



MENA OBSERVATORY
ON RESPONSIBLE AI

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ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE AI IN EGYPT:

A Multistakeholder Approach for Policy, People, and Practice

December 2025

**ADVANCING RESPONSIBLE AI IN EGYPT:
A MULTISTAKEHOLDER APPROACH FOR
POLICY, PEOPLE, AND PRACTICE**

Policy Brief

***MENA Observatory on Responsible AI
The Access to Knowledge for Development Center***

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is a growing global interest in responsible Artificial Intelligence (AI) with more organizations acknowledging the urgency of mitigating the risks associated with emerging AI technologies. AI presents immense opportunities; however it also has significant ethical and regulatory challenges. The Egyptian government has set ambitious national plans to secure Egypt's position as a global and regional AI leader, and thus the ethical implications of AI should be a priority. There is a dire need for a clear and inclusive framework for responsible AI in order for Egypt to avoid any possibility of amplifying existing inequalities and biases, compromising privacy, and/or leaving the misuse of technologies unchecked.

This policy brief was developed following a multi-stakeholder dialogue guided by the five pillars of responsible AI as outlined in the Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI. The roundtable explored global, regional, and local definitions of responsible AI, and offered recommendations to implementing responsible AI in Egypt across the three proposed dimensions of policy, people, and practice. Key recommendations include the need for Egypt to develop a comprehensive, context-specific governance framework for responsible AI, establish a robust governance ecosystem, and support and incentivise SMEs in adopting responsible AI practices. Furthermore, democratizing access to digital and AI education and tools, particularly for youth, women, and rural communities, is emphasized as essential to ensuring inclusive participation in an AI-driven future where no one is left behind.

II. WHAT IS RESPONSIBLE AI?

As AI systems become increasingly embedded in our daily lives, workplaces, and within critical decision-making processes such as healthcare and financial services, their trustworthiness is of paramount importance. This trustworthiness is not only crucial to improving efficiency, accuracy, and harnessing the benefits of emerging technologies, but also to mitigate harm and ensure equitable outcomes for all.¹ Responsible AI provides a comprehensive framework to the development, implementation, and use of AI technologies, ensuring they are robust, safe, ethical, fair, and beneficial to society throughout the entire

AI lifecycle.² Guided by principles such as fairness, transparency, and accountability, Responsible AI aims to address concerns of bias and harm to ensure that the benefits of emerging technologies are distributed fairly across society.

Responsible AI is defined differently by numerous organizations and institutions, primarily through a set of principles. Frameworks such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) [Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence](#), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) [Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute's [Principles for Responsible AI Innovation](#), the Institute for Ethical AI & Machine Learning's [Responsible Machine Learning Principles](#), and more, aim to guide and support the responsible development and deployment of AI technologies. National and regional strategies, such as the [African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy](#), also include guiding definitions and principles for Responsible AI. The [OECD-African Union AI Dialogue 2.0](#), held in November 2024 in Cairo also involved identifying priority context specific principles for trustworthy AI in Africa.

These resources share several common principles for Responsible AI including, but are not limited to: fairness and mitigating bias; transparency and explainability; accountability and responsibility; privacy and security; human oversight and autonomy; people-centredness; sustainability; proper governance; collaboration and multidisciplinary approach; capacity building and education; reproducibility; and proportionality (Figure 1).

Figure 1 below offers a list of these principles. Principles in red are directly quoted from the source documents. Principles in orange represent recurring themes found across multiple documents but have been articulated using different terminology—they have been synthesized and paraphrased to reflect their closely related meaning.

In addition to these frameworks, the [Global Index on Responsible AI \(GIRAI\)](#) is a tool that evaluates the state of responsible AI across 138

² OECD. (2024). AI Principles. <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/ai-principles.html>

³ These principles are a synthesis of some of the common responsible AI principles defined by global and regional institutions, including the OECD's Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence, UNESCO's Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute's Principles for Responsible AI Innovation, the Institute for Ethical AI & Machine Learning's Responsible Machine Learning Principles, and the African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy. Principles in red are directly quoted from the source documents. Principles in orange represent recurring themes found across multiple documents but have been articulated using different terminology—they have been synthesized and paraphrased to reflect their closely related meaning.

