# World Bank backs mobile-friendly AI for growth

LEVEL B1


Photo: Fajar Herlambang STUDIO / Unsplash

## I. WARM-UP

1. How do people in your country use mobile phones for work or study?
2. What new technology has helped your community recently? How?
3. What skills will young people need for future jobs?

## II. KEY VOCABULARY

**connectivity**
the ability of a device to connect to the internet or a network

**local**
belonging to or used in a particular place or community

**adopt**
to start using an idea, product or way of working

**infrastructure**
basic systems like electricity and internet that a country needs

**collaborate**
to work together with other people or groups

**rural**
relating to the countryside rather than a town or city

**eliminate**
to remove something completely

**capital**
money used to start or grow projects or businesses

## III. READING

The World Bank has been urging developing countries to build "small AI" models that run on mobile phones with low connectivity and in local languages. Paschal Donohoe, the Bank's chief knowledge officer, says such tools could speed up development from centuries to decades if they meet local needs.

In the World Bank's AgriConnect scheme, farmers in India need soil analysis in their own language; phone-based small AI can help. He says the Bank could collaborate with governments and the private sector. At meetings in Bangkok last week, the World Bank and the IMF discussed jobs and growth.

The IMF's Kristalina Georgieva said countries need electricity, digital infrastructure and safety so people can adopt it. The Bank noted many rural schools in sub-Saharan Africa lack electricity and reliable internet.

She warned that, over time, 40% of jobs may be augmented or eliminated, with young people most at risk. In the past year, the Bank has mobilised $120bn of private capital using guarantees.

*Reading text adapted from reporting by* **The Guardian***: "World Bank says 'small AI' could transform...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

## IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of AI does the World Bank want countries to build?
2. Where did the World Bank and the IMF meet last week?
3. How could small AI help Indian farmers in the AgriConnect scheme?
4. What conditions did Kristalina Georgieva say are needed for AI adoption?
5. What share of jobs may be changed or removed by AI over time?

## V. DISCUSSION

1. Could small AI on phones help people where you live? How?
2. What risks of AI should governments prepare for first?
3. Where is connectivity or electricity still a problem near you?
4. Should public or private capital lead new AI projects? Why?

## VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

**Present perfect continuous**

Use have/has + been + verb-ing for actions that started before now and continue or are happening around now. Common signals: for, since, this week, lately.

> *"The World Bank* **has been urging** *developing countries to build small AI models."*
>
> *"Many rural schools* **have been struggling** *without power or internet."*

## VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

**Complete each sentence with the present perfect continuous form.**

1. Farmers (seek) ___ advice in their language since 2020. _____
2. Officials (collaborate) ___ with firms all week. _____
3. Young people (worry) ___ about AI and jobs lately. _____
4. Teams (build) ___ small AI for local needs for years. _____
5. A farmer (learn) ___ to use phone AI lately. _____

# Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Fajar Herlambang STUDIO / Unsplash

## I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 10 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10–12 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach or check: connectivity, adopt, infrastructure, collaborate, rural, eliminate. Highlight the idea of small AI running offline or with weak signals.
- Run the reading twice: first for gist (What is small AI?), then for detail (who, where, numbers). For discussion, start in pairs so quieter students can form ideas before a whole-class share.
- Differentiation: stronger students can summarise one paragraph in two sentences; others underline facts and circle opinions. Optional extension asks for one concrete local use of small AI.

## II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit local examples first, then push for specific tasks a phone app could do.
2. List risks on the board and ask students to rank their top two with reasons.
3. Have students map their area and mark places with weak signal or power cuts.
4. Poll the class, then pair opposite views to defend the other side for one minute.

## III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Writing:** In pairs, draft a 70-word message explaining small AI to farmers in AgriConnect.

**Debate:** Groups prepare and deliver 90-second cases for or against public funding for small AI.

## IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

**Comprehension questions:** short factual answers from the text.

**Grammar exercise:** Present perfect continuous

**Discussion:** open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

# Answer Key

**TEACHERS ONLY**

These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


Photo: Fajar Herlambang STUDIO / Unsplash

## IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of AI does the World Bank want countries to build?
   Small AI models that run on phones with low connectivity and use local languages.
2. Where did the World Bank and the IMF meet last week?
   In Bangkok, Thailand.
3. How could small AI help Indian farmers in the AgriConnect scheme?
   By giving soil analysis in farmers' own languages on their phones.
4. What conditions did Kristalina Georgieva say are needed for AI adoption?
   Electricity, digital infrastructure and safety so people can adopt it.
5. What share of jobs may be changed or removed by AI over time?
   About 40% of jobs.

## V. DISCUSSION

**Open answers.** Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

## VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

**Key point:** Use have/has + been + verb-ing for actions that started before now and continue or are happening around now. Common signals: for, since, this week, lately. (Example 2 constructed.)

> *"The World Bank* **has been urging** *developing countries to build small AI models."*
>
> *"Many rural schools* **have been struggling** *without power or internet."*

## VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with the present perfect continuous form.

1. Farmers ___ advice in their language since 2020. **have been seeking**
2. Officials ___ with firms all week. **have been collaborating**
3. Young people ___ about AI and jobs lately. **have been worrying**
4. Teams ___ small AI for local needs for years. **have been building**
5. A farmer ___ to use phone AI lately. **has been learning**