A I 4 I A

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

28 September 2020

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

IFAP Information for All Programme

WGIA Working Group on Information Accessibility

AI4IA CONFERENCE

FINAL REPORT

In observance of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI)
28 September 2020

RECOMMENDATIONS

The wide ranging impact of the COVID-19 pandemic at every level of society has exposed a number of vulnerabilities in many countries. Nations must, in the short term, re-orientate their policies and legislation within various UNESCO areas of expertise. UNESCO and other intergovernmental organisations must also continue to address inequalities, particularly in terms of information and knowledge management, information accessibility and the challenges of illiteracy in the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Artificial Intelligence (AI). The following recommendations refer:

1. Making AI accessible is a collaborative effort between the public sector, private sector and communities. Dialogues with civil society in national, regional and international levels are encouraged to ensure the inclusion of all in issues related to ethics of AI;
2. Communities have an important role to play, we should not underestimate them in this fast-changing and ever evolving world;
3. Cultural diversity must be central in design, roll-out and training of AI and tools towards ensuring information accessibility;
4. In addition to the existing Information Ethics (IE) guidelines for schools and training institutions, specific skills for training of learners in coding should be formulated and creators of algorithms should receive intensive training in Information Ethics. Early childhood education must extend to formal, informal, non-formal education as well as life-long learning;
5. Ethics, transparency, human dignity and the rights of children must be promoted and implemented from the start of the development of any AI systems to their effective use; and
6. Creation of special grants for small and developing countries to reduce technological divide between the South and North, and the inequalities within (such as between rural and urban regions).

There is a need to address these issues and be prepared, not only for a repeat of a global pandemic, but the very real permanent transitions taking place globally. The solution will be hybrid: combining regulation, sanctions, education and reputational pressure.

INTRODUCTION

Recognising the significance of access to information, the 74th UN General Assembly proclaimed 28 September as the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) in October 2019. The specific theme for the IDUAI 2020 is "Saving Lives, Building Trust, Bringing Hope".

The aim of the UNESCO IDUAI 2020 Commemoration is:

- To advocate for the adoption and implementation of sound constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for access to information in times of crisis;
- To endorse principles of the right to information in times of crisis and underline the role of multiple stakeholders in that view; and
- To highlight the impact of proactive sharing of information on health and education, as well as of inclusive and gender-sensitive initiatives, focusing on vulnerable groups, for prosperity and sustainable development.

The UNESCO Information for All Program (IFAP) Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA) hosted the **Artificial Intelligence for Information Accessibility, 'AI4IA'** online conference on 28 September 2020. This event was held under the auspices of UNESCO IFAP, in observance of the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI). This event was hosted in collaboration with the Kule Institute for Advanced Studies (KIAS) and AI for Society area at the University of Alberta, Canada, as well as the International Centre for Information Ethics (ICIE).

It was organised under the auspices of the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean in Kingston, Jamaica and the UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa in Harare, Zimbabwe. The theme of the conference was Inclusive AI with international speakers addressing topics relating to information accessibility.

AIMS OF THE AI4IA

The aim of this specific event was to promote, but also to understand the barriers to, inclusive Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI has been defined by economists and technologists as the 26th General Purpose Technology (GPT). In 2017 Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee stated in the the Harvard Business Review that *"Artificial intelligence, especially machine learning, is the most important general-purpose technology of our era. The impact of these innovations on business and the economy will be reflected not only in their direct contributions but also in their ability to enable and inspire complementary innovations. New products and processes are being made possible by better vision systems, speech recognition, intelligent problem solving, and many other capabilities that machine learning delivers"* (Harvard Business Review, 2017). This means that AI presents us with a tremendous opportunity for development.

The question now becomes how do we ensure that AI is used for the good of society and that existing divides do not get exacerbated? How can AI be leveraged to help meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals? This is a global issue that requires a shared the understanding of how AI can be made inclusive thereby enabling the widest cross-section of society to contribute to the digital transformation that is underway.

The AI4IA event hosted by the IFAP Working Group for Information Accessibility (WGIA) provided a global platform for open discourse involving participants from academia, civil society, private sector and government. With regards to the thematic area and presentation content, speakers were requested to consider addressing Africa and SIDS (Small Island Developing States) in their interventions, recommendations and examples. These are two of UNESCO's priority areas.