¹ Kinney, M., Anastasiadou, M., Naranjo-Zolotov, M., & Santos, V. (2024). Expectation management in AI: A framework for understanding stakeholder trust and acceptance of artificial intelligence systems. *Helijon*, 10(7)

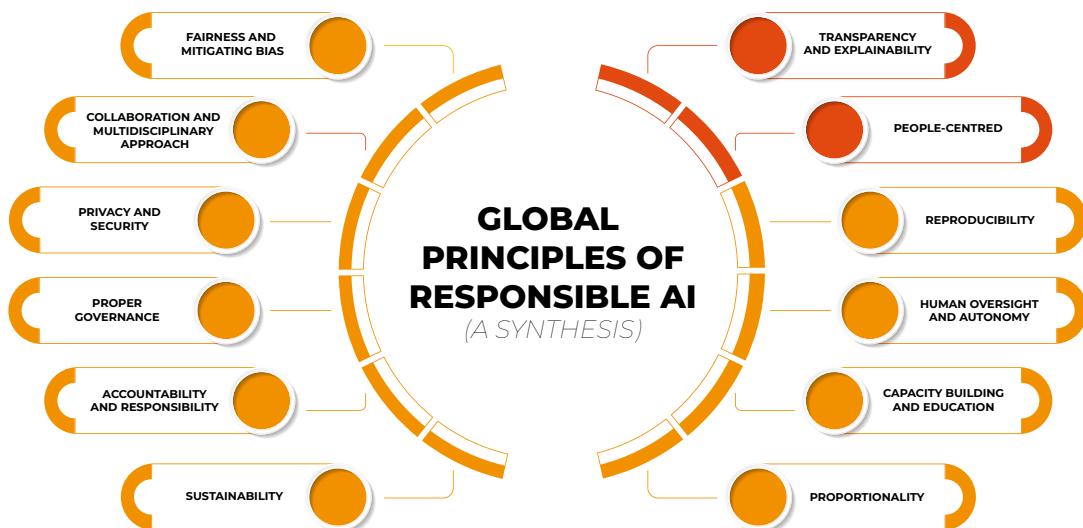
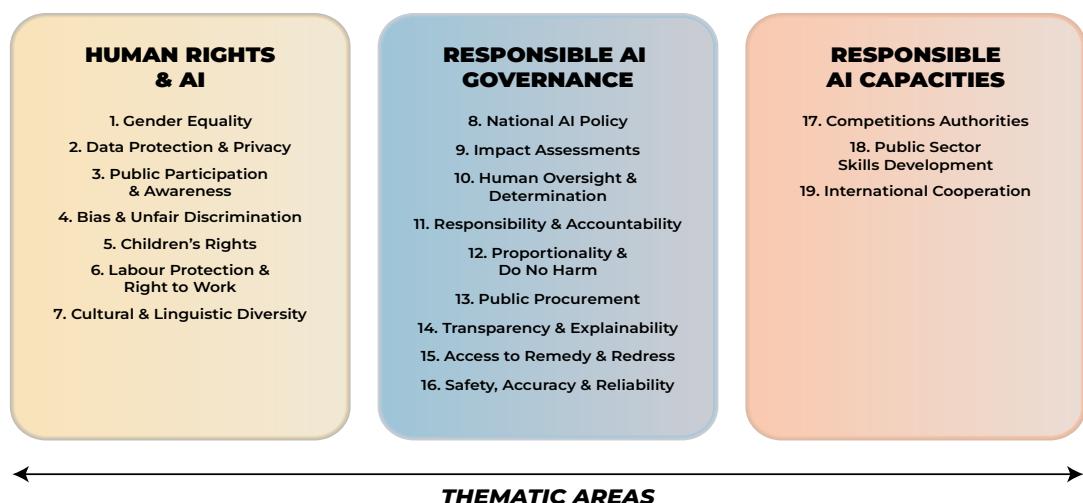


Figure 1: Global Principles of Responsible AI - A Synthesis
Source: Compiled from Various Sources.³



Each thematic area assesses the performance of the following 3 pillars: **Government frameworks**, **Government actions**, and **Non-state actors' initiatives**.

Figure 2: The Global Index on Responsible AI - Measuring Performance

countries.⁴ The index measures progress within 19 thematic areas which are clustered into 3 key dimensions: human rights and AI, responsible AI governance and responsible AI capacities. The thematic areas are assessed through the performance of 3 pillars: government frameworks, government actions, and initiatives by non-state actors⁵ (Figure 2).

