Session agenda & format

- Welcome and housekeeping
- Introductions
- Presentations
  - Welcome and intro to NetHope: Esther Grieder
  - HLA's humanitarian AI research with DFS: Ka Man Parkinson
  - Practitioner perspectives: Michael Tjalve & Mercyleen Tanui
  - NetHope's AI skilling initiatives and resources: Daniela Weber
- Audience Q&A

Humanitarian Leadership Academy × NETHOPE

Housekeeping

- **Session is being recorded:** Link & slides will be emailed within 24 hours
- **Zoom captions** are enabled including translations
- Use **chat** to share comments & reflections
- Submit questions via the **Zoom Q&A** function
- **Kind reminder:** Keep questions and comments respectful and on-topic
- **HPass badge:** You will receive an email next week

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Speakers

Mercyleen Tanui
Global IT Operations Manager
WaterAid

Michael Tjalve
Founder, Humanitarian AI Advisory & Co-founder, RootsAI Foundation

Daniela Weber
Director, Center for the Digital Nonprofit
NetHope

Esther Grieder
Director, Membership Engagement
NetHope

Ka Man Parkinson
Communications & Marketing Lead
HLA

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Esther Grieder
Director, Membership Engagement
NetHope

NETHOPE

NetHope is a **catalyst for collective impact** that advances humanitarian, conservation, and international development efforts worldwide.

For more than 20 years, we've enabled international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and leading technology partners to address our world's most pressing challenges and advance global good through collaboration, collective action, and the transformative power of technology.

OUR NETHOPE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

60+ international NGO Members

120+ national & sub-national NGO Connectors

50+ global technology partners

800K staff across our Members

NETHOPE

NETHOPE MEMBERS

acted

actionaid

americares

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

care

CRS CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

CGIAR

ChildFund International

children international

Concern worldwide

DCA actalliance

DRC DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

FEED THE CHILDREN

fhi360 THE SCIENCE OF IMPROVING LIVES

FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY

FFTP FOOD FOR THE POOR United in God's Work

Global Communities

Habitat for Humanity

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

HELVETAS

HIAS

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

+C IFRC

IJM

International Medical Corps

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE COMMITTEE

Islamic Relief Worldwide

MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES

MEDICAL TEAMS International

Mennonite Central Committee

MERCY CORPS

Mercy Ships

MSI REPRODUCTIVE CHOICES

NRC NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL

orbis

OXFAM

PATH

People in Need

PLAN INTERNATIONAL

Save the Children

SNV

SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES

TEAM RUBICON DISASTER RESPONSE

THE CARTER CENTER

TRÓCAIRE Working for a just world.

Ushahidi

VSO

WaterAid

WELT HUNGER HILFE

World Vision

WWF

ASSOCIATES

accessnow

GOAL

Kobo

msh Management Sciences for Health

MEDAIR each life matters

NGO-ISAC BETTER TOGETHER

RELIEF INTERNATIONAL

TREK MEDICS INTERNATIONAL

USA for UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency

ICC international computing centre

Village Enterprise

WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

NetHope Membership
Our Members are at the heart of everything we do. Find out more about NetHope Membership and how you can get involved.

Find out more

NetHope Connected
Join a community of peers driving change around the world and grow your organization's digital capacity with tools and guidance made for nonprofit realities.

