

# Benchmarking Public Large Language Models in Low-resource Languages

Anonymous EMNLP submission

## Abstract

In recent years, Large Language Models have demonstrated impressive performances, particularly in zero-shot and few-shot learning across various languages. However, these models are often evaluated in English or high-resource languages, with limited focus on low-resource languages. This study benchmarks public LLMs which are commonly used in HuggingFace, including XGLM, Falcon, Llama, mT5-base, BLOOM, Mistral, Pegasus-Xsum, and the fine-tuned variants of mT5 and T5, on benchmark datasets in different low-resource languages. We conducted our experiments to evaluate the performance of these models across three natural language processing tasks: machine translation, text summarization, and question answering. Our evaluation results show a significant variability in performance, highlighting both the strengths and limitations of current multilingual large language models when applied to low-resource languages. Specifically, we observed that language models tend to perform better on languages with Latin alphabet, which is the most widely used in alphabetic writing, compared to those with non-Latin scripts, highlighting the need for more balanced training data.

## 1 Introduction

Large Language Models (LLMs) have demonstrated exceptional performance across various NLP tasks. Several studies indicate that providing LLMs with specific task instructions (e.g., summarizing or translating text) significantly enhances their capabilities (Muennighoff et al., 2023). This approach, known as instruction tuning, has been shown to improve performance in both English and multilingual contexts (Shaham et al., 2024; Wu and Dredze, 2019). Despite significant advancements in LLMs, most models remain English-centric, focusing primarily on English tasks (Brown et al., 2020). This limitation makes them less effective in multilingual settings, particularly in low-resource

scenarios (Zhang et al., 2020a). Additionally, there is a lack of evaluation studies for public LLMs across different NLP tasks.

Existing evaluation studies have been recently proposed. This is the case of (Chang et al., 2023) who present a comprehensive study of benchmarking LLMs related to NLP tasks, methods and benchmarks, which are commonly used to assess the performance of LLMs in an English setting; To move beyond the English language, (Lai et al., 2023a) evaluate ChatGPT on 7 different tasks, covering 37 diverse languages with high, medium, low and extremely low-resources. However, these evaluation studies highlight the performance of LLMs either on English setting or using non public LLMs.

Low-resource languages (LRLs) are languages with limited linguistic resources and data. They often lack training datasets and necessitate pre-training techniques necessary to develop accurate NLP systems. To learn language patterns, LLMs require massive amounts of training data. However, LRLs still lack training data, making it challenging for LLMs, and generating this data can result in weaker LLM training for LRLs. In addition, LRLs are more complex than high-resource languages due to their unique vocabularies, grammatical structures, and linguistic features, making it difficult for LLMs to generate precise translation. Biases and errors in the training data can further reinforce misconceptions in LRL translations.

In this study, we evaluate popular public LLMs on 5 medium-resource languages (namely: *Hindi, Indonesian, Afrikaans, Bengali and Tamil*), and 11 LRLs (namely: *Amharic, Hausa, Igbo, Nepali, Somali, Swahili, Tigrinya, Telugu, Xhosa, Yoruba, and Zulu*) (Joshi et al., 2020) linked to different language Families. The distribution of our selected language families are displays in Figure 3. To conduct our experiments, we select 9 public LLMs: Llama, BLOOM, mT5 (fine-tuned), mT5-base, XGLM, Pegasus-XSum, T5 (fine-tuned), Fal-

