Inclusive AI for a better future : policy dialogue report

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INCLUSIVE AI
FOR A BETTER FUTURE

POLICY DIALOGUE REPORT

THE CLUB OF ROME

Globethics

Inclusive AI for a Better Future

Policy Dialogue Report

Globethics Policy No. 1

Globethics Policy Series

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Abstract

The content of this Policy dialogue report reflects the participants' input and discussion during the closed consultation organized by Globethics in partnership with the Club of Rome on the 1st of November 2023, and the Public Panel on *Ethical Reframing of AI: Time for a Geneva Compact?* organized on the 2d of November 2023, in the framework of the Geneva Peace Week. The report's content does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of either the organizing partners, the participants, or their respective institutional affiliations.

OVERVIEW

1. The policy dialogue on *Ethical Reframing of AI: Time for a Geneva Compact?* was co-hosted by Globethics in partnership with the Club of Rome. It was held in Geneva, Switzerland, in two parts: on 1 November 2023, as a closed-door Expert Consultation, and on 2 November as a Public Panel at the *Maison de la Paix*, in the framework of the *Geneva Peace Week,* under the thematic track "Harnessing technologies to build a better future". The panel comprised international experts with diverse sectoral backgrounds and benefited from UNESCO leadership input.

2. This initiative is aimed at fostering multistakeholder, multidisciplinary, inclusive, and cross-regional dialogue on recent advancements in AI ethics policies and practices. This open process addresses the gap of independent space to bring together around this topic a) all sectors encompassing public, private and civil society organizations, b) diverse world regions and cultures, and c) multiple disciplines of not only technology and economics but also social sciences and humanities, in addition to warranting meaningful intergenerational participation and gender-sensitive leadership. It convened 19 experts and practitioners from Argentina, Canada, Chile, India, Indonesia, France, Germany, Kenya, Morocco, Namibia, New Zealand, Spain, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United States and the United Kingdom.

3.   The dialogue was structured around four pillars: (1) people, (2) sciences, (3) institutions, and (4) instruments. The topics were approached in a transversal way, from different fields and sector perspectives. The methodology was based on open and interactive dialogue, where all participants could participate in their own capacity, sharing their personal views, rather than speaking on behalf of their institutions.

4.   The guiding questions for the discussion included the following:

- In what ways can AI be harnessed to promote inclusivity and diversity, while mitigating potential biases and discrimination?
- How can interdisciplinary collaborations and knowledge-sharing foster a more comprehensive understanding of the ethical implications of AI advancements in various scientific disciplines?
- Who are the needed regulatory bodies and how can they adapt to the continuously evolving landscape of AI to ensure compliance with ethical standards and prevent misuse or abuse of AI applications?
- What type of platforms, initiatives, and partnerships are needed to produce successful instruments in measuring the societal impact of AI, and anticipate major risks?

5.   This report is not a chronological account of the two-day event. It details how participants explored and scrutinized the main concepts, and presents the AI and Ethics-centered ideas, questions, and proposals that emerged in the discussions and interventions. It aims to contribute to the conceptual and ethical framing of the topic and help Globethics and The Club of Rome, the participants, in addition to other stakeholders, to envision the needed steps, in synergy with other frameworks, to ensure a safe, inclusive, and

creative usage of AI. The report's title reflects the highlight of the discussion about the fundamental approach needed to make AI a tool for a better future for all. AI demonstrates its ethical and societal value when it embraces inclusivity across individuals, scientific realms, institutions, and tools.

I.

QUESTIONING THE NARRATIVE

6. Some experts shared that in the process of an ethical reframing of AI, there is a need to clarify the terms "AI", "ethics" and "ethical responsibility." Who and what is responsible – and when and where are the responsibilities – for ethical framing? Whose voices and which actors should be on these platforms? How AI Ethics can be the way to raise values-driven questions, and not just deal with AI risks and challenges? Can ethics rouse values-driven positions and actions in contrast to power or profit-driven ones? Or is it needed to orient power towards the most inclusive common good? The need for questioning the narrative and its informing questions appeared to be a necessity to be able to comprehend the topic in a prudent way. Further research and dialogue are needed to deepen this sensitive dimension of the question.

