Center for AI and Digital Policy

**CAIDP Recommendations for the United Nations Human Rights Council on Addressing the Issue of Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence and its Impact on Women and Girls**

*Safeguarding Women and Girls in the Digital Era*

February 27, 2025

The Center for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP) welcomes the opportunity to provide input to the Human Rights Council's Advisory Committee's *Questionnaire on technology-facilitated gender-based violence against women and girls*.[1]

CAIDP is actively monitoring the developments in AI and technology policy and commends the efforts that the United Nations is making in promoting human rights in the development and deployment of AI systems and other technologies. CAIDP also supports the OHCHR's focus on addressing the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. CAIDP has actively participated in previous stakeholder consultations initiated by the UN and its agencies, including UNESCO, OHCHR, the High-Level Advisory Panel on AI, the Global Digital Compact, and the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies. CAIDP has actively contributed to the UN Global Digital Compact (GDC) by submitting several rounds of written comments and actively participating in consultations, roundtables, deep dives, and stakeholder discussions.[2]

**About CAIDP**

CAIDP is a global, independent, non-profit research and education organization headquartered in Washington, DC,[3] with a global network of researchers. CAIDP's mission is to

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[1] OHCHR, *Call for inputs for the study of the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (HRC resolution 56/19)*, (2024), https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2025/call-inputs-study-human-rights-council-advisory-committee-technology

[2] CAIDP, *Statement to the UN Global Digital Compact on AI and Human Rights*, (Aug 5, 2024), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-statement-on-un-gdc-august-5-2024-activity-7226258590058061824-5ItH/

[3] CAIDP, About CAIDP, https://www.caidp.org/

ensure that AI and digital policies promote a better society, more fair, more just, and more accountable – a world where technology promotes broad social inclusion based on fundamental rights, democratic institutions, and the rule of law. CAIDP provides expert guidance on AI policy to governments and international organizations, including UNESCO, OECD-GPAI, the Council of Europe, G7 and G20, and the European Parliament. CAIDP publishes its annual *Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values (AIDV)* report, which evaluates global AI policies and practices against democratic principles using a standardized methodology.[4]

**Key Recommendations**

- Appoint a Special Rapporteur for AI and Human Rights
- Enhance AI Safety and Accountability in Social Media
- Prioritize the Protection of Girls from Dual Risks as Children and Targets of Gender-Based Violence

As UN Population Fund succinctly summarizes, TFGBV "takes many forms, including sextortion (blackmail by threatening to publish sexual information, photos or videos); image-based abuse (sharing intimate photos without consent); doxxing (publishing private personal information); cyberbullying; online gender and sexual harassment; cyberstalking; online grooming for sexual assault; hacking; hate speech; online impersonation; and using technology to locate survivors of abuse in order to inflict further violence, among many others."[5]

**Q. I.3.b) Are there national, regional or international norms, policy or measures, specific technologies and trends, practices or research findings you would like to highlight of particular relevance for preventing or eliminating TFGBV?**

<u>Universal Guidelines for AI (UGAI)</u>[6] – launched in 2018 by CAIDP. At their core, these Guidelines protect people by establishing institutional obligations and reinforcing the rights of

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[4] CAIDP, *Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values,* (April 2024), https://www.caidp.org/reports/aidv-2023/
[5] UNFPA, *Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence: A Growing Threat*, https://www.unfpa.org/TFGBV
[6] CAIDP, Universal Guidelines for AI (UGAI), (Oct. 18, 2018), https://www.caidp.org/universal-guidelines-for-ai/

people in the context of AI systems. We believe this is the most comprehensive and far-reaching set of Guidelines that take a fair view of human needs, rights and the pace of technological change.

Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values (AIDV) report[7] – published annually by CAIDP. The report evaluates global AI policies and practices of 80 countries using a standardized methodology. Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values is the first global survey to assess progress toward trustworthy AI based on detailed narrative reports, combined with a methodology that produces ratings and rankings for national AI policies and practices. Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values focuses on human rights, the rule of law, and democratic governance metrics.

UNGA resolution "Seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems for sustainable development"[8] – emphasizes that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be respected, protected and promoted throughout the life cycle of artificial intelligence systems and urges all Member States and stakeholders "to **refrain from or cease the use of artificial intelligence systems that are impossible to operate in compliance with international human rights law** or that pose undue risks to the enjoyment of human rights."

