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WINTER DIALOGUE
RESPONSIBLE AI FOR SYNERGISTIC EXCELLENCE (RAISE)
Official Pre-Summit Event of the AI Impact Summit 2026

Partner Organizations

Multilateralism in the Age of AI: Shaping the Future of Global Health Governance

Session Partner

12 January, Monday**12:00 PM - 1:30 PM****RESEARCH & INNOVATION PARK, IIT DELHI
NEW DELHI**

Session Report

Multilateralism in the Age of AI: Shaping the Future of Global Health Governance

12 January 2026

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Concept Note

As artificial intelligence reshapes how health systems predict risk, allocate resources, and deliver care, the absence of shared global rules risks deepening inequities and fragmenting governance. This session will examine how multilateralism must evolve to steward AI as a global public good for health. It explores how international platforms can move beyond fragmented principles toward workable ethical, legal, and operational standards that travel across borders and contexts. Drawing lessons from vaccine governance, digital health cooperation, and pandemic preparedness, the discussion will focus on translating high-level norms into implementable frameworks that respect sovereignty while enabling interoperability.

The session will highlight the central role of national health agencies as co-creators rather than passive adopters of global AI frameworks, and the need for sustained collaboration between governments, academia, industry, and diplomatic actors. By situating AI within the broader architecture of global health governance led by institutions such as the World Health Organization and informed by standards bodies like the OECD, the session will frame AI diplomacy as a practical pathway for effective and equitable health outcomes.

Key Objectives:

- Explore pathways for developing shared operational standards for AI in global health.
- Examine how national health agencies can adapt global AI frameworks to local health system realities.
- Identify the complementary roles of academia, industry, and diplomacy in shaping responsible AI norms.
- Extract governance lessons from vaccines and digital health cooperation applicable to AI diplomacy.

Expected Policy Outcomes:

- To articulate a clear agenda for multilateral coordination on AI standards for health systems
- To explore actionable recommendations for embedding national ownership within global AI governance frameworks.
- To provide guidance on structured public-private-academic collaboration for responsible AI deployment
- To create a reference model for AI diplomacy informed by successful global health governance experiences.

Agenda

PANEL - 1
Time: 12:00 – 13:30
Title: Multilateralism in the Age of AI: Shaping the Future of Global Health Governance
Session Partner: DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS
Speakers • Professor Fuad, Education and Cultural Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi, India • Dr Vivek Virendra Singh, Health Specialist, UNICEF India Country Office • Mr Abhimanyu Saxena, Head - Health Systems Strengthening, UNDP India Country Office • Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty, Professor and Director, NIMS Institute of Public Health and Governance, NIMS University Rajasthan, Jaipur • Dr Anunaya Jain, Global Technical Director, Digital and Data Analytics Hub, Jhpiego Corporation, New Delhi, India • Moderator: Dr Monika Kochar, Advisor Health, DAKSHIN- Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS
Time: 13:30 – 13:45
Launch of Report - Health Diplomacy Futures: Capacity Building in the Global South
Speakers • Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) • Dr Monika Kochar, Advisor Health, DAKSHIN- Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS • Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty, Professor and Director, NIMS Institute of Public Health and Governance, NIMS University Rajasthan, Jaipur

Outcome of the Session

Introduction

The session on “Multilateralism in the Age of AI: Shaping the Future of Global Health Governance” was convened as part of the Winter Dialogue to deliberate on the evolving intersection between Artificial Intelligence (AI), global health systems, and multilateral cooperation. The session was moderated by Dr Monika Kochar and brought together distinguished policymakers, academics, institutional leaders, and implementation experts.

The discussion unfolded in the context of accelerating technological transformation alongside growing strain within multilateral institutions. AI is rapidly reshaping disease surveillance, diagnostics, predictive modelling, and public health decision-making. At the same time, geopolitical fragmentation, regulatory divergence, digital inequities, and uneven institutional capacities are redefining the contours of global cooperation.

The session commenced with Welcome Remarks by Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS). Professor Sharma emphasized that AI governance must not evolve in isolation from multilateral frameworks. He observed that emerging technologies are fundamentally altering development trajectories, and if multilateralism is to remain relevant, it must adapt to technological realities.

He underscored the importance of Global South participation in shaping AI norms, standards, and governance frameworks. Without equitable representation in agenda-setting processes, AI regulation risks reinforcing existing global asymmetries. Institutions such as RIS and DAKSHIN, he noted, have a responsibility to foster south-south dialogue, strengthen negotiating capacities, and generate policy-relevant research that informs global deliberations.