Find out more

Visit our website: nethope.org
Email us: member.engagement@nethope.org or
connected@nethope.org
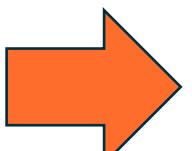
NETHOPE
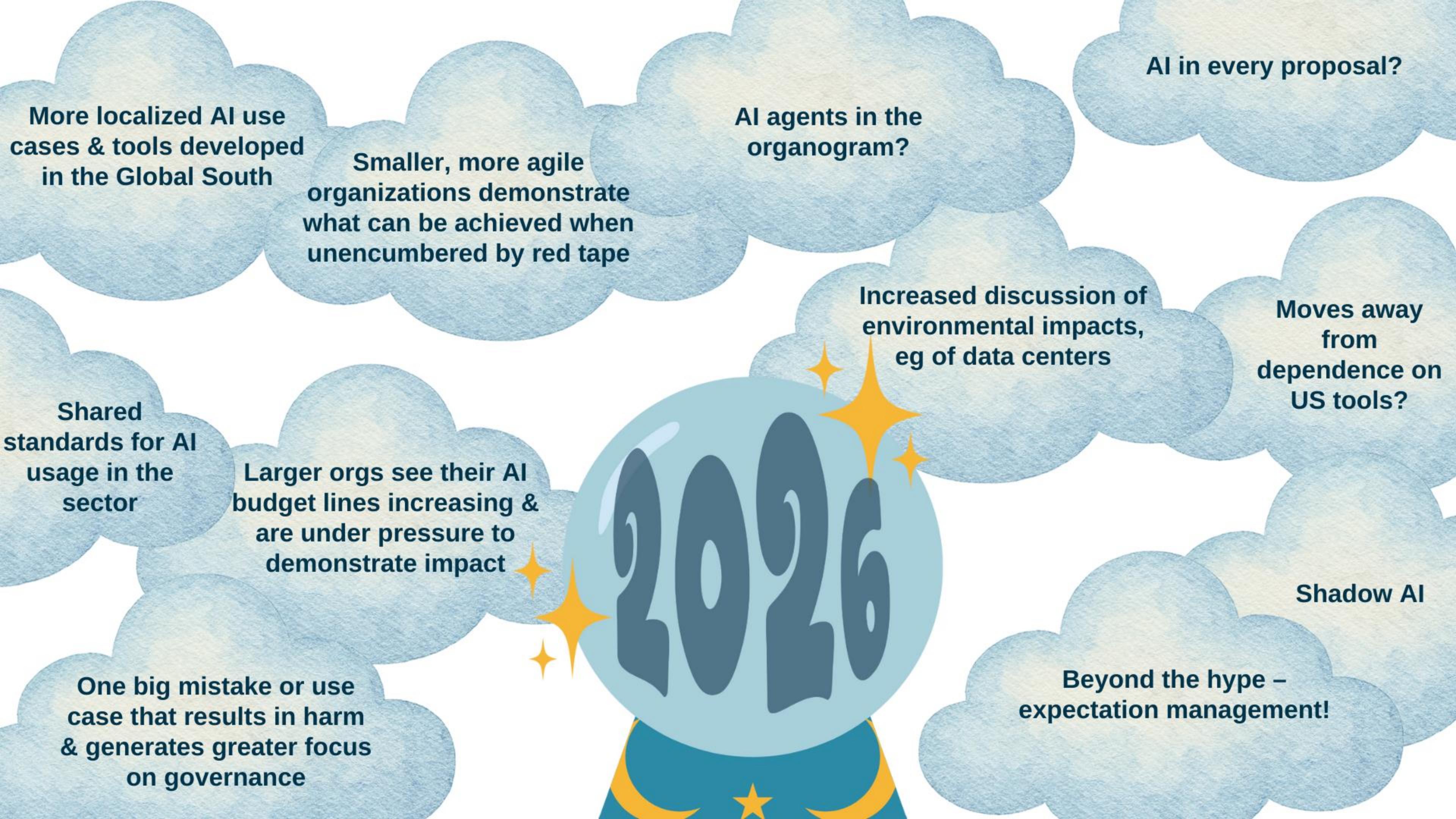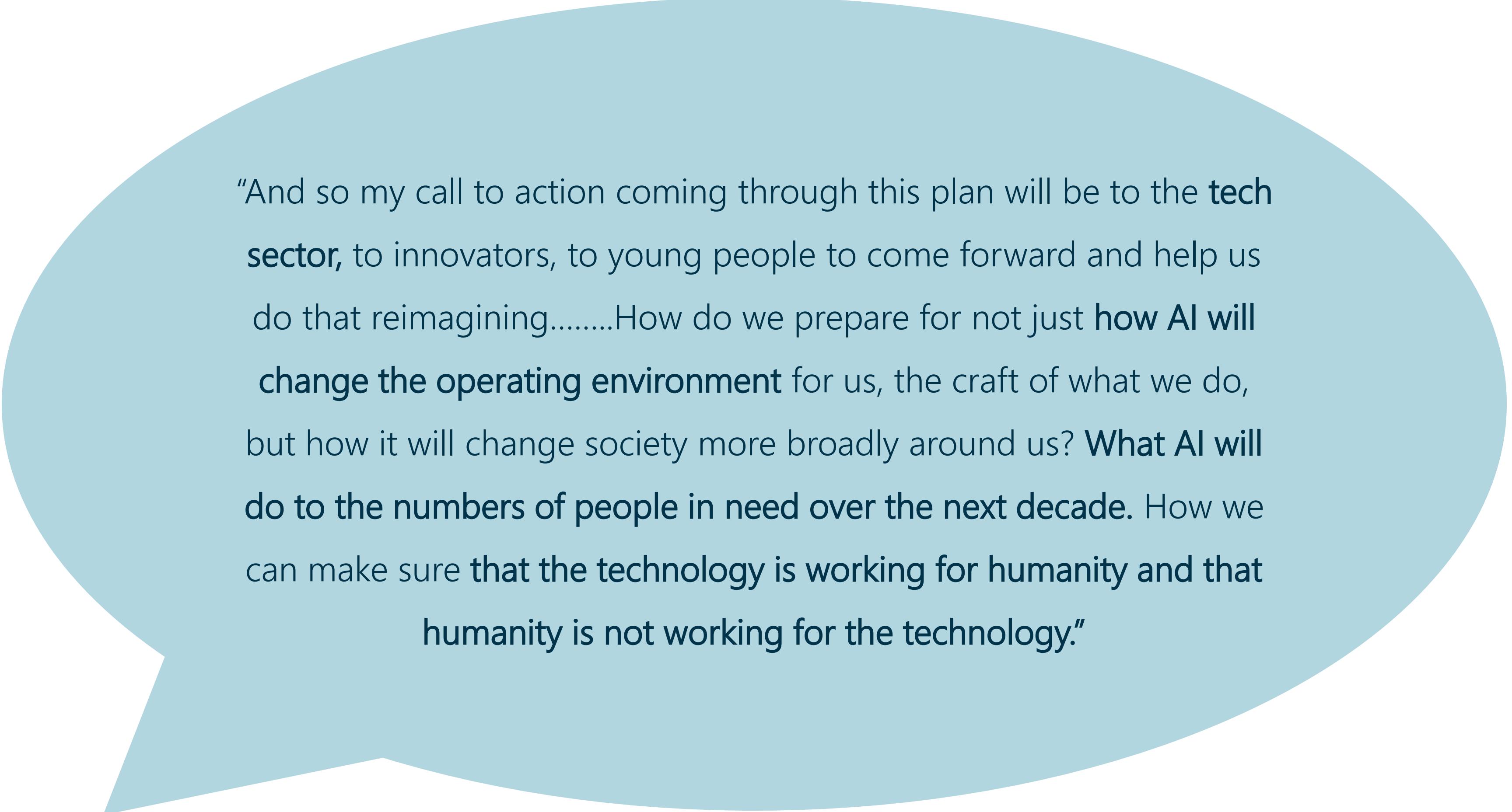
"And so my call to action coming through this plan will be to the **tech sector,** to innovators, to young people to come forward and help us do that reimagining........How do we prepare for not just **how AI will change the operating environment** for us, the craft of what we do, but how it will change society more broadly around us? **What AI will do to the numbers of people in need over the next decade.** How we can make sure **that the technology is working for humanity and that humanity is not working for the technology.**"

