



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



Ministry of
the Interior and Safety



Incheon
Metropolitan City



9TH YOUTH FORUM ON SDG IMPLEMENTATION

**YOUTH AS INNOVATORS: DRIVING AI SOLUTIONS
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Outcome Report

August 2025



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Organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)
Project Office on Governance (UNPOG)
with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety of the Republic of Korea (MOIS) and
Incheon Metropolitan City

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The United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) is part of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Its principal mission is to strengthen the public governance capacities of developing the Member States in Asia, the Pacific, and beyond to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The operational work of UN DESA, and thus UNPOG, aims to strengthen the capacities of developing countries to translate internationally agreed policy frameworks into strategies and programmes at all levels of public governance. The focus on strengthening the capacity of public administration falls within the mandate of UN DESA's Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government.

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Under the responsibility of Juwang Zhu, Director of DPIDG, the UN DESA team was led by Changseob Han, Head of UNPOG, and Prabin Maharjan, Programme Management Expert and the extensive contribution of Carolit Salvacion, Associate Networking and Outreach Expert, Jin Seong Choi, Associate Research and Policy Analysis Expert, Hye Kyung (Shelley) Choi, Senior Programme Management Assistant and Jungsoo Park, Meeting Services Assistant, UNPOG/DPIDG/ UN DESA.

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This report has been prepared by Prabin Maharjan, Programme Management Expert and Carolit Salvacion, Associate Networking and Outreach Expert, UNPOG/ DPIDG/ UN DESA.

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Context

“As Artificial Intelligence reshapes our world, young people must also be front and centre in shaping digital policies and institutions.”, United Nations Secretary, General, António Guterres

Digitalization is transforming our world, offering unprecedented opportunities to accelerate sustainable development. Today’s digital technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI), are pivotal in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by enhancing service delivery, optimizing resource allocation, and fostering innovation. The [United Nations Roadmap for Digital Cooperation underscores](#) that AI, when aligned with the principles of sustainability and equity, can catalyse progress across all 17 SDGs. With only five years remaining to achieve the 2030 Agenda, AI holds the potential to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. However, its development and deployment should be guided by ethical principles and inclusive perspectives to avoid deepening inequalities.¹ Youth, with their unique insights and innovative spirit, are at the forefront of shaping AI’s role in sustainable development.

The ethical development of AI must prioritize the protection and empowerment of youth, who are both key stakeholders and vulnerable users in the digital age. UNESCO’s [Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#) underscores the necessity of safeguarding children and young people from AI, driven harms, such as algorithmic bias, privacy violations, and exposure to misinformation, while ensuring their active participation in shaping ethical frameworks². The [UN Global Digital Compact](#) further emphasizes the need to integrate youth perspectives into AI governance, calling for inclusive dialogues and capacity, building initiatives that equip young innovators to address systemic inequalities and embed human rights principles into AI systems. By centering youth voices in ethical AI discourse, these UN frameworks aim to bridge intergenerational divides and ensure AI technologies align with the needs of future generations.

We are the AI generation, tasked with shaping a future where technology serves humanity and the planet. As highlighted in the [UN Secretary, General’s Strategy on New Technologies](#), young people, digital natives, are uniquely positioned to drive ethical AI innovation. Their creativity and adaptability are critical to ensuring that AI systems address global challenges while leaving no one behind. Youth, with their unique insights and innovative spirit, are at the forefront of shaping AI’s role in sustainable development.

Against this backdrop and guided by the [UN Youth Strategy](#)³, the United Nations Project on Governance (UNPOG), under the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) and Incheon Metropolitan City, with support of the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea, organized the 9th Youth Forum on “Youth as Innovators: Driving AI Solutions for Sustainable Development” virtually on 13 August 2025 at 13:30 – 17:00 Seoul, GMT+9. The Forum served as a platform for youth to lead discussions on AI’s role in achieving the SDGs.

Substantive Scope

AI is revolutionizing public administration by enhancing policymaking, governance, and operational efficiency, while enabling innovative and efficient approaches across various sectors. By embracing AI technologies and fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration, government agencies can unlock

¹ UNESCO (2024). [Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#)

² <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/11/1106612>

³ UN Youth Strategy 2030 calls for empowering young people with technical and leadership skills.

new opportunities for efficiency, effectiveness, and citizen empowerment, thereby accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The forum will explore the transformative potential of AI in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs, with a particular focus on youth, led innovation. It will place special emphasis on SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, recognizing the transformative potential of AI in building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

SDG 16 stresses the need for strong institutions that are built on respect for human rights, effective rule of law, and good governance at all levels. It is arguably one of the most ambitious goals in the 2030 Agenda because it is also an enabler for the achievement of other goals. Trends show that SDG 16 is not likely to be met by 2030, and that there is even regression on some targets.⁴ There is a clear need to strengthen public institutions and confidence and trust in them. Youth, led AI innovations can strengthen public institutions by enhancing transparency and civic participation. By leveraging AI solutions, youth can contribute to building effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels in support of the SDGs. AI, powered platforms can analyse public feedback to improve service delivery, fostering trust in institutions.

In line with the UN Digital Global Compact and UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, ethical AI governance is central to public sector innovation by ensuring that AI applications mitigate biases, promote transparency, and safeguard human rights. Youth involvement is critical as their fresh perspectives and technical acumen foster the development of robust ethical standards that enhance civic participation and trust in public institutions. As digital innovators, they can design fairness, aware models, open, source auditing platforms, and explainable AI systems that detect discriminatory patterns while ensuring accountability, traceability, and human oversight. This approach paves the way for resilient institutions that align digital advancements with the broader goals of social justice and equity. The forum aims to bring together these forward, thinking young innovators, to develop, promote, and implement ethical AI practices while maintaining public trust in institutions.

Furthermore, the forum will facilitate capacity, building, knowledge exchange, and networking among young innovators from diverse regions, including Asia and the Pacific, East Africa, and beyond. Through interactive sessions, participants will have the opportunity to share innovative practices and solutions, ultimately fostering a vibrant ecosystem where digital transformation meets sustainable development.

Objectives

The 9th Youth Forum on SDG Implementation aimed to bring together youths from Asia and the Pacific, East Africa, and beyond to:

- Equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and platforms to harness AI for sustainable development.
- Provide a platform for young innovators to present AI, driven ideas and projects that contribute to the SDGs.
- Ensure that young people's perspectives are integrated into global discussions on AI and the SDGs.
- Encourage youth leadership in reimagining public institutions through the lens of AI and digital governance.
- Promote ethical AI innovation by integrating principles of transparency, fairness, and accountability into youth, led projects, in alignment with UN ethical standards.

⁴ [UN DESA SDG 16 Conference Report 2024](#)

Expected Outcomes

The Forum achieved the following outcomes:

- Participants gained a deeper understanding of how AI can be leveraged to address sustainable development challenges, particularly in the context of SDG 16.
- The Ideas for Change Contest showcased innovative AI, driven initiatives that will inspire further action and collaboration.
- Interactive discussions and expert insights inspired and equip youth to take concrete steps toward implementing AI solutions for the SDGs in their local contexts.
- The forum raised awareness about the role of AI in achieving the SDGs and underscore the importance of youth engagement in this process.
- Participants increased their awareness and understanding of the ethical considerations and governance frameworks necessary for the responsible deployment of AI.
- The forum's highlights and key takeaways is reflected during the Youth Session of the 9th Regional Symposium.

