Between 1820 and 2002, the contribution of between-country inequality to global inequality rose from 28% to 85%.

The great divides between countries that we see today started with the onset of the first industrial revolution. Since then, every spurt of progress was associated with sharper inequality between countries.

Inequality has many dimensions and could be impacted by many factors. One of them is the impact of technological revolutions. How the new technological wave affects inequalities in developing countries – and inequalities between countries – will depend on national policies.

Governments can shape the policy environment and build domestic productive and innovation capacities so as to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits – achieving innovation with equity.

Frontier technologies have already brought enormous benefits, but rapid advances can have serious downsides if they outpace the ability of societies to adapt. The implications could be serious for developing countries – if poor communities and countries are either overwhelmed or simply left behind.

The outcomes for one generation affect the opportunities for the next – resulting in intergenerational transmission of inequalities.