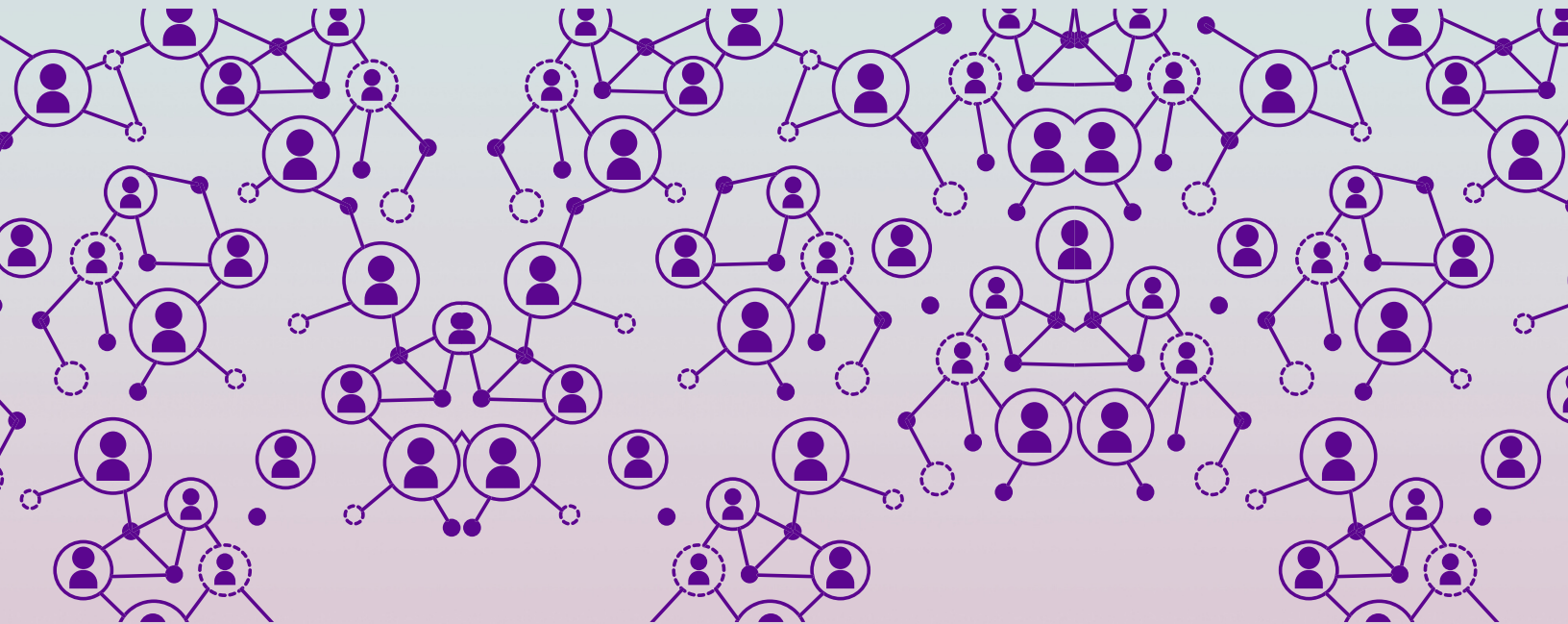


**IA2030Mx**

THE AGENDA IN BRIEF

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MEXICO: A NATIONAL AGENDA



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## THE AGENDA IN BRIEF

Prepared by C Minds for the AI2030Mx Coalition

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# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN MEXICO: A NATIONAL AGENDA

THE AGENDA IN BRIEF

A C Minds Initiative for the AI2030Mx Coalition

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## FOREWORD

In 2018 Mexico was one of the first 10 countries in the world to launch an artificial intelligence (AI) strategy that sought to set the scene for leveraging AI in the public domain. This was when the AI2030Mx citizen coalition was established by nine institutions from every sector in the country. AI2030Mx was created to frame the need for a national multidisciplinary, multi-sectoral collaborative initiative to develop an action plan for the government, academia, civil society, and industry.

In September 2020, after more than a year of collaborative work, we presented Artificial Intelligence in Mexico: A National Agenda – the result of a globally unprecedented effort. This work involved the collective intelligence of more than 400 people participating in a public consultation and those in representational Work Groups. Subject matter experts from recognized institutions led these groups focused on the different areas that correspond to the six thematic axes represented within this document.