⁴ Adams, R., Adeleke, F., Florido, A., de Magalhães Santos, L. G., Grossman, N., Junck, L., & Stone, K. (2024). Global Index on Responsible AI 2024 (1st Edition). South Africa: Global Center on AI Governance

⁵ Adams, R., Adeleke, F., Florido, A., de Magalhães Santos, L. G., Grossman, N., Junck, L., & Stone, K. (2024). Global Index on Responsible AI 2024 (1st Edition). South Africa: Global Center on AI Governance

III. A BRIEF NOTE ON EGYPT'S AI FRAMEWORKS

Egypt launched its [first National AI Strategy](#) in 2019, followed by the release of the [Second Edition](#) in early 2025. These strategies aimed to foster inclusive AI for the benefit of all Egyptians, promote innovation, exploit AI technologies to support the fulfillment of Egypt's sustainable development goals (SDGs), and position Egypt

as an active player in the global AI landscape.⁶⁷ The 2025 edition of the strategy outlines key objectives such as enhancing data sharing and governance, building robust AI infrastructure, supporting local startups and small and medium enterprises (SMEs), nurturing local talent, and establishing a comprehensive AI regulatory framework and system.⁸

In addition to the two strategies, the [Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI](#) was released in 2023 with the aim of raising stakeholder awareness on the ethics of AI, affirm Egypt's commitment to responsible AI practices, and to signal Egypt's preparedness for AI investments.⁹ The charter tailors international responsible AI frameworks to the local Egyptian context and outlines 5 key pillars which are aligned with the OECD's recommendation: human-centeredness; accountability; fairness; security and safety; and transparency and explainability (Figure 3).¹⁰



Figure 3: The Principles of the Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI

6 Egypt National Artificial Intelligence Strategy. (2019) Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. <https://ai.gov.eg/Egypt%20National%20AI%20Strategy-%20English.pdf>

7 Egypt National Artificial Intelligence Strategy. Second Edition. (2025) Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. <https://ai.gov.eg/SynchedFiles/en/Resources/AIstrategy%20English%2016-1-2025-1.pdf>

8 Egypt National Artificial Intelligence Strategy. Second Edition. (2025) Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. <https://ai.gov.eg/SynchedFiles/en/Resources/AIstrategy%20English%2016-1-2025-1.pdf>

9 Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI. (2023). The National Council for Artificial Intelligence.

10 Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI. (2023). The National Council for Artificial Intelligence.

IV. KEY FINDINGS

In light of this, the MENA Observatory on Responsible AI housed at the Access to Knowledge for Development Center initiated an ongoing series of roundtables with the purpose of convening experts from diverse disciplines to explore the latest developments in the field of responsible AI in Egypt. The first two roundtables held in January and May 2025 served as a basis for this policy brief (see Appendix 1 for more details).

The findings of the roundtable were clustered under the three objectives of the MENA Observatory on Responsible AI: Responsible AI for Policy, Responsible AI for People, and Responsible AI for Practice.

Objective 1: Responsible AI for Policy

1. Define Responsible AI

Establish a clear, context-sensitive definition of responsible AI, clarifying whether the 'responsibility' pertains to the development of the tool itself, the way users utilize it, or both.

2. Identify Stakeholders and Allocate Liability

A key issue in the global discourse surrounding AI governance is determining who should bear the responsibility for the outcomes of AI systems. Hence, it is crucial to clearly identify the relevant stakeholders involved in the development, deployment, and use of AI technologies, as well as to define the specific responsibilities of each. Key stakeholders include, but are not limited to: developers who design AI systems; vendors who sell and distribute AI systems; clients or organizations that deploy AI systems; end users that interact with AI systems; and non-users affected by AI systems.

The process of identifying stakeholders and their respective responsibilities aids in clarifying and allocating liability, which is crucial for ensuring accountability in situations where AI systems cause harm. The question of liability must be addressed explicitly in regulatory frameworks to ensure that ethical and legal obligations are properly assigned.

3. Adopt an Egypt Specific Approach and Align with National Guidelines

Developing a responsible AI framework tailored to Egypt's unique context is essential to ensure that AI technologies align with the nation's cul-

tural, legal, and organizational realities. While international definitions and standards offer valuable guidance, they must be adapted to reflect Egypt's specific needs and national priorities. In addition, the framework should be aligned with existing national efforts, such as Egypt's Responsible AI Charter and National AI Strategies, to ensure consistency across all efforts and to support the national vision for the responsible development and use of AI in Egypt.

4. Explore and Evaluate Alternative Approaches to AI Governance

4.1 Amending Existing Laws vs Introducing New Laws

To ensure an adaptive and context-aware legal framework, new regulations should complement, rather than duplicate, existing legislation. One way to achieve this is through 'sequencing legislation,' which is a step-by-step process that begins with mapping and evaluating existing laws relevant to AI technologies, such as the data protection law. Gaps are then identified and either legislation is amended, or new laws are introduced if needed.

4.2 General vs Sector Specific Regulations

AI regulation can generally adopt two alternative approaches:

- a) **A general framework.** This involves the adoption of a broad, overarching AI law that establishes foundational principles and standards that are applied across all sectors.
- b) **Sector-specific frameworks.** This involves the creation of individual frameworks tailored to the unique applications and risks of specific sectors, especially high-risk domains. For example, applications in healthcare and credit scoring involve high-stakes decisions with significant consequences for users, and therefore require stricter and more specific oversight. On the other hand, applications in areas like agriculture or manufacturing often present lower risks¹¹ and may be governed by lighter, more flexible regulations such as a general framework.

