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The role of AI regulation and data governance on the acceleration of Agenda 2030

It is important to envision how emerging AI regulations and digital economy partnerships can accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, I would like to highlight key elements of one of the first AI laws to be tabled and I am referring to Canada's AI and Data Act (AIDA). AIDA aims to:

1. Support governmental efforts to foster an environment in which citizens can seize the benefits of the digital and data-driven economy.
2. Establish a regulatory framework that supports and protects a diversity of values, including the right to privacy and Indigenous Rights.
3. Modernize a legislative framework so that it is suited to the digital age.
4. Establish common requirements for the design, development and use of AI systems, to facilitate international and interprovincial trade and commerce in AI systems while covering a number of systemic impacts.
5. Avoid overlap of a new law with existing norms, frameworks and integrate seamlessly where there are gaps.

Furthermore, it will require that those who design, develop and manage AI systems, adopt measures to mitigate risks of **harm** and **biased outputs** related to **high-impact AI systems**.

As emerging AI regulations and policies refine, notions such as “harm” and “high impact” will be defined through proper information and engagement mechanisms with a broad scope of stakeholders. Meanwhile, the absence of women from engagement, ownership and consequential decision-making in the sociotechnical pipeline of AI systems significantly impacts the intended use of such systems, which leads to biased outputs, technically and socially, and to an inequitable distribution of the benefits AI can bring.

To ensure proper representation of women in the laws and policies that will govern AI and data, it is critical to remember that:

- 1) It is still much easier, more accessible, for the private sector to shape the answers to those questions, than it is for smaller, independent Civil Society Organizations. This is a sector which statistically represents a high percentage of women.
- 2) The UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) must be integrated into AI laws and therefore respect of Data Sovereignty.
- 3) The impact of AI on women presents more risks than to men. Due to the interrelatedness and interdependent nature of all SDGs, Gender Equality (SDG 5) requires a cross-cutting lens into all aspects of AI and Data Development and Governance.

To conclude, we hope to engage further with our colleagues and explore the feasibility of:

- 1) The co-governance of natural resource data, which presents particularly far-reaching implications for human security, adopt gender-aware strategies (See our Policy Brief “Gender Equality and the Environment in Digital Economies”);
- 2) Giving the persons/teams/institutions who will lead the implementation of emerging AI laws, the additional responsibility, not only to avoid the risks and harmful uses of AI, but also to ensure that AI and data are used for SDGs (via funding/investment strategies and incentivization mechanisms, policy architectures, and so on).



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