the AI solution.

Image credit: GIZ

© Ignas Kunda via iStock

REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA

Regional affiliation
ASEAN

4,876 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

281,190,067
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

0.8%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

INDONESIA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

Indonesia's National Strategy for AI (STRANAS KA) is designed to transform the nation into an innovation-driven economy by emphasising high-impact technologies which focus on five key sectors: AI, Internet of Things (IoT), advanced robotics, augmented reality, and 3D printing. This strategy outlines a roadmap for AI development from 2020 to 2045, aiming to transition Indonesia into an innovation-based economy by its 100th independence anniversary as projected in the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2025–2045[30] and the Visi Indonesia Digital 2045 (VID)[31].

30. Undang-Undang Nomor 59 Tahun 2024 tentang Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Panjang Nasional Tahun 2025—2045 (Law Number 59 of 2024 on the National Long-Term Development Plan for the Years 2025–2045. Access via https://peraturan.bpk.go.id/Details/299728/uu-no-59-tahun-2024

31. Visi Indonesia Digital 2045. Access via https://digital2045.id/

The strategy identifies five priority sectors to be impacted by AI development: health services, education, food security, transportation, and public sector reform. To tackle emerging challenges like workforce disruptions and data misuse, STRANAS KA emphasises four strategic pillars: Ethics and Policies, Infrastructure and Data, Talent Development, and Industrial Research and Innovation. Following STRANAS KA, Indonesia's National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) has established a research centre to advance AI and cybersecurity, aiming to drive digital transformation and boost the country's global competitiveness.

To ensure responsible AI deployment, the country emphasises robust data privacy and ethical practices, guided by the Personal Data Protection Law (PDP Law) and Circular Letter No. 9 Year 2023 on Ethical AI. These frameworks apply to public and private electronic system providers, fostering transparency and inclusivity. UNESCO and Indonesia's Ministry of Communications and Informatics (KOMINFO) completed an AI Readiness Assessment for Indonesia in October 2024 with assessment implementation through FAIR Forward for Climate AI Adoption in Indonesia's Blue Economy project. It is the first country in Southeast Asia to have completed the AI Readiness Assessment, providing a benchmark for ethical AI governance.

By 2024, regulatory advancements, including sandbox regulations for testing AI innovations, underlined Indonesia's commitment to building a sustainable AI ecosystem. These efforts align with global standards, ensuring AI serves as a catalyst for economic growth, improved governance, and social welfare while mitigating risks like workforce disruption and data misuse.

WHO IS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- The Indonesian Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS) serves as a political partner, guiding the alignment of AI development with national priorities.
- The Ministry of Communications and Informatics (KOMINFO) integrates AI policymakers training into its Learning Management System (LMS) to ensure a structured educational pathway for policymakers.
- Supporting these efforts, FAIR Forward provides critical support alongside service contractors such as Harapura Impact and Apta Works, Prosa.AI, and Common Room Networks Foundation.

This collaborative and inclusive approach ensures that each partner contributes unique expertise to shape Indonesia's AI policies effectively and ethically.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

As part of this initiative, FAIR Forward Indonesia project builds upon the recently concluded High Carbon Stock Approach (HCSA) project, which involved the collection of tropical forest field data nationwide. The gathered data facilitated the creation of high-quality, open-access, AI-generated, large-scale, indicative HCS maps spanning from December 2022 to February 2024.

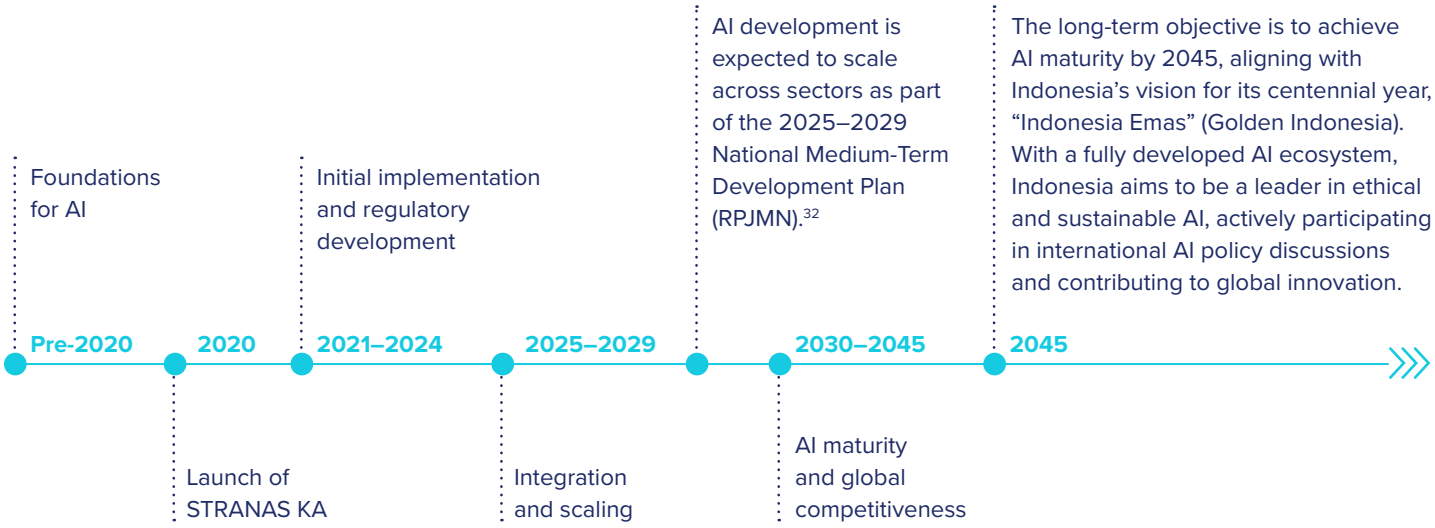
For Natural Language Processing, Prosa.AI has completed Dialogue Paragraph Writing in low-volume local languages Minangkabau, Balinese, and Buginese. This resulted in over 10.6 million words and 21 million words translations. A second phase project will use AI-based tools to identify and tackle climate misinformation and disinformation.

Harapura Impact and Apta Works have delivered AI training using a human rights and ethical AI approach for diverse policymakers. The training emphasised the participation of women and persons with disability in an inclusive approach to AI governance in Indonesia.

Common Room Networks Foundation co-designed an AI-based system with the communities in Pulo Aceh, Aceh, and Maros, South Sulawesi, to mitigate the impact of climate change and adopt AI-based tools for Indonesia's Blue Economy through Co_LABS (Community-based Innovation Lab for Climate Resilience) project.

MILESTONES

Indonesia's journey toward AI development has been strategically structured across several key milestones, each marking significant advancements in AI policy, infrastructure, and implementation.