To ensure a balanced and effective regulatory approach, a broad, overarching AI law establishing foundational principles could serve as a legal

baseline, complemented by more detailed, sector-specific regulations that address the unique risks of AI applications in individual industries.

4.3 Hard vs Soft Law

While strict regulations on AI may enhance safety, security, and accountability, there is a consequence of limiting innovation. This highlights the debate between hard and soft law in governing AI technologies:

- a) **Hard laws**, such as legally binding rules, ensure accountability but may struggle to keep pace with rapid technological change.
- b) **Soft laws**, such as guidelines or ethical principles, provide flexibility and adaptability, allowing for quicker responses to innovation. This approach, however, may lack the authority needed to hold larger, more established companies accountable for any harms and/or misuse.

A hybrid approach may be more effective by leveraging soft law to guide behavior, while gradually introducing hard laws in high-risk sectors where clear accountability is essential. Examples of this hybrid approach include safe harbor provisions and takedown notices, which provide companies with warnings and the opportunity to correct issues prior to facing formal penalties.

5. Determine Organizational Structure (Decentralized or Centralized Oversight)

There is a need to determine the appropriate organizational structure for overseeing responsible AI in Egypt. There are two approaches to be considered:

- a) **Assign oversight responsibilities to individual ministries**, where each ministry would supervise the responsible use of AI within their respective sector. Sectors such as healthcare and fintech already have well-established laws and regulations in place. In order to leverage the existing regulatory frameworks, responsible AI principles can be integrated into these sector specific regulations to ensure compliance.
- b) Create an **independent centralized 'Office for Responsible AI'** that would serve both as an auditing authority and a consultative body. This office would assess AI systems, provide guidance, and intervene in cases of misuse. This office could be created under the National Council for AI

¹¹ Tech-tonic Shifts: How AI could change industry risk landscapes. (2024). Swiss Re Institute. <https://www.swissre.com/dam/jcr:7f722fd0-a5c6-47d4-8108-2d22af815539/sri-expertise-publication-ai-risks.pdf>

by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), or a new standalone authority could be established. Experts suggest that this office should be independent from the MCIT, since each industry will have different regulatory parameters.

6. Build Governmental Capacity

A critical component of responsible AI implementation is enhancing the government's capacity to keep pace with global advancements. This includes developing specialized oversight bodies capable of enforcing responsible AI practices and ensuring compliance across sectors. Strengthening institutional knowledge and technical expertise is also essential for effective governance.

7. Adopt Additional Guard-rails for Sensitive Use Cases

Certain AI applications such as facial recognition, military technologies, eugenics, and other health related technologies pose significant ethical and societal risks. These sensitive use cases require additional safeguards to prevent misuse and protect human rights.

8. Prioritise Data Privacy

Egypt possesses a wealth of data, which presents significant opportunities for AI development. However, data security and privacy remains a critical concern in Egypt's responsible AI conversation. While a data protection law is in place (Law No. 151 of 2020), enforcement persists as a challenge. Data privacy is often not taken seriously in Egypt and the wider MENA region with unethical practices continuing to occur (e.g. hospitals selling patient x-rays to AI developers.) These issues highlight the urgent need for a comprehensive data governance structure that includes risk-based data categorization and strong accountability systems to ensure ethical and secure data use and management.

9. Prioritize Cloud Infrastructure and Sovereignty

AI should not be treated in isolation from cloud computing since AI systems rely heavily on the cloud to function. It is imperative that Egypt continues to invest in the necessary network and data storage infrastructures to support the development and deployment of cloud services and AI technologies. With cloud comes the issue of cloud sovereignty, which ensures that data is stored in servers within the borders of its local

country in compliance with national laws.¹² Since the use of cloud often involves transferring data across borders, which can create significant compliance issues,¹³ it is essential that Egypt safeguards its data and ensures that cloud services align with national interests and privacy standards in order to maintain trust and security in AI deployment.

10. Foster Collaboration and Adopt a Multistakeholder Approach

A collaborative and multi-stakeholder approach is essential for responsible AI governance. This includes collaboration between government, academia, civil society, the private sector, and legal experts. Connecting domain-specific knowledge with AI expertise ensures that policies are both practical and informed. To ensure AI governance is inclusive and effective, it is essential to involve policymakers and parliamentarians in the conversation. Since AI impacts nearly every sector, building the capacity of lawmakers is critical for informed decision-making and legislation. International collaborations play a vital role in facilitating knowledge exchange and capacity building. One example of such is [Microsoft's ongoing partnership with Egypt's MCIT](#).