Tom Fletcher, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

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HLA/DFS humanitarian AI study: 2025 global baseline

The Humanitarian AI paradox

- **93%** of respondents use AI tools; **70%** weekly or daily
- **70%** who are using AI for work are using commercial tools
- Only **4%** consider themselves to be expert AI users
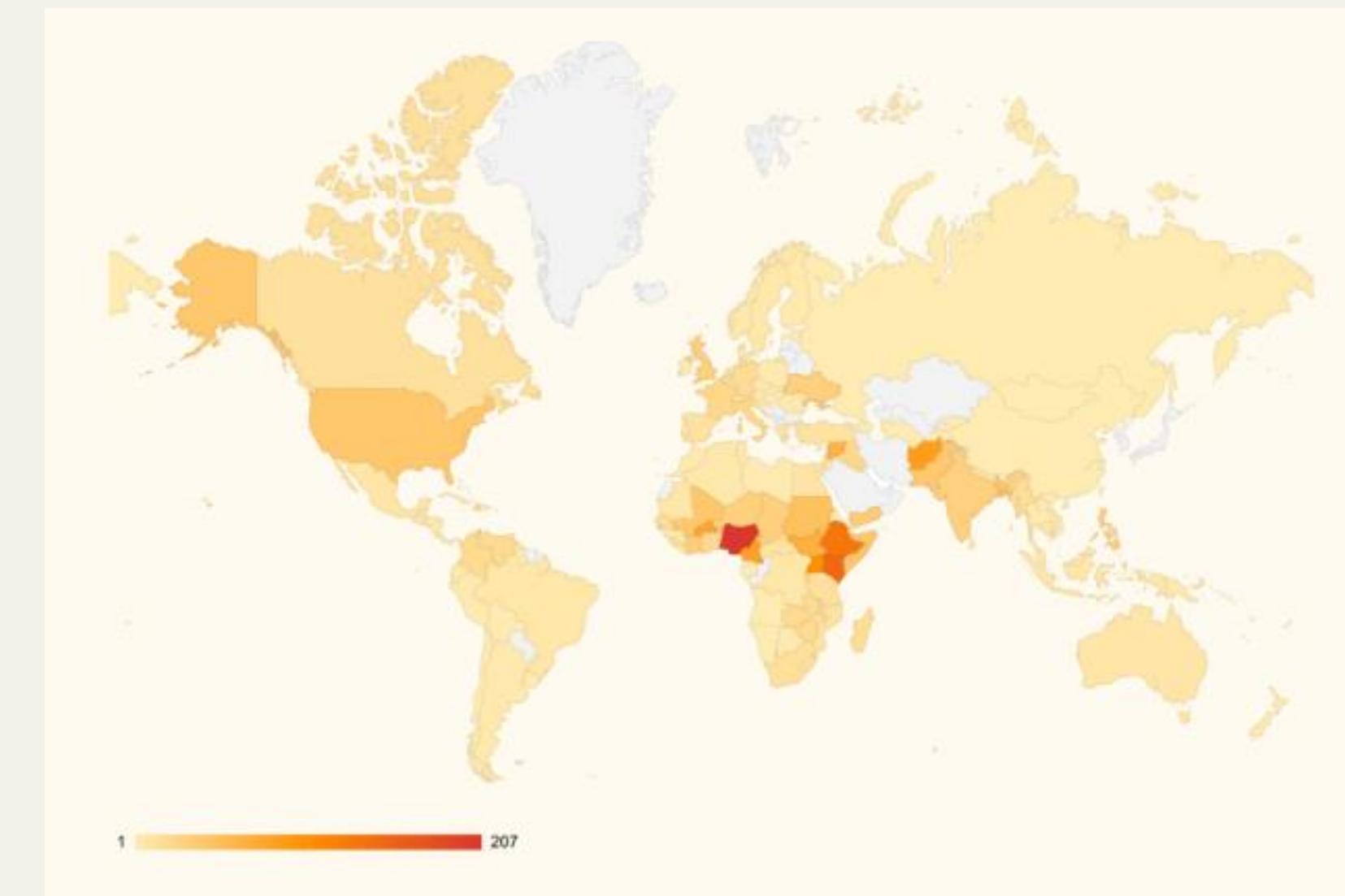
Humanitarian AI use cases: 2025 picture