Summary of Discussions by Speaker



Professor Fuad

Education and Cultural Attaché, Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, New Delhi, India

Professor Fuad examined the question of AI governance through the lens of diplomacy and global cooperation. He noted that most AI systems currently deployed in healthcare are trained predominantly on datasets from high-income countries, raising concerns about contextual validity and equity in low and middle income settings.

He argued that health cooperation must be reframed as soft diplomacy rather than securitized hard diplomacy. Health, he suggested, should serve as a bridge for collaboration rather than a site of strategic rivalry. Drawing from pandemic experience, he emphasized that global scientific coordination during COVID-19 demonstrated the possibility of rapid and effective multilateral action when political will aligns with scientific urgency.

Professor Fuad advocated for institutionalized South-South cooperation in AI standard-setting and collaborative platforms for anonymized data sharing, predictive modelling, and capacity building.

"Public health should not be securitized as hard diplomacy. It must be strengthened as soft diplomacy, where cooperation in data, research, and predictive modelling builds solidarity rather than rivalry."



Dr Vivek Virendra Singh

Health Specialist, UNICEF India Country Office

Dr Singh approached AI from the perspective of large-scale public health system governance. He cautioned against over-reliance on technology without corresponding institutional safeguards. In highly populous countries, he noted, even small algorithmic errors can produce large-scale consequences.

He emphasized that trust is the foundational currency of public health systems. Without transparency, and accountability, AI tools risk undermining public confidence. He highlighted the necessity of retaining the "human-in-the-loop," ensuring that frontline health workers remain empowered to interpret and override algorithmic recommendations.

"Trust is the currency of public health systems. Without trust, no algorithm, however sophisticated, can deliver sustainable outcomes."

Dr Singh further stressed that AI must be directed toward closing coverage gaps, particularly among marginalized populations, rather than merely optimizing services for already-served communities.



"The measure of success is not how advanced the algorithm is, but whether it strengthens institutions, making them more accountable, resilient, and evidence-driven."

Mr Abhimanyu Saxena

Head - Health Systems Strengthening, UNDP India Country Office

Mr Saxena focused on institutional embedding and digital public infrastructure. He observed that many AI projects remain fragmented, donor-driven pilots that operate parallel to existing government systems. For AI to generate sustainable impact, it must be embedded within state-owned digital architectures and aligned with national health information systems.

He emphasized the need for clear data governance frameworks, delineation of ownership responsibilities, and lifecycle monitoring mechanisms. Institutional resilience, he argued, depends on strengthening internal capacities rather than outsourcing critical decision-making to private technology vendors.

AI must reduce administrative burdens on frontline workers and enhance evidence-based decision-making rather than introduce additional complexity.



"Institutional reform begins with education reform. Universities must step beyond comfort zones and actively engage with policymakers and practitioners."

Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty

Professor and Director, NIMS Institute of Public Health and Governance, NIMS University Rajasthan, Jaipur

Dr Pattanshetty highlighted the transformative role universities must play in shaping AI governance. He argued that institutional reform begins with education reform. Academic institutions must foster interdisciplinary engagement that integrates public health, technology, governance, ethics, and diplomacy.

He stressed that universities must move beyond traditional publication-centric models and should prioritize translational research, bridging evidence generation with policy implementation. As trusted and relatively neutral institutions, universities can convene dialogue among governments, technologists, and practitioners, thereby contextualizing global AI frameworks to local realities.



"AI alone is never efficacious. It only delivers value when embedded within strong governance, regulatory clarity, and accountable systems."

Dr Anunaya Jain

Global Technical Director, Digital and Data Analytics Hub, Jhpiego Corporation, New Delhi, India

Dr Jain provided an implementation-focused perspective, identifying structural and regulatory gaps in AI deployment. He noted that while technological innovation often advances rapidly, governance mechanisms that cover procurement standards, lifecycle monitoring, and cost-effectiveness assessments, lag behind.

He emphasized that AI is not self-sufficient; it requires enabling ecosystems that include trained personnel, referral systems, sustainable financing models, and robust oversight mechanisms. Without these, AI solutions risk becoming short-lived pilots.

On cross-border data governance, Dr Jain advocated for federated and hybrid approaches that preserve data sovereignty while enabling collaborative learning through shared models and insights. He also underscored the importance of informed consent, algorithmic explainability, and the right to override AI recommendations as central to building trust.



"Public health should not be securitized as hard diplomacy. It must be strengthened as soft diplomacy, where cooperation in data, research, and predictive modelling builds solidarity rather than rivalry."