Format

The 9th Youth Forum on SDG Implementation was held virtually using Zoom to accommodate the young individuals participating from all over the world. The Forum featured presentations by youth experts and leaders who shared their knowledge with participants, followed by a discussion and Q&A session to foster peer connection, idea exchange, and shared learning.

The Forum also featured presentations from five (5) shortlisted teams of the Ideas for Change Contest. The winners were announced during the Forum. Three (3) winners will receive a certification award from the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS), the Ministry of Environment, and Incheon Metropolitan City of the Republic of Korea during the 9th Regional symposium.

All participating teams were invited to join the Youth Session of the UN DESA's Regional Symposium on 24–26 September 2025. Additionally, the MOIS awardee winners will deliver an in-person presentation of their project proposal during the Youth Session.

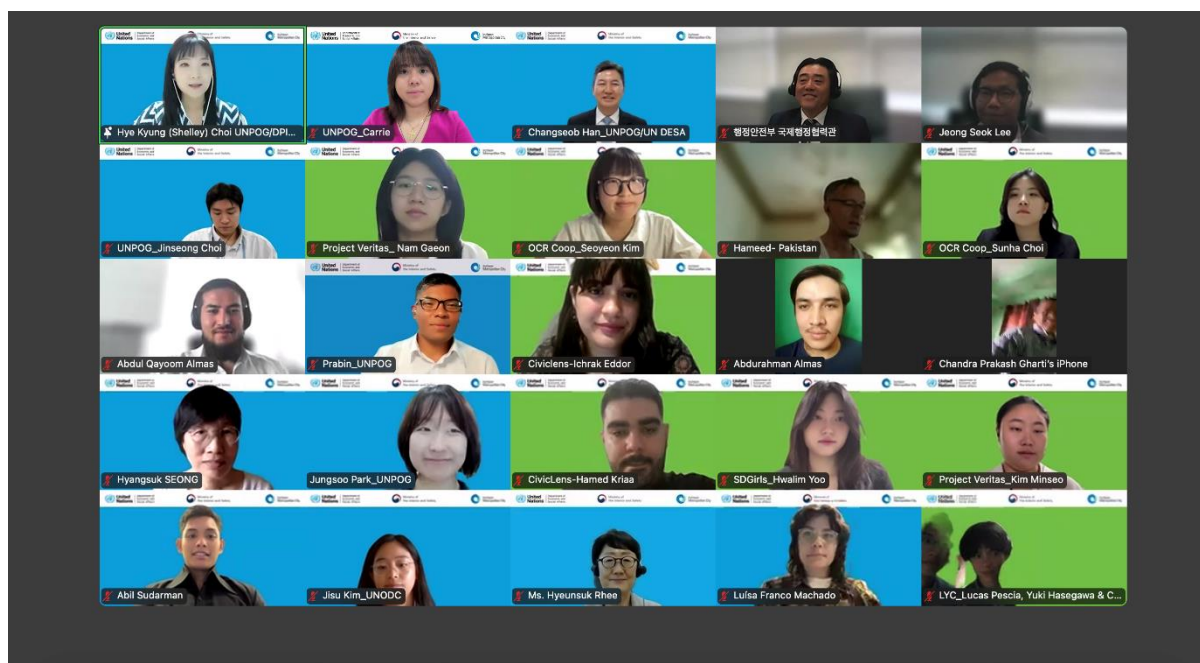
Participants' Feedback

Thirty (30) evaluation responses from the participants were collected following the forum. It is noteworthy that the Youth Forum received an average score of 4.6 out of 5 (overall rating), showing a very high level of satisfaction. Participants rated the usefulness of the session topics and presentations at an average of **4.6 out of 5, showing strong relevance and value**. The feedback shows that participants were overwhelmingly positive about the Youth Forum, with the vast majority giving the highest possible rating of "5." This reflects a high level of **satisfaction and endorsement from participants**.

Overall, 90% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the theme and contents of the Youth Forum were relevant to their interests, a clear sign that the Forum successfully resonated with its audience. **Overall, 97% of participants agreed or strongly agreed** that the Youth Forum provided an engaging space to discuss the role of young people as digital innovators in realizing the SDGs, highlighting the Forum's effectiveness in fostering meaningful discussions.

Summary of the Sessions

Opening Session



In his opening remarks, **Mr. Changseob Han**, Head of UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA, highlighted the vital role of youth as innovators and leaders in shaping a more inclusive, sustainable, and technology, driven future. Commemorating International Youth Day, he emphasized that young people are not merely observers but drivers of change, particularly in harnessing Artificial Intelligence to accelerate progress on the SDGs. He underlined three key insights of this generation: the inseparability of technology and society, the importance of ethics in innovation, and the power of local action for global impact. Noting that only 17% of SDG targets are on track with five years left until 2030, he urged youth to seize the opportunity to lead responsibly in advancing AI solutions, guided by the Global Digital Compact and the Pact for the Future. His remarks set a call to action, inspiring participants to collaborate, innovate, and build a better future together through the 9th Youth Forum.

Mr. Yung, Suh Park, International Administrative Cooperation Bureau Director General, Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) welcomed participants to the 9th Youth Forum and expressed appreciation to the organizers and partners. He highlighted the theme, “Youth as innovators driving AI solutions for sustainable development,” as timely and vital, noting that AI is transforming societies and economies while shaping the future. Emphasizing that today’s youth, digital natives, are the most connected, educated, and innovative generation, he underscored their unique role in harnessing AI for social good in areas such as climate change, education, health, and public services. At the same time, he stressed the responsibility to ensure AI solutions are inclusive, transparent, and ethical. He encouraged participants to be bold, ambitious, and visionary, contributing to a future where AI is not only smart but also fair, leaving no one behind in achieving the SDGs. In closing, he congratulated the competition finalists for their creativity and commitment, framing the forum as a platform for inspiration, collaboration, and building a better world together.

Ms. Hyeunsuk Rhee, Advisory Ambassador for International Organizations, Incheon Metropolitan City, noted the strong global participation of youth and acknowledged the support of partner organizations in making the forum possible. Emphasizing the transformative power of ICT and AI in advancing the SDGs, she stressed that such technologies must be guided by accountability, ethics, inclusiveness, transparency, and purpose. She underlined the critical role of youth, with their imagination, courage, and innovation, in shaping the digital landscape and driving meaningful change. Ms. Rhee also showcased Incheon's role as Korea's global gateway, hosting 15 international organizations and actively promoting international cooperation for sustainable development. She expressed hope that the forum will spark real action and inspire tangible solutions, reaffirming Incheon's full support and commitment to fostering inclusivity, diversity, and partnership as a global hub.

In his keynote address, **Dr. Felipe Paullier**, Assistant Secretary, General for Youth Affairs, underscored the transformative role of young people in shaping the digital future through Artificial Intelligence. He emphasized that youth are not passive beneficiaries but active leaders driving innovations that strengthen institutions, improve services, and promote inclusive societies. Highlighting global initiatives such as the Global Digital Compact, the independent scientific panel on AI, and UNESCO's recommendations on AI ethics, he called for deeper and more formal youth engagement in technology governance. Showcasing inspiring youth, led innovations from South Korea, Singapore, Asia, Pacific, and East Africa, he affirmed that youth participation is essential, not optional. He urged young leaders to listen, speak boldly, and collaborate widely to build a rights-based, inclusive, and sustainable digital future.

