



# EQUITABLE AI COMMUNITY



# The Equitable AI Newsletter

August 2023

## IN REVIEW: July Community of Practice Workshop



Recap: July Community of Practice Workshop

On Wednesday, July 26th, the Equitable AI Community of Practice hosted its second public workshop, focusing on gender inclusive AI governance. Expert panelists and presenters discussed the challenges and opportunities for achieving greater equity in the development and deployment of AI systems and policy.

An introduction from USAID Counselor Clinton White led into a panel with Kelly Stone and Sarah Myers West, moderated by USAID Gender & AI Fellow Genevieve Smith. Dr. Stone, the Director of Research and Capacity Building for the Global Index on Responsible AI at Research ICT Africa, spoke about her organization's work to ensure that responsible AI approaches are more understandable and support AI policy. She emphasized that for AI governance to be truly equitable, there must be mechanisms through which the Global South can meaningfully engage in and drive the development of principles and guidelines. Dr. Myers West, the Managing Director of the AI Now Institute and a Former Senior Advisor on AI at the Federal Trade Commission, agreed, adding that it is imperative that global regulatory approaches are not simply “templated” Western-driven frameworks. Also, we must continue to ask: who is disproportionately harmed by these systems and where do benefits disproportionately accrue? These underlying questions can be a diagnostic tool for larger regulatory and policy questions. When asked to give advice to current AI practitioners, Dr. Myers West recommended building interdisciplinary and diverse teams while also inviting dissenting voices to improve and advance more equitable AI. Both emphasized the urgency of taking action.

The workshop then shifted into two flash presentations. Rutendo Chabikwa, a DPhil candidate and Gender and Technology Consultant at the Oxford Internet Institute, discussed gender and AI policy in Africa. Her presentation focused on recent efforts by African regional bodies, including the African Union and the Southern African Development Committee, to promote development across the continent, including through the use of AI. Ms. Chabikwa finds that these efforts do not adequately address gender harms; she recommends integrating inclusive data

practices and cross-industry collaboration to mainstream gender concerns into development. Paola Galvez-Callirgos, former Consultant Strategic Advisor of Digital Regulation for the Government of Peru and a Master of Public Policy candidate at the University of Oxford, gave the final flash presentation. She spoke about Peru's attempts to integrate gender equality into its AI strategy, including by reducing the gender gap in AI training programs. Ms. Galvez-Callirgos also highlighted how AI governance must be a multistakeholder process, particularly in the inclusion of the Global South population.

An audience Q&A concluded the workshop. In response to a question about bias embedded in datasets, Dr. Myers West noted that it is critical for systems to have greater disclosure about what goes into their training data; nothing can be done about embedded bias without clarity on what a dataset includes. When asked about how to avoid policies that suppress minority voices, Dr. Stone and Ms. Chabikwa emphasized the importance of applying other human rights instruments beyond AI policy. Regarding the risk of AI overregulation stifling innovation, Ms. Galvez-Callirgos noted that attenuating that risk is one reason that it is essential to have collaboration between government, industry, civil society, and academia.

[Watch Here](#)

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## LinkedIn Community

Looking to connect, collaborate, or confer with other practitioners in the equitable AI space? Join the conversation in our Community of Practice LinkedIn group below! Discussion, questions, and sharing your work are highly encouraged.

[Join the Conversation on LinkedIn](#)

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# Upcoming Equitable AI Community Events

*Mark your calendars!*

Upcoming virtual core working group sessions (invite-only):

- **Representation:** Wednesday, August 31st, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. ET

Featuring Catherine D'Ignazio, *Director*, MIT Data + Feminism Lab

Upcoming community of practice workshops (registration required):

- **Collective Action:** Wednesday, September 27th, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. ET

Featuring Caitlin Kraft-Buchman, *CEO/Founder*, Women at the Table

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## Critical Resources

Want to learn more about gender representation, the theme for our next core working group? Interested in potential funding opportunities? Curious about relevant upcoming events? Explore the resources below!

### *Watch & Discover*

**Addressing the Gender Bias in Artificial Intelligence Data** - *OECD Policy*

*Observatory*, March 2021

This webinar brought AI experts together to discuss the risks of non-representative

data and how to ensure that AI systems combat, as opposed to perpetuate, gender bias.

**What Does Feminist Data Science Look Like? - IPAM at UCLA, July 2022**

Catherine D'Ignazio discusses the principles of data feminism and how representation in datasets can translate into more equitable outcomes.