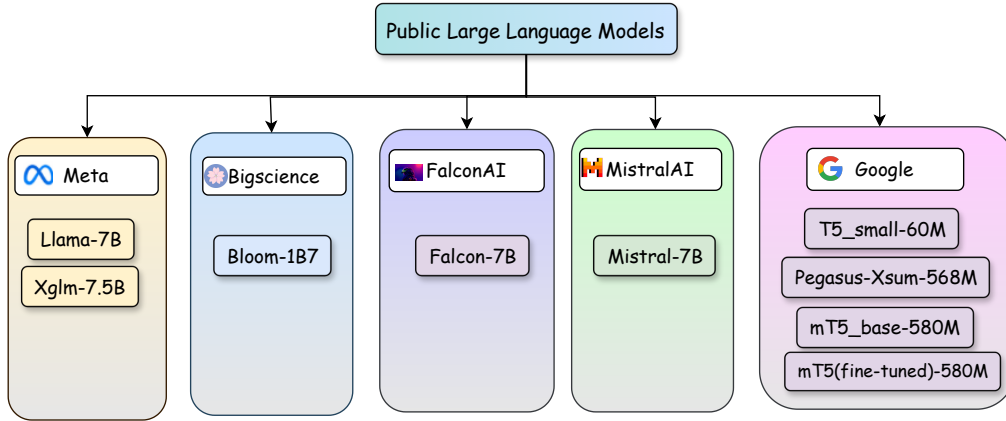


Figure 1: Public Large Language Models used in our evaluation study.

con, Mistral as shown in Figure 1. To underline the performance of these mLLMs particularly on common NLP tasks, we carried out our experiments on 3 NLP tasks: Machine Translation, Text Summarization and Question Answering.

Through our evaluation study, we designed our experiments to mainly answer the research question: *How well do the public LLMs perform in challenging NLP tasks (e.g., text summarization) across low-resource languages.* To answer this question, we included in our experiment different NLP tasks such as machine translation, abstractive text summarization and question answering. Furthermore, we assess the performance of these models on benchmark datasets using different evaluation metrics Our evaluation results demonstrate that LLMs trained on a balanced corpus which covers a diverse set of languages, and models fine-tuned on a few sets of samples tend to perform well while evaluated on languages with Latin scripts compared with languages with non-Latin scripts. We summarize the main contributions of this paper as follows:

- We provide a comprehensive evaluation of 9 LLMs on different NLP tasks across 16 low-resource languages.
- The evaluation results highlight the challenges of benchmarking LLMs on low-resource languages. Specifically, we observed that LLMs tend to perform better on languages with Latin alphabet, which is the most widely used in alphabetic writing, compared to those with non-Latin scripts.

In the following sections, we will discuss LLMs, NLP tasks, benchmark datasets selected for our

experiments, the evaluation methodology and the experimental results. We start by discussing related works regarding benchmarking LLMs and multilingual benchmarks. Furthermore, we provide an overview of the different tasks, LLMs and multilingual benchmarks chosen for our evaluation, and describe the evaluation strategy and the experiments conducted in our study.

## 2 Related Works

In this section, we provide an overview of the related LLMs evaluation studies, specifically for *mLLMs* and *LRLs*.

### 2.1 Evaluation of Multilingual LLMs

Recent studies focus on creating and evaluating benchmarks (including datasets and frameworks) for LLMs in different domains. For example, in the medical domain, [Alonso et al. \(2024\)](#) proposed MedExpQA, the first multilingual benchmark based on medical exams to assess LLMs in medical question answering, demonstrating its performance in only four high-resource languages. Additionally, [Lai et al., 2023b](#) introduces Okapi, a benchmark dataset used to evaluate multilingual instruction-tuned LLMs with reinforcement learning from human feedback for three distinct tasks across 26 languages. [Ahuja et al., 2023](#) introduces MEGA, the first comprehensive benchmarking of generative LLMs, which evaluates models on standard NLP benchmarks, covering 16 NLP datasets across 70 topologically diverse languages. [Liu et al. \(2024\)](#) investigate the importance of translation with LLMs for a variety of scenarios, including multilingual NLP tasks and real-world multilingual user queries to enhance performance in mul-