SOCIAL MEDIA SNAPSHOT

388

YOU TUBE VIEWS

± 90

ZOOM PARTICIPANTS

Many participants also viewed the conference on You Tube. This figure is there only approximate.

SM TAGS

TWITTER | FACEBOOK

#RightToKnow
#AccessToInfoDay

@ICIE_IRIE
@CaribbeanUnesco
@ANIE_ACEIE
@KIASAlberta
@UofA_Ai4Society
@bcjamaica
@unescoROSA
@ICIEInfoEthics
@KIASAlberta

VIMEO

A recording of the conference with presentations **is available here**!

NARRATIVE REPORT

OPENING SESSION

Theme: Situating context of the IDUAI

Session Chair: Cordel Green

Chairman of the UNESCO IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA), Jamaica & Executive Director, Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica

NARRATIVE REPORT

OPENING SESSION

SAADIA SANCHEZ VEGAS

Director: UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean, Kingston, Jamaica

Saadia Sanchez Vegas gave the opening talk for the conference. Setting the scene for the various discussions to come, she discussed the vital importance of information and information technologies, highlighting artificial intelligence and Covid-19 as the two critical concerns of our time. She emphasised how important it is for AI to be designed and guided according to our shared values, without which AI would most certainly prove threatening to human life and well-being. She pointed out that AI raises questions about the ownership and use of our personal and collective data, noting that UNESCO advocates for a humanistic approach to the development and governance of AI. Ms Sanchez Vegas also talked about an upcoming Caribbean AI Initiative that will explore how small island states could benefit from the introduction of AI.

NARRATIVE REPORT

OPENING SESSION

HUBERT GIJZEN

Director: UNESCO Regional Office for Southern Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe

Hubert Gijzen began with a reminder that the AI4IA conference fell on the international day for universal access to information. He noted that information access is a fundamental right, especially important during the Covid-19 pandemic where access to accurate information is increasingly critical. He said that misinformation spreads even faster than the virus but that AI could help to fact check on a large scale to ensure quality information that is trustworthy and reliable. Mr Gijsen read the official remarks of the Director General of UNESCO, which reiterated how the chaos of Covid-19 demands equitable information access more than ever. He outlined that UNESCO firmly believes that access to information should be recognised in law. All governments must commit to the common good and build resilient environments together, adopting legislation for sustainable development. Human rights for all and the SDG Agenda 2030 are paramount. Safe and transparent data collection mechanisms, storage and analysis are critically important and must be freely accessible to be effective, whilst held to privacy standards.

NARRATIVE REPORT

OPENING SESSION

DOROTHY GORDON

Chair, UNESCO Information For All Programme (IFAP), Ghana

Dorothy Gordon, IFAP Chairperson, talked about the priorities of UNESCO's Information For All Program and how they apply to the COVID-19 environment. She noted that while the average citizen might be aware of the Cambridge Analytica exposé, they do not appreciate the extent to which we live in the age of surveillance capitalism (also called the age of techno-colonialism) and that our private human experiences are being exploited without our knowledge; and algorithms have been weaponised. The speed of innovation and disruption creates a sense of helplessness as our institutions struggle to keep up. Technology has become a dimension of power that allows some individuals and societies to extract more value than others. The vulnerable become more vulnerable and the digital divide worsens. Where the pandemic has forced our social structures to go online, criminal elements have followed, allowing for an infodemic in addition to the pandemic. So, therefore, access to content, linguistic diversity, content curation, information management etc... matter. Ms Gordon concluded on the point that a human-centric approach, coupled with evidence-based policies was the way to move forward.

NARRATIVE REPORT
OPENING SESSION

JANDHYALA PRABHAKAR RAO

Director, India Centre of Excellence in Information Ethics (ICEIE), School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, India

Janhyala Prabhakar Rao talked about access to information in India where both traditional and non-traditional means of access and development are linked through technology, and concluded that societies have always been knowledge societies using technologies. Access to information becomes possible only in an environment of cultural and linguistic diversity. Now, AI with its tremendous power of storing data offers a new and immense potential for providing access to information through data mining. AI also widens the opportunities for information production, distribution and consumption, all issues that fall under Information Access. But while AI opens up enormous opportunities for society, it is important to recognise and understand the limitations of its use. Along with modern technology, traditional means of access to information should be used in order to bring about effective balance in social structures.