AI is primarily being used as a:

- **Writing assistant** *e.g reports, emails, proposals*
- **Data processor** *e.g analysis, summarisation*
- **Language tool** *e.g translation*
- **Content creator** *e.g training materials, social media*

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2025: Low levels of organisational AI adoption

- Just **8%** report that AI is widely integrated in their organisations
- **22%** have formal AI policies
- Less than half feel AI has improved efficiency
- Only **38%** believe AI has led to better decisions

X **NETHOPE**

What survey respondents told us in 2025...

Humanitarians are curious about AI, while voicing practical constraints e.g:

- Fundamental barriers e.g skills, funding, infrastructure
- Concerns about ethics and impact on communities
- Lack of organisational strategy

technology internet
governance tools collaboration
infrastructure awareness
literacy implementation
capacity data challenges
context training staff
skills communities
cost
human support local benefits
resources funding access
rural
humanitarian ethical digital
potential organizations
learning transparency

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Has the picture shifted in January 2026?

Help us to build an updated global picture

- Take our 5-minute pulse survey
- Help us track what's happening in key areas e.g. individual/org adoption, use cases, policies, training.
- Insights released from next week
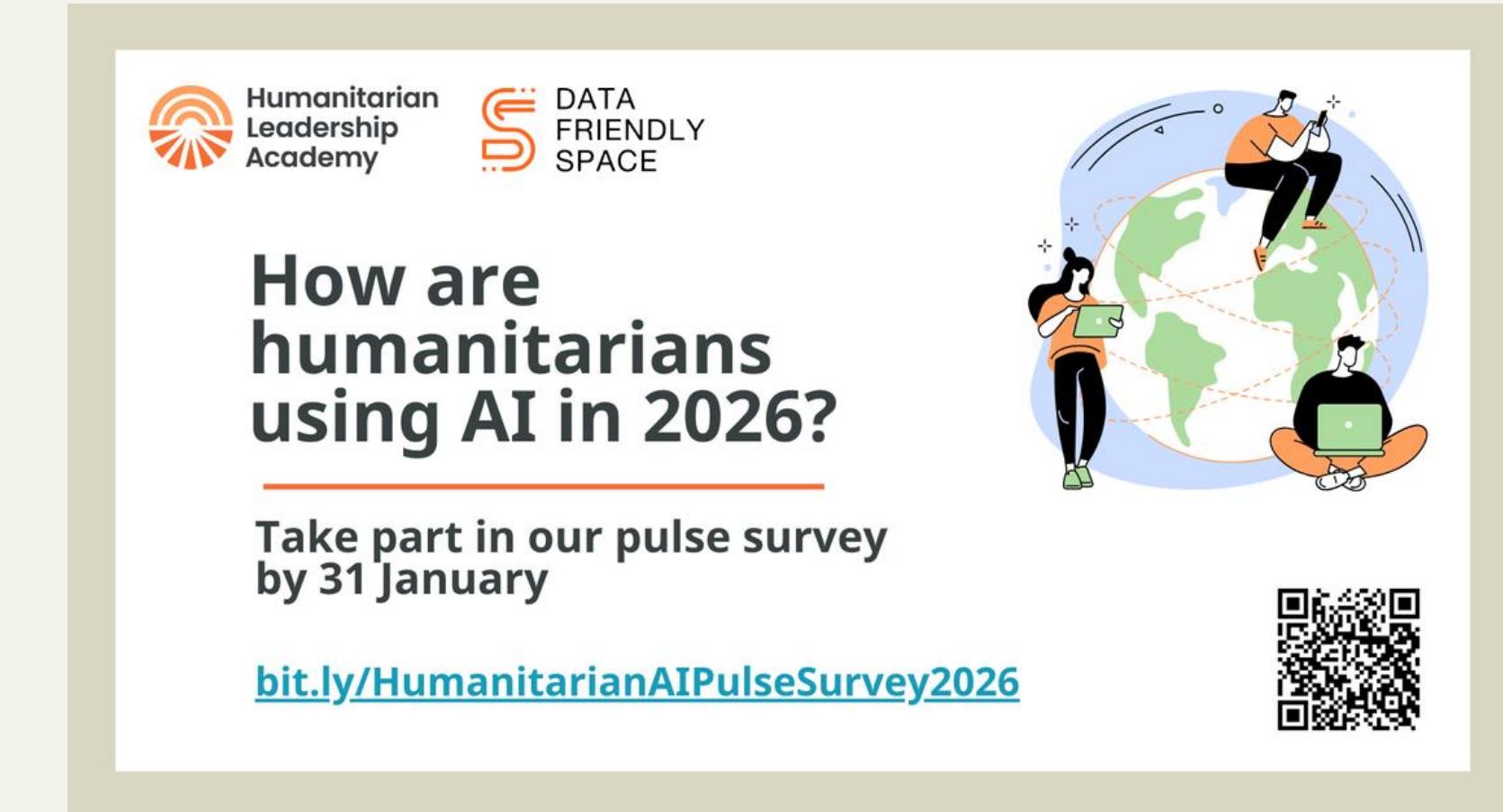
Humanitarian Leadership Academy   DATA FRIENDLY SPACE

How are humanitarians using AI in 2026?

