FIRST INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON

Teaching AI Ethics in African Universities

October, 26 – 27 / 2023 in Bouaké

I. BACKGROUND

Beyond the promising deployment and research in Artificial Intelligence (AI), there are mounting genuine concerns regarding its practical implementation in the world of work and related ethical issues and consequences. This is because while these technologies offer unprecedented opportunities for human empowerment towards an equitable, fair, and sustainable future, they also pose significant challenges relating to equity and fairness. They are developing with exponential speed. Their social and economic impacts are deep and pervasive. There are difficulties in disentangling the causes of these concerns and their consequences. It is also difficult to design suitable policies in response to these concerns. For these reasons, these technologies are deepening existing divides, exacerbating disparities based on access, income or gender, and creating unique risks for human dignity and human rights. AI systems carry in their flanks threats and ethical risks. Ten of such risks stand out, namely, 1. manipulation of human beings and opinions/ information, 2. insidious instrumentalization of consumers (neuromarketing), 3. triumph of programmed decisions and discrimination or stigmatization (expert systems), 4. proliferation of scams and cybercrimes, 5. negation of autonomy (individual consent), 6. exhibition of violence (the killer robot, hypersonic intelligent missiles, the race to intelligent weapons), 7. rapid and globalized proliferation of words of hatred and radicalization, 9. concerns about biobanks and eased attacks on E-finance institutions, and 10. the agony of solidarity or humanism and the reinforcement of gender stereotypes.

Recognizing the profound and dynamic impacts, both positive and negative, of artificial intelligence (AI) on societies, the environment, ecosystems, and human lives, including the human mind, in part because of the new ways in which its use influences human thinking, interaction, and decision-making and affects education, the human, social, and natural sciences, culture, and communication and information, it is important to upscale public knowledge and awareness of AI and of the ethical issues that it raises.

Facing these ethical risks, implementing AI ethics approaches through national policy and regulatory frameworks,

with particular emphasis on diversity and gender equality, has become very crucial in establishing global norms and standards, including through the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI and delivering capacity-building, in coordinated action for enhanced coherence and impact of UNESCO's mandate in this domain. In addition, teaching AI ethics is becoming timely and even necessary. Nevertheless, the question remains whether systematic training in AI ethics in African universities is seriously conceivable without reference modules.

This issue, which involves, among others, the UNESCO, UNESCO Chair of Bioethics of the University Alassane Ouattara (Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire), the Université Virtuelle of Côte d'Ivoire (UVCI), the Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Bioethics of Université Libre de Bruxelles, the Université de Lomé, the UNESCO Chair «Pratiques émergentes en Technologies et Communication pour le Développemnt, (Université de Bordeaux - France), the Université d'Abomey-Calavi, the Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, the Université de Lubumbashi, the Université Assane Seck de Ziguichor, the Department of Computer and Robotics Education of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, justifies the organization of this international seminar.

With its partners, the UNESCO Chair of Bioethics of the University Alassane Ouattara offers to design for African Universities training modules in accordance with the challenges and stakes that are connected, on the one hand, to ethic support in the process of making AI machines, and on the other hand, professional and civic applications of AI technologies.

Now, the question is to know how to make this training on ethics of AI successful in African Universities, if there are no standard consensus modules. This question that concerns in equal terms all institution partners of the Chair provide the justification of the present international Seminar, the very first of this type in Francophone Africa.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

1. General objective

Design frameworks for the promotion of a systematic teaching of Ethics of AI adapted to meet the ethic and socioeconomic challenges within the African continent.

Bring the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence to the attention of the authorities, research and academic organizations, institutions and organizations in public, private and civil society sectors involved in AI technologies, in order to ensure that the development of training modules in AI ethics are guided by both sound scientific research as well as ethical analysis and evaluation.

2. Specific objectives :

- ✓ Bringing together multidisciplinary expertise – ethicists, bioethicists, philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, medical doctors, lawmen, engineers, Information and Communication specialists, historians, linguists, geographers – for an efficient understanding of the history, nature, functioning and applications of AI ;
- ✓ Share and harmonize ownership of the values and main principles of AI ethics ;
- ✓ Share and harmonize strategies of appropriation of the UNESCO values for the structuring in the humane sense of the roll-out of AI ;
- ✓ Promote the UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence and the teaching of AI ethics in Africa ;

✓ Improve public knowledge of the ethical issues involved in AI, particularly the exacerbation of gender divides and the reinforcement of negative gender ;

✓ Offer training modules on the ethics of AI ;

✓ To proceed a scientific popularization of the training modules on the ethics of AI in Africa ;

✓ Develop a critical approach to AI applications in digital, information and geostrategic warfare.

