



WHERE IS

"WE" IN AI

Navigating the AI landscape within the context of an existing and continuously widening digital divide.

AI EVERYWHERE

- Hype around AI
- AI vs. Past Technologies
- Consumer Vs Citizen

WHAT/WHO IS DATA?

- Data = People/Communities
- Extractive Technology

CITIZENS ARE REDUCED TO DATA POINTS

- Data-driven Paradigm
- AI adoption or Invasion?

Do we really want machines making decision for us?
Does AI fuel itself by extracting data, an extractive technology that takes rather than complements citizens?





DATAFICATION OF SOCIETY

- Amplification of algorithmic biases and discrimination against marginalized communities.
- Impact of incomplete or flawed data sets and lack of data transparency.
- Absence of transparency, accountability, and community need in AI design.
- Barriers to AI literacy, affordability, and unequal access to benefits.
- Job insecurity and exploitation in AI-driven platform economies.

- Inadequate representation of diverse people and perspectives in tech development.
- Lack of community-centric AI governance and the spread of misinformation.
- Privacy risks, data breaches, and inadequate protection of personal data.
- Knowledge, information and intelligence divide affecting marginalized populations.
- AI's carbon footprint and its role in deepening climate crisis.
- Monopolising power and control over data, citizens and communities.

Microsoft is building a data center in a tiny Indian village. Locals allege it's dumping industrial waste

"These big companies think they can enter small villages like ours, take our land, and destroy it."

rest of world
Reporting Global Tech Stories

Alarming Rise In AI-Produced Child Abuse Material, Warns Regulatory Body

AI is being used to create highly realistic child sexual abuse content that is increasingly accessible online.

NDTV WORLD

AI and deepfakes blur reality in India elections

BBC

scroll.in

India's scaling up of AI could reproduce casteist bias, discrimination against women and minorities

Even if technology can be considered 'neutral', the databases used to train such models are biased along the country's many faultlines.

Economic Survey flags AI's 'deleterious impact' on jobs, 'pall of uncertainty' for workers across skill segments in India

This is perhaps the first time a government document has officially flagged the impact AI could have on jobs in India.

The Indian EXPRESS
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

Skill gap in workforce, AI advancements make cyber attacks more threatening in India

THE ECONOMIC TIMES | tech

AI Scams Surge: Voice Cloning And Deepfake Threats Sweep India

Scammers gather victims' contact details, names, and other relevant information to make the fake call seem legitimate.

NDTV AI

India expands airport facial recognition amid surveillance fears

FINANCIAL TIMES

Meta fails to detect AI-created fake ads inciting religious violence

Experiment shows Meta approves fake ads based on real hate speech during ongoing election campaign, despite pledge to the contrary

NATIONAL HERALD

The dark side of AI: Its growing environmental footprint

A study by Yale says, "One consequence of the explosion of artificial intelligence is clear: this technology's environmental footprint is large and growing."

The Indian EXPRESS

'Time To Hold Big-Tech Accountable For Using Cheap Labour In Artificial Intelligence Data-Labeling Work'

AI4

AI is 'accelerating the climate crisis,' expert warns

techxplore

Dark side of AI: Potential consequences of emotionless machines could impact humanity

ET THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Cyber-criminals up their AI game to dupe victims with digital arrest, abduction calls

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AI's Climate Impacts May Hit Marginalized People Hardest

A Brookings Institution report warns that energy-hungry artificial intelligence tech will worsen the climate crisis

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

Budget 2024: Economic Survey warns about AI's impact on Indian job market

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Unequal access, Biased algorithms: Gender divide in India's AI landscape

maktoobmedia.com

AI and racism: How artificial intelligence promotes racist rants against Indians

Firstpost

THE HINDU

LinkedIn users say their data is being collected for generative AI training without permission

LinkedIn users claimed that their writing and data was used without their permission by the employment-centric social media platform, for AI model training

Impact of artificial intelligence on human loss in decision making, laziness and safety in education

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Racist, sexist, casteist: Is AI bad news for India?