The agenda represents a plurality of voices and ideas, hours of voluntary work dedicated to its development, experiments with open source work tools and agile methodologies as well as a multitude of learnings resulting from a series of constructive exchanges to benefit our country.

This is why this publication is not only a benchmark for those who participated in its creation. It is also a reference point for the region on innovation, collaboration and shared responsibility.

The C Minds team is proud to have led this collaborative process as coordinators of AI2030Mx (2018-2020). We sincerely thank the group of co-leaders of the central thematic axes for their dedication and broad vision, and the more than 400 people who directly contributed through their input. Our thanks also go to the supporting team and to our partners on the AI2030Mx Coalition and to our board of directors for their ongoing support and guidance.

If we have learned something from the current pandemic, it is that a resilient country is one that doesn't leave anyone behind in terms of accessing, understanding, and using digital technologies. We believe that fundamental factors include an AI governance mechanism, a dynamic agenda, strategic leverage and adequate risk management. This is a historic moment for the world and our country in which every sector must rethink how to make Mexico more fair, competitive and inclusive.

**Claudia Del Pozo, Cristina Martínez Pinto  
and Constanza Gómez Mont**

C Minds, Co-Founders AI2030Mx

General Coordinators AI2030Mx 2018-2020

## INTRODUCTION

In 1950, when Alan Turing posed the question “Can machines think?” he prompted the idea that it would only be a few short years before autonomous intelligent systems would leave the realm of fiction and become reality. Technological advances have led us to question our world view with respect to what it means to be human. Pointing out the deficiencies in our reasoning means that concepts with definitions that were previously crystal clear are now seen as vague, e.g., intelligence, life, and even consciousness. This raises questions that previously had only been explored in philosophy and are now also the domain of science. Where is the demarcation line between humanity and robotics? Could we say that a computer is conscious? What are the criteria for a complex system to be designated a legal entity?

While we don't have definitive answers to these questions, today the fact of the matter is that these disruptive technologies are increasingly shaping our society in every domain: economic, social scientific, artistic, and many more. Because of its great capacity for widespread impact, the application of this technology must be democratic and inclusive in order to build true social value. This is why collaboration among governments, academia, industry, multilateral organizations, and other change agents is required in the design of strategies that are aimed at strengthening institutional capabilities.

Guaranteeing fair and democratic development involves working within a collaborative framework to create alliances that contribute

to an inclusive perspective and that involve agents with the power to leverage the benefits of new technology.

With this philosophy in mind we developed Artificial Intelligence in Mexico: A National Agenda, a document that draws on diverse leadership styles, voices, and sectors, all of which came together in a horizontal, open and voluntary initiative using collaborative digital tools. C Minds, in its role as voluntary coordinator of the 2019-2020 Coalition, spearheaded the efforts, coordinating Work Groups and presenting the resulting vision for the initiative. Aligned with achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) we are proposing a multi-mandate horizontal plan for 2030 that seeks to develop and use AI as a tool to reduce inequality gaps and increase business competitiveness in order to promote inclusive engagement. It also seeks to lay the foundation for an ethical development and use of AI systems, mitigating present and future social and environmental risks.

C Minds drafted this Agenda in Brief not to be a shortened version of the agenda, but to summarize both the challenges involved and the most essential action lines for each of the six axes. In the different sections of this summary we address the problems and current overview of the current context in Mexico as well as suggest lines of action and ways to measure potential impact, ultimately closing with recommendations that function as a call to action.