7. The question of "whose ethics?" is an inevitable debate concerning this global topic. For some experts, ethics is framed differently based on context. How do we navigate that, and whose ethics are we adopting? Values can be part of a dominant narrative. The quest for a universal ethical framework for AI requires the acknowledgment of shared fundamental values such as security, peace, dignity, respect, etc. However, the standards for interpreting these values remain subjective and contextual. Therefore, the

ethical framework must be integrative of global universal aspirations and local contextual expectations.

8. Moreover, the discussion around the conceptual and ethical framework questioned the meaning of responsibility and trust in the context of AI and its possible service to communities and humanity amidst existential challenges. Given that data is generated by everyone, what could be the user-responsibility in creating these systems? As trust-building is essential at the societal level, it is also important to delineate the responsibilities of different actors, including governments, companies, academia, and NGOs, among others. The epistemic need and duty for citizens to understand what is happening and not proceed with ignorance requires a new form of Informed citizenry, inclusion, and participation in decision-making.

9. Privacy is also another dimension of the issue, which is not only challenged but also implicitly re-envisioned. One expert shared that this might be the last generation of people who know what privacy means. The digital narrative about people and realities is shaping their identity. What does truth mean in this context of data and algorithmic ownership, manipulation, and bias? How can transparency still function as a trusted value in this context? Other types of concerns exist when it comes to the perennial question of sentience in AI [or artificial superintelligence or ASI]. This confirms the need to distinguish between the AI that we currently use as a tool, and the AI that may become, or not, sentient.

10. There is also a need to demystify AI. In some contexts, the narrative of fear from of AI [i.e., technophobia] may deepen the digital divide and accelerate the exclusion of entire societies. This narrative is more perilous when it is adopted by some academic and governmental circles. Therefore, it is crucial to demystify AI and

encourage the younger generations to contribute to its development and usage in an innovative and responsible way, which could contribute to addressing many challenges in developing countries for example.

II.

PEOPLE

11. The discussion around the theme "people" focused on prioritizing the participation and well-being of underrepresented people, emphasizing inclusivity and diversity, and exploring the balance between individual autonomy and ethical responsibilities in AI-driven decision-making processes, with a strong emphasis on gender, intergenerational, and multicultural perspectives. Some challenges, especially from the underequipped people's perspective, have been identified.

12. First, the production and dissemination of knowledge is more democratic in the era of AI; however, identifying facts and truth from those which are not becomes more difficult, and the role of subject matter experts is more fragile and complex. The potential exponential increase in bias and misinformation, deepfakes, and digital manipulation of public opinion, require adapted and increased education and training in critical thinking and digital literacy. The (a) availability, (b) affordability, and (c) accessibility of information need to be secured by ensuring not only access to information, but also the ability to evaluate its validity.

13. Secondly, the fact that data is culturally, linguistically, and subjectively diversely informed, algorithms' standards and AI language decisions may lead to biased content, being from gender, culture, linguistic, or ethical perspectives. There should be a

recognition that values, as well as experiences, are plural and that it is imperative not to cage a group or sub-group of communities into one standard. While some take available AI technology resources for granted, it should be emphasized that there are those who are not even part of the equation and the existing aggregates of data. In this framework, some experts have even been alerting from certain new forms of neo-colonialism.

14. Thirdly, the inability of all humanity to catch up with the speed with which technologies are developing is an important existential and social justice question. While <u>Article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights</u> (ICESCR) requires states to recognize the right of everyone to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, we sadly note that in the age of AI, a wide part of humanity does not even have access to electricity or internet.

15. Fourth, while basic services such as administrative and medical ones, are increasingly digitalized, is there a possibility for some people to *opt-out* and be able to stay relevant, with the *right* to *not* be included in this digital world?