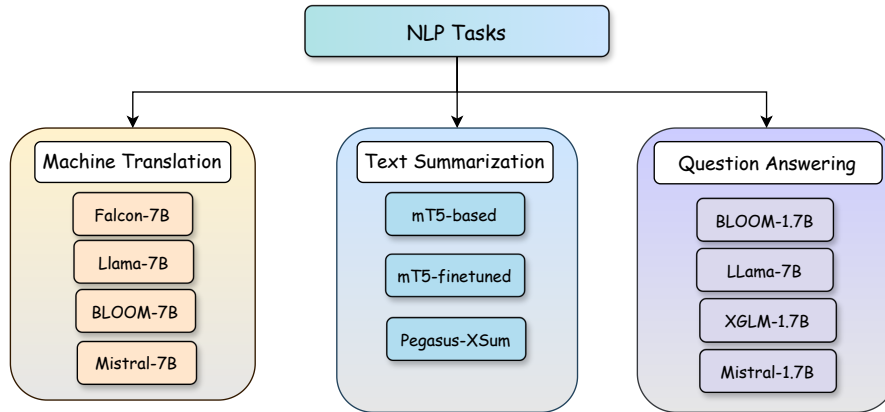


Figure 2: Tasks used in our evaluation study

tilingual NLP tasks with English-centric language models. Srivastava et al. (2023) introduced BIG-bench, which consists of 204 tasks largely related to translation to evaluate the behavior of LLMs. Further, Liang et al. (2023) proposed HELM, a holistic evaluation of 30 language models on 42 scenarios and 7 metrics, by defining a taxonomy of scenarios and metrics that span the space of LLM evaluation. However, these scenarios focused on datasets in high-resource languages, such as standard English or its dialects. Consequently, these LLMs can also exhibit grammatical structure bias, where structures from higher-resource languages influence LRLs.

## 2.2 Evaluation of Low-resource Languages

Evaluation methodologies have shown great performance on high-resources languages but failed to generalize on LRLs, particularly on languages with non-Latin scripts (Bang et al., 2023). Moreover, the performance of LLMs, such as ChatGPT, GPT-3.5 and BLOOMZ, have been evaluated, and the translation capabilities of these models perform well in high-resource languages but are limited in LRLs. This is because a larger vocabulary is needed to represent tokens in many languages, and a lack of language standardization leading to variations in grammar, vocabulary. and writing systems is observed across languages. To overcome these challenges, NLP communities have been developing benchmarks covering specific language families, such as IndicXTREME (Doddapaneni et al., 2023) for Indian languages, MasakhaNER (Adelani et al., 2021) for African languages, and IndoNLU (Wilie et al., 2020) for Indonesian languages.

Despite the overall progress in benchmarking

LLMs, most works focus on evaluating non public LLMs either on high-resource scenarios or on non-English languages in general by highlighting a few NLP tasks. In this study, we benchmark public LLMs for three common NLP tasks—Machine Translation (MT), Text Summarization (TS) and Question Answering (QA)—focusing particularly on LRLs. We use three multilingual benchmark datasets: FLORES-101, XL-SUM, and OKAPI.

## 3 Tasks

### 3.1 Machine Translation

Machine Translation (MT) is a task of translating text in one language to another language without human intervention. For LRLs, MT poses significant challenges due to the lack of parallel data. Recent studies have highlighted the remarkable multilingual translation capabilities of very LLMs like GPT-4 for LRLs (Hendy et al., 2023; Garcia et al., 2023), without requiring explicit fine-tuning. On the other hand, medium-size LLMs such as XGLM have demonstrated superior performance compared to supervised state-of-the-art models using only few-shot examples (Lin et al., 2022a).

In our study, we employ publicly available LLMs such as Llama, Falcon, BLOOM, Mistral and XGLM for evaluating translation text from English to various LRLs and vice-versa. We aim to explore their potential application of these public models for improving MT quality, specially for LRLs.

### 3.2 Text Summarization

Text summarization (TS) is the process of long text into concise summaries that capture the most salient information. There are two types of text

Table 1: We provide a few selected LRLs used for our evaluation experiments including language code, language script, language family and total numbers of speakers.

	Iso-639-3	Language	Script	Language Family	Speakers
Medium	afr	Afrikaans	Latin	Indo-European-Germanic	8M
	ben	Bengali	Bengali	Indo-European-Indo-Aryan	282.9M
	ind	Indonesian	Latin	Austronesian	225M
	hin	Hindi	Devanagari	Indo-European-Indo-Aryan	571M
	tam	Tamil	Tamil	Dravidian	89.4M
Low	amh	Amharic	Ge'ez	Afro-Asiatic	57M
	hau	Hausa	Latin	Afro-Asiatic	77M
	ibo	Igbo	Latin	Atlantic-Congo	31M
	ne	Nepali	Devanagari	Indo-European-Indo-Aryan	32M
	som	Somali	Latin	Afro-Asiatic	22M
	swh	Swahili	Latin	Atlantic-Congo	200M
	tir	Tigrinya	Ge'ez	Afro-Asiatic	7M
	tel	Telugu	Telugu	Dravidian	96M
	xho	Xhosa	Latin	Atlantic-Congo	19M
	yor	Yoruba	Latin	Atlantic-Congo	46M
	zul	Zulu	Latin	Atlantic-Congo	11M