(Source: Compiled by AI Policymakers Indonesia Delegation)

BEST PRACTICES

- Political partners have prioritised transparency and accessibility to promote open data policy and an AI regulatory sandbox.
- Meaningful participation of people from diverse backgrounds has been incorporated in the AI regulatory sandbox. This includes cross-sector experts, NGOs, academia, and marginalised communities such as people with disabilities.
- A dedicated government research centre on artificial intelligence has been established. This allows top-notch research on the topic tailored to Indonesia's needs.
- Accessibility considerations are in place for AI trainers and participants by ensuring women and disability-friendly workshop design and environment.

This hands-on collaboration fosters an AI policy framework that is inclusive, transparent, and grounded in Indonesia's regulatory landscape.

Resources

National Strategy for AI Indonesia National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence

32. Based on Rancangan Teknokratik RPJMN Tahun 2025-2029: Penguatan Fondasi Transformasi (Technocratic Draft of RPJMN 2025-29: Strengthening the Foundation of Transformation). Access via https://perpustakaan.bappenas.go.id/e-library/file_upload/koleksi/dokumenbappenas/konten/Upload%20Terbaru/%7BDIGITAL%7D%20RANCANGAN%20TEKNOKRATIK%202025-2029.pdf

© SimplyCreativePhotography via iStock

KENYA

Regional affiliation
EAC, COMESA

1,952 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

55,339,033
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

2%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

KENYA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

In 2021, Kenya launched its National Digital Masterplan 2022/32, highlighting the importance of AI and other emerging technologies. The masterplan envisions that the government will convene an interagency, multistakeholder AI task force to create a National AI Research and Development Strategic Plan.

In 2023, Kenya launched the AI Practitioner's Guide – an industry-led initiative supported by FAIR Forward. The guide builds on a 2019 report on distributed ledger technology and artificial intelligence and offers insights on how to go about setting up Kenya's AI agenda.

WHO IS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) steered the development of the AI Practitioners Guide.
- The Ministry of ICT and the Digital Economy (MoICDE), through the State Department of ICT and Digital Economy (SDICTDE), is responsible for AI policy development. To begin with, the then Cabinet Secretary for MoICDE (Hon. Eliud Owalo) appointed an ICT Sector Working Group to examine and review policy and legislative, institutional, administrative, and operational structures and systems in the ICT sector and provide recommendations and proposals (including perspectives on AI). The ICT Sector Working Group Report was launched in June 2024 – and provides a blueprint for Kenya's digital Transformation. Additionally, in April 2024, the process of developing Kenya's National AI Strategy got underway under the guidance and leadership of the MoICDE.
- FAIR Forwarunder the umbrella of the Digital Transformation Centre (DTC), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – on behalf of BMZ – has fully supported the development of the AI Practitioners Guide.
- Kenya's National AI Strategy has been developed with the support of the European Union and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), whose collaborative spirit and support have enriched the effort and understanding of global best practices through lessons learned.

WHAT WAS (AND IS) THE PROCESS?

Beyond data privacy, data rights, and access to information and the compliance therein, there was a common understanding from 2023 and moving into early 2024 at MoICDE that Kenya would benefit from an AI strategy that not only guides AI policies and regulations but also inspires a shared roadmap towards a thriving AI industry for the Kenyan economy and other social sectors. The development of the National AI strategy (which commenced in April 2024) is being spearheaded by the MoICDE and has adopted a very consultative, multistakeholder, and open dialogue approach.

Kenya's draft National AI Strategy was published by MoICDE in January 2025 and is undergoing public validation before finalisation.

MILESTONES

BEST PRACTICES

Consultations and engagements with multiple stakeholders have targeted AI experts, academia, AI startup communities, specific public and private sectors, and the general public (through various town hall meetings). This has enabled a strategic consultative approach that promotes transparency, clarity, and a wide stakeholder reach to ensure that opportunities and risks are presented and captured inclusively.

Resources

1. Ministry of ICT and Digital Economy (2024). *The Kenya National Digital Masterplan 2022–2032*. Kenya Digital Master Plan
2. GIZ, GPSDD (2023). *AI Practitioners' Guide Kenya:* Kenya AI Practitioner's Guide
3. Ministry of Information, , and the Digital Economy (2024). *Report of the Information, Communications and Digital Economy Sector Working Group* MICDE Report
4. Ministry of Information, Communication, and Digital Economy (2025). Kenya Draft National AI Strategy Kenya AI strategy

© OscarEspinosa via iStock

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA

Regional affiliation
EAC

1,010 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

13,954,471
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

2.2%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

RWANDA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

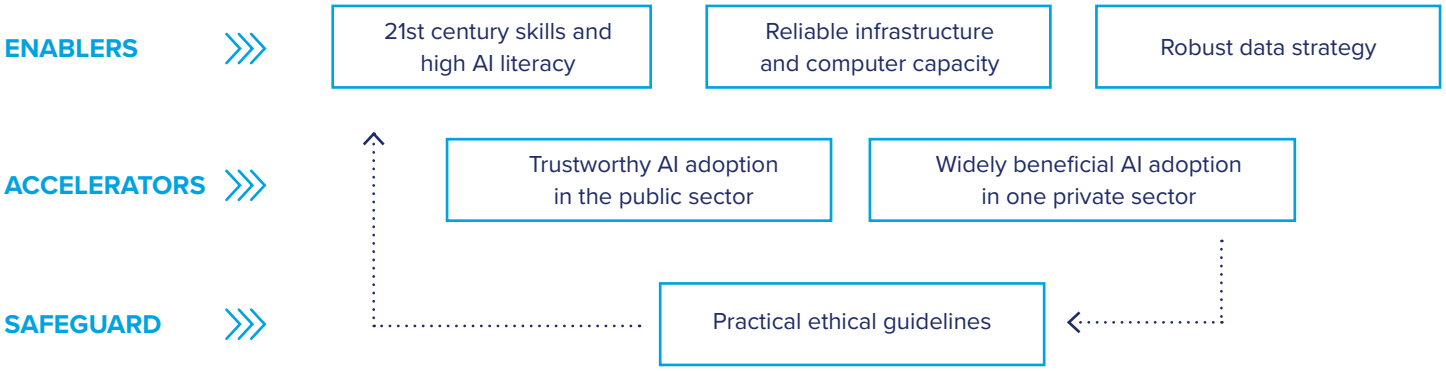
Rwanda developed a National Artificial Intelligence Policy through a multistakeholder process led by the Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT), C4IR, and the Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA). The joint leadership was agreed upon to ensure that strategic and regulatory aspects would be covered adequately in the process. The process relied on a collective intelligence methodology by engaging over 120 participants in eight workshops, eight stakeholder surveys, and multistakeholder interviews.

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

Key stakeholders involved representatives from ministries, the private sector, and academia. In addition to MINICT, C4IR, and RURA, these were the main actors in charge of implementing the AI policy. The multistakeholder approach was selected in light of the transformative potential that AI is predicted to have on many aspects of the country's society and economy. Hence, ownership by a wide variety of actors was considered essential.

