

# Ethical and participatory approaches to the governance of AI in the context of the 2030 Agenda

Section: Technology and science

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Although in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies offer the potential to advance equitable outcomes, concerns have been raised regarding the emergence of a technocracy driven by automation, where societal systems become rigidly controlled by algorithms and technological rules. This scenario, which prioritizes organizational efficiency, legitimacy, and profit, may hinder the adaptability and responsiveness of systems to societal needs, potentially deviating from the equitable and people-centered approach advocated by the 2030 Agenda.

Thus, there is a growing need for new governance frameworks that are flexible, context-aware, and capable of accommodating ethical and participatory approaches to the governance of AI. By fostering an environment where AI is developed and governed in line with ethical principles and societal values, we can move closer and faster to realizing a vision of “better” AI that supports social justice and contributes to the broader goals of sustainable development. This perspective is necessary to emphasize the importance of the lived experiences, needs, and values of diverse urban and rural

populations, especially those who are often marginalized or underrepresented in decision-making processes. It also highlights the role of dialogue and integration of empirical research with vulnerable populations using participatory approaches that ensure that AI technologies are developed in close consultation with those most affected by their deployment.

This is in line with the structural ethos of Sustainable Development Goals, which underline the significance of engaging in meaningful dialogue with policymakers and melding empirical investigations with insights from communities at the margins, thereby promoting inclusiveness and tailoring AI solutions to meet the diverse cultural, social, and economic needs of various groups.