NARRATIVE REPORT: SESSION 1

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

Session Chair: Cordel Green

Chairman of the UNESCO IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA), Jamaica & Executive Director, Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica

Moderator: Erin Klazar

Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA), South Africa

SESSION ONE

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

EDSON PRESTES

Member, UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Digital Cooperation; Member, UNESCO AHEG for the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI; Head, Robotics Research Group, Informatics Institute, Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

Artificial Intelligence - A Domain that matters to all of us

Edson Prestes raised a number of challenges with AI including its perceived neutrality. He explained that AI is only as neutral as the humans who program it. He outlined the various types of intelligence, for example, linguistic and creative, explaining that a more functional AI can mimic but not match human intelligence. A more functional AI is not dependent on more human intelligence and at best is a system that can process information in ways that resemble how humans operate and think. He talked about the UNESCO Draft Recommendations for the Ethics of AI, the goal of which is to guide the actions of states and individuals and to promote human dignity and gender equality. He insisted that member states needed to ensure ethical governance of AI by assessing the impact of AI on their citizens and environment and then promote education around AI and AI ethics. The focus of AI should support improvements in equality and not exacerbate digital divides. Special attention should be paid to economies that are labour intensive and therefore likely to be affected by AI.

Food for Thought

- Due to the multi-impacts of Covid-19, many countries must, in the short term, re-orient their policies and legislation towards UNESCO priority areas. UNESCO should be positioned to deal with the blatant inequities in developing countries, in terms of information and knowledge management, and in particular with regard to illiteracy in the use of ICT/Artificial Intelligence.

- Link for further reading: **UNESCO and Artificial Intelligence**

SESSION ONE

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

KATE KALLOT

Head of AI Ecosystems, Arm, UK

Scaling AI beyond borders

Kate Kallot started by talking about the opportunities of AI and that most of the innovations were coming out of a small number of regions. AI is driven by three factors: data, hardware, and algorithms. She talked about how AI is being developed and discussed in different regions. In Europe, for example, there is a lot of discussion around privacy. In Africa there are a number of grassroots initiatives. She talked about AI communities like Data Science Africa and Alliance AI. With Covid-19 there are new challenges with the closing of universities and data scientists being unemployed. She talked about a neat example of a challenge around predicting flooding in Malawi where they tried to connect problems with data scientists. She gave examples of some of the innovative solutions emerging. She concluded that if we want ethical AI we need better collaboration with the private sector.

Food for Thought

- AI represents a tremendous economic opportunity and is now central to driving innovation at every level. To scale AI or build AI at scale, we need to understand the key drivers in each region.
- Making AI accessible is a collaborative effort between public sector, private sector and communities. Communities have an important role to play, let's not underestimate them In this fast-changing and ever evolving world.
- Africa has the tools to innovate and compete at scale.

SESSION ONE

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INFORMATION ACCESSIBILITY

WENDELL WALLACH

Emeritus Chair, Technology and Ethics studies, Yale University Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics; Senior Advisor, The Hastings Center; Senior Scholar, The Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs, USA.

Access, Education, and Inclusive Governance

Wendell Wallach pointed out that Access, Education and Inclusive Governance are requirements of information accessibility. Without all three, citizens will fall beneath the digital poverty line. We need both the skills to build digital infrastructure and the broad digital literacy to know how to use technology appropriately, and we need experts to be able to challenge misuse and bad legislation. Society's current digital ethics challenges include everything from weaponisation to surveillance to technological unemployment. Contrary to belief, new technologies generally lead to more job creation, rather than taking jobs away. However, many skeptics believe that AI will be different in that it will automate more jobs than are created. This assumption is based on the capital drive where the automation of as many jobs as possible ensures that all profits remain at the top. Speaking to inclusive governance, Mr Wallach noted how the speed of technological development outpaces the capacities of government systems, demanding a new agile governance. Technology monopolies have created new power structures where technology leaders can dictate and influence societies without input from those affected and without the same checks that governments are restrained by. A multi-stakeholder representation from small nations and first peoples is critical and the principles created need to address more than just AI, allowing for a new social contract so that technologies are deployed for the good of all.