"Global Call to Action to Address Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence" - as one of the outcomes of 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Global Call provides 1, 3 and 5-year tangible actions to advance "(1) Response mechanisms; (2) Safety, security and privacy by design and inclusion; (3) Prevention; (4) Funding mechanisms; and (5) Partnerships and collaboration."[9]

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[7] CAIDP, *Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values,* (April 2024), https://www.caidp.org/reports/aidv-2023/

[8] UNGA, *Seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems for sustainable development*, (Mar. 11, 2024), https://docs.un.org/en/A/78/L.49

[9] UNFPA, *Global Call to Action to Address Technology-facilitated Gender-based Violence*, (July 2024), https://www.unfpa.org/resources/global-call-action-address-TFGBV

Child Rights Impact Assessments (CRIA) – already recommended by the UN and Member States to be mandated in the use of child rights impact assessments and made available to the public.[10]

UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence – adopted by 194 countries, the Recommendations pay specific attention to gender-based issues amplified by AI technologies. UNESCO Recommendation should be a critical element of Human Rights Council's engagement with TFGBV.[11]

UNESCO studies on AI-based TFGBV: The study "Challenging systematic prejudices" explicitly focuses on how generative AI systems "risk facilitating [TFGBV], amplifying online harassment and abuse, including doxing and the creation of deepfakes."[12] Additionally, the "Your opinion doesn't matter, anyway" report shows how generative AI can be misused by malicious actors to inflict gender-based harm.[13]

OECD AI Principles[14] – clearly define AI incidents where the development and use of AI systems lead to harms such as injury and human rights violations, which is in the scope of TFGBV.[15]

Council of Europe Framework Convention on AI – The first international treaty on AI contains an explicit recognition of children's rights. The Convention also underlines that AI

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[10] Council of Europe, "*Mapping study on the rights of the child and artificial intelligence, Legal frameworks that Address AI in the context of children's rights*"; "*Building a Europe for and with children*", (28-30 May 2024), www.coe.int/children

[11] UNESCO, *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence*, (2021), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000380455

[12] UNESCO, *Challenging systematic prejudices: an investigation into bias against women and girls in large language models*, (2024), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000388971

[13] UNESCO, *"Your opinion doesn't matter, anyway"*: exposing technology-facilitated gender-based violence in an era of generative AI", (2023), https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000387483

[14] OECD, OECD AI Principles, (2019), https://oecd.ai/en/ai-principles

[15] CAIDP, *"Updates to CCPA Regulations Regarding: Cybersecurity Audits, Risk Assessment and Automated Decision-making Technology"*, (January 2025), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-california-privacy-and-ai-jan-14-activity-7285051256421711874-tnBs/

technologies should promote "gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls." Endorsing this framework would demonstrate alignment to fundamental rights and international cooperation.[16]

**Q.I.4. What are the main international and national normative, regulatory and governance gaps that you have identified as regards TFGBV and human rights?**

Children and teens face significant online risks due to the widespread use of social media and AI algorithms designed to maximize profit through opaque data practices. AI training datasets, such as LAION-5B, incorporate children's voices, images, and location data, raising serious privacy and safety concerns. The precision of this data can reveal sensitive details, including a child's exact location, increasing their vulnerability.[17]

Generative AI has introduced new dangers, with AI chatbots facilitating harmful behaviors, including sexual abuse. This has contributed to a 322% rise in reported sextortion cases involving AI systems.[18] To address these urgent threats, CAIDP has previously recommended key actions, such as banning the commercial use of children's data, enforcing algorithmic transparency for social media platforms, strengthening regulatory oversight, and enhancing AI safety features. Building on these recommendations, we also advocate for independent system reviews by socio-technical experts to improve transparency and provide avenues for redress.

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[16] Council of Europe, *The Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence*, (2024), https://www.coe.int/en/web/artificial-intelligence/the-framework-convention-on-artificial-intelligence

[17] CAIDP, Advisory Document, US Senate on AI Policy, Children's Safety, *"Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming business practices and poses new challenges to children's safety that requires action by Congress"*, (Feb 2025), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_aigovernance-chldrenssafety-activity-7297995156975202305-my2f/

[18] Ibid.

Additionally, our research highlights limitations in the existing regulations concerning children's data protection [19] and its future use. Many legal frameworks, including the GDPR, fail to adequately integrate children's rights as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), leaving critical gaps in safeguarding their digital well-being.[20]

CAIDP has identified significant governance gaps concerning technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), including:

- **Inadequate Legal Protections for Children's Rights:** Existing frameworks, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), are insufficient in safeguarding children's rights in AI systems. There is also a lack of explicit policies promoting human-centric AI development that upholds fundamental rights, democratic values, and the rule of law.[21]

- **Absence of Clear Red Lines:** No definitive legal barriers exist to prevent AI systems from violating civil and human rights, particularly those that enable or exacerbate gender-based violence.[22] [23] [24] Certain AI systems that lack scientific validity should be