11. Prioritize Sustainability and Continuity

Sustainability is a main concern in effective AI governance. Given the rapid pace of technological change, practices deemed responsible today may become obsolete or problematic in the future. Hence, it is essential to establish mechanisms for continuous monitoring, regular policy updates, and adaptive governance. Building a resilient ecosystem that supports long-term ethical AI use is critical to maintaining fair and inclusive outcomes for all.

12. Develop a Sandbox

A regulatory sandbox offers a controlled environment where companies can test AI technologies under the supervision of relevant authorities. This approach balances innovation with oversight, allowing for experimentation while ensuring adherence to responsible AI principles. A priority for Egypt is establishing a regulatory sandbox which could serve as a model for fostering responsible AI innovation and allow for adaptive policy development.

¹² What is Sovereign Cloud? (2024). IBM. <https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/sovereign-cloud>

¹³ Data Sovereignty and the cloud. IT Governance: A GRC Solutions Company. <https://www.itgovernance.co.uk/data-sovereignty-and-the-cloud>

13. Establish Certification / Accreditation Frameworks

One way to promote trust and accountability in AI systems is by creating formal certification and accreditation frameworks. These mechanisms would function similarly to ISO standards or carbon credit systems, providing recognition to organizations that adhere to responsible AI principles. Such certifications could serve as clear benchmarks for responsible AI practices, enhance transparency, and help both organizations and consumers identify trustworthy and responsible AI providers.

Objective 2: Responsible AI for People

14. Raise Awareness

Raising public awareness is a vital step in promoting both responsible AI and data privacy in Egypt. A nationwide campaign is needed to educate users about how AI works, its risks, and their rights. Awareness is not just a government responsibility; it requires a collective effort from civil society, the private sector, and educational institutions. For example, the MENA Observatory on Responsible AI conducted [information sessions at Kasr El-Dobarra Evangelical Church \(KDEC\)](#) on responsible AI and data privacy. This served as an example of incorporating cultural and religious perspectives into awareness raising in order to make the topic more relatable to local communities.

15. Build Capacity

Capacity building is essential for equipping individuals, particularly youth, with the technical and critical thinking skills required to both develop AI technologies and use them responsibly. Since youth stand at the forefront of the digital transformation, they must be prepared to not only participate in the AI economy, but to shape it in ways that are context-sensitive, inclusive, and fair. This effort must be continuous with programs tailored to different groups based on their backgrounds and needs.

For example, the Center for Learning and Teaching at AUC is working towards equipping educators and students with critical AI literacy and the ability to understand both the opportunities and risks of AI. This includes questioning the validity of AI outputs, identifying bias, as well as informing them of the potential effective and appropriate uses of AI in academia, research and beyond. Similarly, [Microsoft's partnership with MCIT](#) targets 100,000 individuals for AI training.

16. Democratize Access to AI Tools and Education

Access to the AI technologies, digital education, and training in Egypt is growing, however many communities and small businesses are left behind primarily due to the digital divide, geographical location, and the high cost of AI tools. Connectivity and infrastructure issues are prevalent in Egypt, especially in rural areas where internet penetration rates are lower compared to urban areas.¹⁴ Alongside the significant urban-rural divide, other factors such as wealth, education level, and gender play a role in exacerbating the digital divide.¹⁵ In addition, opportunities for digital education and training are often focused in urban centers such as Cairo and Alexandria, leaving smaller governorates behind. Smaller businesses are also often unable to reap the benefits of AI technologies primarily due to high costs, making it difficult to compete with larger, more established companies.

To ensure inclusive access to both digital tools and education, initiatives must be dispersed across all governorates and business sizes. This includes integrating SMEs into AI initiatives and ensuring that AI tools and training opportunities are available to all, regardless of their location or size. These initiatives should also prioritize addressing the gender digital divide. Women in Egypt have lower levels of digital literacy compared to men, as well as limited access and ownership of digital tools such as laptops and computers due to high prices.¹⁶ Other barriers such as cultural norms and concerns over online security also contribute to the gender digital divide.¹⁷ Overcoming these barriers is essential to ensure the inclusion of women in digital initiatives and maximizing Egypt's human capital in the AI era.

17. Ensure Environmental Sustainability

As Egypt seeks to attract more investment in AI, it is important to consider the environmental impact of these technologies. Responsible AI should not only be ethical and inclusive but also environmentally sustainable. This means evaluating the energy consumption and ecological

¹⁴ Badran, M. F. (2014). Young people and the digital divide in Egypt: An empirical study. *Eurasian Economic Review*, 4, 223-250.

