Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

Digital Economy: A Position Paper

Background

The concept of digital economy and the host of technologies linked to it have progressed rapidly, as the digitalised world has become a reality for a vast number of people on the planet. Connectivity has gone beyond a means of communication to become a medium for production, distribution and marketing of goods and services as well as a platform for the livelihoods of millions of people. However, critical issues ranging from exploitation of the working class, peasantry and women, surveillance, plunder and destruction of the environment have accompanied the growth of the digital economy - a new frontier being used to further imperialist agendas to the benefit of corporate monopolies and superprofits.

The digital world is often mistaken as intangible – however, first, it is material in nature, and second, it is produced by labour. The digital economy is based on different layers of operations that include:

- Energy and resources (including land, water, critical minerals, and other raw materials)
- Hardware and Infrastructure
- Software, platforms, and algorithms[1]
- Data and services

The use of resources needed for driving the digital economy is now a major concern for global society as a whole, but especially so in the countries of the Global South. The global AI market is rapidly growing and is alone projected to reach USD 5 trillion by 2033.[2] The premise that the digital economy is the key to a host of positive development goals has been promoted by intergovernmental institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), who have played a key role in the context of the digital economy. Through trade liberalisation, deregulation and privatisation; key policy reforms and recommendations provided by the IMF and WB pave the way for big tech corporations in the Global North to capture and dominate resources and push for further liberalisation of the digital economy, with implications on surveillance, land, health, labour rights and other areas.

Global governance initiatives such as the Global Digital Compact (GDC) attempt to guide and regulate digital infrastructure, data flows, and artificial intelligence, but from the framework of expansion and inclusion within the digital economy. Meanwhile, the concentration of corporate power remains largely unchallenged, and the danger to agricultural land, food security, livelihoods, and the environment are sidelined.

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[1] The word 'digital economy' was first introduced in 1995 by a Canadian author Don Tapscott. At that point, the use of digital systems was at a rudimentary stage but he was still able to foresee not only the wide scope but also the challenges that digital-based technologies would bring with them.

[2] https://unctad.org/news/digital-economy-new-frontier-trade-sustainability-and-inclusion

Digital Trade

Digital trade plays a big part in the digital economy. It has reshaped what we trade, how we trade and who can take part, as it reduces the costs of participating in international trade.[3] The digital economy is highly concentrated in a handful of countries, particularly countries from the Global North, leaving the rest of the world, including many least developed countries, often relegated to the role of mere data providers.

The digital economy is the new cash cow that monopoly capital has moved on rapidly to consolidate its control over different spheres of extraction, production, distribution and service. The World Bank launched a digital strategy in 2026 for developing countries for affordable digital access and to drive job creation.[4] This strategy basically liberalises and expands the digital economy and relies on public-private partnerships (PPP),[5] and experience proves that PPP has core financial, operational and accountability flaws where the public bears the financial risks and costs while private entities reap the profits. In addition, it is now an important arena for negotiating free trade agreements, driven by big tech corporations that reshape developing countries' policies such as taxation, ownership and usage of data.

The e-commerce provision in trade agreements is rapidly increasing. Major players that include e-commerce provisions in their FTAs are the EU, USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, etc. It is present in regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Regional groupings such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are also developing digital frameworks such as the Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA), an initiative to provide digital opportunities for the region, going beyond the existing bilateral or multilateral Digital Economy Agreements (DEAs).[6] DEFA is scheduled to be signed at the ASEAN summit in November 2026 but many civil society organisations, trade unions, and activists have already raised concerns about the *lack of transparency and meaningful engagement during the negotiations which concluded in May 2026*. Many have raised concerns about the erosion of labour rights, as digitalisation is reshaping how we work and intensifies labour informalisation, thus weakening job security and heightening precarious working conditions.[7]