Session 1. AI for Strengthening Public Institutions and Achieving SDGs

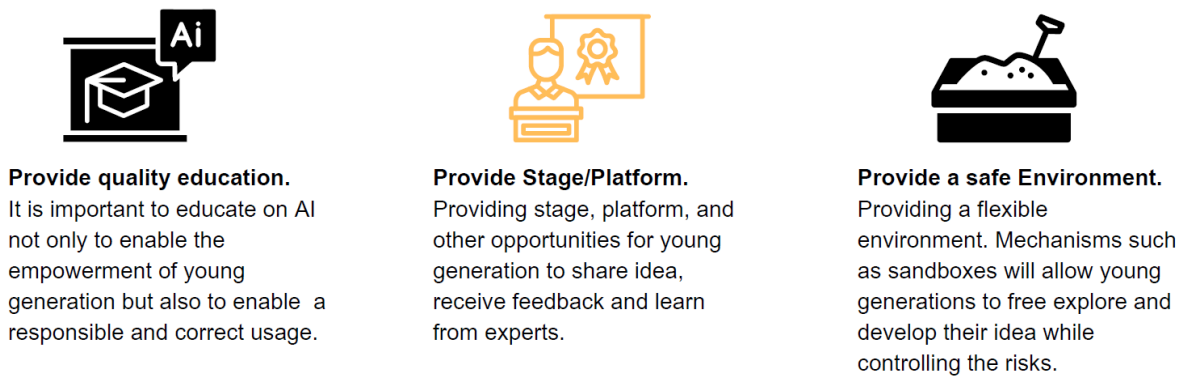
AI in the Public Sector: Opportunities and Challenges for Youth Empowerment and Engagement

Mr. Junho Lee, Associate Expert, DPIDG/UN DESA, highlighted both the opportunities and challenges of using AI in the public sector, particularly for empowering youth. He explained how AI has transformed research, innovation, and entrepreneurship, making once time-consuming and technically demanding tasks far more accessible. For instance, AI tools can now automate coding, analyze large data sets, and generate new insights instantly, opening doors for young innovators with limited resources. The rapid growth of the global AI market, projected to reach USD 4.8 trillion by 2033, offers unprecedented opportunities for youth to participate in AI-driven startups and solutions that improve transparency, efficiency, and inclusiveness in public service delivery. AI also holds potential for enhancing accessibility, such as through text-to-speech technologies that support persons with disabilities.

At the same time, Mr. Lee stressed the significant risks that must be addressed to ensure responsible adoption. He emphasized that AI is only as reliable as its "ingredients", the data it learns from, warning of cases where biased datasets have resulted in discriminatory outcomes, particularly in law enforcement risk assessments. He also raised concerns over technical issues such as hallucinations, susceptibility to manipulation, and vulnerabilities across the AI lifecycle, all of which could undermine trust in public sector applications. To harness AI's benefits while minimizing risks, he underscored the importance of three measures: strengthening education to build digital literacy and responsible AI use, creating platforms like the Forum for youth to share ideas and gain feedback, and developing flexible regulatory environments such as sandboxes that allow innovation while safeguarding against

harm. He concluded by encouraging youth to explore the UN's 2024 E-Government Survey addendum on AI for further insights into digital governance and the future of public sector innovation.

Figure 1. How to Empower Youth While Minimizing Risks



Source : Junho Lee (2025) *AI in the public sector: Opportunities and Challenges for Youth Empowerment and Engagement* [PowerPoint slides], UN DESA.

Harnessing AI for Transparent and Accountable Governance through Youth Innovation

Dr. Luísa Franco Machado, UN Young Leaders for Sustainable Development Goals, Digital Rights Activist and a Published Data Justice Researcher, explored the current role of AI in public institutions, emphasizing that AI is already deeply embedded in governance systems, shaping decisions on resource allocation, risk assessment, and public service delivery. She highlighted that while AI has the potential to enhance efficiency and accessibility, it is not neutral; its design reflects the assumptions and power dynamics of its creators. Using examples from Canada, Colombia, Kenya, and UNESCO initiatives, she illustrated how deliberate, justice, oriented governance can harness AI for public good.

Figure 2. Youth, led Public Sector AI Governance



Source : Luísa Franco Machado (2025) *Harnessing AI for Transparent and Accountable Governance through Youth Innovation* [PowerPoint slides]

However, she also noted ongoing challenges, including biased applications in Brazil and the EU, the influence of big tech, and the erosion of public trust, particularly among young people who experience the real, life impacts of AI systems.

Ms. Machado emphasized the unique role of youth in shaping AI governance, drawing on her experience as founder of Equilabs, a youth, led digital rights lab. She showcased how young people are innovating governance by mapping AI systems, conducting intersectional impact assessments, and advocating for equitable, participatory, and regulated AI. Through initiatives like the Youth Manifesto for AI Justice, youth are asserting their agency to influence AI design, demand collective rights, and ensure public institutions safeguard societal interests. Her closing message reinforced that young people are not merely the future of governance, they are actively shaping AI governance today, with a focus on intergenerational collaboration to build fair, inclusive, and accountable systems.

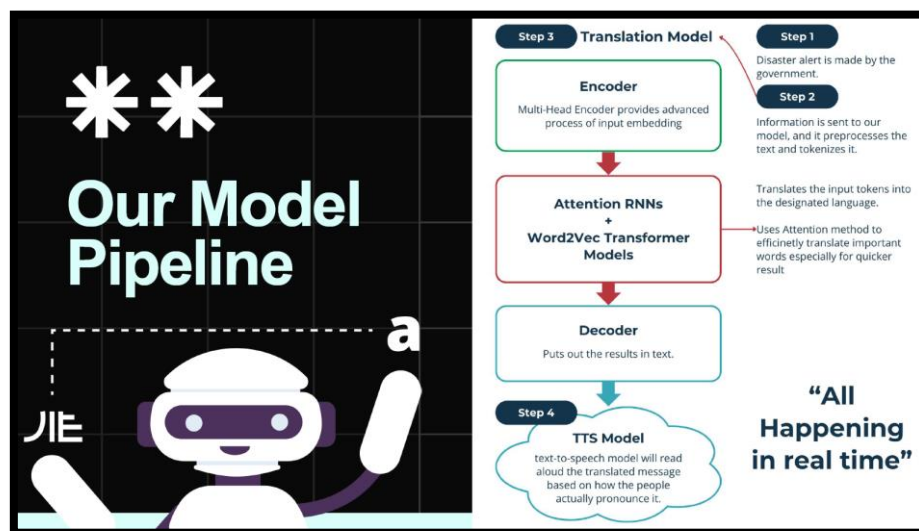
Session 2: Ideas for Change Contest: Presentation from the Shortlisted Teams

The Session 2 featured presentations from five (5) shortlisted teams of the Ideas for Change Contest.

Team SDGirls - VoiceBridge, Nepal

Team SDGirls presented their innovative project VoiceBridge – Nepal, aimed at enhancing public access to life, saving information in disaster, prone, linguistically diverse regions of Nepal. The team identified critical gaps in emergency communication, particularly for indigenous language speakers in areas like Lamjung and Gorkha, where official alerts are often inaccessible due to language and infrastructure barriers. Their AI, powered solution leverages neural translation models and speech technologies to deliver real, time multilingual disaster alerts via local radio, ensuring inclusivity and responsiveness even in low, literacy communities.