Take part in our pulse survey by 31 January

bit.ly/HumanitarianAIPulseSurvey2026

Humanitarian Leadership Academy X **NETHOPE**

Share your humanitarian AI experience at a future discussion!

We'd love to bring together diverse perspectives in a future webinar or podcast.

Express your interest:
info@humanitarian.academy

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Safety and effectiveness

SAFE AI

Language equity

Local empowerment

Humanitarian AI

Lessons learnt, trends and opportunities for 2026

Mercyleen Tanui

January 2026

Nincia, 6, washes her hands at water taps at her school in Timor-Leste. July 2022.

How AI is being used at WaterAid
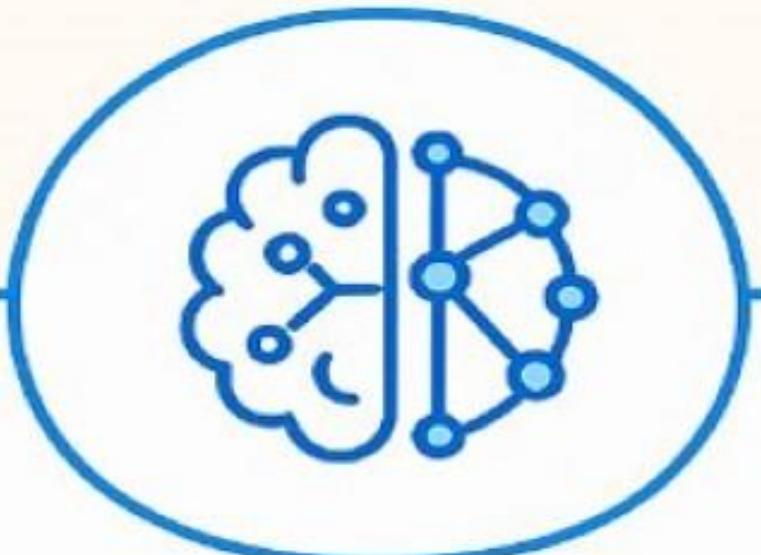
Generative AI

- Personal productivity use cases
- Larger deployment in certain teams for qualitative data analysis and visualization
- Research/source summarisation
- Proposal writing
- Summarization of meeting notes
- Extraction of important information from documents/policies
- Translation

Agentic AI

- Strategic AI implementation — Developing high-value business cases for scaled AI deployment
- Capable of handling workflows, monitoring processes, and even triggering actions, rather than just giving suggestions

WaterAid

Current State of AI

Our AI maturity is uneven, but we are moving beyond early exploration toward structured, purposeful experimentation, laying the groundwork for scalable adoption.