III. SEMINAR QUESTIONS.

1. *Key question of the Seminar.*

- What are the awareness strategies and value-orientations on AI ethics' implementation in African Universities?
- what are the objectives of AI ethics in African Universities?
- what are the contents needed for achieving the objectives of AI ethics in African Universities?
- what are the instructional methods to be employed for teaching AI ethics?
- what are the activities that could be used for evaluating trainees' performance in AI ethics?
- available references that can guide establishment of the ethics of AI in African universities?

2. *Areas of discussion :*

How to deepen and harmonize the understanding of the values and main principles of the ethics of artificial intelligence?

- What should be the methods for teaching AI ethics?
- What content for the training modules?
- How to raise awareness of AI ethics and promote AI ethics education in Africa?
- How to develop a generalized AI ethics curriculum framework for AI education in African universities?
- Discussion around AI applications in specific sectors: social sciences, education, agriculture and food systems, medicine and health, culture and heritage, etc..

IV. AXES OF COMMUNICATION AND MODULES

✓ History and evolution of AI;

✓ Nature and functioning of AI systems ;

✓ Use of AI in such sectors as communication (analysis of words of hatred and radicalization, by means of specific algorithms), health (telemedicine); agriculture, judicial systems, transportation and financial systems (E-finance, biobanks)

✓ Values of AI and ethical principles of AI

✓ Methods of teaching AI ethics;

✓ Teaching AI ethics: inventory, ethical approaches, modules and perspectives of evolution ;

✓ Governance of the teaching of AI ethics.

Comité scientifique

- Pr Lazare Poamé (Philosophie de la technique, Bioéthique et Éthique des technologies), Chaire UNESCO de bioéthique, Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké, Académie royale de Belgique
- Pr Ignace Biaka (Philosophie politique), Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny
- Pr Antoine Dépri N'Guessan (Histoire et Philosophie des Sciences), Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny
- Pr Francis Akindès (Sociologie politique), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Ignace Yapi Ayénon (Logique et Histoire des Sciences), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr N'Guessan Yao (Sciences de l'ingénieur), Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Yamoussoukro
- Azoumana Ouattara, (Philosophie politique), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Patricia Arkhurst Nebout (Didactique des disciplines et Construction des savoirs), École Normale Supérieure, Abidjan
- Pr Henri Bah (Philosophie politique), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Edmond Yao Kouassi (Philosophie sociale), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Simplice Dion (Philosophie politique et morale), Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Abidjan
- Pr Fernand Kouamé (Géosciences), Université Virtuelle de Côte d'Ivoire
- Pr Opadou Koudou (Psychologie de l'éducation), École Normale Supérieure, Abidjan
- Pr Roger Tro Dého (Littératures africaines), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Marcel Kouassi (Bioéthique et Éthique des technologies), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Grégoire Traoré (Éthique environnementale), Université Alassane Ouattara, Bouaké
- Pr Ferdinand Vanga (Sociologie du développement), Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Korhogo
- Pr Abou Sangaré (Métaphysique), Université Peleforo Gon Coulibaly, Korhogo
- Pr Jean-Noël Missa, (Médecine, Bioéthique et Philosophie), Université Libre de Bruxelles, Académie royale de Belgique
- Pr Marie-Geneviève Pinsart (Philosophie), Comité International de Bioéthique-UNESCO, Université Libre de Bruxelles
- Pr Christophe Dikénou (Philosophie et Bioéthique), COMEST, UNESCO
- Pr Alain Kiyindou (Sciences de la communication et de l'information) Chaire UNESCO « Pratiques émergentes en Technologie et Communication pour le développement », Université de Bordeaux
- Pr Samson Guédégbé (Droit privé), Chaire UNESCO Droit de la personne humaine et de la démocratie Université d'Abomey-Calavi
- Pr Ibrahima Niang (Informatique), Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar
- Pr Idrissa Sarr (Informatique), Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Dakar
- Pr Jean-Marie Dikanga Kazadi (Sciences de la communication et de l'Information), Université de Lubumbashi
- Pr Mahamadé Savadogo (Philosophie morale et politique), Université Joseph Ki-Zerbo, Ouagadougou
- Pr Auguste Nsonsissa (Logique et Épistémologie), Université Marien-Ngouabi, Brazzaville
- Pr Stalder Pia (Global and Intercultural Management), Bern University of Applied Sciences
- Pr Jacques Simporé (Biologie moléculaire et Bioéthique), Université Saint Thomas d'Aquin, Ouagadougou
- Pr Simon Komi Kouvon (Philosophie et Bioéthique), Université de Lomé
- Pr Daouda Niang Diatta (Mathématiques), Université Assane Seck, Ziginchor
- Pr Paul Oranu (Information, Communication and Technology), University of Nigeria, Nsukka

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