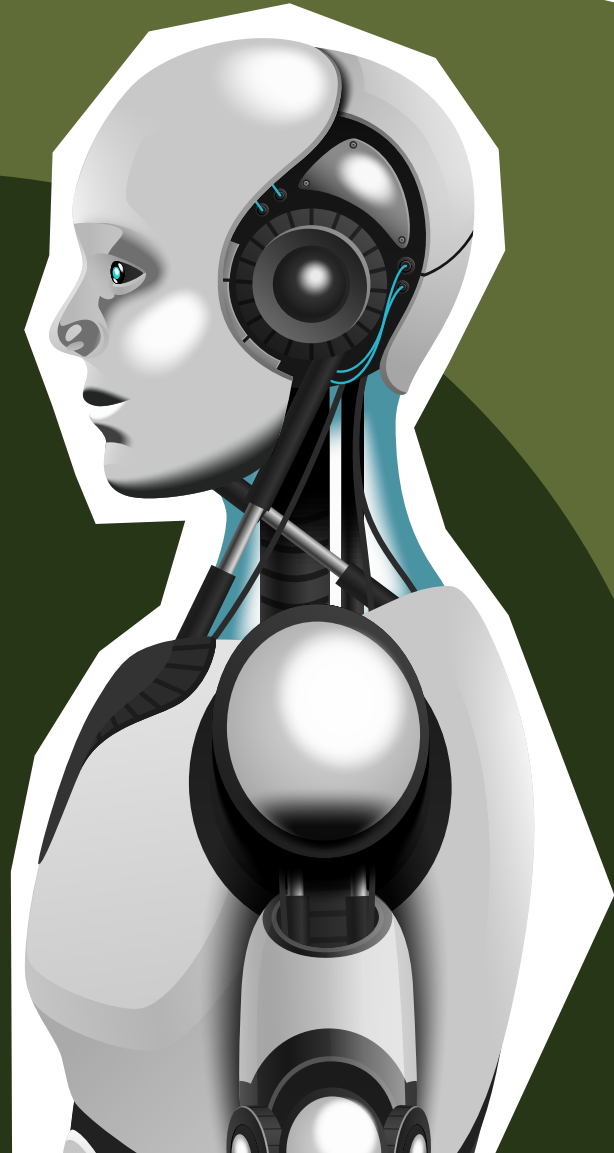
As India rolls out AI tools that authorities say will increase efficiency and improve access, tech experts fear the lack of an official policy for the ethical use of AI will hurt people at the bottom

THE HINDU

Misinformation fueled by Gen AI threatens democratic elections worldwide, warns CSDI report

The rapid surge in Gen AI technologies is having a deep impact on democratic processes. CSDI researchers shared insights about their new report on the risks posed by Gen AI on elections.