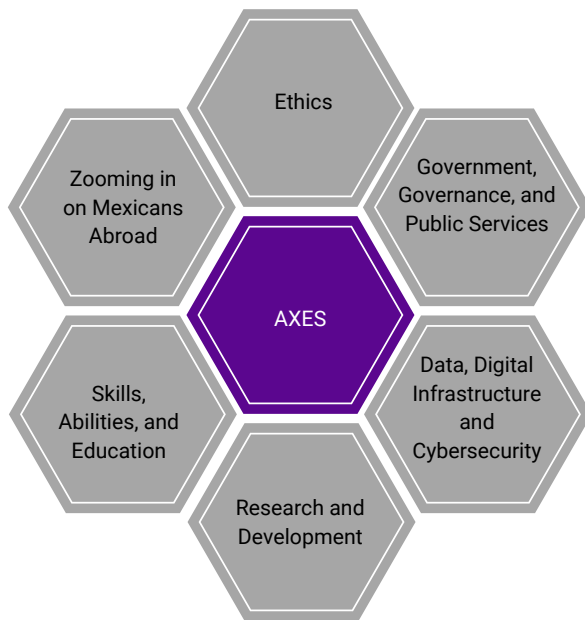
## ACRONYM GLOSSARY

This section includes acronyms used throughout the document, in alphabetical order.

Acronym	Definition
5G	In telecommunications, 5G is the fifth generation technology standard for broadband cellular networks.
AI	Artificial Intelligence
CONAPRED	National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination
GSMA	Global System for Mobile Communications Association
IMT	Mexican Institute of Transportation
IoT	Internet of Things
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M2H	Machine to Human
M2M	Machine to Machine
R+D	Research + Development
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
SNI	National System of Researchers

## KEY CHALLENGES FOR MEXICO

This section addresses an analysis of the main challenges in Mexico's current situation with respect to each strategic axis included in Artificial Intelligence in Mexico: A National Agenda. The image below represents the six thematic axes in this agenda:



We will introduce each axis with a general description including a list of questions and statements inviting critical reflection.

### Data, Digital Infrastructure and Cybersecurity

It is undeniable that data is the essence of computer science and its technologies. Obtaining, organizing, and processing data are the fundamental pillars in all areas. The digital expression of data requires infrastructure for transporting, storing, and using this information.

Cyber resilience is compromised by numerous factors such as an increase in the creation and flow of data, low probability of cyber criminals being detected and penalized by law, and the emergence of new technologies. Below are the main challenges identified for this axis:

- Clean and accessible databases are critical to address crises as exemplified by recent emergency events such as the 2017 earthquakes in Mexico and the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It is essential to guarantee effective and equitable access to data. Currently it seems as though only certain businesses and organizations have the ability to access the volume of data necessary to advance AI.
- It is essential that governments raise awareness, assess risks, and publish easy access guides in order to strengthen digital security. This requires an emphasis on vulnerable groups and/or those who experience some type of structural disadvantage with respect to AI.
- We lack sufficient protocols related to privacy of personal data (PII), customer details (PCI) and sensitive information (PSI) to guarantee their proper use in regulated industries.
- An institution that acts as a centralized body for legislation and regulations on AI could be useful in outlining strategic management elements as reference points to follow.



- Certain specialists in Mexico have identified current infrastructure gaps to meet present-day demands. They have also noticed the need for 10x more passive infrastructure to deploy the 5G network, including towers and transmission architecture such as fiber and underwater cables. While 55 out of every 100 homes in Mexico have access to landline internet, only 74 out of every 100 inhabitants have access to mobile internet and only 81% of municipalities have 3G or 4G coverage.
- Organizations such as the GSMA and consultants such as Aetha estimate that the potential cost outlay would be one of the most expensive in the world due to annual rights fees determined by the Federal Tax Act.
- There is no established definition for data ownership. It is not clear if they belong to the person who generates them or to the person who organizes and processes them.
- Ethical considerations involved in the generation, collecting, and processing of data are generally not taken into consideration.
- There is a dilemma related to whether datasets should be available for free and open use or whether they should be restricted or semi-restricted.
- The data sources, the cost of producing them, and the way in which they are gathered are not defined.
- The economic cost of cyber-attacks is very high; a single malware attack in 2018 cost more than \$2.6 million USD.
- In the 2017 recommendations from the Organization of American States for a national cyber-security strategy in Mexico, the authors identified an urgent lack of professionals in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and specialized technical expertise as well as the need to incorporate specialists from other disciplines such as the humanities.
- Cyberattacks can also be aimed at physical infrastructure such as dams, power plants, hospitals, airports, financial systems, and telecommunication networks, among others.
- The IoT could be used to access a device and use it as a gateway to move laterally on the network and to connect to other critical devices. A breached IoT device could be used to attack other systems, devices and applications.