[19] Council of Europe, "*Mapping study on hte rights of the child and artificial intelligence, Legal frameworks that Address AI in the context of children's rights*"; "*Building a Europe for and with children*", (28-30 May 2024), www.coe.int/children

[20] The Alan Turing Institute, "*Mapping 13 Frameworks at the Intersections of Data-Intensive Technologies, Children's Rights, and Wellbeing*", (November 2023), https://www.turing.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/ai-childrens_rights-_wellbeing-transnational_frameworks_report.pdf

[21] CAIDP, "*Written Evidence Submitted by the Center for AI and Digital Policy (CAIDP)(GAI0098)*", (2021), https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/113873/pdf/

[22] CAIDP, "*Communication and Digital Technologies, Republic of South Africa in response to South Africa National AI Policy Framework*", (April 2024), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-south-africa-ai-policy-nov-28-activity-7268065115298488320-GJt7/

[23] CAIDP, "*Statement to the International Network of AI Safety Institutes*", CA, (November 2024), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-ai-safety-institutes-nov-22-2024-activity-7266474262004174848-2usw/

[24] CAIDP, "*Comments to the Secretariat of the National Technical Committee 260 on Cybersecurity of Standardization*", (February 2025), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-china-ai-safety-standard-feb-21-activity-7298537374026776577-EIiD/

prohibited (such as biometric categorization, emotion recognition, and biometric mass surveillance). Such systems can be used to surveil, harass, or harm women and girls online and offline.

- **Failure to Address Systemic Risks:** AI governance frameworks, including the EU AI Act, lack explicit recognition of fundamental rights violations at scale, leaving gaps in addressing the widespread impact of AI on human rights.[25]
- **Lack of Algorithmic Transparency and Accountability:** Many AI systems operate under opaque algorithms that manipulate and exploit children, or enable online gender harassment, violence, and the spread of non-consensual deepfakes. Social media platforms cite trade secrecy to avoid transparency.[26]
- **Weak Regulatory Enforcement:** There are no binding regulations holding AI developers and deployers accountable for violations of children's rights in digital spaces.[27]

These gaps highlight the urgent need for comprehensive, enforceable, and internationally aligned frameworks that prioritize children's safety, TFGBV, human rights, and ethical considerations in the development and deployment of AI systems.

**Q.II.7. What international organizations, bodies, or agencies are best placed to tackle TFGBV? Further, are there instances of duplication of efforts to tackle TFGBV, and how do you consider this could be overcome?**

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[25] CAIDP, "*Comments to the European Commission On The First Draft General-Purpose AI Code of Practice*", (November 2024), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-europe-comments-eu-code-of-practice-activity-7268262817303080960-LyUE/

[26] CAIDP, "*Comments to the Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts for the Statutory Review of the Online Safety Act 2021*", (2021), https://www.caidp.org/app/download/8531412663/CAIDP-Australia-MandatoryGuardrails-10042024.pdf?t=172832339

[27] Council of Europe, "*Mapping study on hte rights of the child and artificial intelligence, Legal frameworks that Address AI in the context of children's rights*"; "*Building a Europe for and with children*", (28-30 May 2024), www.coe.int/children

One of the most crucial questions standing before the United Nations today is how to leverage existing knowledge, mechanisms, and special procedures within the UN system on human rights to elevate, promote, protect, and advance human rights in the face of rapidly evolving artificial intelligence.

CAIDP has addressed this question in previous advisories to the UN, including to UNESCO, OHCHR, the High-Level Advisory Panel on AI, the Global Digital Compact, and most recently to the UN Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies in our recommendations on the establishment of an Independent International Scientific Panel on AI. During our latest intervention at the UN, we reaffirmed our recommendation to create a mandate for a Special Rapporteur on Human Rights on Artificial Intelligence (SRHR) appointed by the Human Rights Council.

We believe the Human Rights Council can achieve the most effective and efficient coordination system-wide by fully embracing all cross-cutting issues at the intersection of AI and human rights and establishing a dedicated mandate. The soon-to-be-created International Independent Scientific Panel on AI should have a permanent seat allocated to and reserved for the SRHR.[28]

Artificial intelligence is a horizontal, general-purpose technology. As such, the UN can best address the human rights risks by creating a horizontal mandate that includes women and girls as well as other human rights verticals within the entire UN system. This would build on the earlier work of the UN Special Rapporteur for Privacy.

CAIDP has been consistent in its demands for the protection of human dignity and rights

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[28] CAIDP, "*Recommendations for the UN on the Independent International Scientific Panel on AI and the Global Dialogue on AI Governance, A Call to Action to Align Science with Human Rights*", (February 14, 2025), https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-unodet-ai-scientific-panel-february-activity-7296557167854170112-XI0A

(including prohibition against surveillance, right to privacy, online safety for children, advancing the rights of people in vulnerable situations, and protection against gender-based violence, responsible use of neuro-technology as well as independent monitoring and reporting of alleged infringements.)[29]

We are making this recommendation mindful of the need to sustain capacity and resource management to keep pace with rapid developments in AI. Some risks are yet to be discovered. The mandate needs built-in agility for the ability to imagine and prevent risks before they materialize.