The provisions in these FTAs include free flow of data, but absent regulatory measures governed by human rights principles, *data*[8] *has become a new arena for digital colonialism and economic dependence*. For profit-seeking digital economy ventures, data is extracted from people and communities globally, captured and monetised by multinational corporations and Big Tech

[3] https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/digital-trade.html
[4] https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2026/10/20/world-bank-group-launches-first-digital-strategy-to-expand-access-and-create-jobs
[5] https://telecom.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/policy/world-bank-launches-strategy-to-boost-digital-connectivity-in-developing-nations/135059962
[6] https://asean.org/asean-defa-study-projects-digital-economy-leap-to-us2tn-by-2030/
[7] https://www.ituc-ap.org/news-and-updates/no-to-secret-digital-trade-deals-defending-workers-rights-in-the-digital-economy-and-opposing-aseans-defa
[8] Data is raw information collected in the form of numbers, measurements, images or observations which are collected for a specific purpose. Data can be used for various purposes, but also for understanding behaviour preferences as a tool for marketing and advertisements, learning models for building artificial intelligence, among others.

monopolies[9], and exploited for their benefit. Global South countries are only recently paying more attention to the data protection and privacy laws compared to the Global North.[10] For example: India only recently passed the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, despite being one of the major players in the digital economy with its initiative Digital India in 2015[11]. This regulatory gap allows big tech corporations to harvest data using techniques which might be illegal in their own home countries. These systems weaken sovereignty and deepen the structural subordination of the Global South in the global economy while compromising national digital industrialisation policies.

The trade agreements include clauses that restrict how nations can *impose digital services taxes and customs duties on electronic transmissions.* This is, for instance, present in the reciprocal trade agreement between Indonesia and the United States (ART), resulting in an estimated loss of potential state revenue from digital taxes ranges between IDR 15 trillion (approximately $826.81 million USD) and IDR 29.5 trillion (approximately $1.63 billion USD) till per year[12]. The WTO Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmission 1998, lapsed during the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial Conference (MC) 14, under this moratorium developing and least developing countries lost 56 billion dollars during the period of 2017-2020 as they were unable to tax electronic transmission.[13] Although the WTO Moratorium lapsed in March 2026, restrictions on custom duties on electronic transmissions continue under trade agreements such as RCEP and CPTPP, as well as being pursued through the Interim WTO Agreement on Electronic Commerce (ECA).[14] These restrictions continue to limit the policy space of developing countries..

The trade agreements have been used as a tool to maintain the dominance and control of the digital economy by big corporations which hold immense influence over the negotiations of these agreements. Through these agreements, big tech companies continue to exploit resources from the Global South. As mentioned earlier, the digital economy is based on different layers of operations and with these agreements, big tech companies are able to tap into all the different layers- hard materials like raw materials through mining and extraction of resources and manufacturing through cheap labour, while they dominate and attain high profitability through supply value chains.

Digital Economy and Labour

The impacts of this rapid progression of the digital economy are felt across all sectors that include retail and e-commerce, financial services, gig economy, agriculture, education, healthcare, media and entertainment as well as manufacturing. At all levels, the working class can be considered as the most critical component and major actor responsible for the production and delivery of digital-based operations.

[9] https://www.tni.org/en/publication/indonesias-digital-economy-commitments-in-eu-and-rcep-trade-agreement
[10] https://carnegieendowment.org/posts/2024/02/data-protection-regulation-in-the-global-south
[11] https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/union-cabinet-approves-expansion-of-the-digital-india-programme-with-an-outlay-of-%E2%82%B9-14903-crore/?utm_source=chatgpt.com
[12] https://muc.co.id/en/article/trade-agreement-with-the-us-indonesia-cannot-impose-digital-taxes-on-us-companies
[13] https://www.citizen.org/article/understanding-the-moratorium-on-customs-duties-on-electronic-transmissions/
[14] https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news26_e/mc14_28mar26_341_e.htm

The digital economy has transformed retail marketing where physical and/or digital products are moved from seller to buyer. Physical goods are of course common and include all retail products, while digital goods could be digital books, music, e-learning tools, financial tools for maintaining budgets, digital planners, among others.