## Ethics

In the interest of aligning this conversation with the legal and social context in Mexico, we selected the human rights of freedom of speech, equality and non-discrimination, and privacy to explore subjects related to ethics and AI and their roles in national development. Below are some of the key challenges in this axis.

- We need more information about using AI systems to moderate content because the use of these models has inherent risks, mainly to unconscious biases and lack of representation that can be embedded in them. This can limit freedom of speech for certain groups in spite of good intentions.
- The government has yet to explore the way in which an ethical and responsible use of AI can shape society in order to exert formal and informal pressure on actors that develop and use AI systems. For example, governments could exert pressure on digital media and internet companies so that they are held responsible for content with the potential to contain and/or control the spread of hate speech that could be used to instigate violence, deception, and fake news.
- There is a lack of awareness about the risks surrounding AI technologies with respect to privacy in identification and anonymization processes (via biases and errors).
- The problems associated with biases and errors generated by autonomous systems are the Achilles heel of AI.
- For Mexican society, the balance between privacy and access to data often works against privacy, especially with regard to security issues.
- There are three structural challenges that reduce the capacity for freedom of speech: security, a lack of connectivity, and the inclusion of Indigenous peoples in digital systems.
- The opportunities and economic growth involved in using AI will not be democratically distributed if these three systemic challenges currently facing Mexico are not taken into account.
- We need detailed studies on specific autonomous systems. This is essential to identify the origin of the technological bias against certain population groups and that favors others. The principal causes are data and algorithms.
- If AI is used irresponsibly it can foster increased discrimination toward women and Indigenous populations, two challenges that are endemic to Mexico and which project their marginalization to the digital world.
- According to CONAPRED, discrimination against women in Mexico is structural and leads to their exclusion in environments such as schools, economic activities, academic, and scientific and technological development, among other areas.
- According to the 2015 Intercensal Survey, 21.5% of Mexico's population (25.7 million people) identify as Indigenous.
- In 2019 Mexico City installed 29,488 new cameras and by the end of 2020 it is expected that this upgrading will continue. Nevertheless, there are no guidelines on implementing and using smart systems for monitoring/surveillance.

## Research and Development

Even if academia, government and industry benefit from AI development, coordinating this work in a complementary manner is difficult.

Below are some of the main challenges identified within this axis.

- There has been no analysis of where AI should be taught as a study subject, in academic or technical programs and at what levels.
- Although there has been investment in various aspects of AI in recent years, this has been focused on machine learning. It is necessary to identify opportunities in other areas of AI and to encourage investment.
- Mexico lacks the mechanisms required to facilitate intersectoral interactions so that knowledge and human resources developed in academia can be tapped in order to serve the needs of government and industry.
- More comprehensive strategies are needed to drive research in AI by generating collaboration among diverse institutions.
- Part of the inadequate investment and research in AI is rooted in the dearth of attention that the subject receives.
- Across the world – and according to the academic collaboration map – we can see that Mexico is still not one of the countries leading in AI development.

- We need more outreach and technology transfer offices.
- There is a lack of a clear link between AI projects and the SDG agenda.

## Governance, Government, and Public Services

Integrating AI into public administration should not be a challenge for Mexico. On the contrary, it could strengthen public administration since it involves giving citizens new contact opportunities and has the potential to improve public services. Society is the main stakeholder in ensuring that governments demonstrate their aptitude for progress, respect, and accountability. Therefore, AI tends to be an innovative element that can strengthen interactions among the stakeholders we have mentioned. Below are some of the key challenges identified within this axis

- We need to put more effort into ensuring that current AI systems respond to the grand diversity that is Mexico's national reality and to local sociocultural manifestations, all in a transparent way.
- The government has yet to create public policies that lead to implementing AI in an efficient and timely manner. This requires a clear strategy that brings together a range of visions and considerations for responsibly developing and using AI.
- We need the government to galvanize digital transformation which is why it will also be necessary to have a strategy that

enables the government to do so in an orderly manner, i.e., in a way that builds trust as well as taking into consideration short, medium, and long-term implications.