Food for Thought

- A concern is developing around digital imperialism. Similar to cultural imperialism, there is a form of digital imperialism being imposed on digital platform such as social media. The algorithms are structured around the attitudes, beliefs, etc... of the creators. This can be reinforced by dataveillance, facial recognition, data tracking, and bias generated by the creator. Without consideration for other cultures, this can undermine freedom of expression, choice and action. Do not underestimate the impact of digital imperialism. This should be a central political concern for everyone.

NARRATIVE REPORT: SESSION 2

AI AS AN ENABLER IN ACCESSIBILITY & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

Session Chair: Geoffrey Rockwell
Director, Kule Institute for Advanced Study, University of Alberta, Canada
Moderator: Erica Simmons
Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA) & Executive Director, Centre for Digital Innovation, Caribbean Maritime University, Jamaica

SESSION TWO

AI AS AN ENABLER IN ACCESSIBILITY & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

COETZEE BESTER

IFAP SA Chair, South Africa

The essential relation between Information Ethics and Artificial Intelligence

Bester introduced his talk by questioning whether we can ever trust AI if it has already been corrupted by human beings. He talked about how human information ethics and AI ethics need to converge. The concerns of machine learning demand that these two strains of ethics address the same topics. Bester explained how algorithms play a crucial role in what information people get access to and how the data is analysed. Several factors are involved in algorithmic decision making, including the prejudices of the developers as well as the framing of AI, which influences its use. Algorithms are not objective but are rather codified views and roadmaps to objectives. Developers and users need to be able to understand the objectives toward which algorithms are created so that we can understand how information is filtered by the objectives of designers. Bester called for transparency in algo-ethics so that the bias of any algorithm can be unpacked. Only then can any AI be trusted. He concluded by recommending that government policies be aligned to UNESCO guidelines and that intensive ethics training be required and provided for developers, ensuring diversity in algorithms.

Food for Thought

- We should not overcomplicate the matter of Ethics in Information and Communication Technologies – the focus of Information Ethics has expanded and will be able to guide ethics in AI.
- The existing Information Ethics guidelines for schools and training institutions should be expanded to include specific skills for training of learners in coding, and creating awareness amongst learners and educators.
- Creators of algorithms should receive intensive training in Information Ethical issues. Although it was not part of this presentation, research on matters related to cultural diversity in coding and algorithms, should become a priority.

SESSION TWO

AI AS AN ENABLER IN ACCESSIBILITY & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

PEDRO HARTUNG

Phd, Coordinator at Alana, Visiting Researcher at Harvard Law School, Unicef working group member, Brazil

Children's rights by Design in AI development

ISABELLA HENRIQUES

Lawyer, Executive Director of Alana Institute, PhD student, Master in Law, Global Leader for Young Children by the World Forum Foundation, Executive Leader in Early Childhood by the Center on the Developing Child and Member of the Council of the Ombudsman of the State Public Defender's Office, Brazil

Isabella Henriques spoke about the Alana Institute which works on children's rights in Brazil and the barriers that children face in developing knowledge and independence. Many children in Brazil access the internet only through cell phones and some do not have access at all. There needs to be more digital literacy in the schools, especially as a recent report discussed how many companies are collecting data from children. She talked about the recent controversy of the algorithm predicting British children's performance on tests. Therefore, there is a need for child-centric ethics.

Pedro Hartung discussed the need for an ecosystem model, highlighting that states and companies are already violating children's rights. An ecosystem approach looks at how families, governments, companies, and schools should work together. He talked about a UNICEF discussion paper on Children's rights by Design in AI Development. The document has a number of recommendations which serve as Policy Guidance on AI for Children.

Food for Thought

- Ethics, human dignity and the rights of children must be promoted and implemented from the start of the development of any Artificial Intelligence systems to their effective use.
- Media and Information Literacy is becoming increasingly important as a part of basic education.

