In the digital era, the explosion of technology has been matched by an equally seismic shift in the ways we think and talk about it. New digital tools give rise to new terms and phrases, as well as new conceptual frameworks for understanding how these tools affect and interact with society. As we contend with novel and heightened forms of harm, words like disinformation and doxing have entered the mainstream. And concepts like digital rights and data governance have come into existence amidst the push to align the technology of today with our vision for a better future.

The voices of women, girls and other marginalized groups, historically sidelined or altogether absent in tech spaces, are urgently needed in decision-making processes. Get ready to join the conversation—or start your own—by familiarizing yourself with these key terms.

Algorithm

A procedure or formula used to solve a problem, or a series of instructions which tell a computer how to transform a data set into useful information. Algorithms are used widely throughout all areas of information technology.

Algorithmic bias

Decision-making by computer systems or processes which delivers outcomes that are systematically less favorable to individuals within a particular group and where there is no relevant difference between groups that justifies such harms. Bias in algorithms can emanate from unrepresentative or incomplete training data or the reliance on flawed

information that reflects historical inequalities. If left unchecked, biased algorithms can lead to decisions which can have a collective, disparate impact on certain groups of people, even without the programmer's intention to discriminate.

Artificial intelligence (AI)

The ability of machines and systems to acquire and apply knowledge, and to carry out intelligent behavior.

AI audit

An assessment process intended to uncover any risks to the rights and freedoms of individuals which may arise from AI adoptions, and to implement appropriate technical and organizational measures to mitigate these risks.

Automation

The substitution of human input by machines, especially those which are digitally enabled.

Content moderation

The process by which Internet companies determine whether user-generated content meets the standards articulated in their terms of service and other regulations.

Data governance

A system of rights and accountabilities for information-related processes, which govern the use, accessibility and transparency of data information.

Digital citizenship

Competences which allow individuals to access, understand, analyze, produce and use the digital environment in a critical, ethical and creative way.

Digital economy

The changing patterns of production and consumption brought about by digital technologies. The different economic facets of the digital economy can be broken down into three broad components: foundational aspects of the digital economy, such as fundamental innovations, core technologies and enabling infrastructures; digital and information technology sectors, such as digital platforms, mobile applications and payment services, which are making a growing contribution to economies; and a wider set of digitalizing and digitally enabled sectors, in which new activities or business models have emerged and are being transformed as a result of digital technologies, such as e-commerce.

Digital government or e-government

The use of novel information and communication technologies by governments with the objective of optimizing their functions, operations and services.

Digitalization

The ongoing integration of digital technologies and digitized data across economies and society.

Digital literacy

The ability to leverage technological concepts, methods and skills to be able to use and exploit information and communication technologies.

Digital revolution

The transformative changes brought about by a fusion of technologies, such as artificial intelligence, gene editing and advanced robotics, which are blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological worlds. The Fourth Industrial Revolution is of a scale, speed and complexity which is unprecedented, disrupting nearly every industry and creating new opportunities and challenges for people, places and businesses.

Disinformation

False information which is intentionally designed to be deceptive and which often has a political or social goal, including undermining public trust in democratic institutions.

Doxing

The non-consensual, public release of an individual's private, personal, or sensitive information, such as home and email addresses, phone numbers, or employer and family member's contact information, with the purpose of causing physical harm.

FemTech

Software, diagnostics, products, and services which use technology to support women's health, including menstrual health, reproductive health, sexual health, maternal health and menopause.

Gender digital divide

The disparity between women and men and girls and boys in relation to digital adoption and their relative opportunities to access, use and benefit from digital technology.

Gender impact assessment

The evaluation, analysis or assessment of a law, policy or programme, prior to its implementation, that makes it possible to identify, in a preventative way, the likelihood of a given decision having negative consequences for the state of equality between women and men.

Gender mainstreaming

The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels. It is a way to make women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.

Gender transformative

An approach or process which shifts unequal gender relations to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making, and support for women's empowerment.

Hate speech

Any kind of communication in speech, writing or behavior, that attacks or uses pejorative or discriminatory language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of who they

are, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, color, descent, gender or other identity factor. **Sexist hate speech** relates to expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred based on sex.

Human rights-based approach

An approach which aims to support better and more sustainable development outcomes by analyzing and addressing the inequalities, discriminatory practices and unjust power relations which are often at the heart of development problems. Under a human rights-based approach, development efforts are anchored in a system of rights and corresponding State obligations established by international law. Civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights provide a guiding framework for development plans, policies and processes.56 In the context of information and communication technologies, a human rights-based approach is one which also embeds safety-by-design and privacy-by-design.

Machine learning

A branch of artificial intelligence, founded on the ability of machines to learn by themselves and to imitate human behavior. Examples include facial recognition and speech recognition technologies.

Meaningful access

One's ability to have meaningful connectivity (see definition below), together with affordable access and a supportive social environment which facilitates women's and men's full ability and agency in their use of the Internet.

Meaningful connectivity

One's ability to have daily access to the Internet with an appropriate device, enough data and a fast connection.

Misinformation

Misinformation is incorrect or misleading information. In contrast to disinformation, misinformation is not necessarily created or shared to create harm and the individual who shares it may not even be aware it is false.

Online and technology-facilitated gender-based violence

Any act of gender-based violence against women that is committed, assisted or aggravated in part or fully by the use of information and communication technologies, such as mobile phones and smartphones, the Internet, social media platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or which affects women disproportionately.

Public digital innovation

The use of digital technologies and applications to optimize processes and procedures of public services.

Sex-disaggregated data

Data which is cross classified by sex, and which presents information separately for men and women, boys and girls. Sex-disaggregated data is necessary for effective gender analysis, as it is more difficult to identify real and potential inequalities in its absence.