summarization: extractive summarization, which aims to select the most significant phrases from the original text as a final summarize; abstractive summarize that generates concise and human-like sentences based on the original (Liu et al., 2017), (Raposo et al., 2022), (Zhang et al., 2020b). In our study, we focus on the later one, since it is one of the most challenging NLP tasks and requires advanced abilities, such as understanding long texts and generating coherent text. Recently, several fine-tuned LLMs for abstractive summarization have been proposed, however most of them are for monolingual (e.g., English) (Askari et al., 2024), (Zhang et al., 2023). For this task, we evaluate the publicly available models such as mT5-base, mT5 fine-tuned on XLSum dataset, Pegasus-Xsum and the fine-tuned version of T5-small on benchmark datasets in different LRLs. Our goal is to explore the capabilities of these LLMs in generating coherent summaries without prior fine-tuning for these languages.

### 3.3 Question Answering

Question Answering (QA) systems are designed to interpret and answer queries in natural language. Recently, various QA models and datasets have been developed to accomplish enable machines understand the context of queries and precisely answer them (Rajpurkar et al., 2016) (Yang et al., 2015), (Campese et al., 2023). However, these datasets pose unique challenges such as finding the answer span when the context and the problem are in different language. To address this issue,

researchers adopt recent advancements in LLMs to encode input text and use additional layers for classification and solving multilingual QA task (Lewis et al., 2020), (Clouatre et al., 2020), (Yao et al., 2019), (Wang et al., 2020). In our study, we focus on multilingual QA task since it is a crucial step towards cross-lingual machine comprehension in LRLs. We use in our study different public multilingual LLMs, namely BLOOM, Llama, Mistral and XGLM, and evaluate them on different benchmark datasets.

## 4 Multilingual Large Language Models

Our study benchmarks different LLMs based on two main criteria: i) they are publicly available, and ii) they can be employed in multilingual NLP tasks. The models included in our evaluation are BLOOM (Workshop et al., 2023), XGLM (Lin et al., 2022b), Falcon (Almazrouei et al., 2023), Llama (Touvron et al., 2023), Mistral (Jiang et al., 2023), and fine-tuned variants of mT5, mT5-base (Xue et al., 2021), T5 (Raffel et al., 2023), and Pegasus-XSum.

For **MT**, we employ the 7B of Falcon, a decoder-only model trained on 11 natural languages; the 7B of Llama, an encoder-decoder model trained on 20 natural languages; the 7B of BLOOM, a decoder-only model trained on 46 natural languages; the 7B of Mistral-v0.2, a decoder-only model trained on 6 natural languages; and the 1.7B of XGLM, a decoder-only model trained on 31 natural languages. For **TS**, we consider the fine-tuned variants of mT5 trained on 45 natural languages of

XL-Sum<sup>1</sup> dataset; mT5-base, a pretrained encoder-decoder model covering 101 natural languages; Pegasus-XSum, an encoder-decoder model fine-tuned on XSum (Narayan et al., 2018) dataset and also evaluated on low-resource summarization; the fine-tuned variants of T5 small, an encoder-decoder model which used a text-to-text approach. For QA, we use the 1B7 version of BLOOM which covers 48 natural languages; the 7B of Llama trained on 20 natural languages; the 1.7B of XGLM trained on 31 natural languages and the 7B of Mistral-v0.2 trained on 6 natural languages.

By comparing similar-sizes LLMs on different benchmark training data, we highlight their relative strengths and weaknesses in handling multilingual context, particularly for LRLs.

## 5 Benchmark Datasets

In this section, we present the benchmark datasets used in our evaluation study across NLP tasks: Machine Translation, Text Summarization, and Question Answering.

### Benchmark dataset for Machine Translation:

We employ FLORES 101<sup>2</sup> (Goyal et al., 2021) dataset, which contains 3k sentences extracted from English Wikipedia articles, converging various topics. The dataset is also designed for many-to-many evaluation, allowing for comprehensive evaluation of multilingual MT models across many source languages and many target languages, specially with low resources.