SESSION TWO

AI AS AN ENABLER IN ACCESSIBILITY & ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

MIKE SHEBANEK

Head of Accessibility at Facebook, USA

AI for Accessibility at Scale

Mike Shebanek talkede about Facebook's mission and the growing need for accessibility exemplified by the fact that one in ten users make use of the magnifying feature on their screens. Facebook has a dedicated team looking at accessibility, using AI. Some developments have included automatic alt-text, where they use computer vision and object recognition to identify what is in an image when there is no alt-text. This makes photos accessible to people who have vision issues. Facebook has also implemented face recognition to name people in photos, with permission. AI is the only way to meet the accessibility challenges related to 2 billion people uploading images. Furthermore, Facebook has introduced AI tools that let people caption video in real-time, so persons who are hearing impaired can follow live videos. These services are now being applied on other platforms such as Instagram. To further these innovations, Facebook has founded Teach Access, a not-for-profit initiative for computer scientists and others who are taught the importance of making future technologies more accessible.

Food for Thought

- Accessibility has typically not been a part of computer science grad school programs in the past. It is, however, now a big part of working in tech companies, where designing support for people with disabilities must be considered. University programs need to be adjusted not only to enable the students to be aware of the need for this requirement, but also prepare the professors to teach accordingly. There needs to be integration between the syllabus taught and real world application, as well as collaboration between advocates, specialists and educators.

- Links for more reading: **Teach Access initiative**

NARRATIVE REPORT: SESSION 3

AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE & INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

Session Chair: Erica Simmons

Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA) & Executive Director, Centre for Digital Innovation, Caribbean Maritime University, Jamaica

Moderator: Erin Klazar

Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA), South Africa

SESSION THREE

AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE & INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

FATIMA ROUMATE

Professor of the International Law at Mohammed V University, President of the International Institute of Scientific Research in Marrakech, Member of the Ad Hoc Expert Group for the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence UNESCO, Morocco

Artificial intelligence, Ethics and International Human Rights Law

Fatima Roumate talked about how the pandemic is accelerating the use of AI and creating tensions with human rights. She questioned freedom of expression in light of social media manipulation. Our right to privacy is challenged by AI technologies such as face recognition. While the WHO acknowledges that free access to scientific information is critical, access to people's personal information can slide into surveillance. The right to work is challenged by automation. International law can't keep up. Speaking on soft law and ethics, she noted the development of guidelines by various organisations including the G20 and the African Union, pointing out that all the sets of guidelines and principles differ and are not binding. She explained that Covid-19 is accelerating the development of new forms of slavery and inequality where states are prioritising health over rights. She concluded that a dialogue is needed to bridge the divide between engineers, healthcare, government and ethics.

Food for Thought

- Will there be a need to redefine the right to privacy if the current pandemic is just the beginning of a "new world" of movement surveillance to ensure the safety and health of citizens?
- It is perhaps time to rethink the following: international law especially the UN Charter; national legislation; the formation of a multilateral convention under the UN on ethics of artificial intelligence; enhancement of international cooperation (bilateral and multilateral) on ethics of AI; dialogue with civil society at national, regional and international level to ensure the inclusion of all in issues related to ethics of AI; and the creation of special grants for small countries to reduce technological divide between the South and North and inside small countries between rural and urban regions.

SESSION THREE

AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE & INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

JOAN BARATA

Intermediary Liability Fellow, Program on Platform Regulation, Cyber Policy Center at Stanford University, USA

AI and promotion of access to information in times of crisis

Joan Barata talked about how states have suspended rights to access to information due to the pandemic, forcing their press to report only state-sanctioned information. He questioned how individuals or health providers could meet the challenges of a pandemic when states restrict information and circulate propaganda. Free press and access to information is vital and public authorities needed to provide special protection for freedom of expression and access to information. He spoke about how access to information requests have been affected by the disruption of civil servants having to go home, when information offices are considered essential services. He looked at how AI can be used to promote good and reliable access to information and how to use AI to identify and promote access to vital information.

Food for Thought

- Do "opt out" provisions, which then deny service, violate the right to freedom of expression and access to information?
- In some countries, the distribution of “fake news” during the Covid-19 pandemic, is criminalised. Is this a necessary restriction for the government to implement and could this lead to further concerns in relation to freedom of expression? How do we prevent clear contradiction of international freedom of expression and put other mechanisms in place to ensure the drafting of legislation and regulations that are pluralistic?
- There needs to be a constant dialogue around guaranteeing respect for ethics, human rights and independent oversight (mechanisms) in the collection, compilation and disclosure of aggregated data regarding health crises.

