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Morocco's AI Forum (2nd edition)

Women's leadership in AI: From Inclusion to Impact

Date: Tuesday, 14 April 2026

Location: Story Le Carrousel, Rabat – Morocco

A transformative platform advancing women's leadership in artificial intelligence—across organizational decision-making, standards and governance, and social and ethical impact—targeting Morocco and the Global South, jointly organized by MoroccoAI and GIZ.

Insights from the first edition of Morocco's AI Forum

The first edition of the forum “*AI Policies: Between Innovation and Regulation*”, taking place at Four Seasons Hotel-Rabat, on the 28th October, was conceived as a strategic platform to align global debates on artificial intelligence with Morocco's ambitions as an emerging regional and continental hub for responsible innovation-driven AI. Hosted in Rabat and co-organized by **MoroccoAI** and **Meta**, the event gathered ministers, regulators, industry executives, researchers, international organizations, and civil society actors to examine how AI can be governed in ways that accelerate industrial competitiveness and social progress while safeguarding rights, ethics, and sovereignty. Across three panels and high-level opening remarks, participants explored:

- How AI is reshaping industrial processes, smart cities, and competitiveness in Morocco and beyond.
- How ethics, regulation, and governance can keep pace with technological change without stifling innovation, building on frameworks such as UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI.
- How AI can support social inclusion, decent work, gender equality, and human development, especially through “AI for Social Good” initiatives and hybrid human-machine systems.



**Minister of
Industry and
Trade**



**Head of Public
Policy MENA
META**



**President
MoroccoAI**



Watch the full recording from <https://youtu.be/J1SUy8AmRTE?si=oMABnRXMLvFibxdg>

Panel 1: AI for Innovation and Industry Transformation

The first panel, “*AI for Innovation and Industry Transformation*”, explored how artificial intelligence can strengthen Morocco’s competitiveness, accelerate industrial transformation, and position the country as a regional hub for responsible AI deployment. Moderated by **Mr. Karim Amor**, the discussion brought together leaders from government, industry, smart cities, consulting, and enterprise technology:

- **Dr. Ghita Mezzour**, Founder & CEO, DecisiveAI; Former Minister of Digital Transition and Administration Reform
- **Mr. Peter Chun**, President, World Smart Cities Forum; Former Senior Advisor to the President of Korea on Industry 4.0
- **Ms. Majda Moumni**, CEO, OCP Solutions
- **Mr. François Foglia**, Director, C2F2 Sàrl; Innosuisse mentor
- **Mr. Badr Boussabat**, International AI speaker; Bestselling AI Author and Senior Advisor
- **Mr. Hicham Iraqi Houssaini**, Managing Director, SAP Francophone Africa

The panel emphasized that AI is no longer optional for Morocco’s industrial base. It is becoming a prerequisite for maintaining competitiveness, improving resilience and sustainability, and safeguarding digital and data sovereignty. At the same time, speakers repeatedly stressed that AI transformation is not just a technological upgrade: it requires new governance approaches, stronger bridges between universities and industry, and a deliberate focus on ethics, talent, and human responsibility.



Watch the full recording from <https://youtu.be/zoDyNHnahzY?si=IRlenxuJ2BkArOSe>

Panel 2: Ethics, Governance, and Regulation in AI Development

The second panel on “*AI Governance and Regulation*” examined how countries can design regulatory frameworks that balance innovation, risk management, and societal trust in artificial intelligence. The discussion focused on the global nature of AI, the need for internationally aligned approaches, and the challenge of translating ethical principles into effective and practical governance mechanisms. Moderated by **Mr. Nasser Kettani**, the panel brought together experts from international organizations, legal practice, regional policy initiatives, national government, and the private sector:

- **Dr. Ming Kuok Lim**, Advisor for Communication and Information for UNESCO Regional Office for the Maghreb in Rabat
- **Ms. Crystal Dubois**, Attorney-at-Law, Bonnard Lawson International Law Firm
- **Mr. Anys Boukly**, CEO at Digital Partners SA
- **Mr. Abdelali Madani**, Head of the Regulation and Standardization Department, Digital Development Agency (ADD)
- **Mr. Mehdi Taher**, Head of public policy MENA, META

The panel highlighted that effective AI governance is not about restricting innovation, but about enabling responsible and sustainable adoption. Speakers emphasized the importance of clear problem-driven regulation, alignment with international standards and ethical frameworks, and multi-stakeholder collaboration to ensure that AI contributes to economic development, protects human rights, and supports inclusive growth without disadvantaging emerging ecosystems.