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EXPLORATION

Entrepreneurial
Opportunistic
Ad-hoc

EXPERIMENTATION

Aspirational
Situational
Nascent

INNOVATION

Intentional
Mobilized
Codified

REALIZATION

Operational
Measured
Governed

PEOPLE | PLATFORMS | PROCESSES | POLICIES
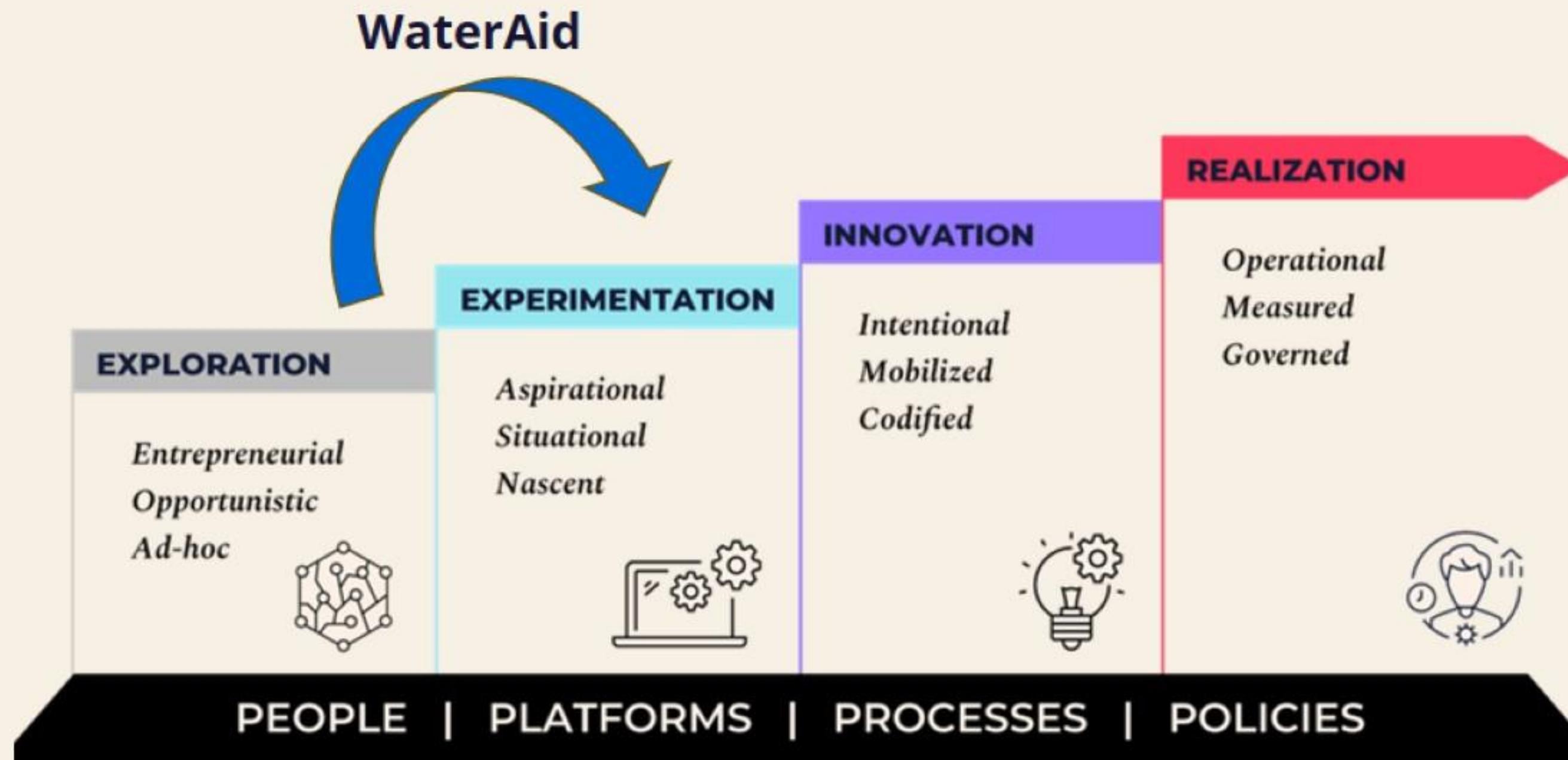
Core Areas of AI Enablement

Over the next 12 months we will develop our AI operating and resourcing model to enable efficient and agile development of new capabilities, ensuring we do not lag on organisational AI maturity. There are three core focus areas:

Data Governance

Failing to act on data governance now means missing the chance to scale AI effectively and unlock its full strategic value

Incubator

Accelerate innovation through structured pilots, rapidly scaling successful use cases and sharing learnings across the organisation.

Workforce Enablement

Equip all staff to thrive in an AI-driven environment, with advanced pathways for key roles and a champions network to drive adoption.

Unlocking Organisational Efficiency

WaterAid

Incubator

By adopting an incubator approach, we embed agility into our operating model, reduce risk through iterative scaling, and accelerate the organization's journey toward AI readiness.

Basic Copilot 365 Adoption

Everyone

Increasing overall AI – fluency and preparing for broader adoption at scale

Premium CoPilot License Pilot

100 Users

Catalyst for innovation and deeper learning, moving us beyond basic AI literacy to advanced capabilities and accelerating organizational AI readiness

Agentic AI

10 – 15 Users

IT and technical teams will showcase the art of the possible with agentic AI; enabling an agile, iterative delivery model that accelerates enterprise transformation.

Shape GenAI opportunities

Set the standard with IT-led value identification

- Select a high-visibility, high-impact idea, solving a clear business problem
- Refine the solution through incremental versions
- Establish clear success metrics

Equip business teams to contribute value-focused ideas

- Spot and share recurring flaws in business' GenAI project proposals
- Coach business teams to contribute throughout GenAI life cycle
- Embed an empowered, accountable decision maker

Show what's possible   Support what's next

WaterAid

Role of Leadership in AI Success

AI is not an IT initiative; it is an organisational change initiative. We need leaders' support to:

- **Model Change and Build Trust**
  Demonstrate commitment by using AI tools themselves, signalling cultural readiness and reducing resistance to adoption

- **Simplify and Remove Barriers**
  Identify and challenge unnecessary complexity in processes, governance, and decision-making to accelerate AI integration

- **Engage Strategic Business Partners**
  Collaborate with business partners to identify, prioritize, and shape the highest-value AI use cases that deliver measurable impact.

- **Champion Upskilling and Engagement**
  Encourage teams to build AI literacy, participate in pilots, and experiment with new tools to foster confidence and capability.

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Considerations before Adoption

- **Building readiness**

  o People and skills readiness

  o Data clean-up and quality

  o Time and Resources

- **Integration with existing systems**

  Check compatibility with current infrastructure and workflows.

- **Strategy for success**

  It is important to define an operating model to ensure successful implementation. For example, a diverse AI working group. Decide where human judgment must remain in the loop to complement AI outputs.

- **Security and privacy**

  Defining guidelines on the usage of AI to minimise risks. Consider data protection, compliance requirements, and cybersecurity risks.

WaterAid

Lessons Worth Sharing

- **Start Small**

- **Human oversight is still key**
  Maintaining a broad perspective on AI is essential, as humanity remains a crucial component in achieving success.

- **Workforce training and capability development remain essential**
  AI alone won't solve all problems; sometimes people need training. Invest in ongoing AI literacy, data literacy, and digital skills.