16. Fifth, in addition to privacy loss, AI generates tension between privacy and accuracy. Data privacy might be compromised, but at the same time, mass data processing demands more accurate information.

17. Sixth, generative AI can increase the bias in social perceptions and representations. Black defendants would be flagged as riskier than white defendants. Women would see fewer advertisements for executive and high-level positions because AI is trained on the CVs of previous executives, mostly men. AI does not necessarily consider that correlation does not imply causation.

18. Seventh, according to the <u>International Labor Organization (ILO) study</u> on Generative AI and jobs, women will be more affected by job loss, since they are globally overrepresented in clerical work. Rather than helping in fighting prevalent discrimination, AI can increase the marginalization of certain groups. Moreover, AI is also a threat to the loss of transformation of technical jobs of highly qualified people. Both the economy and the job market will be subject to challenges and transformations at all levels.

19. Eighth, while AI comes with the possibility of accelerating the technology transfer and increasing the chances for people in developing countries to access this market, and collaborate with other experts across the globe, however, the demand is also to access the technology-making tools and infrastructure, which would enable them to address their concerns. The Bottom-up AI industry would allow users not only to access the global AI tools developed by giant companies but also to develop on the local level, through small and medium enterprises and initiatives, tailored tools to their specific needs and values.

20. The above challenges cover issues of inclusion, representation, intersectionality – diversity, gender, race, socioeconomic status, education level, knowledge, and technology transfer, – and even problems with self-understanding and to an extent narrative identity, call for a triple attitude of:

    i. Endorsing pluralism: because of not all cultures and communities are equitably part of aggregates of data, we need to challenge the monotonic views, definitions, and meaning-making, and look whose voice is being unheard. Designers, policymakers, and users must be aware that the world is not uniform, and always seek and prioritize inclusivity.

ii. Changing perspective: because the focus on the problems may divert people from the available potential, a change in perspective is needed to comprehend both the risks and opportunities of AI. For example, instead of being concerned about how to stop students from cheating using certain AI apps, the question should be reframed: How to come up with a meaningful education system for this specific era?

iii. Staying value-focused: because of the speed with which technologies are moving now, we might have a *foresight lapse*. There is a need to have some kind of *value-orientation* or a value constellation on which it is possible to rely, in the context in which humanity is evolving.

III.

SCIENCES

21. Addressing the critical role of the scientific community in upholding ethical standards in AI research, calls for transdisciplinary, transparency, and accountability in the development and deployment of AI-driven scientific innovations. It also emphasizes the need for international and interdisciplinarity collaborations and the understanding of ethical implications across various fields, ensuring a positive societal impact.

22. There is consensus on the important role of humanities and non-tech skills in ethical standards in AI. The responsibility of AI cannot be on the engineering and sciences alone but must be supported by other disciplines. Moreover, the scientific community cannot alone ensure that AI research adheres to ethical standards and contributes to scientific progress, and as such, help is needed from institutions and organizations involved in policy and science diplomacy. Some experts warn against technocracy, when technical experts alone set the standards, which stands in the opposite direction to democracy.

23. While there is agreement on the important role of the humanities and other disciplines in the ethical standards in AI and emerging technologies, the locus of responsibility for upholding ethical standards is another question. One example demonstrating the complex interplay of roles and hence responsibility is the discussion on "Business and AI Ethics". There is a risk of producing

quasi-science and disinformation to justify existing business models in AI. We shall learn from the example of some "scientists lobbying" and think tanks funded by companies engaged in fossil fuels and their influence on the related policy agenda.

24. On a broader scale, responsibility for AI technologies should be two-fold: (1) an *internal mechanism* which is the ethical level, and (2) an *external mechanism* which is the legal field. On a more specific scale, there are two incompatible perspectives on this responsibility. (1) The first stance says that the responsibility is not in the domain of science and technical experts and expects the legislators to set the boundaries of this new technology; (2) while the second stance implies, if not suggests, the need to recognize at least some responsibility in the hands of those doing technical and scientific work.

