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# DS Reflection #1

While data science has shown signs of transforming international development, trusting broad data on a global scale must be taken with a grain of salt. The accuracy of machine algorithms fluctuates and can degrade over time. In the paper "Don't forget people in the use of big data for development" by Joshua Blumenstock, he discusses for example how the relationship between poverty and phone use may change at any given time. And as this changes, data once collected may now be wrong. Knowing this, it's important to take collaboration between not just data scientists, but also governments, private ownership, and civil society to really have a fundamental understanding of the relationship between people and data.

Joshua argues that "big data could transform international development. But many alleged silver bullets have missed their mark in recent decades." Joshua discusses this argument referencing many pitfalls, strengths, and any future for how big data can be utilized. In regards to promises and pitfalls, big data has a lot of them. There's no proper regulation so private entities can use data to maximize their income. Also, people tend to try and replace old data with new data. Joshua argues that they must be used together, complementing one another. When discussing the future for data science, Joshua brings up the customization of technology directed outside of first world issues. For example, satellites being used not to tag facebook friends but to locate impoverished areas on a map. He also states the importance of increasing technical capabilities globally as well as the collaboration of data scientists with government, and private companies to maximize efficiency and have a more humanitarian outlook when targeting these issues.

Good intent is never enough in data science to solve problems based on people's experiences. This testament from a prior classmate absolutely holds true when regarding the problems discussed above. The laptop per child initiative should have worked on paper. I mean, the data collected indicated it would be a great success. However, it failed because it was introduced in an unfit social and cultural environment.

Transparency is the underlying issue to these problems, so an increase in this on both ends (data based issues & human based issues) could lead to better results. Regarding this statement, there is so much unknown about personal data and what bigger companies/the government are doing with this data. This sense of unknowing not only leads to distrust but it is an underlying issue behind these problems. Data privacy doesn't even exist in some countries.

In lieu of such drastic potential for promoting applications yet demoralizing hindrances, the balancing act can become difficult. This last statement encapsulates the theme Joshua Blumenstock was trying to get at in his paper. Big data must be humbled before really having an impact on a global community. There has to be a balance between

promoting how this data is applied with as quoted above “demoralizing hindrances” of human development.