

# Anti-racism & Localisation Community of Practice

## Theme 8 - AI Bias

April 2026

*We can think of **AI bias** as the result of systems producing skewed or discriminatory results, often stemming from prejudiced or flawed algorithms. It disproportionately impacts marginalised groups, reinforcing societal inequalities.*

### Resources:

Bloomberg takes a deep dive into the bias perpetuated by artificial intelligence with the interactive article: **Humans are Biased – Generative AI is Even Worse**, demonstrating how it can amplify stereotypes across both race and gender.

A series of attempts to challenge stereotypes was tested and documented in the article: **AI was asked to create images of Black African docs treating white kids. How'd it go?**

Groups such as the Digital Humanitarian Network have developed the guidance, including **Generative AI for Humanitarians**, in an effort to help us navigate some of these challenges (*See the 10 Rules of Thumb on page 17*).

## Key takeaways:

*Below is a collection of key takeaways from community of practice (CoP) members discussing this theme in the NiE sector, along with practical strategies to navigate these challenges. Please note, they do not necessarily represent the views of any specific organisation or the Global Nutrition Cluster. Further, we acknowledge that the resources shared and CoP discussions are currently held in English, which we acknowledge is a limitation.*

1 Humans are biased. There is the impression that AI is more objective, but AI learns from us, and is therefore also biased.

2 Further, there is evidence that AI not only reflects our human biases (including sexism, white supremacy, etc.) but can enhance or exaggerate them. From [the Bloomberg article](#) where a text-to-image AI model was used to generate 5,100 images of people in the United States based on professions:

- “Women make up 39% of doctors, but only 7% of the image results.”
- “The model generated images of people with darker skin tones 70% of the time for the keyword “fast-food worker,” even though 70% of fast-food workers in the US are white.”
- “Women made up a tiny fraction of the images generated for the keyword “judge” — about 3% — when in reality 34% of US judges are women.”

3 AI also has unequal climate implications because of the energy and water requirements of AI data centers.

- Per one UNDP report on [AI and the Climate Crisis](#): “many data centers tap into aquifers in major urban areas, further stressing fragile hydrological systems and increasing the risks of environmental degradation and water scarcity for surrounding communities.” and “As AI deployment accelerates, the associated water demand risks intensifying competition over limited freshwater supplies and exacerbating water stress in vulnerable regions.”
- Aljazeera has reported on how [AI is becoming a growing public health risk](#) as “the massive need for clean water by AI data centres can reduce sanitation and exacerbate gastrointestinal illness in nearby communities, placing additional strain on local health infrastructure” particularly among vulnerable communities with poor water access.

4 AI has scaled up drastically in our lives and our work in recent years, and it doesn't feel like it's going to slow down.

5 Some efforts are being made to harness AI technology to solve global challenges, such as the [AI for Good](#) initiative.

6

AI-generated images and videos are becoming increasingly difficult to discern from reality.

7

One member shared that in the DRC context, they are seeing more realistic AI-generated scams that alert local and national actors about supposed humanitarian funding. In this time of strained funding, local and national organisations are at an increased risk of falling victim to these scams.

8

Humanitarian organisations need to consider how AI relates to safeguarding and operational risks when AI is becoming increasingly difficult to discern from reality and more frequently used in our work, from headquarters to the in-country teams.

9

Humanitarian leadership and donors need to be made AI bias-aware.

10

FHI360 has a recent example of working with Ukranian health workers to translate and contextualise resources that had some strong recommendations:

- Ensure human oversight of AI.
- AI should be applied complementary to, not in place of, human efforts.

11

Ethically, writers or creators are required to declare that a piece is AI assisted. It does not seem like we are doing this in the humanitarian sector. We should be held to the same standard in our NiE work.

- Generative AI for Humanitarians rule #9: "Transparency: Be transparent about the use of Generative AI tools. Report what tools you used, how, and what processes it took to generate the final published product."

12

Humanitarian organisations could consider "sandboxing" which means creating an isolated environment where new AI models can be trained, tested and fine-tuned. This approach allows organisations to enforce greater regulation and control over the AI tools they use.

13

AI-generated images of people in humanitarian settings should be critically reviewed to ensure harmful biases, stereotypes, and power dynamics aren't being perpetuated.

- Generative AI for Humanitarians rule #8: "Biases: Ensure outcomes do not hold any gender, racial, or ethnic biases. Run the generated outcomes through a regular clearance process and/or team leadership."
- The GNC Image Use Guidance can be useful for selecting images that reflect our NiE work while promoting respect, dignity, solidarity, justice, and truthful representation of affected populations and thinking critically about images that can perpetuate harmful stereotypes, white saviourism, or other unhealthy power dynamics.

14

In-country coordination mechanisms (clusters/SUN/NGO networks) should be at the forefront of warning humanitarian actors in-country about AI-driven scams.

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Members voiced a desire for the GNC to lead an inter-agency session to inform the wider sector on AI bias and risks, and to hear from in-country actors how AI is affecting their work.



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