### Benchmark dataset for Text Summarization

We use XL-SUM<sup>3</sup>, a comprehensive dataset tailored for abstractive summarization, consisting of 1M professionally annotated article-summary pairs from BBC news articles (Hasan et al., 2021). The data was extracted using a set of carefully designed heuristics and covers 44 languages ranging in resource level from low to high.

### Benchmark dataset for Question Answering

To assess the performance of LLMs in multilingual questions answering, we employ three benchmark datasets, namely: AI2 Reasoning Challenge (ARC)<sup>4</sup> (Clark et al., 2018), Hellaswag<sup>5</sup> (Zellers

et al., 2019) and MMLU (Hendrycks et al., 2021) from Okapi<sup>6</sup> framework. These datasets have been translated from the original AI2 Reasoning Challenge (ARC), Hellaswag, and MMLU datasets in English into 26 languages, including LRLs, using ChatGPT.

## 6 Evaluation Methodology

Two significant techniques can be used for prompting LLMs for a given NLP task. First, prompting LLMs with in-context (Brown et al., 2020), which is a straightforward approach for leveraging LLMs in solving a given NLP task with few-shot examples given in the context without the need for training of fine-tuning. The second technique is instruction tuning (Mishra et al., 2022; Ouyang et al., 2022), which is a novel approach to guide LLMs, following instructions and solve new-tasks based on textual instructions provided in prompt. In our study, we use both techniques as follow:

- **Evaluating Machine Translation:** Following (Zhu et al., 2023), we adopt their learning strategy to evaluate the performance of LLMs in translation text across different languages. (*details can be found in section 7.1*). As an evaluation metric for all languages, we employ SacreBLEU<sup>7</sup> (Post, 2018), a variant of the BLEU score. SacreBLEU works with plain text and generates official WMT scores in comparison to the original BLEU score. Moreover, it facilitates the download and management of test sets throughout assessments.
- **Evaluating Text Summarization:** We fine-tuned the mT5 model as a baseline in the same manner as (Hasan et al., 2021) and then perform our experiments on abstractive summarization in two settings: (i) multilingual, and (ii) low-resource. We employ multilingual ROUGE Scoring<sup>8</sup>, a metric used to evaluate TS as an evaluation metric for all languages. The results indicate that there are four ROUGE type scores, namely: ROUGE-1 (unigram based scoring), ROUGE-2 (bigram based scoring), ROUGE-L (longest common sub-sequence based scoring), and ROUGE-Lsum (splits text using "\n"). We report the first three types of scores in Table 2.

<sup>1</sup><https://github.com/csebuetnlp/xl-sum>  
<sup>2</sup>[https://huggingface.co/datasets/gsarti/flores\\_101](https://huggingface.co/datasets/gsarti/flores_101)

<sup>3</sup><https://github.com/csebuetnlp/xl-sum>

<sup>4</sup><https://allenai.org/data/arc>

<sup>5</sup><https://allenai.org/data/hellaswag>

<sup>6</sup><https://github.com/nlp-uoregon/Okapi>

<sup>7</sup><https://github.com/mjpost/sacrebleu>

<sup>8</sup>[https://github.com/csebuetnlp/xl-sum/tree/master/multilingual\\_rouge\\_scoring](https://github.com/csebuetnlp/xl-sum/tree/master/multilingual_rouge_scoring)

- **Evaluating Question Answering:** We employ the Okapi<sup>9</sup> framework, an evaluation framework designed for instruction-tuned LLMs. We use the accuracy metric as our evaluation metric since it enables evaluation of all languages.

## 7 Experiments

In this section, we provide the details of our experiment setup for each NLP task (MT, TS and QA).

### 7.1 Multilingual LLMs Evaluation on MT

**Selected languages:** Among 101 languages in the FLORES-101 dataset, we selected a set of LRLs with Latin and non-Latin scripts that are relevant for MT tasks. These include *Amharic, Afrikaans, Indonesian, Hausa, Hindi, Igbo, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Xhosa, Yoruba, and Zulu*. Our selection criteria were based on linguistic diversity and the number of native speakers. Notably, some LRLs are spoken across multiple continents as shown in Table 1. For example, Hindi is mainly spoken in India but also has speakers in the United States and Canada. We also prioritize languages like *Xhosa, Zulu, Somali, and Tamil*, which have limited online resources, to evaluate the MT models’ capabilities with less data.