Overall, the mission of the policy is to "leverage AI to power economic growth, improve quality of life and position Rwanda as a global innovator for responsible and inclusive AI" by means of the following six priority areas.

Rwanda National AI Policy: six priority areas



Notably, Rwanda's National AI Policy comprises a five-year implementation plan that calendarises 73 activities supporting each of the areas in the figure above. This is to ensure that the policy achieves impact through the implementation of concrete measures that reach beyond its strategic level.

The policy holds several strengths. It expressly assigns responsibilities across governmental, private sector, and nonprofit actors for steering implementation forward. Furthermore, it is accompanied by an AI Maturity Assessment Framework, which defines key indicators across different dimensions to assess and measure progress in the national AI ecosystem.

WHO WAS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT);
- Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR); and
- Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA).

Support came from GIZ FAIR Forward under the umbrella of the DTC (and on behalf of BMZ) and TFS.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

Desk research
Including digital policy and stakeholder mapping

Workshops
- Two multistakeholder workshops across six sectors
- Six validation workshops with the public sector

Expert interviews
- With 35+ key AI actors from Rwanda
- Consultations with international experts[33]

Eight surveys
To workshop participants for input on ethical guidelines and implementation

Validation and iteration
Continuously through meetings, drafts, and workshops

SWOT analysis
Based on workshop and interview findings

Policy analysis
By RURA of drafted AI Ethical Guidelines

Review
Of national AI policies to identify ideas and blind spots

Assessment and prioritisation
Via roles and a five-year timeline for the implementation plan

MILESTONES

Q1
Official request for National AI Policy by MINICT

2020

July
Beginning of the drafting process

Sept–June
Stakeholder involvement (via workshops, interviews, surveys)

2020–2021

2021

July
Draft of National AI Policy created

June–Sept
Validation workshops with sectoral ministries and other key stakeholders

2022

Oct
National AI Policy finalised

April
Cabinet approves National AI Policy

2023

33. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and World Economic Forum (WEF)

BEST PRACTICES

- To ensure the implementation of AI policy frameworks, it is critical that they include clearly defined actions. The Rwanda AI Policy includes a detailed implementation plan with indicators, responsibilities, budgets, and a monitoring and evaluation framework to regularly measure progress.
- AI, as a cross-cutting technology, has links and implications with most sectors, including agriculture, healthcare, education, and finance. It is crucial to involve sector ministries within government and representatives from sectors in developing AI policy frameworks. Their involvement from early on will increase the likelihood that they will take an active role in policy implementation.

Resources

MINICT (2023). Summary of National AI Policy

Image credit: GIZ

© Wild_Drago via iStock

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Regional affiliation
SADC, BRICS+[34]

6,023 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

63,212,384
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

1.3%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

SOUTH AFRICA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

The Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution (PC4IR) Report is the official policy position on digitalisation, emphasising infrastructural development, economic growth, innovation, research, and capacity building across all public sectors. Through this, an AI Institute of South Africa was established, and a draft national AI policy was released in March 2024 for public comment.

34. BRICS+ is an intergovernmental organisation consisting of ten countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

To aid the development of an AI policy and subsequent strategy, significant financing, regulatory and research work is being simultaneously undertaken by entities (other than ministries), i.e. Information Regulator, Competition Commission of South Africa,[35] universities,[36] the CSIR,[37] and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC).[38]

In March 2024, a national AI summit was organised, and the discussion document for National AI Planning was launched. The document covers the global discourse, trends, and drivers vis-a-vis modelling the local landscape for AI planning, as well as key focus areas for AI implementation in South Africa. This was followed by the national AI policy framework in October 2024, which provides a foundational basis for developing future legislation and directives on AI. The framework is structured around six components (pillars) with an overarching purpose of ensuring ethics, fairness, accountability, transparency, and fairness in AI.

Other cross-cutting AI policy activities include:

1. **UNESCO Readiness Assessment Methodology:**[39] This tool assesses the resources needed (and available) to develop AI ethically and responsibly. A drafting and consultation process has been hosted by the Department of Digital and Communication Technologies (DCDT) and the National Electronic Media Institute of South Africa (NEMISA).

2. **Recommendations towards the development of a national AI strategy:** The National Advisory Council on Innovation (NACI), led by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and the HSRC, is conducting a hybrid workshop research and engagement process of stakeholders across government, academia, industry, and civil society, to co-develop recommendations on a national AI strategy.

3. **The AI Maturity Assessment Framework:** This initiative is funded by GIZ, and supported by DCDT and the Dept of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI), which are collaborating as ministries to advance AI. The project aims to develop robust, ethical, and country-specific AI policy recommendations by understanding the level of AI maturity in SA and what interventions are needed to advance South Africa and ensure its global standing in digital development. The process adopts extensive and inclusive multistakeholder participation through expert interviews, engagement, validation workshops and other asynchronous input methods.

   There will be four main outputs of the project:

   - Develop an inclusive framework that empowers the government to conduct a comprehensive, evidence-based analysis of AI maturity for South Africa;
   - Develop an interactive dashboard (digital public good) for data visualisation of the framework data inputs, which can produce results on demand;
   - Produce an annual “State of AI readiness and maturity of South Africa” evaluation report; and
   - Provide AI policy recommendations to the government based on insights, data, and situational analysis of South Africa.

35. Media and Digital Platforms Market Inquiry and Online Intermediation Platforms Market Inquiry https://www.compcom.co.za/.

36. Centre for AI Research https://www.cair.org.za/.

37. Emerging Digital Technologies for the Fourth Industrial Revolution (EDT4IR) Research Centre https://www.csir.co.za/emerging-digital-technologies-4ir-research-centre.