According to the World Bank:[15]
". . . between 154 million and 435 million people globally are engaged in online gig jobs, up to 12.5per cent of the labour force. In China alone, over 200 million people (about 40per cent of the urban workforce) depend on flexible work. India is projected to have 23.5 million gig workers by 2030, making up 40per cent of the global freelance market. Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Vietnam are also emerging as major hubs."

There is a strong relationship between e-commerce and the gig economy. Gig economy is based on labour markets, where labour is used for moving the e-commerce economy, that is, they are often responsible for the service component such as delivery of foods, groceries, and other retail items. They also could be service workers such as riders and drivers for digitally-connected transport systems. Another form of service providers include contractors who develop online applications, website designs and other electronic services. The digital platform is used to connect workers and employers; however often these workers are given euphemistic descriptions such as being self-employed, partners or working as free-lancers.

The digital economy is in essence based on exploiting workers, especially gig workers. They are generally not paid fixed salaries or wages, rather their earnings are computed based on trips taken for the tasks assigned (such as number of deliveries made) and are 'free' to log into work based on automated application. However, as opposed to traditional physical forms of labour work, platform workers have to work for long hours often crossing 12 hours a day. If they work less hours, they do not get a positive rating from their 'electronic employers.'[16] Workers' performance is not based on clear guidelines and digitalised forms of discipline are used; for instance algorithmic systems regulate their performance based on workers' compliance, customer satisfaction and timely delivery of services.[17] Workers have no space to carry out negotiations on responsibilities or earnings. According to the UNDP, the salary of half of the online workers is estimated at less than $2 per hour[18].

Moreover, flexible hours are difficult for women as they are also responsible for care work at home. Juggling care work and paid work, they are further exploited and doubly burdened. Women are often found in lower-paid care work. Flexibility in work hours is used as a carrot to entice workers, especially women but it is in fact a camouflage as the work can entail precarious working conditions, low and unguaranteed earnings with long irregular hours and no social protection.[19] It is of course a given that all digitalised devices have to be owned by the workers themselves, hence the entire cost of these devices is shifted to workers, which also includes bikes and other vehicles if they are employed in delivery work. Those who are working

[15] https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/blog/gig-economy-reshaping-work-asia-and-pacific-can-governance-keep-pace
[16] https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/05/12/the-gig-trap/algorithmic-wage-and-labour-exploitation-in-platform-work-in-the-us
[17] https://www.hrw.org/report/2025/05/12/the-gig-trap/algorithmic-wage-and-labour-exploitation-in-platform-work-in-the-us
[18] https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/blog/gig-economy-reshaping-work-asia-and-pacific-can-governance-keep-pace
[19] https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/blog/gig-economy-reshaping-work-asia-and-pacific-can-governance-keep-pace

from home have to pay for their computers, network devices and connectivity, energy as well as physical space, and of course continue with their unpaid care work.

However, this snapshot does not capture the working conditions of labour working across various levels. It is also critical to emphasise that the basic foundation of digitalised devices are made from a host of rare earth and critical minerals.[20,21] An ILO case study points out different challenges faced by the labour force employed in mineral extraction:[22]