SESSION THREE

AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE & INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

JILL CLAYTON

Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta, Canada

Ethical Tech Development in the Context of Information Accessibility

Jill Clayton introduced her talk by describing her role as privacy commissioner and identified as three main areas of focus, fairness, accountability and the need for international Standards. She expressed her desire for governments to commit to algorithmic transparency, particularly in the making of decisions about humans. She noted that such systems can be particularly harmful to vulnerable groups, and pointed out that Canadian laws are falling behind. Clayton discussed the advantages of synthetic data over de-identification, noting that anonymisation of data isn't always effective. This is especially important for health data where people are particularly concerned about their privacy. Synthetic data must still be reviewed for ethical handling, especially when it comes to the original datasets from which synthetic data is developed. Legislative frameworks are required for AI to be legal, fair, and ethical. The GDPR in Europe is creating regulations to cover the increasing use of automatic decision making systems by governments. A similar approach is being taken in the Province of Quebec.

Food for Thought

- Legislation takes much longer to catch-up with real life concerns. As the Information and Privacy Commissioner, it is very difficult to address the gaps not yet covered by legislation or policies in real time. However, it is important to refer to international policy making. For example, the GDPR, was such a relevant policy, it was also promoted in Canada and Alberta.

- Link for further reading: **International Right to Know Week**

SESSION THREE

AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES - IMPLICATIONS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE & INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

ISABELA FERRARI

Brazilian Federal Judge, Phd candidate (UERJ), New Law Institute Academic Coordinator, Harvard Law School Visiting Researcher, The Future Society Advisor, Brazil

Algorithmic Justice: Risks and perspectives

Judge Isabela Ferrari spoke about the move to online courts, outlining how AI technology has changed the justice practice. She noted an increase in backlogged court cases, pointing out that the use of AI in judging could help stem the tide. She raised issues for using AI in justice, including opacity and implicit bias, and provide the example of the use of COMPASS to assess recidivism. She explained opacity as the result of the high dimensionality of the data around both the use of and the training of algorithms. Notwithstanding, she argued for the value of using AI and highlights that human judges are also 'opaque'. She suggested that a shift to hybrid decision making might increase transparency.

Food for Thought

- Technology is reframing the way justice is delivered. In algorithmic justice: is it possible to unpack the black box of algorithmic decision-making?
- In a 'human-centric' approach to AI governance, should we not restrict AI only to data management systems in the Court? It is important to understand that it is impossible to design an effective and truly significant regulation without involving a diverse field of stakeholders. Many times, those who design regulation, do not know how AI works. This dialogue is missing from generic principles of AI regulation.
- Using facial recognition has become a 'red flag' for the judiciary. Facial recognition is considered very discriminatory in relation to certain population groups and there needs to be greater consideration before adopting these tools.

NARRATIVE REPORT: SESSION 4

MIS | DIS | MAL-INFORMATION AND AI FOR BOTH A TOOL AND A REMEDY

Session Chair: Jared Bielby
Chair: International Centre for Information Ethics, Canada
Moderator: Erica Simmons
Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA) & Executive Director, Centre for Digital Innovation, Caribbean Maritime University, Jamaica

SESSION FOUR

MIS | DIS | MAL-INFORMATION AND AI FOR BOTH A TOOL AND A REMEDY

LAZARUS DOKORA

Bindura University of Science Education, Zimbabwe

Remarks on the critical economy of information

Lazarus Dokora spoke of the primacy of information in development. Information is not just important to individuals or states, but also to communities. He talked about NGOs that are often important to Africa then pointed out a number of inequities in information primacy. Most of the images taken in Africa, for example, come from Western photographers. What about African images and voices? He also made observations about migratory populations, noting that in a way the whole world is undergoing a migratory experience as the pandemic imposes a new life style on us. This process will disempower many of us and countries at the receiving end of aid will have to concede to information being created about them. He ended his presentation with a note on epistemicide, highlighting the misrepresentation of Zimbabwe.

Food for Thought

- Does citizen journalism contribute to the creation and sharing of mis/dis/malinformation? Alternatively, can citizens act as a cure to mis/dis/malinformation?
- What is the responsibility of civil society, international bodies and social media in providing access to information, particularly when there is conflict between media and government?
- How do we promote critical thinking in the face of post-truths, alternative facts and fake news?
- How do we raise awareness of the importance of all forms of literacy, including information literacy and numeracy (statistics), as well as business and financial literacy?
- How do we engage participatory citizenship?