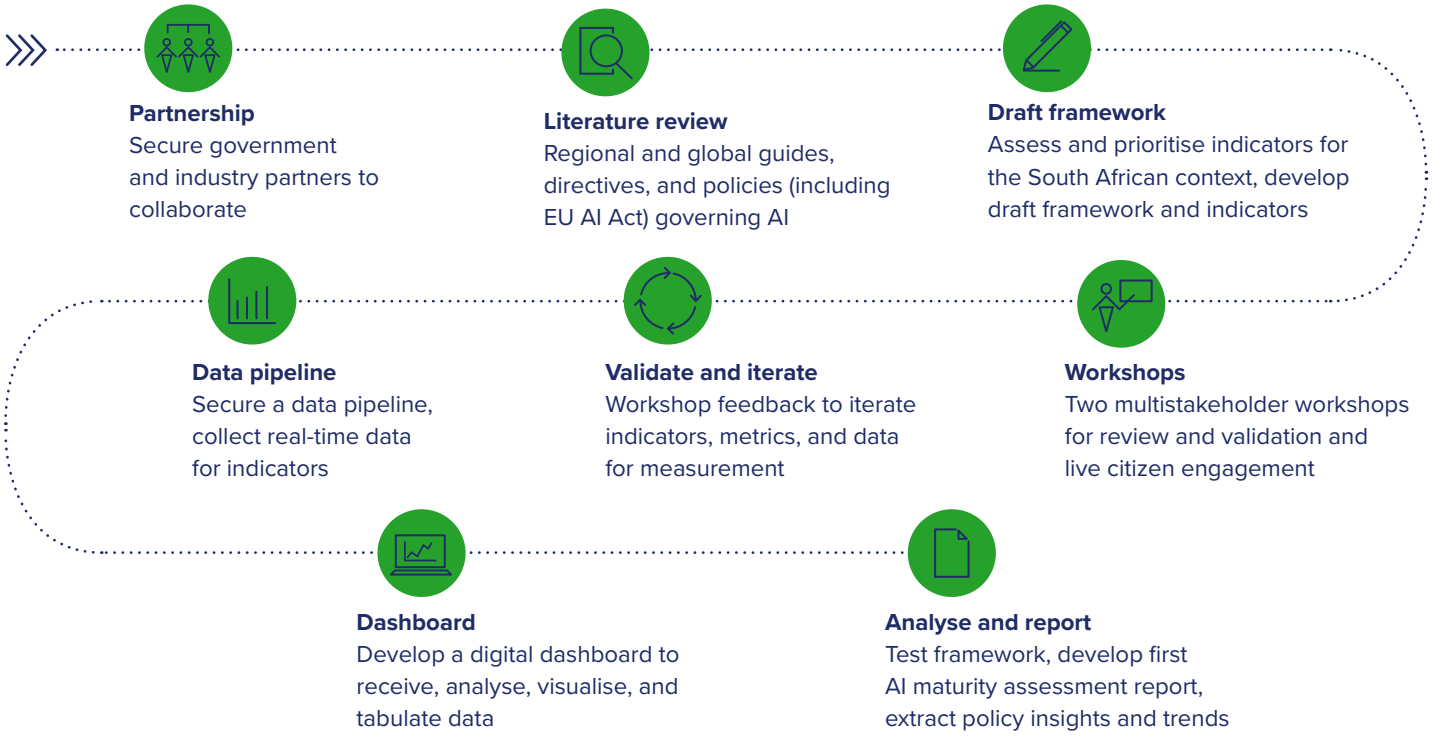
38. See the Policy Action Network project work on AI https://policyaction.org.za/african-ai-policymaking.

39. Activity undertaken across multiple countries by UNESCO, following the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence AI report adopted by member states.

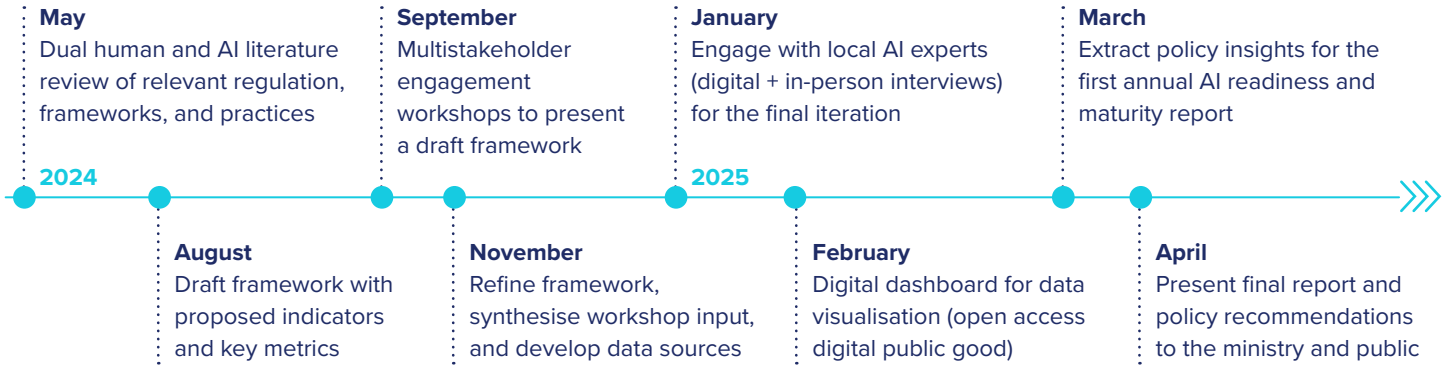
WHO IS DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- **Ministries:** DCDT is the main political partner supporting the development of the AI Maturity Assessment Framework and ministry mandated to develop AI policy. DSTI, through its agency, CSIR, is providing resources to operationally support the framework process, including housing and maintaining the digital dashboard for the AI Maturity Assessment.
- **University of Western Cape (UWC):** The university is the contracted service provider that assists in the implementation of the process for the AI Maturity Assessment Framework.
- **Steering and advisory committee (mix of senior ministry officials, academia, and industry):** The committee ensures alignment of the project goals with the AI ecosystem and national priorities for inclusive development.
- **FAIR Forward (GIZ – on behalf of BMZ):** GIZ supports the activity and the coordination of all partners.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?



MILESTONES



Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

BEST PRACTICES

- Government support is critical but can be futile if an administration change occurs. Consider working with ministry agencies (e.g. CSIR), which provide flexibility and security while still having the support of a ministry. Ministries can remain as consulting partners via a steering or advisory committee.
- The ministry mandated to undertake AI policy development may not be equipped with human, financial, or operational resources. While AI policymaking remains the mandate of DCDT, other ministries and entities support AI advancement and linkages continue across initiatives. It is critical to identify and connect pockets of activity and expertise for intra-government cooperation towards a joint goal: to position South Africa on the global AI stage. This enables ministry cohesion and signals coherence and alignment on national AI priorities.
- Sustainability is critical for effective AI governance. The digital dashboard developed through the AI Maturity Assessment Framework process will become a digital public good housed at the CSIR. This enables stakeholders from any sector to access the dashboard and current data reports for scholarly work or data in developing new products and services. This dashboard and ongoing data inputs will enable the government to draw a report on the country's AI status at any time and adjust strategy, budget, and interventions accordingly.

Resources

Report of the Presidential Commission on the 4th Industrial Revolution (2020). PC4IR Report

Dept of Communications & Digital Technology (2024). *South Africa's Artificial Intelligence Planning* Discussion Document

Dept of Communications & Digital Technology (2024). *National AI Policy Framework for South Africa* National AI Policy Framework Document

Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (2024). *AI Maturity Assessment Framework for South Africa* (project webpage): AI MAF for SA

Image credit: GIZ

© Ozbalci via iStock

UGANDA

Regional affiliation
EAC, COMESA

1,002 USD
GDP per capita
(World Bank, 2023)

48,656,601
Population size
(World Bank, 2023)

2.8%
Population growth
(World Bank, 2023)

UGANDA'S AI POLICY APPROACH

Uganda developed its National Strategy on the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) in 2021. Using an opportunity-focused approach, imperatives were identified for realising the benefits of 4IR applications, including artificial intelligence. The National Strategy on 4IR recognised that AI has broad areas of application in Uganda and can ignite significant economic and social gains if unlocked.

