IGF 2017: Workshop 0F66 report

- **Session Title:** Exploring implications of Big Data and Artificial Intelligence for building inclusive Knowledge Societies and achieving SDGs

- **Date:** Thursday 21st December 2017
- **Time:** 9:00-10:00 am
- **Session Organizer**: UNESCO
- **Chair/Moderator**: Ms. Xianhong Hu, UNESCO
- **Rapporteur/Notetaker**: Ms. Xianhong Hu, UNESCO

- **List of speakers and their institutional affiliations**:
  - Ms. Mila Romanoff, UN Global Pulse
  - Ms. Sophie Kwasny, the Council of Europe
  - Ms. Nanjira Sambuli, Web Foundation
  - Ms. Judith Herzog, Conseil national du numérique
  - Mr. Tijani Ben Jemaa, ICANN/ FMAI
  - Mr. Frits Bussemaker, Chair of the Institute for Accountability and Internet Democracy

- **Key Issues raised** (1 sentence per issue):
  - "As big data and artificial intelligence are in constant progression, we need privacy and data protection more than ever to ensure that these technologies benefit us all in building inclusive Knowledge Societies and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals".
  - Reaffirming the importance of these technologies for human development, Xianhong Hu insisted on "the crucial need to develop them along the values of

UNESCO's concept of Internet Universality which include human rights, openness, accessibility and multistakeholder participation".

- o Mila Romanoff from United Nations Global Pulse, a special initiative of the Secretary General on big data and artificial intelligence, said that "big data and artificial intelligence can be very valuable in understanding people's needs, especially in times of humanitarian crisis.
- o At the same time, these new technologies can present some risks, particularly in terms of privacy and data protection".
- o Nanjira Sambuli from the Web Foundation then cautioned about "all the hope we may want to place in what big data and artificial intelligence will do for those who have been left behind traditionally. These technologies can be very harmful too, they can represent tools of oppression and further divides".

- **If there were presentations during the session, please provide a 1-paragraph summary for each presentation**:

- **Please describe the Discussions that took place during the workshop session** (3 paragraphs):
    - o UNESCO held a session on 21 December 2017 on the implications of big data and artificial intelligence in building inclusive Knowledge Societies and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at the Internet Governance Forum in Geneva, Switzerland.
    - o UNESCO representative, Xianhong Hu, opened the debate stating that "new technologies involving artificial intelligence and big data are rapidly evolving, constantly reshaping our understandings of access to information."
    - o Other participants talked about the misuse of data for oppression purposes, data leaks, as well as data and information literacy and the development of guidelines. Xianhong Hu concluded the session inviting all present stakeholders to consult

UNESCO's ongoing work to promote Internet Freedom and to define Internet Universality indicators.

- **Please describe any Participant suggestions regarding the way forward/potential next steps/key takeaways** (3 paragraphs):
    o Sophie Kwasny from the Council of Europe said that "the potential benefits of big data and artificial intelligence for humankind are huge. Great challenges also come with them, especially regarding human rights. At the Council of Europe, we are working on modernizing our 1981 Convention on the subject, including for example a right not to be subject to a decision solely based on the automatic processing of data".
    o Tijani Ben Jemaa from ICANN/ FMAI addressed the data protection side of the debate and talked about how data can be collected, processed and analyzed to improve the quality of everyone's life. In this sense, big data can be "a source of innovation and growth". He then talked about how, at the same time, "collected data can be used for personal attacks, for business hijacking, for political interests, they can be sold, they may be used against us without our knowledge". Hence the need to protect data with other technologies, with legal tools and digital literacy.
    o Frits Bussemaker, Chair of the Institute for Accountability and Internet Democracy said that "we talk about consent, about ethics, about values. But the translations and definitions of those differ from countries and cultures. We therefore need a law for the Internet and we need to make those who are collecting and using data accountable".

Gender Reporting

- **Estimate the overall number of the participants present at the session**: 80
- **Estimate the overall number of women present at the session**: 40

- **To what extent did the session discuss gender equality and/or women's empowerment?**

    o UNESCO advocates for a human rights-based approach on big data and artificial intelligence; taking into account women's rights. This human rights-based approach is also part of the Internet Universality Indicators that are developed by UNESCO within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, thus keeping a special focus on gender, children and youth.

    o One of the latent questions of the session is how to bring more rights, openness, accessibility and participation to women around the world. Gender equality is, in fact, part of the cross-cutting indicators meant to be broad public policy goals affecting the overall indicators framework.

- **If the session addressed issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment, please provide a brief summary of the discussion**:

    o Participants raised the issue of the benefits of these new technologies towards gender equality. However, Nanjira Sambuli concluded her presentation saying, "no technology will make up for the lack of political or social will to actually ensure human rights."