Figure 3. Model Pipeline



Source : Team SDGirls (2025) VoiceBridge, Nepal [PowerPoint slides]

The presentation emphasized VoiceBridge’s alignment with SDG 16.10, which promotes public access to information and protects fundamental freedoms. The team outlined a clear methodology involving data collection, model training, and real, time broadcasting, supported by a sustainability plan that includes local partnerships, youth training, and solar, powered devices. In both the short and long term,

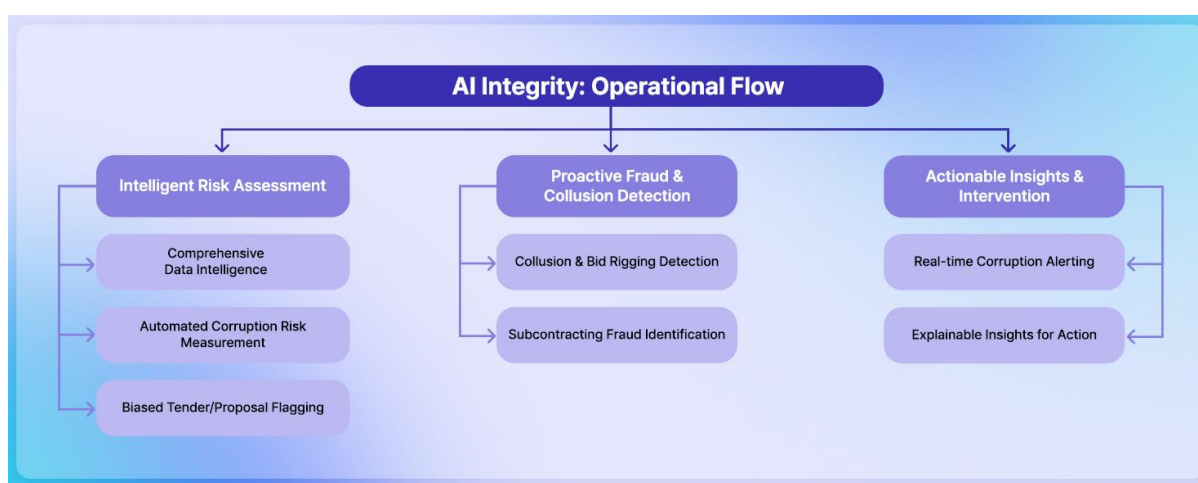
the project aims to improve emergency response, preserve indigenous languages, and serve as a scalable model for other high, risk, multilingual regions globally.

Team Project Veritas - Code of Integrity: AI Surveillance for Corruption in Subcontracting Bids

Team Project Veritas presented Code of Integrity, an AI, powered system designed to proactively detect and prevent corruption in public procurement, especially in subcontracting and bidding processes. Their solution addresses issues such as bid rigging, broker interference, and biased tender specifications by using graph machine learning (GML), natural language processing (NLP), and explainable AI (XAI). The system analyzes procurement data to identify collusion patterns, excessive subcontracting, and favoritism in bidding documents, issuing real, time alerts and risk scores to auditors for timely intervention.

The project aligns with SDG 16 (targets 16.5, 16.6, and 16.10) and SDG 17.8 by promoting transparency, reducing corruption, and enhancing institutional trust. In the short term, the system is expected to improve fraud detection accuracy by 40%, reduce audit workload by 80%, and enable rapid responses to suspicious activity. Long-term goals include restoring public trust, reducing financial losses by up to 30%, and fostering ethical procurement practices globally. The team emphasized sustainability through open, source development, energy, efficient AI training, and international scalability via partnerships and regulatory sandbox pilots.

Figure 4. AI Integrity: Operational Flow



Source : Team Project Veritas (2025) Code of Integrity : AI Surveillance for Corruption in Subcontracting Bids [PowerPoint slides]

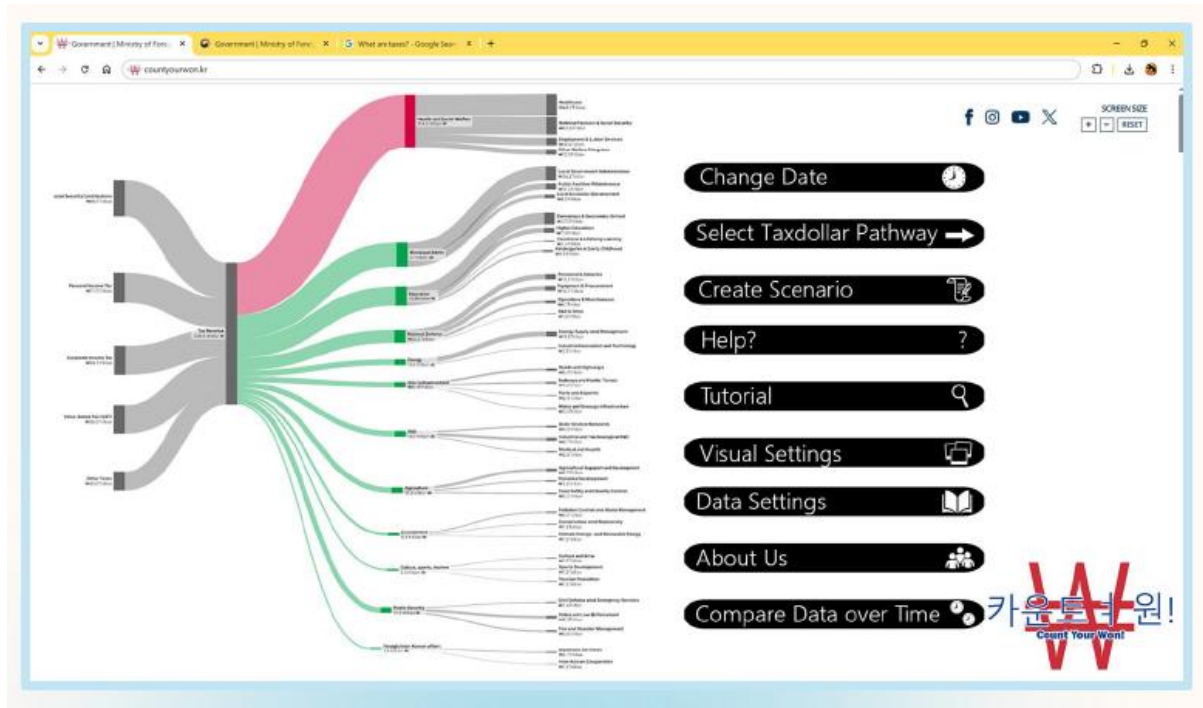
Team LYC - GEO-Government Expenditure Observer

Team LYC presented GEO – Government Expenditure Observer, an AI, powered platform designed to enhance fiscal transparency and public accountability in South Korea. The team addressed the issue of opaque government spending, citing high, profile cases of fund misappropriation and the broader challenge of limited public access to understandable financial data. Their solution involves an independent website that uses AI to track and visualize the flow of every tax dollar in real time through interactive Sankey diagrams. This empowers citizens, journalists, and civil society to monitor government expenditures and detect discrepancies between declared and actual spending.

The project aligns with SDG 16, particularly the goal of building effective, accountable, and transparent institutions. GEO promotes civic engagement by simplifying complex financial data and enabling

informed participation in democratic processes. The platform is designed to be independent from government control, with third, party AI audits ensuring data integrity. Sustainability is ensured through public financing and energy resilience via modular nuclear power. The team also plans to open, source the system, allowing for scalability across other countries and institutions, thereby fostering a global culture of transparent governance.