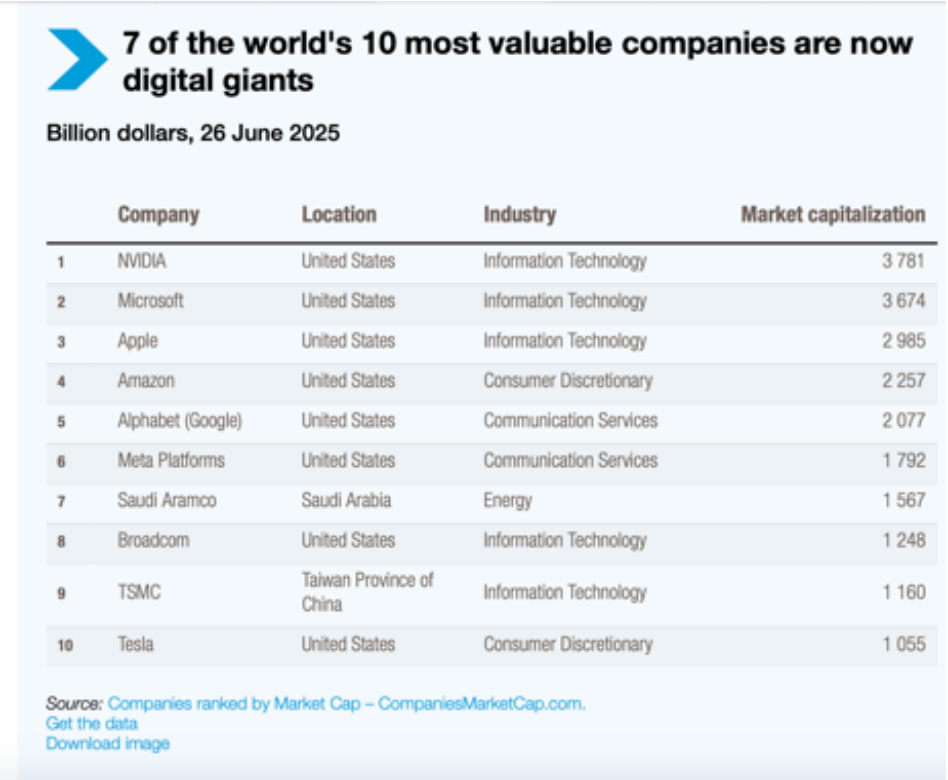
"These include child labour, hazardous working conditions, exposure to toxic substances, unsafe pit structures, and limited access to social protection. Informality is widespread, leaving many workers outside the protection of labour legislation and inspection systems. There are also risks of forced labour linked to exploitative recruitment practices in remote areas, as well as discrimination and structural barriers affecting women and Indigenous Peoples. Women are often concentrated in the lowest-paid and least secure activities and may face heightened risks of violence and harassment."

Given the above issues faced by the labour workforce in the digital economy, encompassing indigenous and rural areas to urban spheres, there needs to be much effort put into social analysis and research on the labour force, the communities where extraction of raw material is happening as well as localities holding physical hardware and data centers. In addition, data centers need vast amounts of energy resources as well as cooling apparatus which are dependent on heavy water usage. This is a new attack by capitalism on utilisation of critical resources for human civilisation, but for women, it has multiple levels of impacts from losing agricultural land, fresh water sources, security and livelihood.

Monopolies in Digital Economy

Advancements in technologies are inevitable but who controls these technologies, how it is used and for what, is essential to examine in order to protect human rights. Currently, monopoly corporations dominate the digital economy and that includes NVIDIA, Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet (Google) and Amazon, who are also among those dominating the global economy, according to the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Of the top big corporations, seven are based on the digital economy, including Meta Platforms and Broadcom apart from the above mentioned.[23]

[20] https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tn_unctad_ict4d16_en.pdf
[21] https://www.globalxetfs.com/articles/critical-minerals-the-core-of-the-modern-economy
[22] https://www.ilo.org/resource/article/qa-critical-minerals-and-work-ilo
[23] https://unctad.org/news/highly-concentrated-digital-markets-put-consumers-risk-heres-how-change-course



7 of the world's 10 most valuable companies are now digital giants

Billion dollars, 26 June 2025

	Company	Location	Industry	Market capitalization
1	NVIDIA	United States	Information Technology	3 781
2	Microsoft	United States	Information Technology	3 674
3	Apple	United States	Information Technology	2 985
4	Amazon	United States	Consumer Discretionary	2 257
5	Alphabet (Google)	United States	Communication Services	2 077
6	Meta Platforms	United States	Communication Services	1 792
7	Saudi Aramco	Saudi Arabia	Energy	1 567
8	Broadcom	United States	Information Technology	1 248
9	TSMC	Taiwan Province of China	Information Technology	1 160
10	Tesla	United States	Consumer Discretionary	1 055

