Session Outcome Document

WSIS Action Line C10: The Future of the Ethical Dimensions of the Information Society: Impact of Artificial Intelligence

UNESCO

Wednesday, 29 May 2024

10:00–10:45 (UTC+02:00)

https://www.itu.int/net4/wsis/forum/2024/Agenda/Session/179

Key Issues Discussed

- **Ethics of AI in the Information Society**: Discussions emphasized the importance of ethical considerations in AI development and deployment, focusing on the potential impacts on society.

- **UNESCO's Activities**: Review of UNESCO's efforts in implementing the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, including tools like the Readiness Assessment Methodology and the Ethical Impact Assessment.

- **Private Sector Role**: The significance of the private sector in establishing and maintaining ethical standards and guardrails for AI was underscored.

- **Global Governance of AI**: The conversation highlighted the necessity of involving the Global South in global AI governance discussions to ensure inclusive and equitable policy development.

View on Emerging Trends

- **AI-Generated Synthetic Content**: New challenges posed by AI-generated content, particularly in terms of intellectual property and copyright issues in creative industries, were discussed. The governance of such content is crucial to maintain ethical standards.

- **Application of Ethical Principles**: Emphasis was placed on the need for practical application of ethical AI principles across all policy domains to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Tangible Outcomes

- **Commitment to UNESCO's AI Ethics Recommendation**: All stakeholders reaffirmed their dedication to advancing the implementation of UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI.

- **HealthAI joining UNESCO Business Council**: HealthAI expressed interest in joining UNESCO's Business Council, indicating growing private sector engagement.

- **Civil Society Observatory Participation**: A representative from The Future Society will join UNESCO's Civil Society Observatory, enhancing multi-stakeholder collaboration.

Actionable Plan and Key Recommendations

- **Implementation of UNESCO Recommendations**:

- o   Utilize the Readiness Assessment Methodology and the Ethical Impact Assessment tools.

- o   Share data and insights via the Global AI Ethics and Governance Observatory.

- o   Expand networks like Women4Ethical AI and the Business Council.

- o   Foster closer collaboration with other UN agencies, particularly ITU and UNDP, to advance AI ethics discourse and avoid duplicating efforts.

Suggestions for thematic aspects that might be included in the WSIS Forum 2025 (one paragraph)

- For the WSIS Forum 2025, thematic aspects could encompass a comprehensive exploration of the ethics of AI within the information society, addressing the socio-economic impacts and highlighting the importance of inclusive global governance, including its impact on the SDGs. Key themes might include the role of the private sector in implementing ethical AI standards, the challenges posed by AI-generated synthetic content in creative industries, and the need for effective, cross-domain application of ethical principles. Discussions should prioritize the implementation and assessment of the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration through networks like Women4Ethical AI and the Business Council. Emphasis on the participation of the Global South in shaping equitable AI policies, along with enhanced cooperation with UN agencies such as ITU and UNDP, would be crucial to ensure holistic and inclusive AI governance frameworks.