Uganda launched a digital transformation roadmap in 2023 to gain operational momentum to attain aspirations spelt out in the Digital Uganda Vision. The roadmap embraces data analytics and artificial intelligence for Uganda to harness the power of data to drive evidence-based policymaking, optimise resource allocation, and improve service delivery.

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

Uganda has developed a roadmap for developing an ethical AI framework. In 2024, the AI ecosystem underwent assessments, baseline surveys, and reviews to support the development of enabling policies, regulations, standards, and guidelines for the country to harness the benefits of AI while minimising its potential negative effects. One example is a regulatory sandbox developed by the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC). This sandbox provides a controlled environment for testing new technologies, including AI, without compliance hurdles.

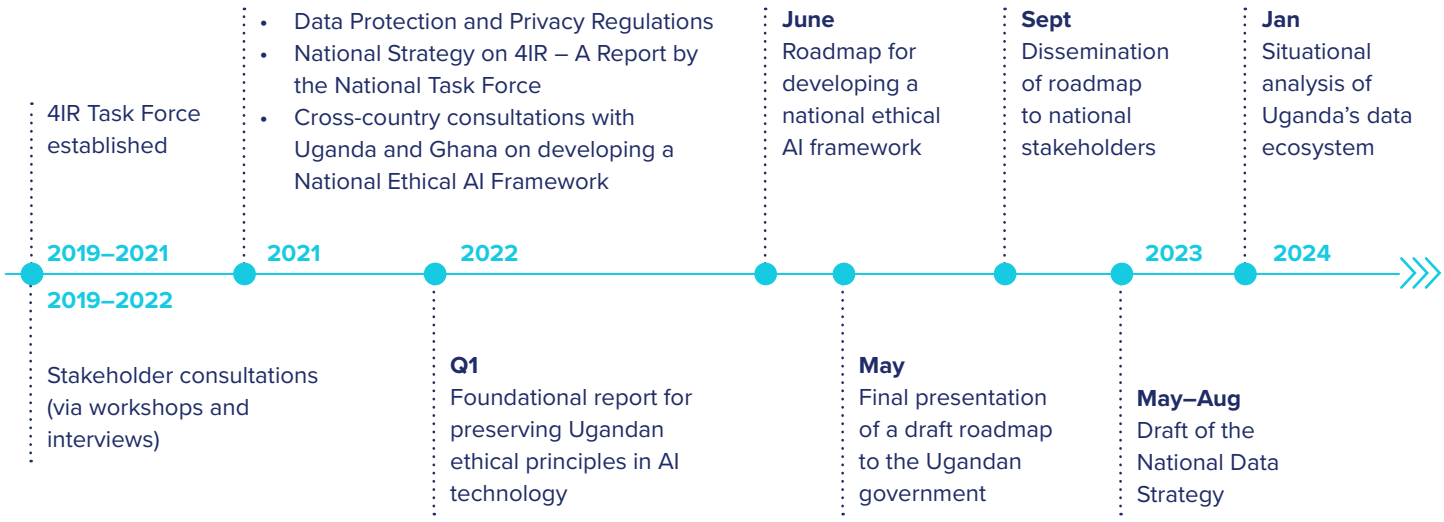
Uganda is developing a national data strategy to strengthen legal, policy, and regulatory frameworks supporting data and AI ecosystems.

WHO WAS (AND IS) DRIVING THE PROCESS?

- **The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance (MoICT&NG)**
- **The Expert Task Force on 4IR:** Selected from innovation hubs, the private sector, academia, media, development partners, and government and established by the prime minister. Development is in collaboration with government key stakeholders in the data ecosystem that include the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development; the Ministry of Public Service; the National Planning Authority; Uganda Bureau of Statistics; the National IT Authority; the Uganda Bureau of Standards; Uganda Registration Services Bureau; National Identification Registration Authority; Uganda Communications Commission; Office of the President; Office of the Prime Minister among others.
- **FAIR Forward (GIZ – on behalf of BMZ):** Partnered with the MoICT&NG to foster the AI ecosystem in Uganda through capacity development and policy dialogues to promote AI adoption.
- **The UN Global Pulse Lab, also funded through GIZ FAIR Forward:** Supported the development of the roadmap for an ethical AI framework and the National Strategy on 4IR through the provision of technical expertise and support for stakeholder engagements.
- **Sunbird AI:** In January 2023, The Ministry of ICT and National Guidance signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Sunbird AI. The MoU was geared towards leveraging AI systems to increase the use of ICT services for Uganda's social and economic development in accordance with Uganda's Third National Development Plan (NDPIII)
- **National Information Technology Authority, Uganda (NITA-U):** Developed and rolled out a platform that enables seamless sharing of data across government systems in a rational, secure, efficient, and sustainable manner. This platform is implemented through a legal framework in the form of the NITA-U (National Data Bank) Regulations.

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS?

MILESTONES



Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network

BEST PRACTICES

During the drafting process, Uganda acknowledged the importance of comprehensive preparatory groundwork before jumping into developing AI policies. This can be seen in Uganda's endeavours to prioritise foundations for AI policies, such as an ethical framework and a data strategy, to govern the societal impact of AI.

At the same time, Uganda (re-)instituted its 4IR Task Force to ensure any policy would be grounded in an informed assessment of national priorities and capacities. The task force was established by the Office of the Prime Minister and reflected a diverse representation of society and its different sectors.

High-ranking members contributed authoritative insights from their respective fields, ensuring efficient engagement and expert advice. Their commitment to the process was demonstrated by securing suitable replacements when members were unable to attend meetings. This approach, combined with clear deliverables and timelines, ensured an effective engagement of the 4IR Task Force in processes like the National Strategy on 4IR.

Resources

Ministry of ICT Uganda (2020). Uganda's National 4IR Strategy

Ministry of ICT Uganda (2023). Digital Transformation Roadmap

Image credit: GIZ

Image credit: GIZ

ANNEXURE: POLICY MAPPING

(status as of February 2025)

This annexure provides a compilation of relevant, existing technology (AI and data-related) policy landscapes of the partner countries. It illustrates the legal and governance building blocks (frameworks, white papers, and/or guidelines) which are already in place, have contributed to the digital development of the respective country ecosystems, or are currently under development in each country.

These foundational policy components are crucial in creating an environment conducive to AI development, which in turn necessitates robust governance through data and AI strategies and policies. A review of these policy maps will reveal emerging trends across regions, such as consistent ICT (digital) policy strategies, as well as data protection, cybersecurity, and consumer protection measures, among others.

Kindly note that this list is a static snapshot, current in December 2024, and non-exhaustive. It is meant to provide context around what the partner countries have done with the resources available to them in the form of regulations, policies, guidelines, frameworks, and white papers.[40]

40. For additional overviews on national AI policies, you can also have a look at the OECD. AI Policy Observatory and, for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Policy Map of the African Observatory on Responsible AI.