- **Consideration of cost and water**
  To accelerate our AI journey and enhance its maturity, we consider both costs and water consumption. We ensure that we are right-sizing the tools for the problems we face. Moreover, we are particularly mindful of water consumption since we are a water organization.

- **Cross-Functional Collaboration Drives Impact**
  Bringing people together to address the steep innovation challenge. The AI sector moves quickly—learning from one another regardless of titles or roles.

WaterAid

AI is an organisational change initiative, not an IT initiative.

Thank you!

Jan 29, 2026

NetHope AI Skilling and Resources

Daniela Weber
Director, NetHope Center for the
Digital Nonprofit

The NetHope Digital Nonprofit AI Readiness Framework

Responsible AI
The organization establishes clear governance structures, ethical guidelines and monitoring processes to ensure AI models operate fairly, transparently and accountably.

Technology
The organization has the necessary infrastructure, platforms and technical expertise to select, deploy and operate AI solutions.

Organizational Resources
The organization understands the opportunities of AI and is ready to invest in delivering those.

Strategy and Opportunity
The organizations recognizes the strategic value of AI and identifies mission-aligned use cases.

Data Readiness
The organization has the required frameworks, capabilities and quality controls in place to ensure their data is ready for AI training and operation.

Skilling and Change
The organization implements structured skilling programs and change-management practices to support the adoption of AI.

Responsible AI
How does the organization ensure responsible AI?

Strategy and Opportunity
Is the organization clear on the Why? of AI?

Technology
Does the organization have the required technology capabilities?

DNAI

Data Readiness
What is the organization's approach to quality data?

Organizational Resources
Is the organization committed to investing in AI?

Skilling and Change
How does the organization approach the change brought about by AI?

NETHOPE AI SKILLING AND RESOURCES

How ready are nonprofits for AI?

Figure 3: Overall and dimension-level AI Readiness Benchmark

AI Readiness Scores by Dimension

Legend:
- Overall Benchmark: 1.99
- Dimension Benchmark

Dimension	Score
Responsible AI	2.02
Skilling and Change	1.89
Organizational Resources	1.82
Data Readiness	2.08
Strategy and Opportunity	1.96
Technology	2.18

Score 0–4

NetHope Nonprofit AI Readiness Benchmark   **NETHOPE**

Digital Nonprofit AI Readiness Benchmark

NETHOPE AI SKILLING AND RESOURCES
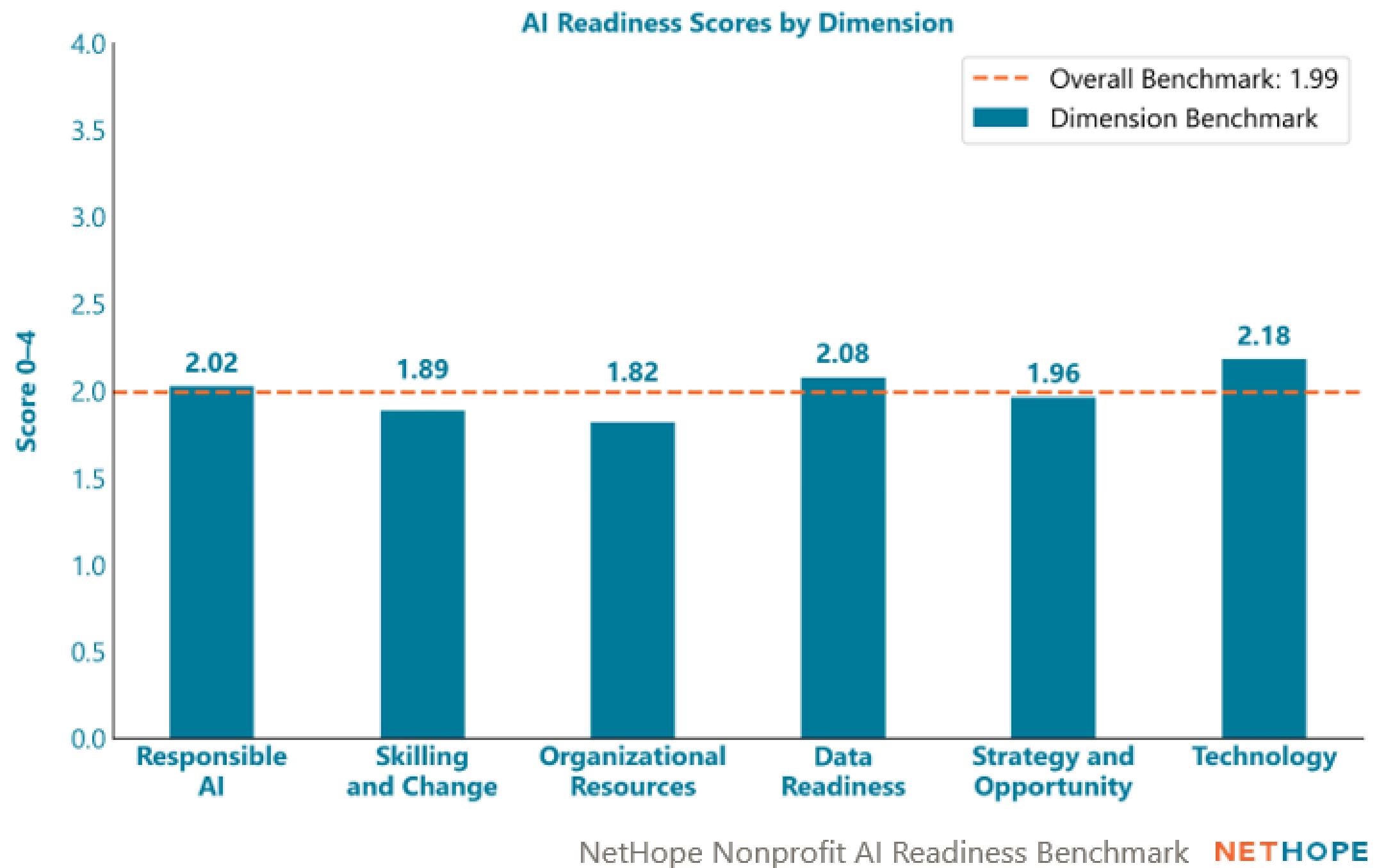
What you should do

