



Response to the Call for Input to the Elements Paper of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4)

Association for Computing Machinery (ACM)

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A. Introduction

This submission from the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) responds to the call for inputs issued by the Co-Facilitators of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4). As the world's largest scientific and educational computing society, ACM is committed to advancing computing as a transformative tool for addressing global challenges. In the context of Financing for Development (FfD), ACM's perspective centers on the pivotal role of digital science, technology, and innovation (STI) in driving sustainable development and the reform of the global financial system.

The FfD4, to be held in Seville, Spain from June 30 to July 3, 2025, offers an opportunity to develop comprehensive financing strategies that leverage technological advancements. ACM submits the following recommendations to be considered by the Conference with the aim to shape financing policies that promote inclusivity, sustainability, and global digital equity.

B. A Global Financing Framework (Including Cross-Cutting Issues)

The Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) must develop a comprehensive and forward-looking global financing framework that recognizes the integral role of technology in modern economies. ACM emphasizes the following cross-cutting issues:

Inequities in Access to Finance and Technology: ACM emphasizes the importance of digital inclusion as a fundamental cross-cutting issue. Many Countries in Special Situations (CSS) face barriers in accessing both financial resources and technology. ACM urges FfD4 to focus on reducing the digital divide by fostering equitable access to digital infrastructure, enabling the development of financial technologies (fintech), and promoting access to affordable digital financial services.

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Financing: ACM emphasizes the need for financing models that harness technologies that themselves promote sustainability rather than deplete resources. ACM recommends that the FfD4 Conference prioritizes the development of energy-efficient systems, renewable energy-powered infrastructure,



and innovations in circular economy models where technology can be reused or recycled. Sustainable technologies, such as AI-driven environmental monitoring, can support climate resilience by enabling smarter decision-making. Green finance and climate-resilience funding should support, among other things, the development of green computing and foster global partnerships to scale these solutions. By promoting sustainable technology, digital transformation can align with long-term environmental goals and climate action.

Digital Financial Inclusion: The rapid evolution of fintech presents a critical opportunity to expand financial inclusion globally. ACM urges FfD4 to promote policies that support the development and deployment of fintech solutions to reach underserved populations, while ensuring regulatory frameworks are in place to protect consumers and ensure financial stability.

C. Action Areas

a. Domestic Public Resources

ACM advocates for financing towards the modernization of domestic financial systems through digital transformation. For instance, the development and use of decentralized distributed ledger technologies such as blockchain or other similar digital tools improve transparency, efficiency, and accountability in tax collection and public resource management. ACM strongly encourages technologies that prioritize human well-being and enhance human-driven decision-making. By focusing on improving public services and outcomes for citizens, these technologies can reduce inefficiencies, enhance fiscal management, and ensure resources are used in ways that promote the well-being of all people.

b. Domestic and International Private Business and Finance

To mobilize private resources for sustainable development, it is essential to develop investment frameworks that align private sector incentives with the SDGs. ACM recommends the adoption of digital platforms that facilitate ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) investments. Such platforms can improve transparency and streamline investment processes, enabling more private capital to flow toward sustainable projects in regions in special situations. Furthermore, it is critical that these solutions prioritize digital inclusion by reducing the digital divide, ensuring that underserved populations have access to the financial opportunities and benefits provided by these platforms. By making inclusion a core objective, these platforms can help extend the reach of private investments to those who need them most, fostering equitable growth and development.



c. International Development Cooperation

International cooperation must focus on capacity building in the digital and technological domains. ACM stresses the importance of technology transfer, knowledge sharing, and investments in digital infrastructure, which will enable CSS to leapfrog traditional development obstacles. Moreover, development cooperation should prioritize digital education, improving the technological skills needed to foster innovation at local levels.

d. International Trade as an Engine for Development

ACM urges bold action to ensure that digital trade, e-commerce, and the digital economy become powerful engines for human well-being and sustainable and inclusive growth in Countries in Special Situations. Policies must make it a priority to facilitate digital trade by investing in and expanding access to affordable digital infrastructure and secure payment systems and fostering regulatory environments conducive to cross-border e-commerce. They should also ensure that these technologies are accessible to all, especially in CSS, bridge inequalities, empower small businesses and connect them to global markets, and foster entrepreneurship in marginalized communities.

e. Debt and Debt Sustainability

ACM advocates for innovative financing instruments such as debt-for-technology swaps and debt-for-climate swaps, which allow countries to reduce their debt burden while simultaneously investing in crucial areas like digital transformation and climate adaptation. Additionally, countries in special situations should be equipped with digital tools to better manage and monitor their debt portfolios, reducing the risk of future crises.