Figure 5. AI, Powered Sankey Diagram Website



Source : Team LYC (2025) GEO-Government Expenditure Observer [PowerPoint slides]

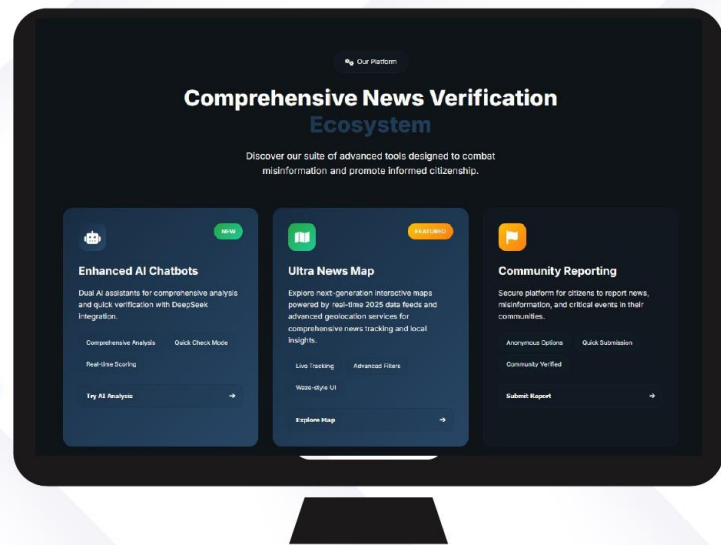
Team Civic Lens - Civic lens

Team Civic Lens introduced their project Civic Lens, an AI, powered platform designed to improve public access to accurate and understandable government communication. The team addressed the growing issue of misinformation and vague public messaging, particularly during elections, crises, and policy rollouts. Their solution uses natural language processing and real, time monitoring to analyze official statements, social media posts, and press releases, assigning transparency scores and flagging misleading or incomplete content. A built, in chatbot, CivicBot, simplifies complex policies and translates information into youth, friendly and minority languages, ensuring inclusivity and clarity.

Aligned with SDG 16.10, Civic Lens empowers citizens, especially youth and marginalized communities, to make informed decisions and engage critically with public information. The platform promotes digital literacy, media awareness, and civic participation while reducing the harm caused by misinformation. Its sustainability plan includes scalable architecture, youth, powered data annotation, multi-platform access (including SMS and voice), and partnerships with schools, NGOs, and media outlets. Designed with privacy and ethics in mind, Civic Lens aims to become a globally adaptable tool for strengthening transparency and public trust in governance.

Figure 6. How CivicLens Work?

- **Comprehensive Analysis** Full fact-check + bias breakdown
- **AI Quick Check** Fast credibility check for viral claims
- **Bias & Clarity Detection:** Flags manipulation and unclear language
- **Maps + Civic Updates:** Real-time visual monitoring of risks
- **Community Reporting:** Crowdsourced reports on local issues

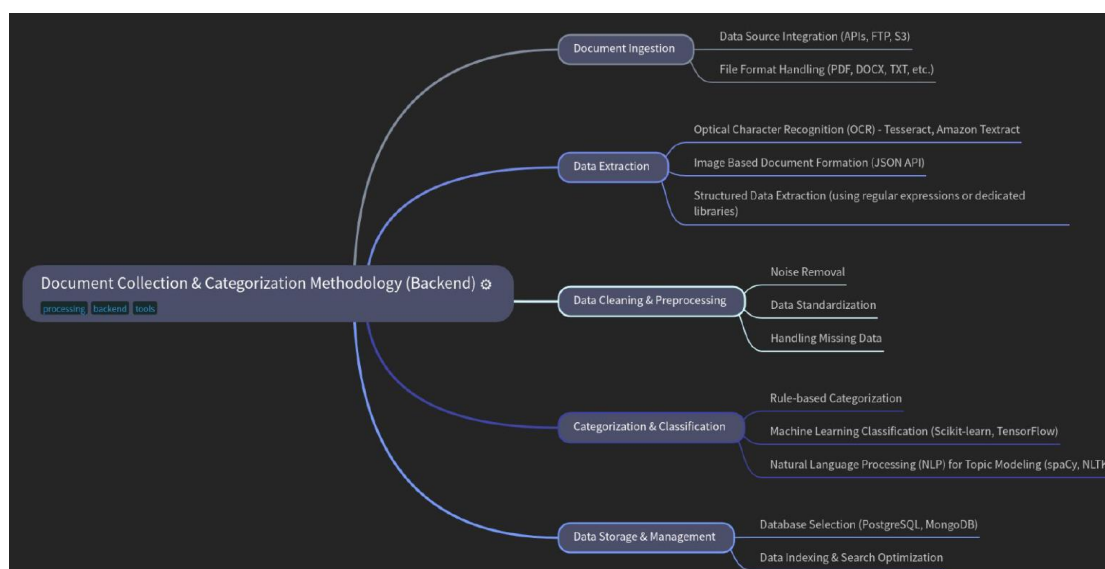


Source : Team Civic Lens (2025) Civic Lens [PowerPoint slides]

Team OCR.coop - Vis-AI. AI for Efficient Public Service Delivery: Easing ROK Visa Processing for Foreigners

Team OCR.coop presented Vis-AI, an AI, powered solution designed to improve public service delivery for immigrants in South Korea. The team addressed the challenges faced by non-native speakers in navigating complex visa documentation and administrative procedures, particularly those with low language proficiency. Vis-AI uses advanced document layout analysis, multilingual OCR, and translation tools to extract and interpret key information from official immigration forms. By automating the understanding of visa documents, the system empowers users to act confidently and independently, reducing reliance on legal assistance and minimizing errors.

Figure 7. Document Collection & Categorization Methodology



Source : Team OCR.Coop (2025) Vis-AI. AI for Efficient Public Service Delivery: Easing ROK Visa Processing for Foreigners [PowerPoint slides]

The project aligns with the AI for Efficient Public Service Delivery track and supports SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). In the short term, Vis-AI simplifies immigration paperwork and improves access to services for marginalized communities. Long, term goals include expanding the tool to other administrative domains such as healthcare, licensing, and labor permits. The team’s sustainability plan includes modular architecture for scalability, multilingual support, integration with government portals, and open, source development to ensure transparency and adaptability. Vis-AI aims to create a more inclusive and responsive public service ecosystem.

Session 3: Ethical AI Governance: Youth Pioneering Accountability and Trust in Public Institutions

Youth, led Efforts for Inclusive, Trustworthy and Ethical AI Systems

Mr. Abhishek Venkateswaran, Project Officer, UNESCO Regional Office for South Asia, highlighted the critical importance of ethical AI in public governance. He emphasized that UNESCO’s Ethics of AI recommendations, the first global normative standard adopted by 193 countries, provide guiding principles such as transparency, explainability, privacy, and fairness, which are contextualized across sectors including education, healthcare, and finance. Ethical AI ensures that innovation aligns with human values, builds public trust, and supports equitable access to opportunities. Despite the rapid adoption of AI across South Asia, youth remain largely absent from decision, making, even though they represent a significant demographic, are early adopters of AI, and can uniquely identify biases, risks, and opportunities in AI systems.

Figure 8. UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI



Source: Abhishek Venkateswaran (2025) Youth, led Efforts for Inclusive, Trustworthy and Ethical AI Systems [PowerPoint slides] UNESCO

Mr. Venkateswaran also outlined youth, led efforts and initiatives promoting ethical AI in the region. These include India’s AI Fellowship, UNDP’s AI, driven design competitions in Bangladesh, school AI clubs in Sri Lanka, and UNESCO’s consultations integrating AI into education in Nepal. Common modes

of youth participation include workshops, hackathons, policy dialogues, community, building, and youth, led think tanks. However, gaps remain in AI literacy, diversity of participation, trust, and policy integration. He recommended five key actions: embedding youth voices in AI governance, expanding ethical AI literacy programs, supporting grassroots innovations, enhancing cross, sector collaboration, and ensuring youth inputs are systematically incorporated into policy development to foster inclusive, transparent, and sustainable AI ecosystems.

