Sandboxing: Prototyping and experimentation lessons for AI powered DPI

As an Official Pre-Summit Event of the AI Impact Summit 2026, on December 3 2025, the Datasphere Initiative's Global Sandboxes Forum, UNDP, and Kalpa Impact will host an online event to discuss the interaction between AI and digital public infrastructure (DPI) and the role that interactive and testing initiatives such as sandboxes can play in supporting inclusive design and deployment.

Date: December 3 2025,
Time: 17.00 - 18.30 IST
Location: Online (hybrid format with in-person presence UN-House Meeting Room United Nations 55, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi - 110003, India)

Background

As countries look to invest in DPI initiatives, many are considering the value and connection between AI and DPI. On the one hand, AI can help drive and support DPI services and infrastructure and at the same time DPI can provide vast amounts of data necessary to power AI. But what comes first? How can they work together considering countries' different cultural and development contexts ? What are the risks and real benefits for people and the planet? And importantly, how can their inter-relationship support linguistic and cultural diversity, tackle gender biases, and ensure often marginalized groups are not left behind?

Bringing together governments, businesses, representatives from civil society and academia, the side event will explore the DPI journey and how experimentation and iterative approaches and tools such as sandboxes could be used to better understand the benefits and challenges of leveraging AI in digital public infrastructure.

Expert speakers from around the world will bring their knowledge and experience in deploying DPI, building AI and designing sandboxes.

Following the event, participants will be invited to share a DPI challenge where experimentation could be helpful. Proposals will be reviewed and three will be selected as challenges to be addressed in the DPI Sandbox Co-Creation Lab. The co-creation lab will test three contributions in a hands-on practical experimentation session where participants will co-create their DPI sandbox prototype. Datasphere, Kalpa Impact and UNDP team plans to host this Co-Creation Lab during or around the India AI Impact Summit.

Agenda (IST)

17.00 - 17.20	Welcome Remarks: Looking ahead to the AI Impact Summit

Opening Remarks by:
- MeitY Leadership
- UNDP Representative

17.20 - 17.55	Sandboxes: Impact and interest in experimentation

In this session, participants will discuss how policy prototyping and iterative testing can help ensure effective tech and policy decisions in a country's DPI and AI journey. Speakers will share lessons from their own sandboxes in an effort to explore how these innovative methods can offer new ways for stakeholder consultation, technical scaling and policy iteration.

Moderator
- Sophie Tomlinson, Director of Programs, Datasphere Initiative

Invited discussants:
- Dr. Japheth Odhiambo, Communications Authority of Kenya
- Narun Popattanachai, Office of the Council of State, Thailand
- Armando Manzueta, Digital Transformation Director, Ministry of the Economy of the Dominican Republic
- Dr. Moses Nkundwe, Jamii Stack Sandbox, Tanzania
- Ramesh MC, Center for Open Societal Systems (COSS), India
- Mariana Rozo-Paz, Policy, Research and Project Management Lead, Datasphere Initiative

17.55 - 18.25	AI powered DPI: Opportunities and risks for prototyping

In this session speakers will unpack the tensions around DPI and AI and how their interrelation offers major opportunities but also challenges for inclusive AI and Digital Public Infrastructure. The discussion will explore how prototyping and experimentation can address and/or amplify risks and opportunities.

Moderator
- Sushant Kumar, Kalpa Impact

Invited discussants:
- Chrissy Meier, DIAL
- Sourav Das, Co-Develop
- Astha Kapoor, Aapti Institute
- Verena Kontschieder, Prototype Fund CH
- Risper Onyango, Africa Sandboxes Forum

18.25- 18.30	Closing: Next steps for co-creation