Source: Companies ranked by Market Cap – CompaniesMarketCap.com.
Get the data
Download image

A further breakdown of these monopoly corporations by their ownership over infrastructure, digital technologies and other related assets shows further oligarchy of these digital giant corporations.[24] For instance:

- Four companies own 67 per cent of the global 130 billion USD cloud market (which basically is data storage facility). These are Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure infrastructure, Google Cloud and Alibaba Cloud. The first two have a 52 per cent market share of the cloud market.
- Similarly, a 100 per cent monopoly for Extreme Ultraviolet (EUV) lithography machines, part of digital economy hardware is held by the Dutch corporation,[25] ASML, while Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) holds an 80 per cent monopoly over high end advanced manufacturing for semiconductors.[26] Nvidia also holds a near monopoly over Graphics Processing Units and AI accelerator hardware.[27]
- Another set of global giants in the digital economy sector are the battery manufacturers; the ten of the largest among them are Chinese corporations, among which CATL and BYD are the largest and control 54% of the global EV battery market share[28]. The digital economy relies on uninterrupted power supply and the battery manufacturers are using their indispensable role in the digital market, especially in data centers; this is referred to as 'compute-energy' synergy, where computing power and electricity provision work in synergy.[29]

[24] https://www.pcmag.com/news/four-companies-control-67-of-the-worlds-cloud-infrastructure
[25] https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/250-million-asml-printer-behind-nvidias-chips-2026-07-28/
[26] https://theconversation.com/how-taiwan-came-to-dominate-the-global-chip-industry-276939
[27] https://medium.com/@thebuycode/nvidia-and-the-architecture-of-a-monopoly-a8a746086841
[28] https://eleport.com/ev-battery-manufacturers/
[29] https://www.ourchinastory.com/en/17128/What-is-computing-electricity-synergy-and-why-is-it-important-to-AI?%EF%BD%9CToken-Factory-%E2%85%A2

Digital systems are also critical tools for counterinsurgency (COIN) programs to overcome movements fighting for justice and democracy. As corporate elites consolidate power, democratic spaces are captured and drift toward authoritarianism, driven by massive lobbying investments that secure industry-friendly policies. When US President Donald Trump traveled to Beijing, China this year in May for a high-profile summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping, his delegation included over a dozen top American technology and business executives.[30]

A particular area of the digital economy also includes surveillance known as the digital surveillance economy where corporations are developing economic models based on mass data collections and monetisation of personal data. This goes beyond the market model; the convergence of defence technologies, artificial intelligence, and mass data collection is militarising civilian digital spaces, turning them into systems of control and surveillance. As day to day life becomes digitalised, expansion of digital monitoring threatens fundamental freedoms including the rights to privacy, access to information, association, and expression.[31] For women and women human rights defenders (WHRDs), digital surveillance can enable the monitoring of their communications, movements and organising, potentially creating risk of targeted harassment and repression. The collection and misuse of sensitive personal data, including information relating to sexual and reproductive health, can also facilitate greater state and corporate control over women's bodies, sexuality and reproductive choices, undermining bodily autonomy.

Autonomous weapons technologies such as dronesbeen already used in the genocide in Gaza. NATO has also published a study where it names a number of critical earth minerals essential for the weapons industry.[32] Hence, the digital economy is rife with pitfalls for communities, especially women. For instance, mineral extraction and the use of land and water for digital economy disproportionately affects women's access to land, water and food, and livelihoods. More often, as primary providers of food and caregivers within the household and communities, women absorb an increasing burden of un/der/paid care and reproductive labour while environmental degradation and resource extraction make it more difficult to sustain their families and communities.

