

UAE launches \$1 billion 'AI for Development' initiative to accelerate progress across Africa

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The UAE has unveiled a \$1 billion initiative to support and finance artificial intelligence projects across Africa, aiming to strengthen economic and social development by improving digital infrastructure, enhancing government services and boosting productivity.

The announcement was made during a speech by His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, at the G20 summit, where he reaffirmed the UAE's commitment to advancing sustainable growth through international partnerships and innovative financing solutions for emerging economies.

The initiative will be delivered by the Abu Dhabi Exports Office (ADEX), part of the [Abu Dhabi Fund for Development \(ADFD\)](#), in cooperation with the UAE Foreign Aid Agency. It forms part of the UAE's wider effort to help developing countries harness the potential of advanced technologies, including AI, to support long-term development.

The programme aims to integrate AI tools into priority sectors such as education, agriculture and infrastructure, helping countries address critical developmental challenges and unlock new opportunities for sustainable, inclusive growth. It also aligns with the UAE's national vision to build a competitive, knowledge-based economy and strengthen its position as a global centre for AI innovation.

Mohamed Saif Al Suwaidi, Director-General of ADFD and Chairman of the Exports Executive Committee of ADEX, said: "ADEX's leadership of the AI for Development initiative reflects the UAE's belief that artificial intelligence is a real force for advancing equitable growth and sustainable development. By combining technology, financing and partnerships, we aim to support developing countries in overcoming

developmental challenges and building long-term economic resilience.”

He added: “Integrating AI technologies into the education, agriculture and infrastructure sectors opens new horizons for inclusive development. Through this initiative, we aim to empower UAE enterprises to implement pioneering, high-impact development projects that strengthen economic and technological cooperation between the UAE and African countries, while supporting the achievement of global sustainable development goals.”

Al Suwaidi noted that the initiative builds on the humanitarian and development legacy of the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and reflects the vision of President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, along with the commitment of Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan and Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to supporting communities and improving lives worldwide.

Dr Tareq Ahmed Al Ameri, Chairman of the UAE Foreign Aid Agency, highlighted the country’s long-standing commitment to humanitarian and development work. He reaffirmed the UAE’s role in supporting communities and meeting essential needs, including through the use of advanced technologies.

Al Ameri said the new initiative “reflects the UAE’s enduring commitment to strengthening global solidarity and advancing cooperative development to build a better future for all”, emphasising that many African nations require transformative projects to address gaps in education, healthcare and infrastructure.

The initiative is dedicated exclusively to African countries and forms part of the UAE’s broader development assistance across the continent. Since 1971, the UAE has provided more than AED 152 billion in aid to African nations. Through the AI for Development initiative, the UAE aims to expand this legacy by supporting AI-driven development projects in cooperation with ADEX and UAE donor entities.

By backing innovation, modernisation and long-term capacity building, the UAE seeks to help African countries accelerate progress while reinforcing its own global standing as a leading hub for technological advancement and smart systems.