



# Dispatches from the Digital Planet

August 2020

## #DigitalPlanet

2020 is proving to be an eventful year around the globe—and on our digital planet. COVID-19 changed the nature of work, home life, and commerce. It brought to the fore pre-existing inequalities and inequities, underscored the need for more digitally connected communities, and prompted policymakers to turn pronouncements and promises into action.

We touch upon all these issues in this Dispatch - from a look into the Social Distance Readiness of 42 countries, to an exploration of the uneven state of the United States. We consider the leapfrog potential of 6 African countries and examine the paradox of India's digital progress.

We are also delighted to announce IDEA 2030: Imagining a Digital Economy for All, a new research initiative with support from the Mastercard Impact Fund, which brings together two increasingly important issues of our time: the need for inclusive growth and recovery, and the pervasiveness of digital technology.



Finally, we hope you will check out the newest addition to our website: “Off the Charts,” a new data visualization series showcasing our latest work.

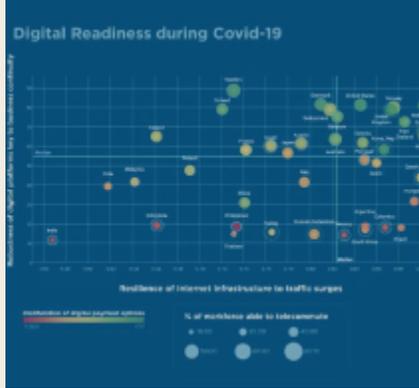
COVID-19 is serving as an accelerating force for many trends; what do you think are the most overlooked realities of the emerging new normal? [Let us know on Twitter](#)

### **Bhaskar Chakravorti**

Dean of Global Business, The Fletcher School  
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COVID-19 RAPID RESPONSE  
RESEARCH





## How prepared are these 42 countries for the Post-Pandemic, Socially Distant Digital Economy?

A study of digital preparedness and social distance readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the first research projects to come out of the three-year initiative “IDEA 2030: Imagining a Digital Economy for All.”

Funded by the Mastercard Impact Fund, in collaboration with the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, this research evaluates data from 42 countries. Watch the 3-minute summary video.

## ‘Off The Charts’: A data series.

The digital world is in constant flux. Get regular glimpses of it here.



## The African Leapfrog Index:

Explore an analysis of 6 African countries’ digital opportunities.



## Webinar out-takes.

How the Pandemic lays bare America’s Coastal - Heartland gap.



## Report: India’s digital turn in comparison with its G20 peers

How can India unlock its dividend trifecta, and leverage its digital economy? Our latest research, generously funded by The Rockefeller Foundation, aims to answer how India can translate digital momentum into job creation and recovery beyond the pandemic.

## Video: Does Working from Home Actually Work?

Some employees who work from home are more productive, but it isn't for everyone, argues Bhaskar Chakravorti,



## In the News

**Why Silicon Valley's biggest companies are investing billions in India** | CNN Business

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**Researchers track spread of virus through social distancing** | ABC Action News

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**ICE's international student ban is a politicized pandemic response that hurts America: Bhaskar Chakravorti** | NBC News

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**Lessons from 6 countries on how to end coronavirus lockdowns: Bhaskar Chakravorti** | Business Insider

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**Digital contact tracing is doomed in the United States: Bhaskar Chakravorti** | Fast Company

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**Why It's So Hard for Users to Control Their Data: Bhaskar Chakravorti** | Harvard Business Review

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**Google and Twitter Are Right. Workers Should Stay Home.** | Bloomberg

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**34 days of pandemic: Inside Trump's desperate attempts to reopen America** | Washington Post

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**Who is Practicing Social Distancing Best?** | NBC10 Boston

## About Digital Planet

Digital Planet is an interdisciplinary research initiative of The Fletcher School's Institute for Business in the Global Context (IBGC) dedicated to understanding the impact of digital innovation on the world and providing actionable insights for policymakers, businesses, investors, and innovators.

### Meet the Team

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