The Indian EXPRESS



ARE WE ASKING

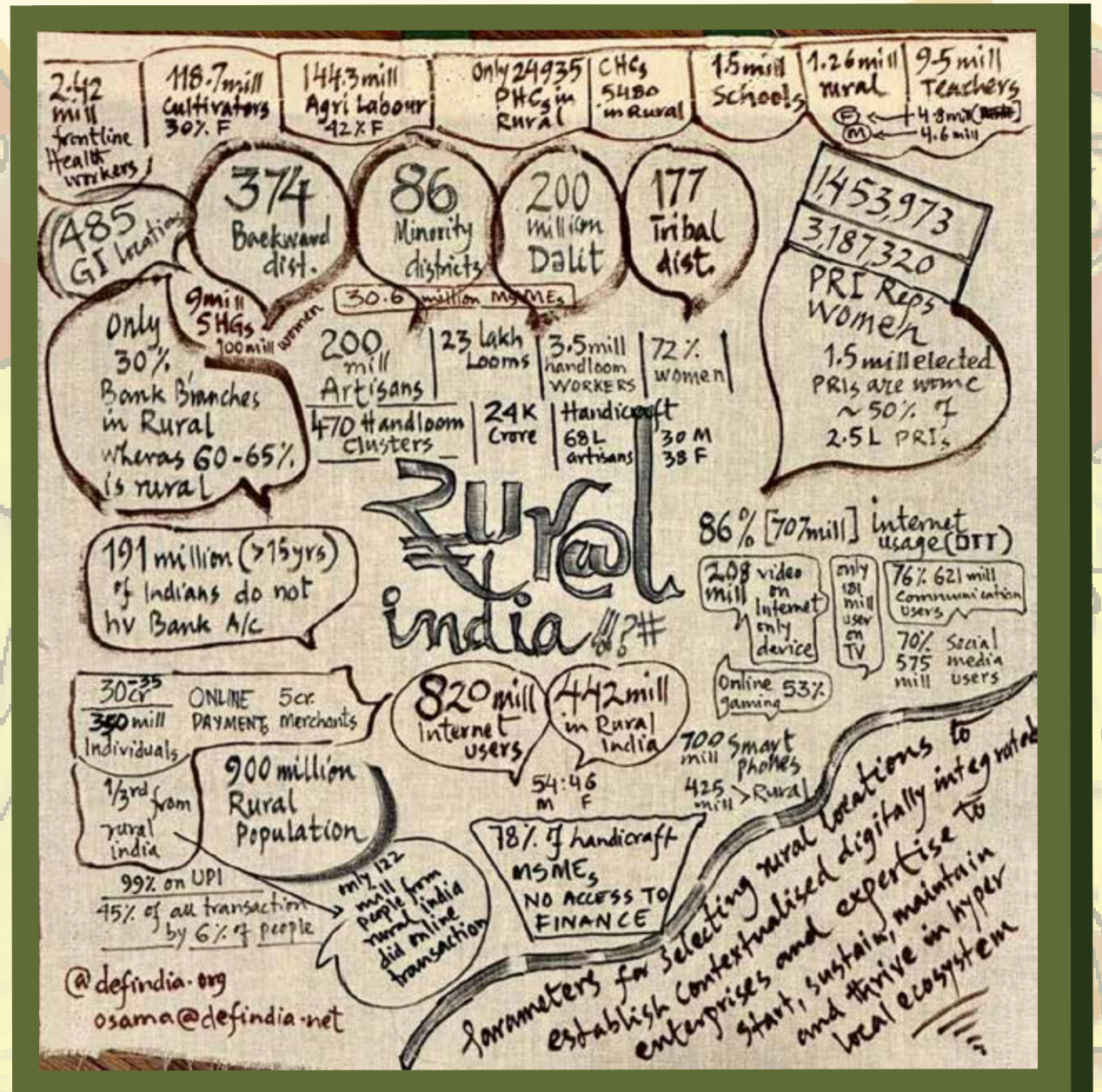
THE RIGHT

QUESTIONS



THE PARADOX OF DIGITAL INDIA: PROGRESS AND DIVIDE

- ▶ India is a global leader in digital economy with over 650 million smartphone users and 950 million internet subscribers.
- ▶ Despite progress, a large portion of the population remains unconnected, contributing to a deeper social divide.
- ▶ Only 24% of rural India has internet access, while 66% of urban India is connected (NSSO, 2024).
- ▶ These trends are contradictory and concerning as we see a noticeable decline in Internet access compared to previous years, with 31% of rural households using the internet, compared to 67% among urban population, as reported in the Oxfam's Inequality Report 2022: Digital Divide.



JUST AI



An initiative by
Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF)

Data and Algorithms for Communities

DEF has been asking these questions to build an ethical, inclusive, and community-centered approach to AI in India, ensuring that technology serves the needs of the most vulnerable in society.

- How can AI be developed and used to benefit marginalized communities while avoiding exploitation and harm?
- How can AI systems be designed to be inclusive and address the needs of rural and underserved communities in India?
- What safeguards can be put in place to prevent the displacement or exploitation of workers, especially in low-wage, gig, or platform economies?

LET US ASK

Who holds power in AI development, and who benefits from it?

Who decides what constitutes a "valid" or "ethical" use of AI, and how are these decisions made?

How do AI systems affect cultural, social, and economic structures, especially in rural India?

How can the concentration of power in tech corporations and government surveillance initiatives be mitigated?

How do algorithms in sectors like health or finance contribute to the exclusion or bias against communities in rural and peri-urban India?

Who is funding AI development and owning the data, and how does this affect the outcomes and inclusivity of AI projects?

How can AI be used to enhance services in education, finance, and public services while ensuring it does not marginalize specific groups based on caste, gender, or socio-economic status?



THERE IS MORE TO IT!

■ What are the hidden costs of AI, particularly regarding labor, environmental impact, and data ethics?

■ What are the implications of the gig economy and underpaid labor in data labeling, transcription, and AI training? How can these issues be addressed to ensure fair compensation and rights for workers involved in AI development?

■ How can the environmental impact of large-scale data centers and AI training be mitigated, especially in a country like India where the climate crisis is already a pressing concern?

How can AI be made accountable to citizens and communities, ensuring transparency and fairness?

What role can policy dialogue, advocacy, and grassroots involvement play in making AI systems more transparent and accountable to the people they affect?

How can citizens be empowered with the knowledge to critically engage with AI systems and understand their rights regarding data protection and algorithmic decisions?

What are the ethical frameworks that should guide the development and implementation of AI in India

BEYOND THE OBVIOUS

- How can AI be aligned with democratic and feminist internet principles at the grassroots level to ensure that it serves the public good rather than corporate interests?
- How can AI be leveraged to create a citizen-centric digital model that prioritizes inclusion, social justice, and human dignity?

What role can AI play in bridging the digital divide, particularly in rural communities, without exacerbating existing inequalities?

How can the use of AI in rural India contribute to digital empowerment and literacy without deepening the divides in access to technology, data, and decision-making power?



AI Tools Development

Build Citizen and Community-Centric AI Design

Explore Research Gaps

Citizen and Community in AI Accountability

Develop AI Literacy & Toolkit for Communities

Training and Capacity Building of Youth

Mechanism for tackling AI Misuse

Participation AI in Key Sectors Bridge and Intelligence Divide

Protect Data Privacy and Data Protection Rights

Mentor and accelerate AI best practices from the grassroots

Fellowships and Awards

AI Accountability Policy

Strengthen AI for Social Good

Forge Multi-Stakeholder and Multi-Sectoral Partnerships

Build Regulatory Frameworks in AI Governance

Policy Briefs and Policy Reviews

EMPOWER SOOCHNAPRENEURS, COMMUNITIES AND CITIZENS



Soochna reneur

Information, Entitlements & Empowerment