Check your AI Readiness. Use the NetHope AI Readiness Framework to assess where you stand, and what categories of AI readiness your organization needs to address.

Agree your responsible AI framework. Set the guardrails on what you as an organization will and will not use AI for (the Humanitarian AI Code of Conduct is a good starting point). Create an AI policy that enables staff to try out AI tools but at the same time is also very clear on the limitations on the use of AI – you need to protect your data and your organization. And do not neglect cyber security – look to the Global Humanitarian ISAC (Information Sharing And Analysis Center) for guidance.

Build capacity everywhere in your organization. Generative AI tools are extremely accessible, and increasingly AI functionality is built into the software packages that you are using. Ensure that everyone in your organization knows not just how to use the tools, but knows what the limitations and risks are, and how to mitigate those. Many free learning resources are available, such as the NetHope's Unlocking AI for Nonprofits e-learning curriculum (soon also available in Spanish).

Define your AI purpose. Have a cross-departmental conversation in your organization about what your best use cases for AI might be, and how you prioritize achieving and scaling them. Is your key objective to achieve more operational efficiency? Or could AI transform the way you provide humanitarian services? Use tools such as AI Suitability Toolkit to guide you through your AI discussions.

Embed and measure. Everyone in the sector understands "behavior change" and "impact measurement" and "incentives" – apply those terms to your AI projects. Employ change management tools for successful evaluation and adoption at scale. Measure the outcomes of AI tools you implement and compare them with the total cost of ownership for the tools. Stop projects that do not deliver value.

Do not lose focus on your data. If you want to implement AI applications, and you do not have good data governance and data management practices in place, now is the time to change that. Use the Data Governance Toolkit for Nonprofits to set those data foundations – they are critical to make your AI project work.

Participate in sector collaboration on AI. We know that open conversations about what worked and what did not are the most helpful learning opportunities for humanitarian staff and lift the overall capability of the sector. Share your approaches and use cases with each other, collaborate to create common solutions that will serve all humanitarians, and join forces to advocate for AI offerings that close not widen the digital divide. NetHope Members can join the AI and Emerging Technologies Working Group to share and learn. NetHope Connectors have access to many AI resources specifically created for smaller, national and subnational NGOs, such as this AI webinar.

Capacity Building Resources

Research, use cases, toolkits
Scoping a new version of the Lighthouse

Unlocking AI for Nonprofits Curriculum (Spanish version coming soon)

AIm for Impact - Expanded AI skilling curriculum on NDLI (coming soon)

Peer Learning & Exchange

NetHope Members can join the AI and Emerging Technologies Working Group to share and learn. NetHope Connectors have access to many AI resources specifically created for smaller, national and subnational NGOs, such as this AI webinar.

Are you ready for AI?

JOIN TOGETHER.
ACT TOGETHER.
ACCELERATE TOGETHER.

nethope.org

AI SKILLING AND RESOURCES

NETHOPE

Resources

kaya

Learning resources on Kaya

DATA FRIENDLY SPACE | Humanitarian Leadership Academy

How are humanitarians using artificial intelligence in 2025?

Mapping current practice and future potential: full insights report

August 2025

Report August 2025

Humanitarian Leadership Academy | DATA FRIENDLY SPACE

Dashboard

Humanitarian Leadership Academy — PODCAST

Humanitarian AI series

Bridging implementation gaps: from AI literacy to localisation

In conversation with Michael Tjalve

Humanitarian Leadership Academy — PODCAST

Humanitarian AI series

Developing AI literacy: a matter of trust, critical thinking & localisation

In conversation with Meheret Takele Mandefro

Podcast series

Upcoming events

Humanitarian Leadership Academy

DATA FRIENDLY SPACE

Save the date! 27 February 2026

HLA x Data Friendly Space Humanitarian AI pulse survey webinar

Details to be announced soon!

x **NETHOPE**

Thank you for joining us!

- **Feedback:** Please complete the short survey on Zoom
- **Recording:** This will be available on the HLA YouTube channel within 24 hours and link will be emailed to you
- **HPass digital badge:** This will be emailed next week

Please don't forget to take the pulse survey ☺ Thank you!