- We need to pay greater attention to AI governance in the following four dimensions: ethics, regulations, technology, and social spheres where rights and responsibilities are regulated surrounding the use of user data.
- There are a number of roles the government could play with respect to taking action on AI, e.g., the government as financier, as regulator, as implementer, as service provider, as resource manager, etc.

### Skills, Abilities and Education

The more knowledge available to a population, the longer it takes to assimilate that knowledge, thus postponing entry into the workforce. In recent years, the creation of new AI models and modifications to previous models have increased in production thanks to high connectivity among people and the availability of information from the Internet. Nevertheless, a larger population does not ensure greater productivity given that not everyone has completed basic education, which is generally associated with poor distribution of available resources in Mexico. We will now share the main problems identified within this axis:

- Employers do not have the necessary tools to identify areas where AI can be applied, how to identify new roles, where to source them, and how to ensure that employment profiles are appropriate.

- Schools and universities need more guidance to know what to teach, how to teach it, who to hire, and how to evaluate that it has been understood correctly. They need to know how to obtain resources, to finance R+D, and in what areas, as well as understanding how to patent solutions and enter the private industry.
- There is not enough promotion abroad about Mexico's work and studies in AI and on our country's capacity for innovation. By promoting these benefits we could attract private investment and further develop talent and abilities.
- Mexico must maintain its successful diplomatic relations in order to generate collaborations for international projects involving AI.

### Zooming in on Mexicans Abroad

This agenda framework is a joint, multi-actor collaborative effort involving civil society, academia, the business sector, government entities, and all Mexicans. It is focused on new technologies and their respective implementation, specifically with regard to using AI, and includes a proposal to empower communities of Mexicans abroad.

Here are the main challenges identified within this axis.

- Strengthen linkages between the Mexican diaspora and first- and second-generation migrants including children of co-nationals born abroad, who may be documented or undocumented.

- There is a need for increased technological support for the most vulnerable Mexican populations.
- To be able to support our co-nationals abroad via AI technologies there is a lack of clarity surrounding what Mexicans abroad most need, the priority actions over the short, medium and long term, and the AI tools that could lift levels of digital education for the Mexican diaspora, especially at higher levels, as well as for returnees, and possibly including young Dreamers.

## LINES OF ACTION AND MEASURING IMPACT

This section includes proposed actions defined in response to the previously identified challenges as well as metrics for measuring progress in each of them. The ideal sector to lead each action line is identified in alphabetical order in parentheses, i.e., (A: academia; G: government; I: industry; S: civil society and multilateral institutions).

### Data:

- Update the legal framework with respect to personal data in order to promote greater access considering privacy protection and ethical criteria **(G)**.
- Accelerate access to the greatest quantity of data in a way that respects ethics and privacy. Establish who is responsible for collecting and processing data and above all, regulatory compliance **(G)**.
  - **Measuring impact:** Number of data policies implemented in all legislation **(G)**.
- Drive standardization of data in public databases, e.g., based on the international Open Data Charter **(G)**.
  - **Measuring impact:** Terabytes of data and number of users for each database. Define standards to promote opening data up to industry **(G+)**.

### Telecommunications, Infrastructure and Cybersecurity:

- Review, update and implement the National Cybersecurity Strategy developed in 2017 and define a coordinating government institution to be responsible **(G)**.
- Review and promote reforming the national legal framework related to cybercrimes. Focus on ensuring legal compliance in the actions of suppliers of internet access to businesses and society in general **(G)**.
  - **Measuring impact:** effectiveness and appropriateness of self-regulating mechanisms.
- Promote structured incentives to boost the creation of more specialists and solutions in the cybersecurity industry.
  - **Measuring impact:** the number of specialists in cybersecurity in México **(G)**; startups dedicated to AI and cybersecurity **(I)**.
- Create public policies that facilitate deployment of telecommunications infrastructure **(G)**.
  - **Measuring impact:** trends in mobile teledensity and services penetration for fixed broadband and mobile services coverage **(G)**.