Youth Innovations for Bias Mitigation and Accountability in Public Sector

Mr. Abil Sudarman, AI Ethics Activist, Indonesia, reflected on the challenges of corruption and weak public trust in institutions, noting how deeply corruption is entrenched in daily governance and service delivery. He highlighted Indonesia's poor standing in the Corruption Perceptions Index and the urgent need for reform, emphasizing that the young generation, comprising over 64 million Indonesians, must take the lead in driving change. Unlike senior leaders who often lack urgency, youth care deeply about the future they will inherit and are motivated to innovate with integrity, accountability, and fairness.

Sharing inspiring examples, Mr. Sudarman described successful youth, led innovations, including an AI, powered electronic ticketing system that reduces bribery opportunities in traffic enforcement, and a trusted platform that combats election, related fake news by providing voters with transparent, verified information on candidates. He underlined, however, that building AI models is only the first step; the biggest challenge lies in adoption, where innovators often face resistance or even intimidation from entrenched interests. He encouraged young innovators to build partnerships with senior leaders and persist in ensuring their solutions are implemented for the public good, reminding participants that their ideas must extend beyond presentations into real, world impact.

Figure 9. A Call to Action

A new, digitally-driven youth movement is emerging as a powerful force for global accountability and positive change. While this movement is full of energy and innovation, it often lacks the funding, support, and protection needed to thrive. The most effective way to empower these young leaders is to build the foundational infrastructure they need, including dedicated support systems and protective frameworks. By investing in these innovators, we can directly strengthen democracy and create a more resilient world for everyone.

Source: Abil Sudarman (2025) Youth Innovations for Bias Mitigation and Accountability in Public Sector [PowerPoint slides] Indonesia

Announcement of Winners

Team Civil Lens won the **Incheon Metropolitan City Award** (Third Place), sponsored by Incheon Metropolitan City, for its AI, powered platform that monitors, analyzes, and explains public communications from governments and institutions in real time. The platform serves as a trusted digital filter, ensuring that citizens receive clear, accurate, and actionable information while protecting against misinformation, confusion, and bias.

Team Project Veritas won Second Place, sponsored by the **Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea**, for its innovative 'AI Integrity' system, an advanced AI, powered solution that proactively detects and mitigates corruption in public procurement, particularly in subcontracting and bid rigging, strengthening governance transparency and efficiency in support of SDG 16.

The **First, Place Award**, sponsored by the **Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) of the Republic of Korea**, went to SDGirls for VoiceBridge Nepal, an AI, powered, human, centered disaster communication tool that leverages neural translation, speech recognition, and local radio integration to deliver real, time, multilingual emergency alerts, bridging language barriers and ensuring inclusive, accessible preparedness for Nepal's remote and diverse communities.

Closing Remarks

In his closing remarks, **Mr. Changseob Han**, Head of UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA, highlighted the remarkable contributions of youth in driving AI solutions for sustainable development. Participants demonstrated innovative applications that enhance transparency, public service delivery, and citizen empowerment, showing that technology can directly serve humanity. Emphasizing impact, ethics, and collaboration, he urged young innovators to continue shaping policies, creating solutions, and holding institutions accountable, echoing the principles of Youth2030 Phase 2. Mr. Han recognized the support of the Republic of Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety, Incheon Metropolitan City Government, speakers, and evaluators, and concluded by inspiring participants to build responsibly, innovate boldly, and lead with purpose, affirming that the future, and the potential to achieve the SDGs, is in their hands.