SESSION FOUR

MIS | DIS | MAL-INFORMATION AND AI FOR BOTH A TOOL AND A REMEDY

ANTHONY CLAYTON

Chairman - Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica and Professor of Sustainable Development, University of the West Indies, Jamaica

The role of AI in regulating the abuses of social media

Anthony Clayton's presentation focused on how we are on the brink of a digital revolution. He discussed how we need to find solutions to tackling new and innovative methods of cybercrime. Clayton spoke about the Islamic State as a new generation of terrorist organisations that effectively used social media, for example, the Christchurch massacre that was streamed online. Promotion of violence through the upload of this content creates copycat, self-recruited terrorists. AI is needed to screen the volume of materials being uploaded that promote violence. However, using AI for policing has its own challenges, including bias, understanding context, the evolution of language (especially street language) and how misinformation can be deliberately disguised. He also outlined how most legislation does not deal adequately with cyber crimes and that it is often difficult to identify the perpetrator. Furthermore, the regulators in many countries do not have the right to demand companies to remove content, and doing so may lead to accusations of censorship. Mr Clayton believes that we will need a hybrid solution including more regulation to protect democracy while also promoting freedom of expression.

Food for Thought

- To what extent should regulators see their responsibility extending to media and information literacy, so that learners become aware of the dangers and opportunities in the use of digital technologies?
- The future direction is probably towards greater supervision of cyberspace, relying largely on automated content monitoring systems and giving additional legal responsibilities to social media and technology companies.
- What is the role of understanding language, tone and nuance in interpreting the data/social media posts etc... to classify them as hate speech? Is every language and cultural inference considered or is there automatically bias involved?
- The solution will be hybrid, combining regulation, sanctions, education and reputational pressure.

SESSION FOUR

MIS | DIS | MAL-INFORMATION AND AI FOR BOTH A TOOL AND A REMEDY

DIOGO CORTIZ

Professor at Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-S), Researcher at NIC.br, Brazil

The technical challenges of AI ethics

Diogo Cortiz talked about the problem of regulating hate speech online. In Europe companies depend on civil society to help monitor and identify hate speech. Mr Cortiz described a project working on developing a new set of tools to identify hate speech online, as current models and tools are unable to process the volume of what is posted online. The project involves the use of machine learning to automate the identification of hate speech online. They are collecting a wide range of examples of misinformation and hate speech in Portuguese and annotating the data to factor in bias/representivity, and will use this data to "train the machine" to recognise misinformation or hate speech in Portuguese. Mr Cortiz also discussed some of the challenges they have faced, including the problem of privacy, a problem of representativity as well as maintaining the promotion of freedom of expression.

Food for Thought

- The lines are very much blurred between "freedom of expression" and "hate speech". How can one ensure that in the process of distinguishing between them, censorship and surveillance does not take the upper hand?
- What is the role of understanding language, tone and nuance in interpreting the data/social media posts etc... to classify them as hate speech? Is every language and cultural inference considered, or is there automatically bias?
- Understanding bias is very important, for example how would algorithms have classified speeches by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro in the past vs now?

- Links for further reading: **EU Code of Conduct** and **Data Annotator Job Description**

NARRATIVE REPORT: SESSION 5

HEALTH RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION - A REFLECTION ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Session Chair: Geoffrey Rockwell
Director, Kule Institute for Advanced Study, University of Alberta Canada
Moderator: Erin Klazar
Member, IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA), South Africa

SESSION FIVE

HEALTH RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION - A REFLECTION ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS

NIDHI HEGDE

Department of Computing Science and Fellow at Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute, University of Alberta, Canada