- Facilitate procedures required for infrastructure deployment by creating a national one-size-fits-all architecture or standardizing the requirements and adopting international best practices such as the Dig Once policy or efficient access to basic infrastructure in built environments **(G)**.
    - **Measuring impact:** direct private and foreign investment in telecommunications infrastructure **(G+)**.
  - Reconsider and analyze the spectrum costs in Mexico to promote deployment of telecommunications networks **(G+)**.
    - **Measuring impact:** In the future, when 5G is available in Mexico as an enabling technology, measure the spectrum assigned for IMT; note the number of 5G subscriptions, of SIM M2M and M2H cards, of 5G traffic as a percentage of total traffic, of 5G population coverage, of the number of 5G devices as a percentage of total devices **(GI)**.
  - Identify and catalogue critical infrastructure that is vulnerable to cyberattacks and carry out risk assessments to verify their resilience and the effectiveness of response protocols **(GI)**.
  - Organize a federation of Computer Emergency Response Teams in charge of furthering cooperation and dealing with cybersecurity challenges to facilitate appropriate and rapid responses (from the State when applicable) and increase national cyber resilience **(G)**.
  - Adopt a standardized protocol for addressing security risks **(GI)**.
    - **Measuring impact:** number of cyberattacks on users and public and private entities **(GI+)**.
- Government, Governance, and Public Services:**
- Strengthen and implement an AI model and strategy for use in the government, accompanied by a skill development protocol. **(G+)**.
    - **Measuring impact:** number of trained public officials. Adopt strategies to create data-based public policies based on analysis by AI systems **(G+)**.
  - Adopt AI within the government to streamline processes for supplying public services **(GS+)**.
  - Adopt AI for process optimization when supplying public services to generate more value to society **(GS+)**.
  - Conduct exercises, pilot programs, regulatory sandboxes and public policy prototypes to inform the conversation on AI governance and data privacy. Translate the results into specific actions. **(GIS+)**.
    - **Measuring impact:** Number of these exercises that contribute to or are defined in legislation; number of frameworks in terms of AI governance.
  - Create a strategy for the future of work, analyzing the jobs and tasks that are most at risk to automation; offer continual training programs that support individuals throughout this transition.

- Finance more AI and related subject research projects.
  - **Measuring impact:** the percentage of research budgets that are allocated to research in AI and related subjects.

### Talent and Education

- Enable education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) starting with basic education (**AGS**).
  - **Measuring impact:** trends in primary student performance in mathematics and science (PISA test) (**AGS**); percentage of STEM students registered in primary, secondary and tertiary education (**AG**).
- Build a critical mass of researchers in AI development and related subjects via training of local talent, repatriating experts, and attracting foreign talent. (**AGI**)
  - **Measuring impact:** number of students who graduate with degrees and doctorates in AI related sciences (**AG**); number of scholarships to study or work on AI subjects in Mexico and abroad (**AGI**); support for research subjects (**AGI**); initiatives to attract foreign talent and avoid brain-drain such as direct economic and tax stimuli for repatriating experts and attracting foreign talent (**AGI**); the number of repatriated or recruited AI experts to work or study in Mexico.
- Offer options for alternative education to develop emerging talent in Computer Sciences and AI.
  - **Measuring impact:** number of active community centers with access to computers and training in Computer Sciences and AI systems free of charge (**AGIS**); number of resources and certifications available online (**AGIS**).
- Continue to carry out studies and analyses on private sector needs for AI related skills. Offer courses, diplomas and certifications in this subject. Educate and train the population as a whole to reduce the impact of lost employment (**AGIS**).
  - **Measuring impact:** annual national level of human resources and the labor demand from the private, governmental and academic sectors; the number of AI courses and certifications in Mexico as well as the number of people who have been trained (**AGIS**).
- Encourage and deliver large conferences on AI systems and related topics (e.g., cybersecurity) and ethics in order to raise awareness among students, professors, professionals, businesses, governments and civil society. (**AGIS**).
  - **Measuring impact:** the number of large conferences (free and fee-based) offered, and number of participants (**AGIS**).
- Enable and maintain constant dialogue with citizens on subjects related to AI with an eye to promoting and understanding the benefits and possible negative impacts associated with implementing this technology, e.g., via a communication campaign (**GIS**).