The following policies are included in the mapping:

- AI regulation;
- Data protection legislation;
- AI policies and strategies;
- AI task force data policies;
- Emerging technology policies;
- Sandboxes;
- Digital, ICT, and 4IR strategies; and
- Cybersecurity law.

Use the hyperlinks below to jump to a specific country:

GHANA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Data Protection Act	Data Protection Commission	2012	The Act sets out the rules and principles governing a data controller or processor's collection, use, disclosure and care of personal data or information.	The Data Protection Act 2012
Cybersecurity Act	Cyber Security Authority (CSA)	2020	The Act focuses on: 1. The right framework to deal with cybersecurity incidents 2. Secure critical information infrastructure 3. Provisions for the protection of children online	Cybersecurity-Act-2020-Act-1038.pdf (csdsafrica.org)
National AI Strategy	Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation	Forthcoming The Draft document is undergoing review.		
National Public Policy Formulation Guidelines	National Development Planning Commission	2018	The guidelines help stakeholders and policymakers identify essential sections and issues of a policy that need key consideration in order to produce effective policy for the benefit of citizens and the country holistically.	Guidelines for Public Policy Formulation in Ghana
Ethical AI Framework	Ministry of Communications and Digitalisation & Data Protection Commission	Forthcoming		

INDIA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
National Cyber Security Policy	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)	2013	The policy aims at protecting the public and private infrastructure from cyber-attacks. It also intends to safeguard "information, such as personal information (of web users), financial and banking information and sovereign data".	National Cyber Security Policy 2013.pdf (meity.gov.in)
Digital India Programme	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Ministry of Finance	2015	The vision of the Digital India Programme is to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy by ensuring digital access, digital inclusion, and digital empowerment and bridging the digital divide. It is centred on three key vision areas: 1. Digital Infrastructure as a core utility to every citizen 2. Governance and services on demand 3. Digital empowerment of citizens	https://digitalindia.gov.in/
Center of Excellence for Internet of Things (IoT) & AI	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)	2015	The Centre of Excellence for IoT and AI is part of the Digital India Initiative to jump-start the IoT ecosystem. The main objective of the centre is to create innovative applications and domain capability (e.g. smart city, smart health, smart manufacturing, smart agriculture) by harnessing the innovative nature of the start-up community in India and leveraging the experience of corporate players.	https://www.coe-iot.com/
AI Task Force for India's Economic Transformation	Ministry of Commerce and Industry	2017	1. Leverage AI for economic benefits. 2. Create policy and legal framework to accelerate the deployment of AI technologies.	ai-task-force-report.pdf (cis-india.org)
National Strategy for Artificial Intelligence	NITI Aayog	2018	Recognising AI's potential to transform economies and the need for India to strategise its approach	NationalStrategy-for-AI-Discussion-Paper.pdf (indiaai.gov.in)
AI Stack discussion paper	Department of Telecommunication (DoT)'s AI Standardisation Committee	2018	The paper highlights five major horizontal pillars: 1. Security 2. Data storage 3. Privacy 4. Customer experience 5. Computing	ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - INDIAN STACK.pdf (tec.gov.in)
Biological Data Storage, Access, and Sharing Policy of India	Ministry of Science and Technology, Department of Biotechnology	2019	The policy defines guidelines for sharing data generated by scientists in India using modern biotechnological tools and methods.	Draft 1 - Biological Data Policy.docx (dbtindia.gov.in)
Approach Document for India, Part 1: Principles for Responsible AI	NITI Aayog	2021	This document proposes principles for the responsible management of AI systems that may be leveraged by relevant stakeholders in India.	Responsible-AI-Part1-22022021.pdf (niti.gov.in)

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Approach Document for India, Part 1: Operationalising Principles for Responsible AI	NITI Aayog	2021	This document identifies a series of actions for the government, the private sector, and research institutions that must be adopted to drive responsible AI.	Responsible-AI-Part2-12082021.pdf (niti.gov.in)
Digital Personal Data Protection Bill	Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)	2022		
Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023	Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)	2023	The Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act regulates the processing of personal data and ensures that individuals' privacy is protected. Its impact on AI in India is significant in several ways, particularly because AI systems often rely on large volumes of personal data to train algorithms and make decisions. Companies developing AI models need to ensure they have obtained proper consent for data collection, which could require changes in how AI training datasets are collected and processed. AI developers must also ensure that data collection is transparent and respects individuals' rights. Moreover, AI companies that rely on cloud services or outsourcing may need to rethink their data storage and processing strategies. Cross-border data flows could be restricted, requiring AI developers to store data locally or comply with stringent conditions for international data transfers. The AI developers will also need to ensure that their systems meet the legal requirements set forth by the DPDP Act. This may require regular audits, legal reviews, and adjustments to AI systems and data processing workflows to ensure compliance. The government released Draft Rules in 2025 to implement the DPDP Act, which is undergoing a public consultation process.	Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023
National Cyber Security Strategy	National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS)	Forthcoming		

INDONESIA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
National AI Strategy from 2020 to 2045 (Strategi Nasional Kecerdasan Artifisial)	Ministry of Research and Technology/ National Research and Innovation Agency and Artificial Intelligence Innovation Center (PIKA) & Industrial Collaboration and Artificial Intelligence Innovation (KORIKA)	2020	1. To transform Indonesia into an innovation-based country 2. To encourage AI research and industrial innovation 3. To improve data and data-related infrastructure 4. To establish ethical and relevant policies 5. To develop AI-related talents in the population	Strategi Nasional Kecerdasan Artifisial Indonesia 2020 – 2045 – KORIKA
Digital Roadmap 2021-2024	Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo)	2021	1. Digital infrastructure 2. Digital government 3. Digital economy 4. Digital society	MSMEs Digital Technology Intervention: Policy and Strategies in Indonesia (adb.org) https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/indonesia-digital-economy-opportunities
Personal Data Protection Law	Data Protection Authority (DPA)	2022	1. Personal data 2. Face recognition 3. Privacy regulation	https://www.dpr.go.id/dokakd/dokumen/K1-RJ-20220920-123712-3183.pdf (Only in Indonesian) Policy analysis: https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/indonesia-enacts-first-personal-data-protection-law-key-compliance-requirements/ https://fpf.org/blog/indonesias-personal-data-protection-bill-overview-key-takeaways-and-context/