f. Addressing Systemic Issues

ACM calls for a transformative overhaul of the international financial architecture, prioritizing inclusivity, resilience, and the well-being of all people, especially in countries in special situations. Rather than simply adopting AI and big data just for efficiency, these technologies must be leveraged to create financial systems that are inherently equitable and people centric. By using digital tools to democratize access to financial services, improve transparency, and anticipate global crises, financial systems can be built that not only manage risk but actively reduce inequality. Possibly by enhancing the role of multilateral development banks (MDBs), the future of finance must serve as a



vehicle for global solidarity, empowering vulnerable populations and ensuring that resilience is shared across borders.

g. Science, Technology, Innovation, and Capacity Building

STI must be central to the FfD agenda, not just as a tool for growth, but also as a driver of human-centered development. ACM emphasizes the need for international cooperation in building technological capacity in countries in special situations, Investments in STI should focus on reducing the digital divide by fostering digital education that reaches marginalized communities, creating innovation ecosystems that empower local talent, and establishing partnerships with academic and research institutions to drive equitable progress. By promoting digital literacy and inclusive innovation, countries in special situations can develop sustainable, technology-enabled, human-driven growth paths aligned with the SDGs.

D. Emerging Issues

1. Digital Finance and Cybersecurity

As digital financial services expand, there is a growing need for robust cybersecurity measures to protect users and maintain trust in digital platforms. ACM calls for global collaboration to establish strong, inclusive cybersecurity standards and practices that protect financial systems from cyber threats, safeguard financial systems, and ensure that all people can trust and safely access digital financial services. Cybersecurity must be viewed as a fundamental enabler of digital (financial) inclusion, helping to bridge gaps in trust and access, while maintaining the stability of global financial networks.

2. Artificial Intelligence and Automation

While AI and automation offer significant potential to revolutionize industries and enhance efficiency, they also risk exacerbating inequalities, particularly in sectors vulnerable to job displacement. ACM recommends that financing strategies include provisions for workforce reskilling and equitable access to opportunities. AI must be deployed responsibly, particularly in sectors that are highly susceptible to automation, ensuring that no one is left behind in the shift to a digital economy. This calls for financing policies that support workers, particularly in least developed countries (LDCs) and vulnerable groups, by providing access to new skills, new opportunities, and new pathways to meaningful employment.

In alignment with global efforts to govern AI for the benefit of humanity, ACM emphasizes the financing strategies should be aligned with robust global governance frameworks that ensure AI development and deployment are ethical, inclusive, and



transparent. ACM urges FfD4 to consider the UN AI advisory body's call for international dialog on global AI governance and ensure the Financing for Development dialog proceeds in parallel. Responsible use of AI should be a common goal for both dialog, to prevent harm, foster inclusivity, and create a future where AI serves the well-being of all people.

3. *Climate Change and Financing for Resilience*

As climate-related risks intensify, there is an urgent need for financing mechanisms that prioritize climate resilience. ACM advocates for the use of digital tools, such as AI-driven climate risk models and other digital tools, to help countries develop more precise, inclusive, and responsive climate adaptation strategies. However, while these technologies offer significant benefits, it is essential to also address their sustainability risks, such as energy consumption, resource use, and potential environmental impacts. These tools must be developed and deployed in ways that minimize their ecological footprint, ensuring they do not contribute to the very climate challenges they aim to solve, especially in countries most affected by climate change. ACM advocates to prioritize financing mechanisms that not only support these technologies but also ensure they are also aligned with a broader commitment to reducing inequality and empowering the most vulnerable populations to respond effectively to climate risks.

E. *Data, Monitoring, and Follow-up*

Effective monitoring and follow-up are crucial for ensuring accountability in financing for development. Additionally, ACM recommends the establishment of a global data-sharing platform that facilitates the exchange of best practices, lessons learned, and financial data among countries. This platform could be supported by international organizations and MDBs, providing countries in special situations with technical assistance to modernize their data collection and management systems.

F. *Overarching Reflections*

The FfD4 Conference is a critical moment to align global financing strategies with the rapidly evolving digital and technological landscape. ACM strongly believes that science, technology, and innovation must be at the core of any sustainable financing framework. The integration of STI into financing for development will enable countries to overcome resource limitations, modernize their economies, and ensure that the benefits of technological advancement are equitably shared.



ACM stands ready to contribute to these efforts and to support the United Nations and its Member States in shaping a more inclusive, resilient, and technology-driven global financial system. The Conference presents an opportunity not only to address existing financing challenges but also to foster the innovation and collaboration needed to achieve the SDGs by 2030 and beyond.

This submission reflects the views of the Association for Computing Machinery and is intended to provide substantive recommendations to inform the elements paper for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Seville, Spain. ACM hopes these insights will contribute to the successful deliberations and outcomes of the Conference.