¹⁵ PwC Middle East. Bridging the Digital Gap: The state of digital inclusion in the MENA region. (2022). PwC Middle East. <https://www.pwc.com/mi/en/publications/documents/bridging-digital-gap-state-digital-inclusion-mena-region.pdf>

¹⁶ Mohieldin, M. S., & Ramadan, R. (2022, May). Would Closing the Gender Digital Divide Close the Economic Gender Gap in Emerging Markets and Developing Economies?: An Empirical Assessment. Economic Research Forum (ERF).

¹⁷ Mohieldin, M. S., & Ramadan, R. (2022, May). Would Closing the Gender Digital Divide Close the Economic Gender Gap in Emerging Markets and Developing Economies?: An Empirical Assessment. Economic Research Forum (ERF).

footprint of AI systems and encouraging practices that minimize harm to the environment.

Objective 3: Responsible AI for Practice

As AI adoption accelerates across the private sector, it is crucial to ensure both large corporations and SMEs are held accountable for the technologies they implement. However, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective in implementing responsible AI in practice for both large and small companies. SMEs in Egypt face unique challenges in adopting responsible AI, with very few of them currently implementing the five principles outlined in Egypt's Responsible AI Charter. For many of these businesses, responsible AI is not a primary concern, as they are typically focused on securing funding, developing their products, and competing in a rapidly paced market. Many SMEs are unaware of what responsible AI entails, and unlike large corporations that have the capacity to maintain in-house ethics and compliance teams, they do not have the resources to hire dedicated teams to manage ethical and legal concerns.

While these constraints are valid, it is important for SMEs to recognize the responsibilities that come with entering the high-risk AI industry. SMEs must be fully aware of the potential risks, ethical considerations, and legal obligations associated with the development and deployment of AI technologies. SMEs should take proactive steps to align their practices with both national regulations and international standards for responsible AI.

18. Develop Simplified and Practical Guidelines for Responsible AI Adoption by SMEs

SMEs are not looking for lengthy toolkits or complex frameworks; they need simple, practical solutions that are tailored to their specific sectors. To support them, responsible AI practices must be simplified and tailored to their specific sectors and capabilities. This could include creating short checklists or manifestos and offering practical, hands-on training. Incentives such as certification or access to government funding for compliant businesses could further encourage adoption and help integrate responsible AI into SME operations.

19. Advocate for Alternative Ways of Incentivising Business to Adopt Responsible AI Practices

It is essential to demonstrate the value of responsible AI to SMEs, not just as a regulatory requirement, but as a competitive advantage. One proposed incentive is to create a 'label' or certification system that recognizes businesses adhering to responsible AI practices. Companies that earn this label could gain access to government funding or investment opportunities, encouraging broader adoption of responsible AI practices. A suggestion for the MENA Observatory was establishing a Responsible AI Cup to incentivize responsible innovation in Egypt and the wider MENA region. The Observatory has taken this on and is currently developing a Responsible AI Cup for Startups with the first iteration scheduled for winter 2025-2026. The cup, targeted towards micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) developing or using AI technologies, aims to encourage the adoption of ethical principles in AI products, promote AI driven innovation and build a generation of responsible and ethical AI startups in Egypt and the MENA region.

20. Involve Investors and VCs

Investors and venture capitalists (VCs) play a powerful role in shaping the future of AI by influencing which technologies receive funding and how they are developed. By aligning their investment strategies with responsible AI principles, investors can help ensure that innovation is not only rapid but also ethical, inclusive, and safe. As interest in Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria continues to grow, responsible AI is becoming increasingly relevant to investment decisions. This shift presents a valuable opportunity-SMEs may be more motivated to adopt responsible AI practices if they see it as a pathway to attracting investment. Investors therefore may have the potential to serve as key enablers of ethical AI adoption.

V. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The roundtable discussion underscored the multifaceted challenges of implementing responsible AI in Egypt across the three dimensions of policy, people, and practice. A key takeaway was the need for a comprehensive governance framework that articulates a context-sensitive definition of responsible AI and clearly identifies relevant stakeholders and their respective roles and responsibilities. This framework, as well as

any other initiative pertaining to responsible AI, should be tailored to Egypt's unique socio-economic context and technological capabilities, and be in alignment with ongoing national efforts, such as the Responsible AI Charter and its five pillars.

