

Using AI to Reveal Systems that Perpetuate Inequities Affecting Women and Girls

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Geneva - As part of the 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW70), I had the honour of representing WFWPI UN Office Geneva by presenting at a virtual parallel event hosted by the Women in Leadership Organization, Inc. (WILO) on 9 March 2026. The session examined how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to identify and better understand systemic inequities affecting women and girls globally. My contribution offered a human rights perspective, emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural collaboration in advancing gender equality. The discussion highlighted AI's capacity to analyze complex datasets and transform them into visual insights, enabling clearer identification of patterns embedded within social, economic, and political systems.

A key concept presented was AI as a "digital mirror," reflecting existing inequalities and

potentially amplifying them if applied without ethical oversight. This was illustrated through the contrast between two classrooms: one equipped with digital tools and another with limited resources, demonstrating how unequal access to technology shapes educational outcomes and future opportunities. The discussion also underscored the global digital divide, noting that women have less access to the internet than men. As AI increasingly relies on digital infrastructure, this disparity risks further marginalizing women and girls. Additional barriers include the high cost of education, limited international recognition of qualifications, and the impact of automation on employment opportunities.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed these inequalities. While many students in developed regions continued learning online, millions in developing countries lacked access to the necessary technology. As a result, educational disruptions were widespread, with an estimated 11 million girls at risk of not returning to school, highlighting long-term consequences for gender equality. Speakers including Dr. Scott Ebbrecht, Dr. Donna Elder, Dr. Teri Marcos, Dr. Dina Pacis, Dr. Jennifer Preimesberger, Dr. Nilsa Thorsos, and Dr. Patricia Nilsen-Traynor emphasized ethical AI integration, leadership development, and education as essential to creating inclusive systems and expanding opportunities for women.

The discussion aligned with global frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which affirms education as a fundamental right. Key recommendations included expanding access to digital infrastructure, ensuring equitable educational opportunities, promoting recognition of qualifications, and supporting the ethical development of AI systems. This presentation aligns with the WFWPI pillar of Education, highlighting the role of knowledge and leadership in empowering women and girls. Strengthening these areas enables greater participation in decision-making and contributes to more equitable societies.

In conclusion, AI reflects existing societal structures and can either reinforce or reduce inequality depending on its application. Ensuring equitable access to education, technology, and opportunity is essential. When used responsibly, AI can serve as a powerful tool for revealing hidden disparities and supporting more inclusive and informed decision-making.