



INSIGHTS SUMMARY

HARNESSING GENERATIVE AI FOR SOCIAL IMPACT: DRIVING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

GLOBAL GOALS / HYBRID WORKSHOP / 19 SEPT 2023

We would like to thank the following speakers:

Kacper Łodzickowski, Vice President, AI Capabilities, **Pearson**; **Brigid Evans**, Director of Government Relations, **Pearson**; **Ravi Shankar Chaturvedi**, Managing Director, Digital Planet, The Fletcher School, **Tufts University**; **Naria Santa Lucia**, General Manager, Digital Inclusion and Community Engagement, **Microsoft Philanthropies**; **Kasia Jakimowicz**, International Digital Development Expert, Human Capital Development, **World Bank**

The dawn of generative AI presents a tantalising prospect for the overhaul of the education sector. The promise of tailoring education to the individual, widening its reach, and innovating teaching techniques is palpable. However, to truly harness these advantages, there's a pressing need for stakeholders to confront and address the innate challenges, ensuring that AI innovations are equitable, free of biases, and universally beneficial.

INSIGHT 1: FORGE AI SOLUTIONS THROUGH COLLABORATION

The design and development of AI products can only truly resonate if they are developed in tandem with their eventual end users. Inclusion of the user perspective isn't just advantageous – it's crucial to ensure the product's relevance and impact. When AI-based educational solutions are moulded in collaboration, they can better meet the specific needs of their audience, leading to enhanced effectiveness in educational environments. Incorporating on-the-ground feedback is key to authentic impact.

On the one hand, there are so many opportunities – and also, there are so many risks that we need to carefully balance the two.

Kacper Łodzickowski, Vice President, AI Capabilities, Pearson

INSIGHT 2: ACTIVELY MITIGATE AI BIASES

An under-representation of the Global South in AI models stands out as a pressing concern. Such biases in data can unintentionally accentuate pre-existing disparities, resulting in AI models that do not reflect the global community's rich diversity. The solution lies in purposefully training AI with diverse datasets. There is an urgent need for concerted efforts to discern, pinpoint and rectify inherent biases.

I think if we were to try and really think about, to what extent can AI really help improve literacy, literacy in a functional sense: Can it help farmers become better farmers? Can it help everybody be better at their own sort of professions in whatever it is that they pursue?

Ravi Shankar Chaturvedi, Managing Director, Digital Planet, The Fletcher School, Tufts University

INSIGHT 3: PRIORITISE THE WELFARE OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

To fully exploit AI's capabilities, one must also be attuned to its wider societal ramifications, especially concerning those most at risk. All stakeholders need to embrace a human-centric outlook when navigating the waters of AI. Such an approach would help ensure that AI interventions not only advance educational goals but also provide a safety net against any inadvertent negative impacts on underrepresented groups. Social impact professionals need to actively engage in these discussions, ensuring that AI strikes the right balance between innovation and equity.

Even if we are not AI experts, we've got to engage and build understanding about what this means for the most vulnerable people and communities and how we can harness AI for good.

**Zahid Torres-Rahman, Co-Founder and CEO,
Business Fights Poverty**

But there's also a tonne of infrastructure that's needed to actually train these models. So one of the things I'm very worried about is that not every country, or every language, or every local is going to be able to train enough data. So we're going to have more and more exacerbated inequalities.

Naria Santa Lucia, General Manager, Digital Inclusion and Community Engagement, Microsoft Philanthropies

IN SUMMARY

Generative AI stands as a beacon of transformative change for education. Yet, to ensure its potential is fully realised, a comprehensive and inclusive strategy is essential. By fostering solutions in partnership, addressing and rectifying biases, and placing the welfare of marginalised communities at the forefront, stakeholders can position AI as a catalyst for positive change in education. As we chart the course ahead, this nuanced approach will be pivotal to amplify AI's benefits while curtailing any potential drawbacks.

It's critical to get the voice of the educator, to get the voice of the student, to get the voice of the parent involved as you're thinking about how you're designing these products to make sure that they are meeting the needs of those you're trying to serve.

**Brigid Evans, Director of Government Relations,
Pearson**

People in emerging economies are going to have different educational challenges (...). If we try to generate AI on the results and the way the Western economies learn and process information, that might not work for emerging economies in a specific context of the country.

Kasia Jakimowicz, International Digital Development Expert, Human Capital Development, World Bank

RESOURCE

- **REPORT:** businessfightspovetry.org/report/generative-ai-and-social-impact-role-of-business