Watch the full recording from <https://youtu.be/dsl5ga6Grp8?si=Sw8XDRKwyvrpYpkC>

Panel 3: AI for Social Good and Inclusive Job Creation

The third panel on “*Pro-Social and Human-Centered AI*” explored how artificial intelligence can act as a catalyst for social transformation, inclusion, and human development rather than merely technological acceleration. Discussions focused on AI as a form of societal infrastructure, raising fundamental questions about access, equity, human agency, and the responsibility to ensure that AI strengthens social cohesion and shared prosperity. Moderated by **Ms. Marielle Sander**, the panel brought together voices from academia, policy, innovation, and civil society:

- **Ms. Cornelia C. Walther**, Thought Leader Bridging Humanity and Technology
- **Ms. Aawatif Hayar**, Expert in Frugal Social Smart cities and communities, Former Minister of Solidarity, Social Integration, and Family
- **Ms. Loubna Bouarfa**, Machine Learning Scientist, Entrepreneur, and Serial Founder of AI Startups; University of Cambridge
- **Mr. Amine Bensaid**, President of AlAkhawayn University in Ifrane
- **Ms. Vida Hamd**, Head of Public Policy MENA, META

The panel emphasized that the future of AI depends on deliberate human choices. Speakers highlighted the need for AI systems that are inclusive, energy-efficient, culturally grounded, and outcome-driven, while reinforcing education, truth, and human connection. Rather than pursuing scale or performance alone, the discussion underscored that meaningful AI adoption requires ethical intent, open collaboration, and governance models that place human dignity, agency, and societal benefit at the center of technological progress.



Watch the full recording from https://youtu.be/Ge0GEY0Zl9s?si=0w6sBn_gStGZmR5g

The second edition of the Morocco's AI Forum

Building on the first edition of the forum, which examined **AI policies at the intersection of innovation and regulation**, this second edition deepens the conversation by focusing on **Women's Leadership in AI: From Inclusion to Impact**. While the initial edition addressed how governance frameworks can enable responsible AI, this new chapter shifts attention to *who shapes AI systems and to what end*, recognizing leadership as a decisive factor in translating policy into real-world outcomes.

This second edition serves as a strategic platform dedicated to strengthening women's leadership in artificial intelligence in **Morocco and the broader Global South**. Its launch at this pivotal moment reflects the growing recognition that AI's societal impact depends on the diversity, values, and perspectives embedded in its design and governance. As AI increasingly influences decision-making, access to opportunities, and the distribution of resources, the central question is no longer simply women's inclusion in AI, but whether AI delivers **meaningful, equitable, and ethical impact** for women and society as a whole.

Grounded in the conviction that women's leadership is a catalyst for impact, the forum moves beyond symbolic representation toward outcomes. Adopting a **Women in AI** perspective, it recognizes women as designers, policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and users of AI, whose transversal leadership across governance, innovation, ethics, and sectoral applications can drive more inclusive economic growth, address structural inequalities, and ensure that AI systems serve human development rather than narrow interests.

The Challenge We Face

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a prospective technology; it is actively reshaping economies, public policies, and social structures. However, a potential strong bias resulting in women underrepresentation across the key domains that shape AI's trajectory and impact—from the potential impact on **social and ethical dimensions** to reshaping **governance and standards-setting** and redefining a **new organizational leadership** and **decision-making process**.

1

Addressing the Social and Cultural Barriers through AI

Beyond institutions, structural, cultural, and socio-economic factors continue to constrain women's full participation in AI ecosystems. These barriers perpetuate gender disparities and prevent women from contributing their unique insights to technology that affects everyone.

2

Governance Deficit: Women's role?

Women's participation remains limited in AI governance structures, regulatory processes, and standards-setting bodies. Their underrepresentation in these critical forums means that policies, regulations, and ethical frameworks often lack the inclusive perspectives necessary for equitable AI development.

3

Pioneers in AI Leadership

Women role models in executive, technical, and board-level positions where AI strategies, investments, and products are paving the way. This trend opens perspectives in critical decision-making processes that shape the future of AI innovation and deployment across industries and sectors.

Morocco's Strategic Context

Morocco's New Development Model (NDM), launched in 2021, is considered one of the main reference frameworks guiding the country's long-term development vision toward inclusive, sustainable, and resilient growth by 2035. It provides a powerful framework for women's inclusive leadership, emphasizing human capital development, equal opportunity, and women's active participation and leadership as drivers of economic and social transformation.

Women Shaping Social Responsibility and Inclusion

Empowering women to leadership positions is both a societal imperative and a powerful lever for achieving productivity, competitiveness, and shared prosperity. The NDM recognizes that women's leadership in technology and innovation is essential for Morocco's economic transformation and sustainable development goals.

Women Influencing Governance

Strong emphasis on social cohesion, trust in institutions, territorial equity, and ethical governance are foundations for sustainable development. This includes empowering women to actively influence policy, regulations, and ethical frameworks that shape Morocco's technological future and ensure inclusive decision-making processes.

Education as an Enabler for Women's Leadership

Education is viewed not only as individual advancement but as a strategic national investment, with growing recognition of women's crucial role in leading innovation, driving strategy, and implementing solutions across high-value sectors. The NDM positions education as the foundation for empowering women to take leadership roles in emerging technologies like AI.

Morocco's Strategic Context

Adopted in 2020, **Maroc Attamkine** is the **National Integrated Program for the Economic Empowerment of Women and Girls**, setting a clear national ambition to strengthen women's participation in the labor market and economic life by 2030. The program targets an increase in the **female employment rate to 30% by 2030**, compared to 19% in 2020, through coordinated public action. The program focuses on removing structural barriers to women's economic participation by combining legal reforms, institutional coordination, fiscal incentives, and targeted initiatives such as **Akadimiya Attamkine** and **Douar Attamkine**. It emphasizes access to skills, employability, entrepreneurship, and leadership as key levers for sustainable empowerment.



Morocco's Strategic Context

Morocco's ***Digital Morocco 2030*** strategy positions digital transformation as a lever for inclusive and sustainable development, with a strong focus on women and youth through digital inclusion, advanced digital and AI skills, and leadership in innovation ecosystems. By prioritizing access, skills, and leadership, the strategy recognizes women's empowerment in digital and AI as essential to equitable growth and long-term digital sovereignty. The ***AI Made in Morocco*** initiative, launched in January 2026, marks a strategic step toward building sovereign, homegrown AI capabilities aligned with Morocco's values and societal needs, while fostering local innovation, research, and entrepreneurship. Ensuring women's full participation is essential to promoting ethical, human-centered AI and to strengthening inclusive national and regional leadership in AI for development.

The Forum directly supports these national ambitions by serving as a platform that:



**Advances women's leadership
in AI governance, innovation,
and decision-making**



**Translates Digital Morocco
2030's inclusion objectives into
concrete action and
partnerships**

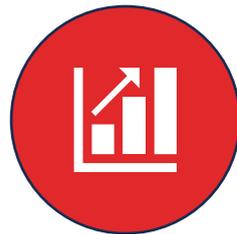


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Forum Objectives

The Forum is conceived not as a one-off event, but as a sustained knowledge-sharing and action-oriented platform designed to create lasting impact across countries and generations.



Challenge Bias

Address social norms and gender bias in AI systems to ensure culturally aware, socially responsible technology that maximizes positive human impact.



Address Barriers

Tackle cultural, institutional, and structural obstacles specific to Morocco and the Global South that prevent women from fully participating in AI ecosystems.



Strengthen Governance

Encourage women's participation in AI governance, standards, and policy-making bodies to ensure inclusive and equitable frameworks for AI development.



Promote Leadership

Advance **women's leadership in AI** innovation and decision-making across sectors and institutions, creating pathways for women to influence strategic technological choices.



Facilitate Exchange

Enable South–South and South–North knowledge sharing and collaboration, creating bridges for learning and partnership across regions.



Build Foundation

Lay groundwork for **scalable initiatives including competitions, hackathons, and mentorship programs** that will extend the forum's impact beyond the event itself.

Expected Outcomes



1

Women-Driven Policy & Governance

Concrete policy and leadership recommendations, driven by women's insights, to influence AI standards, governance, and ensure socially responsible AI development tailored to cultural and regional contexts.



2

Empowered Network of Women AI Leaders

An expanding Governance and Advisory Board of women AI leaders and allies, empowered to drive AI innovation within organizations, influence global standards, and shape inclusive AI across their countries.



3

Foundations for Women's AI Impact

Strong foundations for the launch of action-oriented initiatives including competitions & hackathons, mentorship, and capacity-building programs, all designed to further women's agency in leading AI innovation, influencing governance, and shaping inclusive AI.

Three Thematic Pillars

The forum is structured around **three interconnected thematic pillars** that address the full spectrum of women's leadership in AI—from **societal trends and challenges to institutional governance and organizational power**. Each panel brings together diverse perspectives to explore challenges, share solutions, and chart pathways forward.



Panel 1 — Women grounding AI: Social Norms, Gender Bias, and Human Impact

Focus: Culture, society, and ethical implications

Purpose: Examine how women's leadership shapes AI systems that are socially responsible, culturally aware, and designed to reduce bias and maximize positive societal impact. Address the intersection of technology, culture, and human values.



Panel 2 — Women governing AI: Standards, Governance, and Trust

Focus: Systems, standards, and institutional influence

Purpose: Explore how women leaders contribute to AI governance, policy, and standards-setting, ensuring ethical, inclusive, and trustworthy AI development. Examine the mechanisms for increasing women's participation in regulatory and governance bodies.



Panel 3 — Women leading AI: Decision-Making Power and Organizational Transformation at Scale

Focus: Power and leadership inside organizations

Purpose: Highlight how women in executive, technical, and strategic roles influence AI innovation, drive performance, and shape organizational decisions. Explore the pathways and practices that enable women to rise to leadership positions in AI-driven environments.

Women grounding AI: Social Norms, Gender Bias, and Human Impact

Purpose

Examine how AI systems can contribute to reduce bias by becoming socially responsible, culturally aware, and designed to. This panel emphasizes the role of women in ensuring AI benefits society, respects human values, and addresses gender and social inequities.

By centering human impact and ethical considerations, this discussion explores how women's leadership can guide AI development toward outcomes that are not only technically sophisticated but also socially beneficial and culturally appropriate for diverse communities.

Key Questions

How can women's leadership help identify and mitigate gender bias in AI datasets and algorithms?

In what ways do cultural and social norms influence AI design and deployment in Morocco and the Global South?

How can AI be leveraged to address societal challenges such as education, health, and inclusion?

What ethical frameworks and community engagement practices can women leaders champion to ensure responsible AI adoption?

Women governing AI: Standards, Governance, and Trust

Purpose

Explore how women leaders contribute to the design, implementation, and oversight of AI governance frameworks, regulatory standards, and institutional policies. The panel emphasizes the importance of inclusive leadership in building trustworthy and ethical AI systems that align with societal values.

This conversation examines the critical role women play in ensuring AI development is guided by robust governance structures, transparent standards, and accountability mechanisms that serve the public interest.

Key Questions

Why is women's participation in AI governance and standards-setting critical for inclusive innovation?

How do women leaders influence AI policy at organizational, national, and international levels?

What mechanisms can increase women's visibility and decision-making power in AI governance bodies?

How can public and private institutions collaborate to ensure gender-balanced leadership in AI standards and regulation?

Women leading AI: Decision-Making Power and Organizational Transformation at Scale

Purpose

Highlight how women in executive, technical, and strategic roles influence AI innovation, drive organizational performance, and shape critical business and technology decisions. This panel explores the pathways, strategies, and organizational practices that enable women to rise to leadership positions in AI-driven environments.

Through compelling case studies and evidence-based insights, panelists will demonstrate the tangible business value of women's leadership in AI, showcasing how diverse leadership teams drive better outcomes, foster innovation, and create more inclusive organizational cultures.

Key Questions

How do women leaders shape AI strategy, product development, and investment decisions within organizations?

What evidence links women-led AI teams to improved innovation, collaboration, and performance outcomes?

Which organizational structures and cultural practices best support women in leadership roles?

How can companies mentor and promote women into executive and board-level AI positions?



The **Forum** invites leaders, policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and advocates to join this transformative movement. Together, we will **empower women to lead AI innovation within organizations, influence standards and governance, and shape socially responsible and inclusive AI**—ensuring that technology reflects human values, mitigates bias, and serves all of society.



Date

Tuesday, 14 April 2026



Location

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Organized by

MoroccoAI and GIZ

"Empowering women to lead AI innovation within organizations, influence standards and governance, and shape socially responsible AI is both a societal imperative and a strategic lever for driving innovation, competitiveness, and shared prosperity."

For more information, please contact the organizing committee.

Email: team@morocco.ai

Website: www.morocco.ai

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