Towards a Global AI Responsibility Index (GARI) led by the Global South

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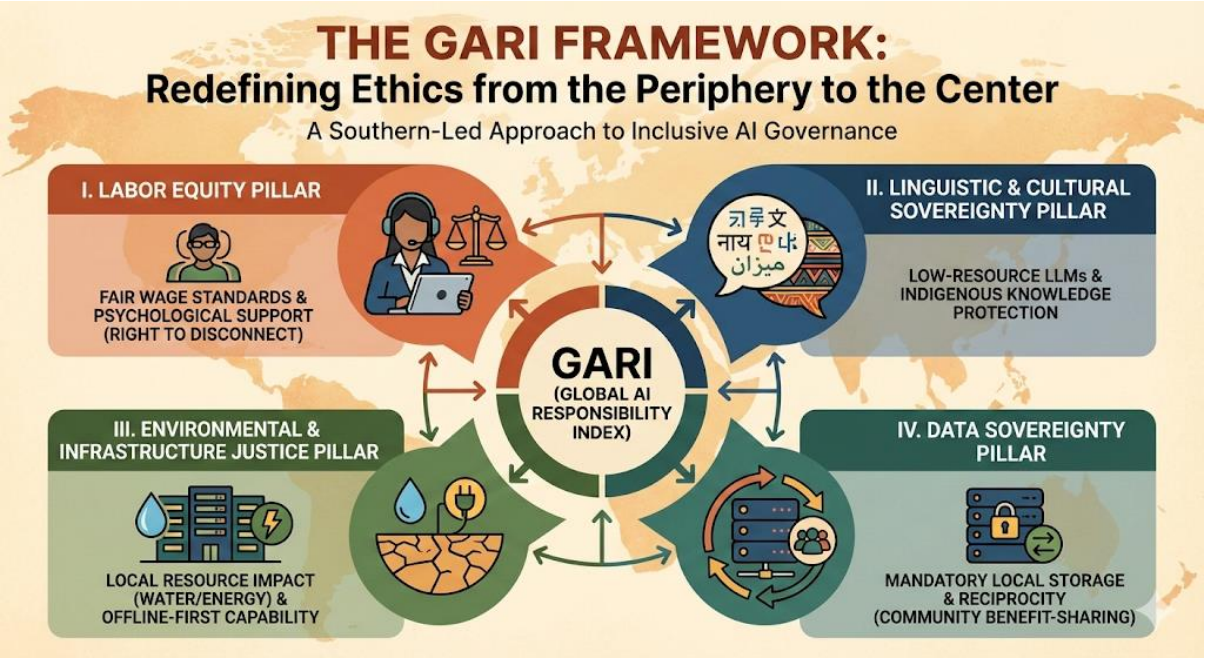
Abstract

Current AI indices are predominantly Euro-centric, measuring readiness through the lens of capital and responsibility through Western legalism. This manuscript proposes the **Global AI Responsibility Index (GARI)**, a framework that shifts the focus from purely technical safety to **Distributive Justice**, **Data Sovereignty**, and **Labor Equity**. It argues that for AI to be truly "responsible," it must account for the historical and economic asymmetries between the Global North and the Global South. This work would be a step towards Responsible AI metrics *by*, *for* and *of* the people from the Global South.



1. The Critique: The Mirage of Universality

Existing AI metrics often treat the "Global South" as a blank slate for adoption rather than a site of innovation and resistance. The bias in current indices manifests in three ways:

- **Institutional Blindness:** Assuming all nations have the regulatory capacity of the EU.
- **Linguistic Marginalization:** Benchmarking "responsibility" based on English-language performance, ignoring the 7000+ languages primarily spoken in the South.
- **Extraction Silence:** Ignoring how "frontier models" are built on the back of low-wage micro-workers in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America.

2. The GARI Framework: Four Pillars of Southern Responsibility

To be truly inclusive, an index must measure what matters to the majority of the world's population.

I. The Labor Equity Pillar
Unlike Western indices that focus on "job displacement," GARI measures the **quality of AI labour**.

- **Metric:** Fair wage standards for data annotators and content moderators.
- **Metric:** Psychological support and "Right to Disconnect" for workers exposed to traumatic training data.

II. The Linguistic & Cultural Sovereignty Pillar
AI responsibility isn't just about "accuracy"; it's about **cultural survival**.

- **Metric:** Availability of Large Language Models (LLMs) in low-resource indigenous languages.
- **Metric:** Protection of traditional knowledge from "algorithmic mining" without community consent.

III. The Environmental & Infrastructure Justice Pillar
AI consumes immense water and energy. Often, the "cloud" sits in the North, but the ecological cost is paid by the South.

- **Metric:** Local resource impact (water/energy) of data centers in drought-prone regions.
- **Metric:** "Offline-first" AI capability for regions with intermittent connectivity.

IV. The Data Sovereignty Pillar
This pillar measures the resistance to **Data Colonialism**.

- **Metric:** National frameworks that mandate local storage and local benefit-sharing for extracted data.
- **Metric:** Reciprocity: how much value returns to the community that provided the data?

3. Proposed Metric Comparison Table

Category	Western-Centric Index Focus	GARI (Global South) Focus
Privacy	Individual Data Consent (GDPR)	Collective/Community Data Sovereignty
Labour	Professional Upskilling	Rights and Wages for Data Laborers
Safety	High-level "Alignment" with Western Values	Mitigation of State/Corporate Surveillance
Diversity	Gender/Race representation in datasets	Deep Linguistic & Dialectal Inclusion
Environment	Net-zero corporate pledges	Local watershed and grid stability impact

4. Conclusion: From "Ready" to "Responsible"

The goal of GARI is not to rank who is "best" at copying Silicon Valley, but to identify which nations and corporations are fostering a **reciprocal** relationship with the Global South. We must ensure the metrics move beyond "Western Readiness" and toward "Global Responsibility." This work would be a step towards Responsible AI metrics *by*, *for* and *of* the people from the Global South.