Dr Monika Kochar

Advisor Health, DAKSHIN-Global South Centre of Excellence, RIS

In her concluding reflections, Dr Monika Kochar emphasized that the conversation on AI in global health must move beyond technological optimism to institutional realism. She underscored that artificial intelligence is ultimately a governance challenge, one that intersects with sovereignty, equity, trust, and multilateral cooperation. She noted that while AI presents unprecedented opportunities to strengthen disease surveillance, predictive analytics, and service delivery, its impact will depend on the strength of regulatory frameworks, the clarity of accountability mechanisms, and the capacity of public institutions. Dr Kochar highlighted that the Global South must play a proactive role in shaping AI norms rather than merely adapting to externally defined standards. She concluded by stressing that responsible AI adoption requires embedding digital innovation within broader health systems strengthening efforts, ensuring that technology remains a tool for advancing equity and inclusive development rather than deepening structural divides.

Key Takeaways

- AI governance is fundamentally an institutional and multilateral challenge rather than merely a technological one.
- Global South leadership in AI norm-setting is essential to prevent regulatory asymmetries.
- Trust, transparency, and human oversight are non-negotiable pillars of responsible AI.
- AI must be embedded within national digital public infrastructure rather than deployed as isolated pilots.
- Data sovereignty and interoperability require carefully balanced governance frameworks.
- Universities play a central role in bridging research, policy, and practice.
- Lifecycle governance and institutional capacity building are prerequisites for sustainable deployment.
- South-South cooperation offers a pathway to contextualized AI standards.



Conclusion

The session reaffirmed that AI is reshaping not only health systems but also the architecture of global governance. Across diplomatic, multilateral, academic, and implementation perspectives, speakers converged on a central insight: the trajectory of AI in health will be shaped less by the sophistication of algorithms and more by the strength of institutions, the clarity of regulatory frameworks, and the inclusiveness of multilateral processes.

Welcome Remarks by Professor Sharma, DG, RIS set the tone by emphasizing that multilateralism must evolve to remain relevant in a technologically transforming world.

The discussion highlighted several imperatives: strengthening digital public infrastructure, institutionalizing lifecycle governance frameworks, ensuring transparency and human oversight, safeguarding data sovereignty, and prioritizing equity in deployment strategies. Universities, multilateral agencies, and diplomatic institutions were recognized as critical actors in bridging global frameworks with local realities.

Ultimately, the session concluded that AI presents a transformative opportunity for global health, enhancing preparedness, improving accountability, and extending services to underserved populations. However, realizing this promise requires deliberate choices: fostering cooperative rather than competitive technological ecosystems, investing in institutional capacity, and reinforcing multilateral solidarity.

In an era marked by both technological acceleration and geopolitical fragmentation, the future of AI in global health will depend on whether nations choose collaboration over isolation and governance over improvisation. The Winter Dialogue reaffirmed that inclusive multilateralism remains not only relevant, but indispensable, in shaping an equitable digital health future.





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RIS specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. It is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. Through its following centres/forums, RIS promotes policy dialogue and coherence on regional and international economic issues.



The word “DAKSHIN” (दक्षिण) is of Sanskrit origin, meaning “South.” The Hon’ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence in November 2023. The initiative was inspired by the deliberations of Global South leaders during the Voice of the Global South Summits. DAKSHIN stands for Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative. Hosted at the RIS, DAKSHIN has established linkages with leading think tanks and universities across the Global South and is building a dynamic network of scholars working on Global South issues.



AIC at RIS has been working to strengthen India’s strategic partnership with ASEAN in its realisation of the ASEAN Community. AIC at RIS undertakes research, policy advocacy and regular networking activities with relevant organisations and think-tanks in India and ASEAN countries, with the aim of providing policy inputs, up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction, for strengthening ASEAN-India partnership.



CMEC has been established at RIS under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W), Government of India. CMEC is a collaboration between RIS and Indian Ports Association (IPA). It has been mandated to act as an advisory/technological arm of MoPSW to provide the analytical support on policies and their implementation.



FITM is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Ayush and RIS. It has been established with the objective of undertaking policy research on economy, intellectual property rights (IPRs) trade, sustainability and international cooperation in traditional medicines. FITM provides analytical support to the Ministry of Ayush on policy and strategy responses on emerging national and global developments.



BEF aims to serve as a dedicated platform for fostering dialogue on promoting the concept in the Indian Ocean and other regions. The forum focuses on conducting studies on the potential, prospects and challenges of blue economy; providing regular inputs to practitioners in the government and the private sectors; and promoting advocacy for its smooth adoption in national economic policies.



FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India’s development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.



FIRD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India’s development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India’s engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.



As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.



Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South South Cooperation approaches for international development.



DST-Satellite Centre for Policy Research on STI Diplomacy at RIS aims to advance policy research at the intersection of science, technology, innovation (STI) and diplomacy, in alignment with India’s developmental priorities and foreign policy objectives.

— Policy research to shape the international development agenda —

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