**Learning Strategy:** With 12 translation pairs, we report the performance of each LLM in MT using the following direction:  $X2E$ , which means translation from a source language to English and vice-versa  $E2X$ . We used the *OpenICL*<sup>10</sup> framework (Wu et al., 2023) as a foundation for all implementations.

**Results** Table 3 shows the performance of five LLMs on the FLORES-101 benchmark for MT. The models evaluated are: Falcon-7B (Almazrouei et al., 2023), Llama-7B (Touvron et al., 2023), BLOOM-7B (Workshop et al., 2023), Mistral-7B (Jiang et al., 2023), and XGLM-7.5B (Lin et al., 2022b), all of which have comparable parameter sizes. The evaluation results show that XGLM outperforms the other models in translating LRLs, specially Afrikaans, Indonesian, Hindi, Swahili and Tamil, with the most notable performance in Indonesian translations.

<sup>9</sup><https://github.com/nlp-uoregon/Okapi>

<sup>10</sup><https://github.com/Shark-NLP/OpenICL>

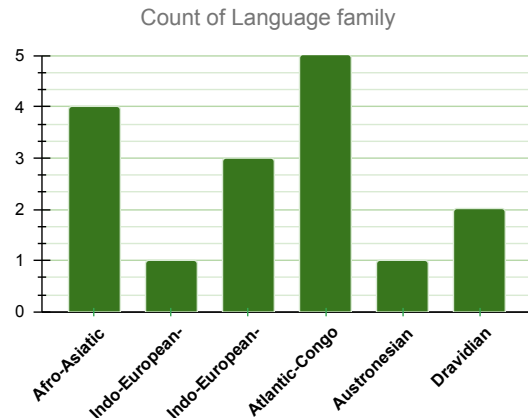


Figure 3: Distribution of language family used in our experiments.

**Performance analysis:** The superior performance of XGLM can be attributed to its training on a balanced multilingual corpus compared to the other models that are trained primarily on English datasets. This training approach allows XGLM to excel in few- and zero-shot learning across various tasks. Specifically, XGLM has demonstrated its effectiveness by surpassing the official supervised baseline in 45 directions and outperforming models like GPT-3 in 171 out of 182 translation directions with just 32 training examples on the FLORES-101 MT dataset.

### 7.2 Multilingual LLMs Evaluation on TS

**Selected Languages** For this abstractive text summarization, we chose 11 LRLs for our evaluation, namely: *Amharic, Bengali, Indonesian, Hausa, Hindi, Igbo, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Tigrinya, and Yoruba*. These languages were chosen based on different criteria: their presence on at least two continents, the number of speakers, their language families, and the availability of resources.

**Results** Table 2 shows the performance of different LLMs on summarizing text in the selected languages. In particular, we evaluate four multilingual LLMs on the XL-SUM dataset: i) mT5-multilingual-XLSum (a fine-tuned version of mT5) (Xue et al., 2021), ii) mT5-base (Xue et al., 2021), iii) Pegasus-XSum (Zhang et al., 2020b), and iv) T5 (fine-tuned) (Raffel et al., 2023). The evaluation results indicate that the mT5-multilingual-XLSum model consistently outperforms the other models across all languages. Specifically, mT5 variants show high performance on Hausa, while Pegasus-

Table 2: Summarization performance of LLMs over LRLs. Best results are in bold.