Militarism and conflict over natural resources, aggravated by the digital economy, also have an added impact on women and children. Not only through displacement, violence and the destruction of their livelihoods, but also through the erosion of bodily autonomy - undermining women's ability to exercise control over their bodies, health, sexuality, reproductive choices and personal safety. These forms of control and violence undermine community safety and collective self-determination.

Land, Resources and Extractivism

Technologies are highly reliant on minerals. As digitalisation progresses rapidly, so does the global race and demands for critical minerals for semiconductors, AI, data centres and more digital technologies and devices. As a result, there has been an increasing number of bilateral deals between Global North countries and resource-rich countries in the Global South, leading to land grabbing and land conversion for mineral extraction, often at the expense of Indigenous, peasant, fisherfolk and rural communities,[33] with women of these communities bearing disproportionate impacts.

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[30] https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c5yx757w048o
[31] https://gchragd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/GCHRAGD-SURVEILLANCE-AND-HUMAN-RIGHTS-background-paper.pdf
[32] https://www.nato.int/en/news-and-events/articles/news/2024/12/11/nato-releases-list-of-12-defence-critical-raw-materials
[33] https://globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/transition-minerals/the-critical-minerals-scramble-how-the-race-for-resources-is-fuelling-conflict-and-inequality/

The geopolitical competition to raw minerals has intensified, resulting in the US asserting to maintain its hegemonic position in the race of digitalisation and AI as China continues to dominate in the processing and manufacturing of many transitional-related resources. The US is consolidating control over strategic supply chains through policies such as US Critical Mineral Policy 2025 and executive orders to Deep Sea mining 2025 and aggressive trade and investment agreements such as Reciprocal Trade Agreements and Pax Silica.

Pax Silica was launched by the US in 2025, to secure supply chains for artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, and critical minerals. The Global South countries like the Philippines are part of this initiative due to untapped critical minerals and strategic positioning to Indo-Pacific trade routes in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.[34] These agreements and extraction come at the expense of different communities, particularly indigenous communities and their livelihoods. The nickel mining has led to displacement, environmental degradation and various human rights abuses for coastal and rural communities in Indonesia and the Philippines.[35] [36] As retaliation and to maintain its dominance, China has also initiated the World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organisation (WAICO) in 2026, an intergovernmental body dedicated to AI cooperation. The heightened geopolitics and competition will further fuel the extraction of resources, and different communities in the Global South will continue to pay the price.

The digitalisation is cementing its roots in every sector including in agriculture, shifting from traditional farming to data-driven industries to maximise profit by squeezing the highest productivity out of the field. The digital land mapping and surveillance technologies have been shown to accelerate privatisation of land, land use conversion, and land grabbing, while undermining peasant land rights and food sovereignty.[37]Georeferencing technology uses an aerial photo, scanned geologic map providing geographic information and placing the image in the real-world location and through digital land register corporations take ownership of the land, particularly when digital process is used exclusively eliminating the traditional survey confirmation such as ground truthing, increasing the risk of land grabbing.[38] This has been practiced by many agriculture businesses in South America where land ownership registration is chaotic already[39]. Further, data that is used without the knowledge of farmers by the mega agrochemical corporations is hand in hand with banking services that enforce digital data gathering which maps production processes, inputs and practices used by farmers. This information is used to consolidate market control over agricultural inputs and create harmonised production methods benefiting corporate practice. Digital systems providing Global Positioning System (GPS) monitoring and vehicle tracking, operational data for workers are being used in many countries of Asia Pacific including India and Pakistan. This is more worrisome when intergovernmental organisations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture organisation collaborate with Palatir - a data analyst profit-driven corporation, on the world's largest humanitarian supply chain, which collects data of partners, suppliers, transporters, and beneficiaries in aggregate form[40]. AI is transforming farming into data driven industry which will further promote uses of pesticides, concern regarding data privacy[41], algorithmic bias and potential displacement of labor[42] needs to be addressed.

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[34] https://avasant.com/report/pax-silica-and-the-philippines-what-the-new-economic-security-zone-means-for-global-supply-chains/
[35] https://gtwaction.org/the-deadly-cost-of-nickel-mining-in-indonesia/
[36] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/01/philippines-nickel-mining-projects-approved-despite-inadequate-consultation-and-serious-risks-to-communities-health-and-environment/
[37] https://grain.org/en/article/6653-infographic-digital-fences-technology-and-its-use-in-land-grabbing
[38] https://news.mongabay.com/2020/10/digital-land-grab-deprives-traditional-latam-peoples-of-ancestral-lands-report/
[39] https://news.mongabay.com/2020/10/digital-land-grab-deprives-traditional-latam-peoples-of-ancestral-lands-report/
[40] https://privacyinternational.org/news-analysis/5789/world-food-programme-expand-palantir-partnership/
[41] https://privacyinternational.org/news-analysis/5789/world-food-programme-expand-palantir-partnership/
[42] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0168169925010336

In addition, the digital economy in the countries of the South as well as in the North has to be examined through its impact on marginalised sectors of the community, especially women, the labour sector, extraction of resources and the impact on the environment. The competition between imperialist countries for holding the upper hand in digital economy, especially the US and China is a further cause of concern; given the dominant position of China in terms of critical minerals supply chain, the foundation for all digital economy is a serious concern as issues such as environmental standards and the rights of indigenous people on ancestral lands are all at stake.[43]

Conclusion

It is clear that the digital economy as a platform has many pitfalls for the most marginalised sectors of the human population, especially for rural and indigenous people and the working class. On one side labour exploitation is easily carried out while plunder of our resources is being carried out at a vast scale.

There is an urgent need to further research and analyse the various components of the digital economy. Political education is a critical undertaking for organising and mobilising different sectors of society including labour, women, youth, indigenous people, consumers and others.

Recommendation:

- Reject mega-free trade agreements and initiative - Digital Economic Framework Agreement (DEFA), Pax Sicilica-that prioritise corporate profits, deregulation, and privatisation over human rights.
- Require full, ex-ante human rights, labour, and gender impact assessments by independent bodies or national human rights commissions before signing or tabling trade agreements.
- Ensure digital trade and investment agreements do not undermine the right to privacy, fair working conditions, local employment preferences, or state-owned enterprises that support workers.
- Protect traditional agrarian practices, seed sovereignty, and indigenous knowledge from being eroded or patented by corporations.
- Eliminate mechanisms such as Investor–State Dispute Settlement that allow corporations to sue governments for implementing public interest, labor, or environmental protection policies.
- Eliminate trade provisions that threaten national sovereignty and growth by eliminating digital services taxes and customs duties on electronic transmissions and free data flows.
- Establish a mechanism such as Global Digital Compact that goes beyond reformist solutions and further explores possible interventions to hold big tech companies and corporations accountable for and promoting human and people's rights.
- Resist automation, platform economies, surveillance capitalism, data colonialism, and AI-driven displacement that threaten women's work, safety, and bodily autonomy.
- Highlight the massive environmental footprint of the digital ecosystem—including rare mineral extraction, high energy consumption, and electronic waste—and integrate these impacts into policy and climate justice talks.
- Address the reality that there are significant inequalities in internet access and digital literacy persist among women in Asia and the Pacific, moving beyond neutral technology narratives to tackle systemic socio-economic barriers.

[43] https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/03/rare-earths-scarce-metals-and-the-struggle-for-supply-chain-security/

- End the misclassification of gig workers as independent contractors to ensure accountability and fair labour rights.
- Establish mandatory benefits, health coverage, and social security nets that do not shift overhead costs onto workers.
- Protect the right of gig workers to organise, form unions, and collectively bargain for fair wages and working conditions.
- Implement public infrastructure and policies that alleviate the double burden of unpaid care and underpaid digital labor on women.