A Special Rapporteur would bring agility, authority, competence, and a strong mandate to facilitate international cooperation and hold actors accountable for violations.[30] "Special Rapporteurs can act quickly, and draw public attention to threats to and violations of human rights from state and non-state actors."

UN Special Rapporteurs do not operate in a vacuum. Under the purview of the UN Human Rights Council, Special Rapporteurs report input is critical for the Universal Periodic Review of the member states human rights records. This allows for the practical and timely establishment of monitoring and incident reporting mechanisms by the United Nations on artificial intelligence and human rights.[31] In cooperation with UN Women, the Special Rapporteur would be well-positioned to address TFGBV.

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[29] CAIDP, "*Letter to the UN Secretary General and the UN Global Digital Compact on AI and Human Rights*", (August 5, 2024),
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-statement-on-un-gdc-august-5-2024-activity-7226258590058061824-5ItH/

[30] Marc Rotenberg, "*The Imperative for a UN Special Rapporteur on AI and Human Rights*", (2024),
https://aire.lexxion.eu/article/aire/2024/1/13

[31] CAIDP Statement, Response to UN Advisory Board Interim Report "*Governing AI for Humanity*", (March 31, 2024),
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/center-for-ai-and-digital-policy_caidp-statement-governing-ai-for-humanity-activity-7180020573106769920-8bRt

**Q.III.14. Are there any specific technology, industry practices or policies relevant that either enable, increase, prevent or tackle TFGBV?**

In addressing the issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence and its impact on women and girls, CAIDP urges the UN Human Rights Council to adopt policies that center on the security and safety of technologies as well as accountability and democratic values such as fairness and privacy.

CAIDP urges the UN Human Rights Council to build upon the following AI policy frameworks, which establish these principles:

- Universal Guidelines for AI (2018)
- OECD AI Principles (2019)
- G20 AI Guidelines (2019)
- UNESCO Recommendation on AI Ethics (2021)

We continue to demand that "All policies, strategies, and implementation of artificial intelligence must adopt a human rights-based, people-centered, equity-focused, and gender transformative lens".[32]

CAIDP advises the UN Human Rights Council that good procurement practices within governmental organizations and the private sector can help to tackle TFGBV. In her book "From Trustworthy AI Principles to Public Procurement Practices", CAIDP's President Merve Hickok provides a long list of actual examples of risk scoring leading to detrimental treatment of persons.[33] An example is the Spanish government's VioGén system, which underestimated the risk of women being subjected to domestic abuse (Eticas Foundation, Fundacion Ana Bella 2022).

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[32] CAIDP, *Statement to Civil 20 (C20) on Gender and Artificial Intelligence*, (30 September 2021), https://www.caidp.org/app/download/8346473063/CAIDP-C20-Statement-30092021.pdf?t=1660245988

[33] Hickok, Merve, "*From Trustworthy AI Principles to Public Procurement Practices, Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter*", (2024), https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783111250182/html

CAIDP has consistently called for an oversight authority to address the risks of Generative AI in social media[34]. The use of social media can be, and already is, quite dangerous in promoting dangerous behavior, amplifying hallucinations, bias, extremism, privacy violations, and mental health risks[35].

CAIDP previously recommended the prioritization of the presumption of innocence and human dignity. To that effect, adopt a lens of "people in vulnerable situations" rather than "vulnerable groups." Individuals or groups are put into vulnerable situations by the practices of institutions, the design of systems, and power imbalances[36].

**Q.IV.22. What work are you, your body or the OHCHR currently carrying out in the field of TFGBV and human rights? Please provide any relevant information such as links to reports, background material, sections or units involved, etc.**

CAIDP publishes its annual *Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values (AIDV)* report, which evaluates global AI policies and practices against democratic principles using a standardized methodology and covers 80 countries.[37] Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values is the first global survey to assess progress toward trustworthy AI based on detailed narrative reports, combined with a methodology that produces ratings and rankings for national AI policies and practices. Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values focuses on human rights, the rule of law, and democratic governance metrics. Read the 2023 report here: https://www.caidp.org/reports/aidv-2023/

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[34] CAIDP, *"Big Tech and the Online Child Sexual Exploitation Crisis"*, (Jan. 31, 2024), https://shorturl.at/dzycT
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] CAIDP, *Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Values,* (April, 2024), https://www.caidp.org/reports/aidv-2023/

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