Language	mT5-multilingual-XLSum			mt5-base			Pegasus-xsum			T5-small (fine-tuned)		
	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-1	R-2	R-3
amh	20.65	8.01	18.69	3.58	0.82	3.45	0.13	0.0	0.13	0.13	0.0	0.13
ben	29.76	12.42	25.57	6.12	1.60	5.97	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ind	37.01	17.15	30.88	8.41	2.38	7.74	15.81	4.24	12.67	20.41	5.32	15.03
hau	<b>39.96</b>	<b>18.23</b>	<b>32.20</b>	<b>9.81</b>	1.98	<b>8.64</b>	18.93	4.11	13.83	<b>25.34</b>	<b>6.01</b>	<b>17.61</b>
hin	38.74	17.21	21.24	9.35	1.73	7.91	0.31	0.07	0.31	0.06	0.01	0.06
ibo	32.29	10.90	25.35	7.69	1.46	7.18	<b>21.86</b>	3.91	<b>16.17</b>	24.78	4.81	17.31
som	31.74	11.80	24.37	7.98	1.37	7.17	20.81	4.47	15.23	20.66	4.13	14.58
swh	37.72	18.00	31.17	9.49	2.64	8.65	16.80	3.77	12.78	22.57	5.57	16.34
tam	24.45	11.27	22.25	3.48	0.97	3.36	0.55	0.0	0.54	0.26	0.13	0.26
tin	25.98	8.99	22.05	5.95	1.08	5.56	0.52	0.0	0.51	0.11	0.09	0.11
yor	32.01	12.69	25.93	5.80	1.10	5.50	21.28	4.23	14.91	22.55	4.48	15.52
<b>AVG</b>	<b>31.84</b>	<b>13.33</b>	<b>25.42</b>	7.06	1.55	6.46	10.63	2.25	6.76	12.44	2.77	8.81

Table 3: Translation performance of LLMs over LRLs. Best results are in bold.

Language	Falcon-7B		Llama-7B		BLOOM-7B		Mistral-7B		XGLM-7.5B	
	BLEU <sub>X2E</sub>	BLEU <sub>E2X</sub>	BLEU <sub>X2E</sub>	BLEU <sub>E2X</sub>	BLEU <sub>X2E</sub>	BLEU <sub>E2X</sub>	BLEU <sub>X2E</sub>	BLEU <sub>E2X</sub>	BLEU <sub>X2E</sub>	BLEU <sub>E2X</sub>
amh	0.37	0.02	0.54	0.02	0.27	0.10	0.87	0.01	0.21	0.01
afr	11.18	5.93	15.79	9.37	6.85	3.45	16.00	9.78	<b>16.73</b>	3.91
ind	11.03	4.90	13.44	5.71	10.22	8.88	15.87	10.14	<b>34.32</b>	<b>30.38</b>
hau	1.80	0.96	1.90	1.20	1.57	0.67	2.97	2.04	2.60	0.45
hin	0.47	0.33	7.48	3.59	7.11	7.91	11.85	5.81	<b>24.19</b>	<b>18.40</b>
ibo	1.93	1.29	1.82	1.10	1.20	0.99	2.46	1.72	1.72	0.26
som	1.74	0.75	2.16	0.83	1.49	0.59	3.44	2.04	2.44	0.31
swh	2.47	1.04	2.65	1.27	7.03	4.14	5.32	2.56	<b>30.01</b>	<b>19.07</b>
tam	0.40	0.00	0.82	0.15	4.15	5.06	2.69	0.89	<b>14.86</b>	<b>9.00</b>
xho	2.05	1.45	2.28	1.16	1.39	0.62	3.72	2.19	1.86	0.94
yor	1.78	1.12	1.79	1.39	1.82	1.88	2.81	1.82	1.97	0.69
zul	1.61	1.10	1.87	0.94	0.98	0.45	2.92	1.87	1.49	0.74
<b>AVG</b>	3.06	1.57	4.37	2.22	3.10	2.89	5.91	3.40	<b>11.03</b>	<b>7.01</b>

Table 4: QA performance of LLMs over medium (ind, hin, tam, ben) and very LRLs (ne and tel). Best results for each task are in bold.

Language	BLOOM-1B (Acc)			Llama-7B (ACC)			XGLM-1.7B			Mistral-7B-v0.2		
	ARC	Hellaswag	MMLU	ARC	Hellaswag	MMLU	ARC	Hellaswag	MMLU	ARC	Hellaswag	MMLU
ind	23.76	33.49	25.14	19.23	29.77	27.93	20.85	31.70	24.60	<b>32.65</b>	<b>38.11</b>	<b>40.97</b>
hin	20.89	29.11	23.60	21.15	27.08	25.52	20.46	28.43	23.67	<b>22.17</b>	<b>29.29</b>	<b>30.41</b>
tam	<b>23.29</b>	25.76	24.07	20.67	25.53	24.67	22.15	25.38	23.51	21.45	<b>25.95</b>	<b>27.40</b>
ben	20.62	26.88	24.99	19.08	25.97	25.09	19.76	26.68	24.01	<b>21.13</b>	<b>27.43</b>	<b>29.06</b>
ne	20.02	26.59	23.91	21.81	26.46	24.54	<b>22.50</b>	25.23	23.63	22.16	<b>27.18</b>	<b>28.47</b>
tel	19.04	25.99	24.13	<b>20.26</b>	25.57	24.64	17.54	25.69	23.89	19.65	<b>26.04</b>	<b>26.66</b>

XSum demonstrates superior results on Igbo compared to other languages.