- **Measuring impact:** number of public consultations and surveys that gather opinions and concerns of citizens with respect to using and implementing AI (**GIS**).
- Translate materials on AI systems from other languages into Spanish (**AS**).
  - **Measuring impact:** number of articles translated (**AS**).
- Advance development: 1) of projects and startups that develop and/or adopt AI, 2) that are focused on challenges specific to Mexico via AI; by way of programs (**GI**) accelerators (**I**) and tools, e.g., a public directory of capital funding and financing options (**GI**).
  - **Measuring impact:** financing and investment in projects, startups and companies whose main activity is related to AI or that use AI; the rate of return on these startups.
- Map the AI ecosystem in Mexico.
  - **Measuring impact:** number of directories of experts, institutions and AI related research projects by sector in Mexico; number of AI related international collaborations; number and level of scientists in the National System of Researchers (SNI) with related lines of research.
- Enable innovation clusters (**G**).
  - **Measuring impact:** creation of an easy-to-use index that facilitates state and/or municipal administration in order to deploy telecommunications infrastructure (**G**).
- Initiate public policies that promote academic development or that favor developments in academia that lead to patents and commercially viable products (**AGI**).
  - **Measuring impact:** number of patent applications by Mexican registrants at the IMPI, USPTO, EP, WIPO, etc. (**AGI**).

## R+D+i

- Support public and private associations and applied research to advance the development and implementation of responsible AI systems (**G**).
  - **Measuring impact:** the total amount and distribution of resources assigned to R+D in AI (public and private at the state and national levels), taking into account collaborations among academic institutions (**G**).

## Ethics

- Create a specialized independent body that protects and monitors human rights related to developing and implementing AI in Mexico, with support from academia and different interest groups (**G+**).
- Establish minimum standards (technical and non-technical) and auditing mechanisms for these standards.

Technical standards should include clear, robust and valid metrics for AI systems in order to reduce and identify errors and biases. The non-technical standards should include but not be limited to transparency and easily explainable AI systems, e.g., requiring risk disclosure and potential negative impacts of AI systems on research **(AGIS)**.

- Incentivize the creation of independent organizations that can monitor and audit AI systems **(IS)**.
- Promote the development and ethical use of AI:
  - **Measuring impact:** number of ethics committees for arbitrating research projects related to AI and data science **(AS)**; number of ethics courses on study plans for undergraduate and master's degrees in areas related to AI and data science **(AG)**.
- Create practical tools to support the adoption of international guidelines on the ethical use of AI **(AGIS)**.
- Promote the inclusion of minorities and vulnerable groups in projects and institutions dedicated to topics related to AI **(AGIS)**.
  - **Measuring impact:** the number of people involved in AI who identify as a minority and/or are from vulnerable groups **(AGIS)**.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This historic moment in which we all find ourselves calls for the use of better tools to create better solutions. One of these tools is AI which can act as a catalyst for enabling social and economic development in Mexico. One key way to achieve this goal is to design and implement a common course with collaborative solutions on different fronts. In seeking to contribute to these goals the authors of this Agenda have recommended action for thematic axes in numerous sectors that, once adopted, could bring Mexico closer to profound structural changes for the benefit of all Mexicans. These actions have the potential to mitigate social and environmental risks that are inherent when taking accelerated action to support adoption of these tools.

The AI2030Mx Coalition and C Minds, in its role as President of the Coalition 2018-2020 hope that this proposed Agenda will mobilize agents for change and decision-makers to wager on AI as an accelerator for economic and social empowerment for our country; and to conceive the technological impact of AI as a crucial requirement for a prosperous future.

It is essential that this Agenda be promoted from the perspective of strengthening the economy and creating social impact that is fair and equitable for all.

When AI systems are developed and used in a way that fosters inclusion, equity, ethics, justice, and the protection of human rights, it can play a key role not only in addressing challenges related to the SDGs but also in creating social value and economic momentum.

Drawing on what we have already stated we will be taking the following actions to follow up on this Agenda:

- The AI2030Mx Coalition will support this Agenda via the next organization that chairs the Coalition. And they will do this via a formal multisectoral collaboration mechanism in order to revitalize the implementation of the lines of action previously outlined by corresponding stakeholders (government, civil society, academia, industry).
- We will organize and establish Work Groups to monitor each proposed line of action and to evaluate the most favorable mechanisms for financing the implementation of these lines of action.
- We will review various global agendas to ensure they correspond to this proposed research and development agenda.
- We will establish the current level of AI through the outlined KPIs and will evaluate measures and progress each year.