

IT for Change's Input at the Global Digital Compact Consultation – Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technologies

My name is Merrin, and I represent IT for Change. I'd like to make a few comments on the theme 'Artificial Intelligence and Emerging technologies' on behalf of my organization:

The design and deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems is marked by the concentration of economic and political power, and entrenchment of social inequities. The real and present damage from this is often overlooked in discourses on 'ethical AI', which even if useful, slips into unhelpful long-termism in AI risk-mapping.

Development of AI for public and social ends is impeded by the current Intellectual Property regimes that exacerbate the gap in technological capabilities between countries.

The dual-use nature of AI technologies and possible misuse in the military domain is another real threat that multilateral systems can no longer wait to tackle.

No AI is too powerful to evade public oversight, and AI use that pose grave threats to peace, security, human and ecological well-being must not be permitted at any cost. The design, development, and use of AI should be guided by the precautionary principle, and the social value of AI should accrue to communities whose data is used. To translate these principles to practice, we need to institute mandatory ex-ante and ex-post assessments of threats and impacts to human rights, peace, and security from the specific uses of AI. We also need to decentralize AI innovations by breaking AI monopolies and building technological capabilities of developing countries through public financing to democratize AI's social and economic value.

In this regard, we need the following actions at the multilateral level:

1. In line with precautionary principle, we need binding regulations on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and a global ban on non-human control of nuclear weapons platform launches.
2. Evolve binding common standards at the global level to guide future trajectories of AI design, development, and use.
3. Reject digital trade rules that prevent nation-states from enforcing transparency and accountability regulation on AI services and application providers.
4. Reform IP Regimes and introduce new licensing systems similar to the creative commons regime so that community contributions are recognized in the development of generative AI, and digital intelligence is available for appropriate public uses.
5. And finally, bridge the AI divide between nations through international public financing initiatives.