25. The problem stems from this sort of race to the bottom. We want machines to understand human beings better than themselves and this has consequences on human agency. However, stopping this race to the bottom is not the role of scientists, but rather of institutions and regulatory bodies. Meanwhile, it is important for the user to have the ability and responsibility to question the bias in data quality and think about the effect of unreliable data especially if it has disproportionally discriminatory effects even when intention was absent.

26. Formal education should strongly connect ethics and sciences. The suggestion is to (1) Allow scientists developing AI technologies to have the foundational knowledge of humanities, social sciences; (2) offer them the possibility to learn the language that a transdisciplinary collaboration requires; and (3) invite them to go beyond the binary perceptions of reality through the dichotomies of science or non-science and technology or non-technology,

through the involvement of non-technical people in their AI research groups.

27. Addressing transparency, privacy, and bias, a "Bias Expert Focus Group" at the IEEE Standards Association spoke about the <u>Ontological Specification for Ethical Algorithmic Bias</u>. This is important in assessment-making in AI systems, especially in the future when we talk about serials, and in the context of autonomous systems with no human involvement.

28. There is also a need to clarify what measures we should use for assessment regarding the impact of interdisciplinary research in the AI field. The impact assessment needs to go beyond the sole focus on individual values and interests and include the community level and social impact too.

IV.

INSTITUTIONS

29. AI requires a multistakeholder ethical responsibility on the governance, ethical and legal framing, as well as monitoring and managing this new technology and its societal risks and potentialities, collaboratively involving governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector, academia, and civil society.

30. The proposals and demands on the ethical responsibility of institutions are somehow charted alongside an extensive discussion on the misuse and abuse surrounding AI and emerging technologies on the one hand, and the capacity of this technology in contributing to face global challenges, such as sustainability, poverty, and peace.

31. The institutions, including tech companies, must assume moral responsibility and not throw it on the shoulders of individuals, in this very sensitive sector. When, for example, ChatGPT and similar tools are being released, the institutions are alerted about the risks that this technology entails, however, the individuals are forced to mitigate themselves these risks, due to the absence of clear regulations as well as safe limitations of the technology itself.

32. This moral responsibility calls for multistakeholder collaboration, beyond the legal regulations that can be set by governments. It also calls for international cooperation in establishing global policies and governance procedures, taking into consideration the power imbalances between countries and even within countries. International collaboration within a multilateral framework is more necessary for smaller and less powerful countries, to ensure an inclusive AI ownership and responsibility, since the technology is centralized in the hands of the few.

33. One way of solidifying this institutional collective responsibility is by referring to the international system of human rights. It is a framework that is globally shared and known and needs to be the ethical base of any framework for AI. Instead of companies merely relying on their own standards, an ethical framework reflected in global regulations offers the companies, as well as other stakeholders, a common ground in dealing with the technology and its implications. Subsequently, this global framework should be managed by a regulatory body whose decisions should have a certain enforcement capacity.

34. The global framework does not replace the national level, and the role of governments in coping with this challenge. UNESCO launched the Readiness Assessment Methodology (RAM) to support governments in identifying the gaps they need to address and build their institutional capacity in responding to AI regulation.

35. Rigorous auditing and accountability are required in the adoption of AI technologies in relation to public services. It is crucial that there is no algorithmic bias when AI is combined with public services or institutions. Even technologies should be resisted when used inappropriately.

36. The existing social structure lacks the capacity for social justice when distributing the gains made by technological advancement. This could be exacerbated by AI. There is a need to rethink taxation and data status, ownership, and exploitation in this framework.

37. Civil society is a major actor in this field on both global and local levels. Hence, funding should be ensured by the private companies of AI to support the work of the civil society in monitoring, raising awareness and literacy, activating agency and creative initiative for using AI for societal purposes, or encouraging the emergence of small and medium enterprises in the field. A bottom-up approach can support making AI a tool for further inclusivity and contribute to bridging the gap between high- and low-income countries. With the right funding and investment, AI could stimulate entrepreneurship to address local and global challenges.