## *Must-See Articles*

**Artificially Inequitable? AI and closing the gender gap - OECD Policy Observatory, March 2023**

Authors Celine Caira, Lucia Russo, Luis Aranda outline why policy makers should focus on the basics to ensure AI plays a positive role in closing the gender gap.

**Examining How Gender Bias is Built into AI - Adelphi University, March 2023**

Authors Subadra Panchanadeswaran and Ardra Manasi delve into the interplay of gender and the AI used by virtual assistants and robots in developing this commentary, with the goal of inspiring conversations on how societal biases are baked into AI applications that continue to be developed and incorporated into our lives.

## *Suggested Long Reads*

**AI, Gender, and Development in Africa: Feminist Policy Considerations -**

*Rutendo Chabikwa, Oxford Internet Institute, March 2023*

Written by July CoP workshop speaker Rutendo Chabikwa, this report provides an overview of whether African governments and regional bodies incorporate

adequate consideration of gender in their discussions of AI and its potential role in economic development.

**Data Feminism** - *Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein, The MIT Press, February 2020*

Authors Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein show how challenges to the male/female binary can help challenge other hierarchical (and empirically wrong) classification systems.

**Discriminating Systems: Gender, Race, and Power in AI** - *Sarah Myers West, AI Now Institute, April 2019*

Written by July CoP workshop speaker, Sarah Myers West, this report points to new ways of understanding the relationships between issues of discrimination in the workforce and in system building, which can open up new pathways to redressing the current imbalances and harms.

**Invisible Women** - *Caroline Criado Perez, Vintage Books, March 2019*

Author Caroline Criado Perez exposes the gender data gap – a gap in our knowledge that is at the root of perpetual, systemic discrimination against women, and that has created a pervasive but invisible bias with a profound effect on women's lives.

**Where are the Women? Mapping the Gender Job Gap in AI. Policy Briefing: Full Report** - *Erin Young, Judy Wajcman, and Laila Sprejer, The Alan Turing Institute, March 2021*

Authors Erin Young, Judy Wajcman, and Laila Sprejer, present a new, curated dataset, analyzed through innovative data science methodology, to explore in detail the gendered dynamics of data science and AI careers.

## *Funding and Opportunity Announcements*

**Generative AI Skills Challenge** - *apply by August 15*

data.org, with support from Microsoft, is launching the Generative AI Skills Challenge, a global grant for organizations to help train and upskill teams on generative AI to drive social impact.

**Google Launches Fund For Female Founders In Asia-Pacific, Focusing On AI Startups**

Google for Startups Women Founders Fund, will provide \$100,000 in equity-free cash to six female-founded startups this year. It will focus on startups in India, Japan and South Korea before expanding into other Asia-Pacific markets.

**Call for proposals: International conference on Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence in Agricultural Management** - *submit your abstract by September 8*

The International Conference on Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence in Agricultural Management, 15-17 November 2023, invites colleagues from academia and the business sector involved in the application of artificial intelligence in agriculture to submit an abstract for presentation at the conference. Please note that abstracts (200 words) have to be written in English and should be submitted via email to [Alagriculture.conf@gmail.com](mailto:Alagriculture.conf@gmail.com). Please contact the conference for the abstract template.

**Call for Partners: the Global Challenge to Build Trust in the Age of Generative AI**

Join the OECD in building a global competitive challenge to promote trust by equipping governments, organizations, and individuals to be resilient in the era of scalable synthetic content. Ready to get involved? Complete our [Global Challenge Partner Inquiry form](#). Have questions? Contact them at [ai@oecd.org](mailto:ai@oecd.org).

*Upcoming Events*

- **Symposium on Artificial Intelligence, Industry, Science, and Society (AI2S2)** - September 11-15, 2023; *Geneva, Switzerland*
- **The AI Conference 2023: Shaping the Future of AI** - September 26-27, 2023; *San Francisco, California, United States*
- **Internet Governance Forum Annual Meeting** - October 8-12, 2023; *Kyoto, Japan*
- **Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization Conference** - October 30-November 1, 2023; *Boston, Massachusetts, United States*
- **International Conference on Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence in Agricultural Management** - November 15-17, 2023; *Stockholm, Sweden*
- **Women in Tech Global Conference** - April 23-25, 2024; *United States and European locations TBD, Virtual*

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