KENYA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Digital Literacy Programme (DigiSchool)	Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Authority	2013	The programme introduces primary school children to the use of digital technology and communications (AI skills and education).	https://www.digischool.go.ke/#
Blockchain and AI Task Force	Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MOIC-DE)	2018	Key among the recommendations made by the Task Force include: 1. Development of policies promoting AI and protecting human rights 2. Creating an AI ecosystem that supports the development of AI and analysis of potential risks of AI 3. Implementing mitigation measures	Link no longer available.
Kenya Gazette – Data Protection Act	Office of the Data Protection Commissioner	2019	The Act contains: 1. Automated decision-making cannot happen without human input to reduce instances of biased decision-making with significant negative impacts. 2. Requirements for data controller to notify a person within a reasonable period of time that an AI decision has been rendered that may produce legal effects. This Act is the only law in Kenya that can be relied on in terms of the protection of data processed by AI systems.	TheDataProtectionAct__No24of2019.pdf (kenyalaw.org)
Digital Economy Blueprint	Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MOIC-DE)	2019	The Blueprint identifies the five pillars of the digital economy: 1. Digital government 2. Digital business 3. Infrastructure 4. Innovation-driven entrepreneurship 5. Digital skills and values	Kenya-Digital-Economy-2019.pdf (ict.go.ke)
Digital Economy Strategy	Ministry of Information, Communications and the Digital Economy (MOIC-DE)	2020	The Strategy was developed due to Kenya's adoption of the Digital Economy Blueprint for Africa. It focuses on six pillars: 1. Digital government 2. Digital business 3. Infrastructure 4. Innovation and entrepreneurship 5. Digital skills and values 6. Digital inclusion	Link no longer available. Replaced with: The Kenya National Digital Master Plan 2022-2032 (ict.go.ke)

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Kenya National Digital Master Plan 2022–2032	Ministry of ICT, Innovation and Youth Affairs	2022	The Kenya National Digital Master Plan 2022–2032 is a sequential progression of the Master Plan 2014–2017, the blueprint for leveraging and deepening the contribution of ICT to accelerate economic growth. The Master Plan categorised the ICT elements into foundations and pillars as a conceptual model to foster understanding and structuring the strategic interventions. The foundations include ICT human capital and workforce development, Integrated ICT infrastructure and Integrated information infrastructure. The four key pillars are: 1. Digital infrastructure 2. Digital services and data management 3. Digital skills 4. Driving digital innovation for entrepreneurship	https://cms.icta.go.ke/sites/default/files/2022-04/Kenya%20Digital%20Masterplan%202022-2032%20Online%20Version.pdf

RWANDA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Smart Rwanda 2020 Master Plan (SRMP)	Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT)	2015	SRMP focuses on digitising the economy, positioning ICT as a key national export and contributing to job creation and GDP growth.	SMART_RWANDA_MASTERPLAN.pdf (minict.gov.rw)
Data Revolution Policy	National Institute of Statistics (NISR)	2017	To ensure that the Rwandan government agencies follow consistent rules on data release, privacy safeguards, use of an open licence, and technical standards.	https://statistics.gov.rw/file/5410/download?token=r0nXaTAv
Emerging Technologies Strategy and Action Plan	Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT)	2020 (not yet adopted)	It identifies technologies that Rwanda will focus on from 2020 to 2025 with the goal of maximising their benefits and minimising the risks of falling behind. Ultimately, its mission is to promote socioeconomic use cases across health, education, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, and public service delivery.	Additional information: Transforming Rwanda into a living Laboratory of Emerging Technologies (archive.org)
Data Protection Law	National Cyber Security Authority (NCSA)	2021	To protect personal data and privacy.	Law relating to the protection of personal data and privacy_15.10.2021
National AI Policy	Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT)	2023	1. To accelerate AI adoption by enabling the rapid growth of Rwanda's AI ecosystem 2. To foster the adoption of AI in high-growth sectors 3. To scale public and private sector investment in AI	National AI Policy Summary II Nw (minict.gov.rw)
Guidelines for the Ethical Development of AI	Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) and Centre for Fourth Industrial Revolution (C4IR)	Forthcoming	The guidelines provide a set of principles fostering and promoting the ethical development and deployment of AI systems for the benefit of the people of the Republic of Rwanda. As such, they seek to ensure AI developers and implementers build AI systems that are trustworthy.	
Start-up Act	Ministry of ICT and Innovation (MINICT)	Forthcoming	The Startup Act aims to boost the country's entrepreneurial and business environment.	Additional information: Nine major incentives in Rwanda's proposed Startup Act - The New Times
Regulatory Sandbox	Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA)	Draft	Provides a clearly defined testing environment so as to develop and test innovative technology or solutions without being subjected to a great number of regulatory requirements.	Final_Draft_Regulation_Governing_the_Regulatory_Sandbox_in_Rwanda_v2.0.pdf (rura.rw)

SOUTH AFRICA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Electronic Communications and Transaction Act	South African Accreditation Authority (SAAA) Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (Ministry)	2002	Law governing any/all electronic communications and transactions (i.e. internet communications, digital texts, emails, SMS, etc.). Communications of a digital nature can impose or create legal rights and obligations, which in turn can impact citizens. This can be facilitated by and through the use of AI tools and automation, thus, this is a key piece of regulation impacting AI policy.	ECTA 25 of 2002
Consumer Protection Act	Consumer Ombudsman, National Consumer Tribunal, National Consumer Commission	2008	1. Regulates promotion and transaction of goods and services, as well the quality and extent of products and services themselves (this can include AI products and services – e.g. chatbots or apps – and may extend to disclaimers or warranties given by AI agents). 2. Grants certain rights to consumers around the way a service provider or supplier may transact, including the right against discrimination towards any consumer (especially discrimination based on the components listed under Section 9 of the Constitution of South Africa). 3. Imposes obligations on a supplier of goods or services to act ethically and responsibly and grants rights and options to consumers in instances where goods are defective.	CPA 68 of 2008
Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)	Information Regulator	2013 (became effective in 2021)	POPIA is South Africa's national data protection law to protect people's privacy, which is considered a human right under the South African constitution.	Protection of Personal Information Act (www.gov.za) Policy analysis: An Overview of South Africa's Protection of Personal Information Act
Presidential Commission on the Fourth Industrial Revolution	South African Government & leaders from academia, business and civil society	2019	Commission combines research and stakeholder engagements to generate a comprehensive view of South Africa's current conditions as well as the prospects in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.	Presidential Commission on Fourth Industrial Revolution: Members and terms of reference (www.gov.za) Report of the Presidential Commission on the 4th Industrial Revolution (ellipsis.co.za)

