Concept note AI side event of 26th CSTD
The multi-faceted implications of AI

29 March (13:20 -14:35)
Tempus, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Background

The recent release of new AI-generation technologies such as ChatGPT and Bard, DALL-E and Stable Diffusion, are exponentially shifting AI to the mainstream. They are revolutionising and causing disruption to the previous wave of technology— taking human interactions to new heights, moving across new frontier to access knowledge, imbued with the ability to generate works of art, poems, stories, essays, codes, and more.

These AI systems have been trained largely using datasets including materials from the internet, books, and materials which may be proprietary or copyrighted. In addition, the used datasets mostly leave out the people, the economies, and the cultures of developing countries. In the current state of affairs, AI systems can create even more acute power asymmetries in international relations, for example if they are used to support trade negotiations.

Technology is a cornerstone of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the UN has consistently emphasized that technological change is essential for economic growth and sustainable development.

We have seen many examples of how AI was harnessed to address the COVID-19 pandemic. As we reimagined a world with AI— with the consequential reshaping of our culture, beliefs and behaviours, there are concerns about the implications. These include the tensions surrounding the equitable technology diffusion and sharing with the Global South, the flowing effects on our long-held regulatory structures and laws, intellectual property, ethics and other rights, and in areas we have not even thought of yet.

Aim and Objective

To provide a brief overview of the potential multifaceted implications of the application of AI and possible solutions among policy makers, academia, private sector, civil society and international organizations.

In the absence of an effective international normative framework, the future of AI is evolving without much input from most developing countries. Currently, most AI frameworks and regulation are developed by the Global North or self-regulation by digital platforms that control the data used to feed AI models and algorithms. So, what are the real alternatives?

Guiding questions

- The power of AI systems is growing very fast. Knowledge and creative jobs were thought to be less exposed to AI disruption? Is this still true? Will any occupation escape the impact of AI?
- Are our societies ready to deal with the of AI, for jobs, for , human rights, for civic and political participation, for ethics?

- Can education help make AI more likely to enhance workers' abilities rather than replace them? What needs to change in education policies and practices for this to happen?
- Given that AI does not currently reflect most of the world, is it ethical or equitable to allow it to have an increasing role in managing global systems? Is there a riks that AI development will escape the regulatory power of governments?
- Can an open innovation approach for AI offer an alternative model which is more amenable to the ethical and equitable imperatives that matter for developing countries? How shall the rights issue in relation to AI and emerging technologies be addressed?
- How can international cooperation help solve these issues?