Privacy and health access in the digital transition due to the Covid-19 crisis

Nidhi Hedge talked about the importance of access to both public health and personal health information during a pandemic, but highlighted that there can be serious privacy issues. K-Anonymity could address these issues. Research by Latanya Sweeny found that a high percentage of people could be identified with just three pieces of information (date of birth, zip code, and gender). K-anonymity is achieved by generalisation (a bigger cohort for a piece of information like a shared decade rather than year of birth) and suppression (suppressing columns of information). The issue is whether this works during a pandemic where there might be a need for group identification, for example, the identification of the Hutterite community as experiencing an outbreak. Another proposed solution is the creation of synthetic databases, but this is a young technology and it is not known if such databases will work in healthcare. Ms Hedge also discussed changes and challenges to access to healthcare in a pandemic, with a transition from physical to virtual care. Questions arise around compromises that are made in virtual care, how transcripts/recordings of such sessions are stored and how to manage privacy during video conferencing that takes place in someone's home. A new set of guidelines and standards will be needed for the use of technology and AI in virtual care, particularly as there will probably be similar pandemics and approaches in the future.

Food for Thought

- Known and understood notions of privacy are not readily applicable to public health information dissemination, particularly in today's context. Balancing the need for essential information and preventing privacy breaches has become essential.
- Access to health care in a pandemic (challenges): The transition to virtual care is not smooth. Privacy, security, and accessibility are poorly understood. There is a need to address these issues and be prepared - not only for a repeat of a pandemic, but for the very permanent transitions taking place.
- There needs to be focus on health care continuity and integrity of information communication.

SESSION FIVE

HEALTH RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION - A REFLECTION ON THE COVID-19 CRISIS

WENDEL ABEL

Professor Mental Health Policy, University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. Project Lead, Partnership for the Promotion of Patients Rights in Maternal, Neonatal and Infant Health (PPR)

Promoting Health Rights of Women in Jamaica

Wendel Abel spoke about the issues surrounding access to health care information in Jamaica. They have not met two of the Millennium Development Goals, namely the improvement of maternal health and the reduction of maternal and infant mortality rates. Maternal and infant mortality is solvable, but is connected to other key issues such as access to information. Patients have a right to information and informed consent, which is lost in healthcare systems that are stressed, leading to shorter and sometimes ineffective engagements with patients. To address this, Prof Abel described organisations in Jamaica involved in promoting health rights such as the Partnership for the Promotion of Patient Rights and the Civil Society Collaborative Forum, which work to bring different organisations together and to promote awareness of health rights. Abel also talked about their involvement in reviewing policy and working with leaders like the public defender to ensure better access to healthcare information and the sustainability of the project going forward.

Food for Thought

- Patient rights include the right to privacy, but the more access there is to data the better AI health solutions will be. How do we balance these interests and should they be 'competing'?
- People have the right to access information pertaining to health, health care and their medical records. In consideration of digitisation, how do we ensure records are accurate and accessible, with particular consideration to telemedicine?

- Links for more reading: **Health Rights Jamaica**

THEMES AND CORE STAKEHOLDERS

THEMES THAT AROSE FROM THE AI4IA

The following themes arose during the presentations and following the question and answer sessions:

1. Digital imperialism and digital olichargy - we need some true multi-stakeholder governance, not just multistakeholder, but also inclusive. Not just national governance, but also international governance.
2. AI represents a tremendous economic opportunity and is now central to driving innovation at every level.
3. Accessibility issues specifically for people with disabilities - i.e. visual disabilities. AI is the only tool to help with this.
4. Guaranteeing the respect for ethics, human rights and independent oversight in the collection, compilation, and disclosure of aggregated data regarding health crises.
5. Access, education, transparency and inclusive governance.
6. Business and financial literacy, media and information literacy are crucial components.
7. Consider children's rights by design - it is an ecosystem model - not just products and services, but all the possible things that can affect children.
8. Future direction is probably towards greater supervision of cyberspace, relying largely on automated content monitoring systems and giving additional legal responsibilities to social media and technology companies.
9. Challenge is to find ways to limit harm being caused while protecting democracy, freedom of expression and level of personal privacy.

This conference emphasised the notion of "inclusivity" coupled with diverse multi-stakeholder collaboration. From education (school-going age to life-long learning), to policy development and implementation, from pluralistic approaches between civil society and the tech developers, to the role of health care providers and ethical considerations in data collection and management. In summation, AI4IA should be underscored by the IFAP priority areas and guided by the ROAM-X principles.

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   - Jaco du Toit, Chief of Universal Access to Information Section, Communication and Information Sector
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7. The Members of the UNESCO IFAP Working Group on Information Accessibility (WGIA)

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