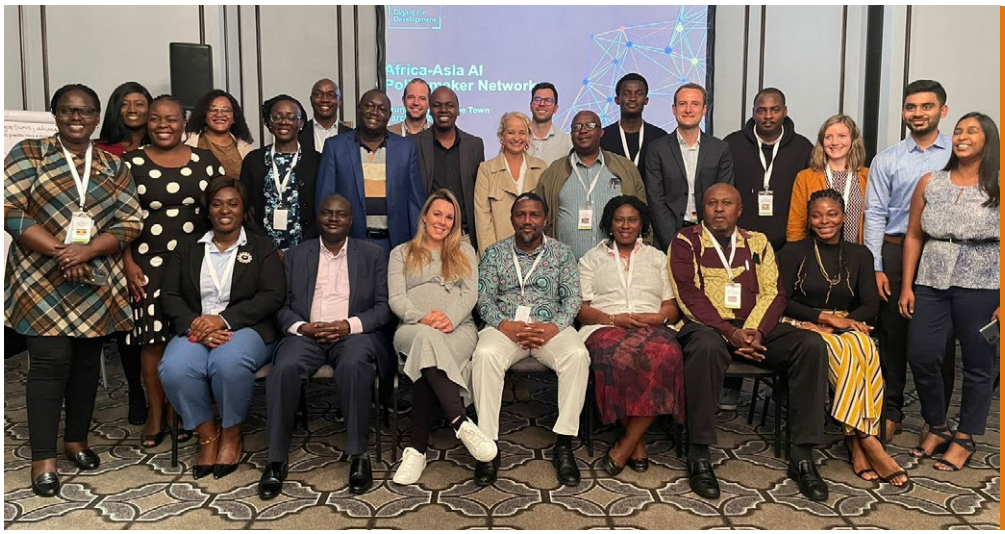
Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Cybercrimes Act	South African Police Services (SAPS)	2020	The Act deals with the prevention of offences relating to cybercrimes, as well as protecting citizens and institutes from cyber threats. The Act works to criminalise: 1. the disclosure of data messages which are harmful 2. computer-related extortion, fraud, and forgery 3. unauthorised access to, interception of, or interference with, data	Cybercrimes Act 19 of 2020 (www.gov.za)
South Africa's Artificial Intelligence Planning: Discussion Document	Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (Ministry)	2024	Draft national plan for AI	Draft Plan Discussion Document
National Data & Cloud Policy	Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (Ministry)	2024	Plan seeks to create an enabling environment for the provision of data and cloud services and is a framework aimed at efficiently managing and utilising data through cloud computing technologies. Key principles of the plan include: 1. Accelerating the rollout of digital infrastructure to ensure fast, secure, and reliable broadband connectivity 2. Ensuring data privacy and security 3. Promoting open data and data interoperability 4. Adopting a cloud-first approach	National Data & Cloud Policy 2024
South Africa National Artificial Intelligence Policy Framework	Department of Communications and Digital Technologies (Ministry)	2024	The National AI Policy Framework represents a strategic blueprint for harnessing AI technologies to advance the country's economic growth and advancement in technology while maintaining societal well-being. The framework, premised on six strategic pillars, all having an underlying basis on ethics, aims to ensure that AI systems are developed and implemented with considerations for fairness, accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.	National AI Policy Framework

UGANDA

Policy	Responsible governmental body	Adoption date	Relevance for AI	Link
Data Protection and Privacy Act	The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and National Guidance	2019	The Act regulates personal data collection, processing, use and disclosure, and applies to any person, entity or public body within or outside of Uganda who collects, processes, holds, or uses personal data.	Data-Protection-and-Privacy-Act-2019.pdf (ict.go.ug)
Data Protection and Privacy Regulations	Personal Data Protection Office	2021 (not yet in effect)	The Act and Regulations focus on the protection of privacy and personal data through regulation of its collection, processing, and storage.	Data_Protection_and_Privacy_Regulations-2021.pdf (pdpo.go.ug)
National Cyber Security Strategy	The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and National Guidance	2022	1. Safe and trusted digital economy 2. Cyber-skilled Uganda (digital awareness) 3. Active and reliable partner of the international community 4. An enabling governance framework	Ugandan-national-cybersecurity-strategy.pdf (ega.ee)
National 4IR Strategy	The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and National Guidance	In progress	The strategy addresses digital technologies such as cloud computing, AI and blockchain, and physical technologies such as autonomous vehicles.	4IR Strategy Report: Executive-Summary-Ugandas-National-4IR-Strategy.pdf (ict.go.ug) New Study on Uganda's 4th Industrial Revolution Strategy
Digital Transformation Roadmap	The Ministry of Information and Communications Technology and National Guidance	2023	The roadmap intends to guide Ugandan digital transformation efforts, enabling it to capitalize on emerging technologies, enhance economic competitiveness, and improve the lives of citizens. The roadmap further outlines a comprehensive implementation plan to give rise to the objectives. These objectives include enhancing digital infrastructure and connectivity; promoting digital services; fostering innovation and entrepreneurship; empowering digital skills and literacy; and promoting cyber security, data protection, and privacy.	UG Digital Transformation Roadmap

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network



First in-person meeting of Africa-Asia AI policymaker network in Cape Town, South Africa - March 2022

Image credit: GIZ

Second gathering of the cohort in Kigali, Rwanda - 2023

Image credit: GIZ

Convening of the policymaker network in Naivasha, Kenya - 2024

Image credit: GIZ

Image credit: GIZ

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are additionally grateful to all those who shared their insights via interviews with us:

Ghana

- Maxwell Ababio
  Data Protection Commission (DPC)
- Prof. Jerry John Kponyo
  Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST)
  Responsible AI Lab

India (State of Telangana)

- Shashidhar KJ
  Digital Futures Lab

Kenya

- Linet Kwamboka
  Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data
- Viola Ochola
  The Commission on Administrative Justice (Office of the Ombudsman)
- Brian Omwenga
  Tech Innovators Network Kenya (THINK)

Rwanda

- Joris Cyizere
  Centre for the 4th Industrial Revolution (C4IR)
- Esther Kunda
  Ministry of ICT and Innovation

South Africa

- Dr. Paul Plantinga
  Human Science Research Council (HSRC)
- Dr. Makaziwe Makamba
  National School of Government

Uganda

- Irene Karungi Sekitoleko
  Ministry of ICT & National Guidance

CONTENT REVIEW AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AI Policymaker Network:

- **Ghana:** Maxwell Ababio, Alfred Nortey
- **India:** Shri Jayesh Ranjan, Smt. Rama Devi Lanka, Rushitha Mandava
- **Indonesia:** Andreas Bondan Satriadi, Kautsarina, Riri Kusumarani, Silvi Fitri Ayu
- **Kenya:** Richard Kiarie, Sherleen Kiura, Agnes Mwaura, Lucy N'dungu, Viola Ochola, Esther Moloyce Odhiambo
- **Rwanda:** Joris Cyizere, Esther Kunda, Victor Muyunyi
- **South Africa:** Makaziwe Makamba, Alfred Mashishi, Paul Plantinga
- **Uganda:** Baker Birikujja, Irene Karungi Sekitoleko, Julius Torach, Christopher Yikii

UNESCO: Prateek Sibal

Research ICT Africa: Scott Timcke

GIZ FAIR Forward: Mary Afram, Mark Gachara, Pascal König, Ivan Mukiibi, Bhavika Nanawati, Karlina Octaviany, Philipp Olbrich, Elikplim Sabblah, Aishwarya Salvi, Balthas Seibold, Kathleen Ziemann.

AI Policymaker Network

Developed with the support of FAIR Forward, GIZ and Africa-Asia AI Policymaker Network