*Performance analysis:* The mT5-multilingual-XL-SUM is based on the mT5 checkpoint, which is fine-tuned on 45 languages, including our selected languages. Hausa and Igbo had approximately 6k and 4k training samples, respectively, which is a good indication that models fine-tuned on such a small training data can still generalize and produce

competitive results to multilingual models.

### 7.3 Multilingual LLMs Evaluation on QA

**Selected Languages** For this task, we assess LLMs on six LRLs from the Okapi framework. These languages are *Indonesian, Hindi, Nepali, Bengali, Tamil and Telugu*. These languages were chosen due to their limited resources, which are considered as LRLs.

468 **Results** We evaluated the multilingual capabilities of four publicly available models: BLOOM-7B, 469 Llama-7B, XGLM-1.7B and Mistral-7B-v0.2 on 470 different QA benchmark datasets. We explore the 471 evaluation results for each dataset as follow: ARC, 472 Hellaswag, and MMLU 473

- 474 • **ARC**: as shown in Table 4, Mistral tends to 475 perform well on Indonesian, Hindi and Ben- 476 gali compared to the other models. BLOOM 477 outperforms other models especially on Tamil, 478 XGLM on Nepali, and Llama on Telugu.
- 479 • **Hellaswag**: on this dataset, Mistral outper- 480 forms other LLMs on all languages, and In- 481 donesian presents the highest score across lan- 482 guages.
- 483 • **MMLU**: Mistral also outperforms the other 484 models on all languages. The highest score is 485 shown particularly on Indonesian.

486 *Performance analysis*: Indonesian is known as 487 the official and national language of Indonesia and 488 is spoken by over 225M people. Indonesian is also 489 among the most widely spoken languages in the 490 world. This language is classified as a medium- 491 resource language (Joshi et al., 2020) with a high 492 score while evaluating the baselines models in the 493 framework, thus enabling researchers to develop 494 more open-access tools and resources in that lan- 495 guage. Notably, among the selected LRLs, Bengali 496 and Tamil present a quite significant score com- 497 pared to other languages. This observation aligns 498 with previous findings that the Mistral-7B model 499 outperforms the best open 13B model (Llama 2) 500 across all evaluated benchmarks and the best re- 501 leased 34B model (Llama 1) in reasoning, mathe- 502 matics, and code generation tasks.

## 503 8 Conclusion

504 In this work, we present a comprehensive study 505 to evaluate a set of 9 public LLMs, commonly 506 used in Hugging Face, on three different NLP 507 tasks—machine translation, text summarization, 508 and question answering—particularly focusing on 509 low-resource languages. We evaluated the per- 510 formance of these LLMs on 16 low-resource lan- 511 guages based on available resources. Our find- 512 ings highlight the challenges and limitations of 513 evaluating LLMs on low-resource system due to 514 the scarcity of training data and different writing 515 scripts. To address this limitation and advance the

state-of-the-art in low-resource languages, future 516 research efforts could explore the development of 517 specialized models tailored for low-resource lan- 518 guages by incorporating native speakers as human- 519 in-the-loop feedback mechanisms during model 520 training. 521

## 522 9 Limitations

523 While our study provides valuable insights into the 524 performance of multilingual large language mod- 525 els on low-resource languages, we acknowledge 526 two main limitations as follows: i) our evaluation 527 focused on a subset of publicly available LLMs 528 and multilingual benchmark datasets. Due to the 529 vast number of models and resources available, we 530 selected the popular and publicly LLMs from the 531 Hugging face Hub, and ii) the multilingual LLMs 532 evaluated in this study were not specifically opti- 533 mized or customized for the selected low-resource 534 languages. To achieve significant results on low- 535 resource languages, we believe further research 536 should focus on developing tailored LLMs by in- 537 corporating native speakers as human-in-the-loop 538 feedback mechanisms during model training.

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