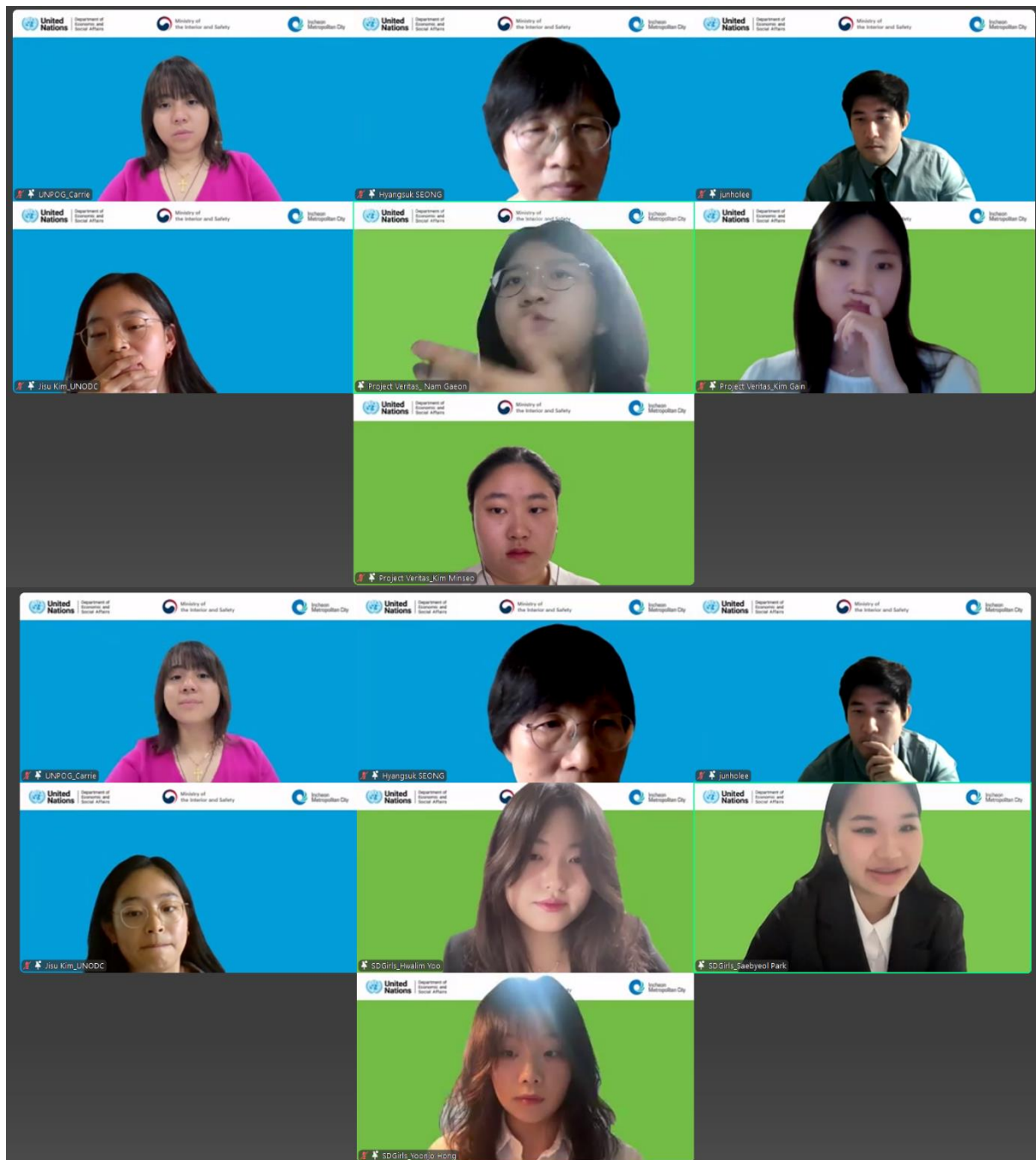
Annexes

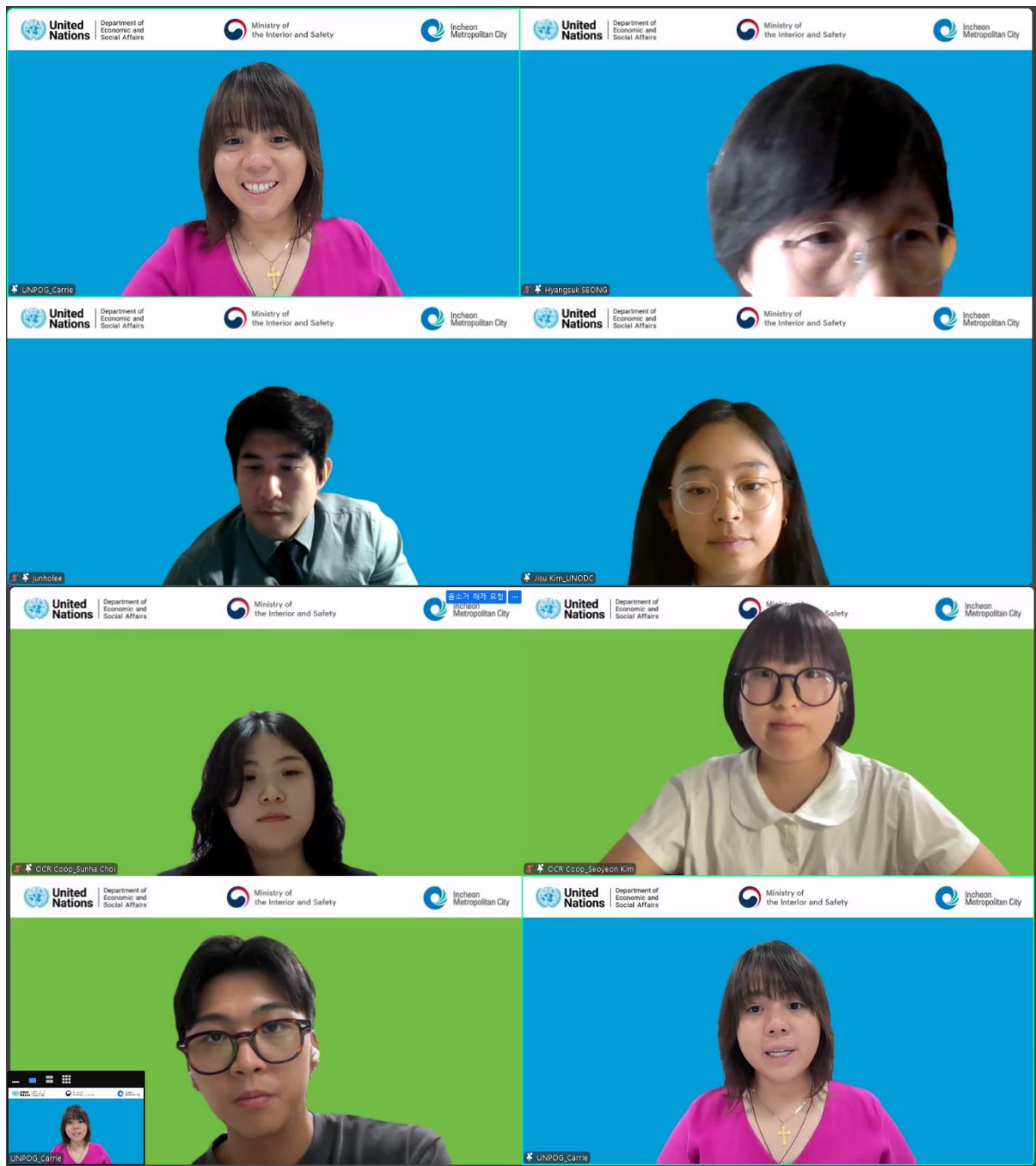
Annex 1 – Forum Agenda

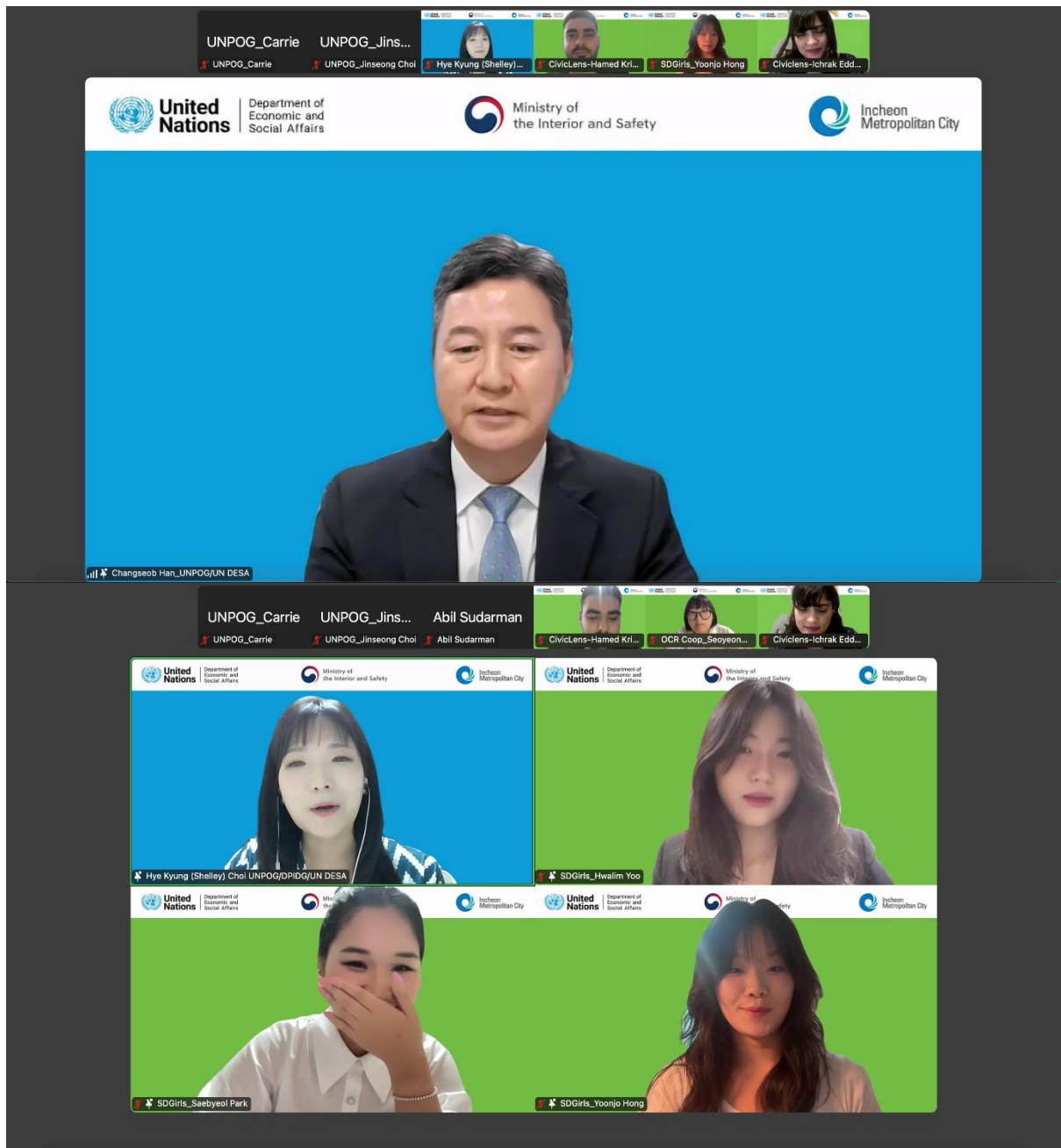
13 August 2025	
Time (KST)	Agenda
13:30, 13:50	Introduction and Opening Session Moderator: Ms. Hye Kyung (Shelley) Choi , Senior Programme Management Assistant, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Changseob Han, Head of Office, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (5 mins) • Mr. Yung, Suh Park, International Administrative Cooperation Bureau Director General, Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS) (5 mins) • Ms. Hyeunsuk Rhee, Advisory Ambassador for International Organizations , Incheon Metropolitan City (5 mins)
13:50, 13:55	Keynote Speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Felipe Paullier, Assistant Secretary, General for Youth Affairs, United Nations Youth Office (5 mins) (Video Message)
13:55, 14:00	Photo Session (Online and Offline)
14:00, 14:45	Session 1: AI for Strengthening Public Institutions and Achieving SDGs Moderator: Mr. Prabin Maharjan , Programme Management Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA AI in the public sector: Opportunities and Challenges for Youth Empowerment and Engagement (10 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Junho Lee, Associate Expert, DPIDG/UN DESA Harnessing AI for Transparent and Accountable Governance through Youth Innovation (10 mins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Luísa Franco Machado, UN Young Leaders for Sustainable Development Goals, Digital Rights Activist and a Published Data Justice Researcher Interactive Discussion/QA (25 mins)
14:50, 14:55 Break	
14:45, 15:35	Session 2: Ideas for Change Contest: Presentation from the Shortlisted Teams Moderator: Ms. Carolit Grace Salvacion , Associate Networking and Outreach Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team 1 SDGirls (8 mins) • Team 2 Project Veritas (8 mins) • Team 3 LYC (8 mins) • Team 4 Civic Lens (8 mins) • Team 5 OCR.coop (8 mins)