V.

INSTRUMENTS

38. The need for regulations, policy frameworks, and practical instruments has become a pressing reality, to mitigate the risks of AI and guide its safe developments, while mitigating the related societal and environmental risks. Moreover, this engagement is needed at all levels: global, national, institutional, social, and educational, for effective integration of ethical considerations in the decision-making processes, prioritizing human values and ethical standards while promoting innovation and progress.

39. On top of the <u>UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence</u>, adopted in November 2021 by all Member States, there are existing AI regulations and policies including the <u>OECD Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence</u>, adopted in May 2019 and amended in November 2023, the <u>US Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence</u>, issued in October 2023, the <u>EU Artificial Intelligence Act</u> which is still in the process of adoption, and other national laws or policies.

40. The UNESCO Recommendation represents a unique global effort that aims to serve as a compass of ethical processes to govern all phases of AI system development – from research, development, and procurement while protecting human rights and dignity, fundamental freedoms, and the environment. The need for a new global policy or regulation can be for some people questionable,

while there is a pressing need to move from guidelines to real practice with inclusive and fair outcomes, and to knowledge and interpretation rooted in human rights and humanitarian law systems.

41. Guidelines and regulations are, however, needed on the national levels, but also in the private sector, and sector-specific ones. Hence, global frameworks need for example to be translated on each national level and contextualized with consideration of the local culture, hopes, and needs, to ensure their legitimacy. The aim is to globally disseminate the understanding of this technology in both culturally sensitive and internationally convergent non-polarized ways.

42. Academic institutions have also joined the global effort to better understand, demystify, and scientifically think about Artificial Intelligence and its ramifications. Research in this field is an extremely important instrument, not only for the companies' purpose of development and profitability, but also to keep a critical distance from the subject and its stakeholders. Education, more broadly, should ensure the needed AI literacy at the grassroots, all over the world. Ignorance will only contribute to further manipulation of public opinion or misuse of the technology, while what is needed is to make understanding AI part of the citizens' agency requirements. Civil society has a crucial role in this formal and informal education and related citizenry development.

43. The idea of a new global AI body – an international AI government – is controversial. In addition to the leadership of UNESCO in the field, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) with the AI for Good Global Summit is playing a major role in the sector too, and the UN Secretary General launched the Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence. However, an executive

instrument globally responsible for the continuous development of global guidelines, risk assessments and management, and serving as a platform to manage issues opposing stakeholders, is missing. Moreover, many think that this governing body must be multistakeholder where everyone is given a seat around the table, due to the nature of AI whose governance can't be only intergovernmental.

VI.

TOWARD A GENEVA COMPACT

44. Due to the complex nature of AI, the need for a multistakeholder Compact for ethical reframing of the technology and its usage is formulated. The Compact aims to present the ethical framework in the most inclusive and simple way, for global people's by-in and legitimacy. It should allow the integration of different views and expectations, especially for those working in silos. The Compact needs to be intergenerational, coping with Children's Rights too.

45. The global multistakeholder Compact on Ethics of AI is more seen as a dynamic document, offering the ethical framing but not definitively defining neither the questions nor the answers. It should be the basis for a platform to engage with emerging questions, innovative ideas, and concerns in the most inclusive way, stimulating coordination and amplifying the underrepresented voices, breaking the race to the bottom.

46. The discussion yielded a consensus emphasizing the imperative of an ongoing dialogue. This continued dialogue should not only spark collaborative initiatives, involving a broader spectrum of participants in both ideation and execution, but also consistently foster cooperation among all stakeholders. Recognizing that AI is both part of the shared challenges and the common good of

humanity, the aim is to cultivate a continuous and inclusive policy engagement that advances collective action and convergent understanding.

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Abstract

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