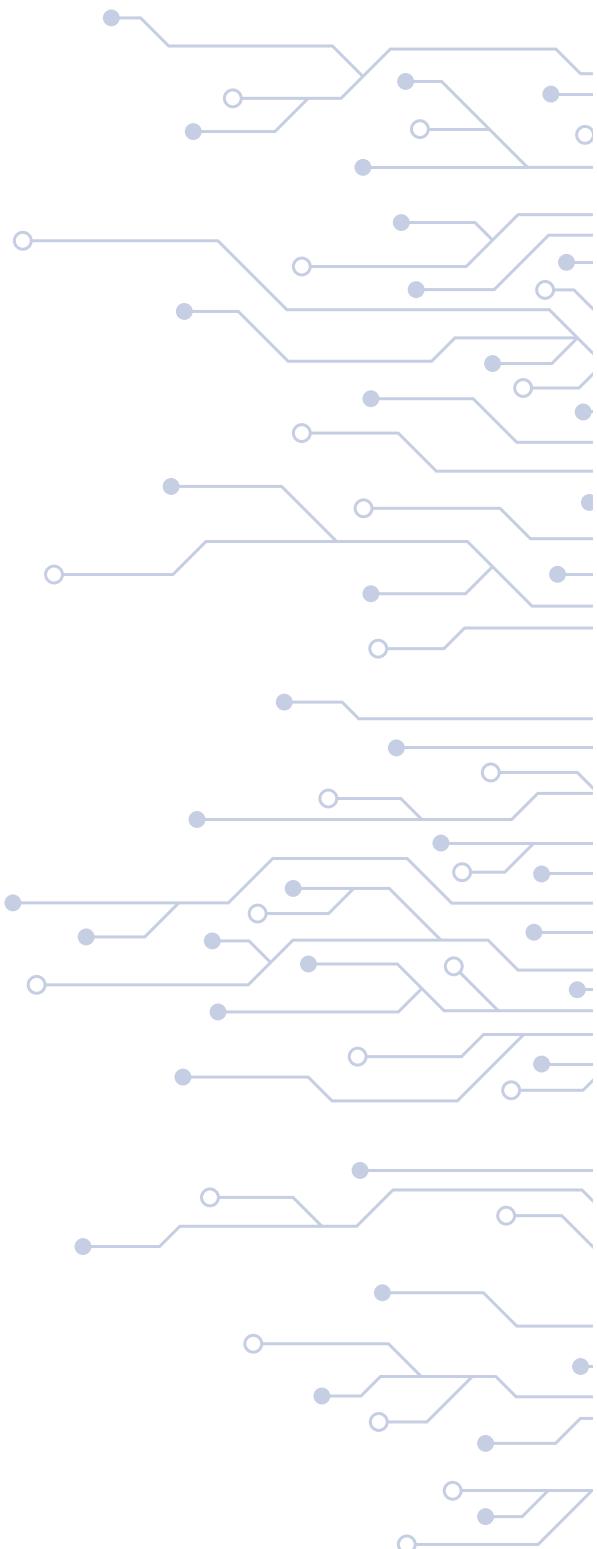
Furthermore, establishing a robust governance ecosystem is essential, either by allocating oversight responsibilities to the relevant authorities, or by creating an independent, centralized Office for Responsible AI. Critical decisions remain ambiguous regarding whether to amend existing legislation or introduce new ones, whether to adopt a general overarching framework or sector-specific regulations, and whether to rely on binding (hard) or non-binding (soft) legal instruments. Ultimately, the nuances of governing AI must be considered in order to strike a balance between enabling innovation and ensuring effective regulation.

People are central to shaping the future of AI in Egypt, especially its youth. To ensure their meaningful participation in the future AI-driven economy, it is essential to equip them with the necessary technical and critical thinking skills required to both develop and use AI technologies responsibly. This requires democratizing access to AI education and tools, addressing connectivity and infrastructure issues, and bridging the digital divide, particularly for women and rural communities.

Finally, since SMEs are the backbone of the Egyptian economy, supporting their adoption of responsible AI practices is essential. This support includes the introduction of alternative incentives, such as certifications, funding, and prizes, to encourage responsible AI implementation. Additionally, SMEs should be provided with tailored, simplified, and practical resources for adopting responsible AI, including checklists, manifestos, and targeted training. It is also important to ensure that investors and VCs align their investment strategies with responsible AI principles to further incentivize responsible business practices.

The MENA Observatory on Responsible AI intends to continue hosting multistakeholder dialogues to keep up with emerging developments in the field of Responsible, both within Egypt and across the wider MENA region. In line with recommendations from experts at this roundtable to establish a responsible AI prize for SMEs in Egypt, the Observatory is currently developing a Responsible AI Cup for Startups, with the inaugural edition scheduled to launch this fall. The competition will evaluate early-stage startups based on their alignment with key responsible

AI themes and principles, awarding the startup that demonstrates the most promising commitment to responsible AI practices. The goal is to promote and incentivize the implementation of ethical, transparent, and accountable AI practices, helping shape a new generation of startups that prioritize both innovation and responsibility.



VI. ANNEX 1: ABOUT THE STUDY

This policy brief was produced as an output of an ongoing series of roundtables organized by the [Middle East and North Africa \(MENA\) Observatory on Responsible AI](#) led by the [Access to Knowledge for Development Center \(A2K4D\)](#) at the [American University in Cairo's Onsi Sawiris School of Business](#). The purpose of this series of discussions is to convene experts from diverse disciplines to explore the latest developments in the field of responsible AI in Egypt. By fostering collaboration and promoting inclusive, multi-stakeholder dialogue, the series seeks to maintain active dialogue on responsible AI in Egypt to keep up with the rapidly evolving landscape.

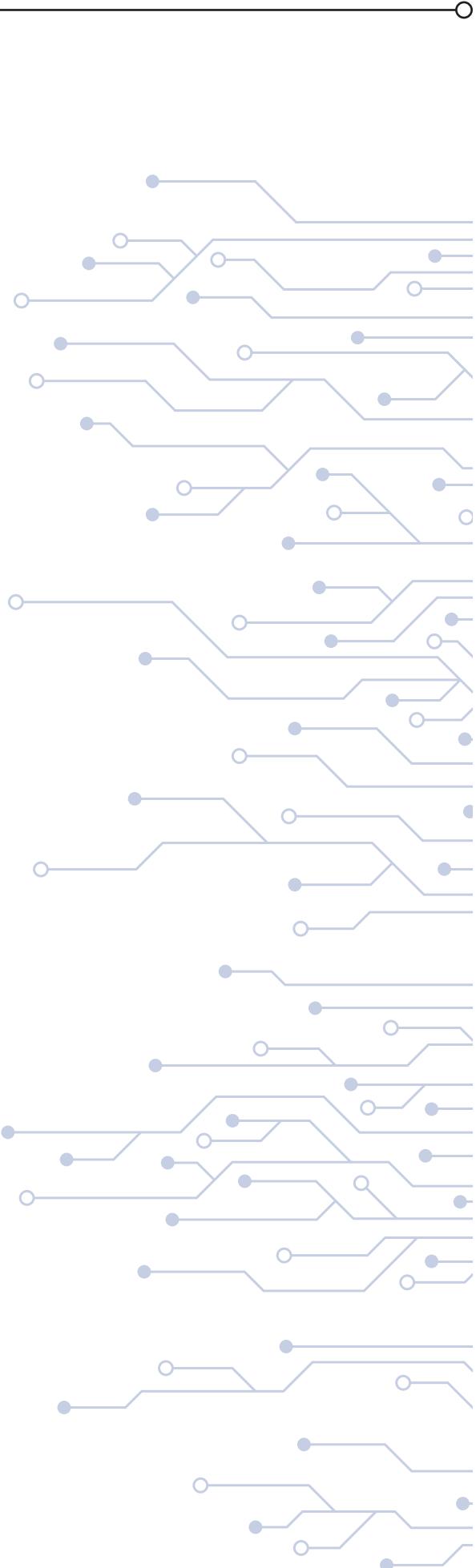
The first roundtable

On January 14th, 2025, the MENA Observatory on Responsible AI, ADSERO-Ragy Soliman & Partners, and APCO jointly hosted the first roundtable at AUC's Tahrir Campus. The event brought together twenty four stakeholders from the government, academia, the legal sector, international organizations, the private sector, and SMEs to discuss Egypt's proposed AI bill.

The discussion allowed participants to share insights, identify key priorities, raise concerns, and offer recommendations regarding the bill's definition of AI, its philosophy, scope, and implementation. Among the key takeaways was a collective agreement on the need to clearly define what 'responsible AI' constitutes, especially within the context of Egypt. Participants also emphasized the importance of taking stock of the existing regulatory landscape governing AI in Egypt, both on a national and institutional level. This insight served as the central theme of the second edition of the roundtable series.

The second roundtable

The second roundtable, which this policy brief is based on, took place on May 4th, 2025, at AUC Tahrir Campus' Oriental Hall. The event hosted a diverse group of twelve stakeholders, including experts from the government, parliament, academia, the legal sector, international organizations, the private sector, and SMEs. Participants engaged in a multi-stakeholder dialogue on responsible AI, developed a shared understanding of what it means both globally and within the Egyptian context, examined the current existing policies and practices used by large corporations and SMEs to regulate their AI technologies, and worked towards developing a set of guidelines to further advance the framing of responsible AI for policy and practice in Egypt. The Egyptian Charter for Responsible AI's five pillars served as a key guide to the conversation.





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