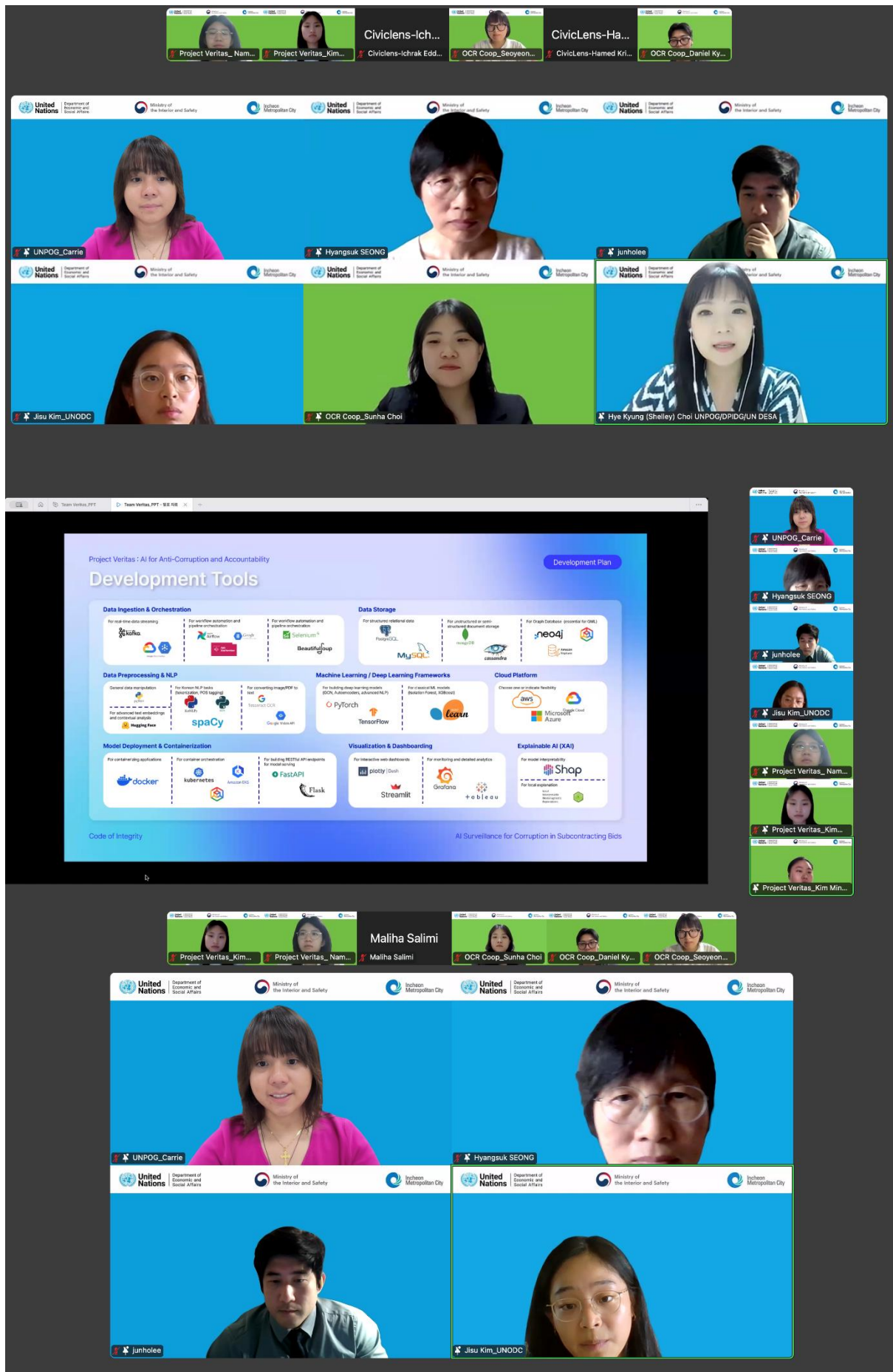
15:35, 16:10	<p>Question and Answer Session (35 mins)</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Carolit Grace Salvacion, Associate Networking and Outreach Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</p>
16:00, 16:05 Break	
16:10, 16:50	<p>Session 3: Ethical AI Governance: Youth Pioneering Accountability and Trust in Public Institutions</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Jin Seong Choi, Associate Research and Policy Analysis Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</p> <p>Youth, led Efforts for Inclusive, Trustworthy and Ethical AI Systems (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Abhishek Venkateswaran, Project Officer, UNESCO Regional Office for South Asia <p>Youth Innovations for Bias Mitigation and Accountability in Public Sector (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Abil Sudarman, AI Ethics Activist, Indonesia <p>Interactive Discussion/QA (15 mins)</p>
16:50, 16:55	<p>Announcement of Winners (5 mins)</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Hye Kyung (Shelley) Choi, Senior Programme Management Assistant, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</p>
16:55, 17:00	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Changseob Han, Head of Office, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA (5 mins)

Annex 2 – Snaps of the Forum









We're not AI utopians We're addicted & exhausted

What are young people's feelings towards AI?
Let's ask TikTok!

What can institutions learn with that?

Luisa Franco Machado

How to empower youth while minimizing risks

Provide quality education.
It is important to educate on AI not only to enable the empowerment of young generation but also to enable a responsible and correct usage.

Provide Stage/Platform.
Providing stage, platform, and other opportunities for young generation to share idea, receive feedback and learn from experts.

Provide a safe Environment.
Providing a flexible environment. Mechanisms such as sandboxes will allow young generations to free explore and develop their idea while controlling the risks.

UNDESA | Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government

Remove spotlight

junholee



United Nations

Department of
Economic and
Social Affairs



Ministry of
the Interior and Safety



Incheon
Metropolitan City

9th Youth Forum on SDG Implementation



United Nations Project Office on Governance
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs