

Week of 6-10 July

AI FOR ALL GLOBAL BRIEF

INFRASTRUCTURE

Kenya's Microsoft-G42 Data Center Is Suspended. Africa's Power Wall Makes the Energy Gap Undeniable.

When President Ruto stood at the summit table where the Microsoft-G42 partnership was announced, he was holding a concept note his own National Treasury had already quietly declined to clear. The reason was arithmetic: the proposed facility would require roughly 1,000 megawatts at full scale — nearly a third of Kenya's entire installed power capacity. By May 2026, unresolved negotiations over a government capacity contract had left the hyperscale data center suspended indefinitely.

Ruto is now using the episode as a political lever, citing it in support of his government's target of adding 10,000 megawatts of generation capacity by 2030 — a goal that would require roughly \$38 billion Kenya does not currently have a committed path to raising.

Why it matters: For every community near a proposed data center site in an emerging market, the energy trade-off is not an engineering footnote — it is the central political question. Kenya's grid said no to a campus that would have served foreign interests before Kenyan ones.

Source: [Data Center Dynamics](#)

ALSO THIS WEEK

- Sightline Climate finds 30–50% of 2026 global data center capacity will be delayed or canceled — the power-wall finding that explains Kenya structurally. [\[source\]](#)
- Abu Dhabi's MGX closes its inaugural fund at \$49 billion, with stakes in OpenAI, Anthropic, xAI, and a \$40B data center operator. [\[source\]](#)

REGIONAL LENS

Africa's AI Sovereignty Gap — Who Controls the Infrastructure Being Built on the Continent?

Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt, Ghana, and South Africa have each released or substantially revised national AI strategies in the past eighteen months. Every one names dependence on foreign technology providers as a structural risk. The infrastructure reality runs the other way: fewer than 25,000 AI-specialized graduates enter African labor markets annually against an estimated need of 300,000, and the compute being built is financed largely by Gulf sovereign funds and US hyperscalers operating under their own governments' rules.

South Africa's national AI policy was drafted with AI assistance, then withdrawn after the tools generated fabricated citations — a detail that crystallizes the dependency problem better than any policy brief.

Why it matters: The gap is felt not by ministries but by the developer in Lagos priced out of closed-model API pricing, the student in Nairobi whose language the model does not understand, and the civil society organization in Accra whose data is governed by a jurisdiction it never consented to.

Source: [Al Jazeera, June 26 2026](#) | [Rest of World](#)

ALSO THIS WEEK

- Aramco leads Together AI's \$800M Series C at an \$8.3B valuation, betting on open-weight inference infrastructure that scales compute access globally. [\[source\]](#)

EDUCATION & HUMAN CAPACITY

The 30-Point Gap — What Happens When Students Teach Themselves the Skills Their Institutions Promised

Thirty percentage points separate what graduating seniors say they can do with AI tools and what their employers say they are seeing. NACE's employer survey of 185 organizations, fielded through mid-March 2026, found hiring managers rating new graduates' AI proficiency well below what those graduates self-report. Handshake's Class of 2026 survey of 1,248 seniors across nearly 500 institutions adds the human figure: 85% of seniors now use AI tools, up 31 points in two years, but only 28% say their institution meaningfully integrated AI into their program.

The gap reaches well beyond the computer science pipeline — AI proficiency is now a listed requirement or strong preference in entry-level roles across media, financial services, healthcare administration, and logistics.

Why it matters: The institution had four years with this cohort. The students carrying the skills gap into the labor market are largely carrying it alone — and the question for career services and curriculum committees is whether institutions catch up before students conclude the institution isn't where they learn what matters.

Source: [Inside Higher Ed](#) | [NACE](#)

ALSO THIS WEEK

- UNESCO's Global Skills Academy / AI EmpowerED programme targets 500,000 teachers and students trained and credentialed by December 2026 across six countries. [\[source\]](#)

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Midjourney Wants Hollywood's AI Secrets. The Fight Could Decide What "Fair Use" Means in Court.

Disney, Universal, and Warner Bros. sued Midjourney last year, accusing the AI image generator of training on their copyrighted characters without permission. Now Midjourney is turning the case around — asking Judge John Kronstadt to force the studios to disclose how they use AI internally, arguing that if the plaintiffs are training their own tools on unlicensed material for

storyboarding and production work, that undercuts their claim that such training is a rights violation rather than industry custom.

A magistrate judge had limited the studios' disclosure obligations to consumer-facing tools; Midjourney's motion, filed this week, asks the court to widen that to internal production use.

Why it matters: For the writers, illustrators, and below-the-line workers who negotiated AI protections into their WGA and SAG-AFTRA contracts, the discovery fight may reveal whether those protections cover the parts of the pipeline — pre-production, concept art, post — where AI tools have reportedly spread furthest.

Source: [Variety](#)

GLOBAL SIGNALS / GOVERNANCE

The EU Moves to Triple Data Center Capacity and Build Its Own AI Stack — Germany Has Already Started

On June 3, the European Commission published its Technological Sovereignty Package, naming what Brussels now acknowledges openly: the EU produces roughly 10% of global semiconductors and has handed roughly 70% of its cloud market to three US companies. The package proposes tripling EU data center capacity within five to seven years.

Germany didn't wait. In May, the federal government awarded a €250 million contract for the "Deutschland-Stack" — a sovereign AI platform for federal agencies — to Deutsche Telekom's T-Systems and SAP, under procurement rules built around zero-trust design and BSI-certified infrastructure.

Why it matters: For governments in the Global South writing their own AI sovereignty strategies, the Deutschland-Stack tender is now the most detailed public template available for what "sovereignty as binding procurement criteria" actually looks like in practice.

Source: [European Commission](#) | [T-Systems](#)

ALSO THIS WEEK

- The UN's first Global Dialogue on AI Governance convened in Geneva July 6–7; Guterres named the AI divide a "sovereignty gap" and previewed a proposed Global Fund for AI. [\[source\]](#)

OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

Africa's AI Founders Have Until July 20 to Apply for MEST's Next Cohort

MEST Africa's AI Startup Program is now accepting applications for its second cohort, closing July 20, 2026. The fully-sponsored, up-to-12-month program brings selected founders from Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and Kenya to Accra for seven months of intensive training — forming teams, validating AI business ideas, and building a deployable product alongside practitioners from Google, Meta, and OpenAI.

The strongest ventures continue into a four-month incubation phase focused on customer acquisition and scaling, with the chance to pitch for up to \$100,000 in pre-seed investment from the MEST portfolio.

Why it matters: For a founder with a real AI idea and no funded path to build it, this is one of the few fully-sponsored routes on the continent from concept to a pre-seed pitch — and the window to apply closes in days, not months.

Source: [MEST AI Startup Program](#)

ONE SIGNAL WE ARE WATCHING

Compute access is the new terms of dependency. Kenya's grid stalled a hyperscale data center before diplomacy could finish the deal. Africa's sovereignty declarations are colliding with the physics of foreign-financed compute. The EU is naming its own dependency and legislating a way out — and Germany's Deutschland-Stack shows what sovereignty looks like as procurement criteria rather than policy language. The MEST application window — open through July 20 — is one of the few places this week where that argument is being answered with action rather than analysis.

AI for All Global Brief is a publication of Tomorrow Foundation.