DIGITALLY EMPOWERED AND WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

AN NGO CSW68 PARALLEL EVENT

22 MARCH 2024
8:30 - 10:00 AM EASTERN TIME (ET)

**SALVATION ARMY INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL
JUSTICE COMMISSION, AUDITORIUM
221 E. 52ND STREET, NY 10022**

EVENT DETAILS

DATE: Friday, 22 March 2024

TIME: 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time (ET) (GMT-5)

LOCATION: Salvation Army International Justice Commission, Auditorium
221 E. 52nd Street, New York, New York 10022

COST: Free and open to the public

EVENT AGENDA

8:15 a.m.   **DOORS OPEN**

8:30 a.m.   **OPENING REMARKS**

Ayaka Matsuno, Director, Asia Women Impact Fund,
Gender Investment and Innovation Program
Sasakawa Peace Foundation

8:37 a.m.   **PANEL INTRODUCTION**

Lauren Power (Panel Chair), Lead Researcher, Digital
Gender Gap Study, Gender Investment and Innovation
Program, Sasakawa Peace Foundation

8:45 a.m.   **PANEL DISCUSSION**

- **Yuko Itatsu**, Professor, Interfaculty Initiative in
  Information Studies, Graduate School of Interdisciplinary
  Information Studies; Director, B'AI Global Forum,
  The University of Tokyo
- **Andrew Wyckoff**, Adjunct Assistant Professor,
  Georgetown University Walsh School of Foreign Service;
  Nonresident Senior Fellow, The Brookings Institution;
  Visiting Senior Fellow, European University Institute
- **Caitlin Kraft-Buchman**, Founder, Women @ the Table;
  Co-Founder, <A+> Alliance for Inclusive Algorithms

9:40 a.m.   **DISCUSSION AND Q&A**

9:55 a.m.   **CLOSING REMARKS**

10:00 a.m. **EVENT CONCLUDES**

**DIGITALLY EMPOWERED AND WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA
AN NGO CSW68 PARALLEL EVENT**

CONCEPT NOTE

The **Sasakawa Peace Foundation** is pleased to host the NGO CSW Parallel Event, 'Digitally Empower and Women-led Development in Asia', under the auspices of the 68th Commission on the Status of Women on 22 March in New York, USA. The purpose of this event is to explore the changing landscape of development amidst rapid digital transformation and what that means for women's empowerment, especially in Asia.

Digital technology is an exceptionally empowering force for women when it is inclusive and regulated for impact. Unfortunately, persistent gender gaps in digital access and literacy, STEM education, and biased algorithms based on historic exclusions of women in the data perpetuate outdated gender stereotypes and the exclusion of women in the creation and use of new digital tools, including AI, and the underrepresentation of women in careers in the digital and technology sectors. Although this digital gender gap is not new and there are interventions already in place to close this gap, recent accelerations in emerging technologies reignited concerns on digital inequalities. The public launch of the generative artificial intelligence (AI), ChatGPT, on 30 November 2022 sparked global interest and concern about how AI might be leveraged to disrupt or amplify different forms of discrimination and exclusion, including discrimination against women and girls in all their diversity. In this rapidly changing environment, what are effective, responsive, and sustainable solutions to close the digital gender gap, embracing a whole-of-society approach and leaving no one behind?

There have been many policy approaches prepared by state and non-state actors. A notable example is UNESCO's *Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence* [1], a global framework of ethical norms and values for digital governance on AI technologies and AI-influenced technologies. Since its launch in 2021, more than 50 countries have begun to integrate its principles into policies, law, and practices, and key private sector actors have also pledged to use it in their design and deployment of AI systems [2]. The OECD AI Observatory, International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and many others have also remained leading voices in the evolving digital governance landscape. State-led efforts such as the European Union's EU AI Act, the USA's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the *ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025* [3] are also driving regulations on emerging technologies, and these policy advisories and frameworks can be revisited to respond to new challenges over time.

CONCEPT NOTE

The *ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025*, launched in 2021, was complimented by the launch of the *2023 ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA)*, which aims to double the ASEAN digital economy from USD $1 trillion to USD $2 trillion by 2030. During the 4th ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Digital Ministers' Meeting held in February 2024, officials called for a more inclusive approach to the implementation of the *ASEAN Digital Masterplan* and endorsed the *ASEAN Guide on AI Governance and Ethics*. The Guide serves as a governance framework to ensure that AI technologies are developed and used in ways that are understandable, equitable, secure, and respectful of human rights and privacy, with a strong emphasis on ethical standards and integrity. In Asia, a region characterized by rapid and uneven economic development and high levels of income inequality, are such high-level policy commitments enough to close the digital gaps and inequalities that already exist both between countries and within society?

According to a new report by the International Monetary Fund, *Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work* [4], "advanced economies will experience the benefits and pitfalls of AI sooner than emerging and developing economies, largely because their employment structure is focused on cognitive-intensive roles". This forecast highlights risks brought by emerging technologies, including AI and those influenced by AI, of widening digital gaps between those that are already prepared, skilled, and empowered, and those who are not. Those who are already facing marginalization and exclusion, including women and those from emerging and developing economies, may find it increasingly difficult to bridge the digital divides. It also suggests that the potential and experienced harms of emerging technologies, which will first be experienced by advanced economies, may later also be inflicted upon emerging and developing economies as their markets develop. Now more than ever, digital empowerment has become a critical aspect to consider in how we approach development. How can emerging technologies, including AI, be leveraged to ethically capture benefits, mitigate risks, and prevent the amplification of digital gaps? Research into the interrelatedness of digital gaps is key to understanding the root causes behind them, the risks and opportunities brought by emerging technologies, and possible solutions for closing the gaps.

CONCEPT NOTE

This panel discussion on 'Digitally Empowered and Women-led Development in Asia' brings together international experts on gender equality, women's empowerment and development, and global governance and policy making on digital and emerging technologies to share their insights on these critical issues. Using an intersectional perspective on bridging the digital gender gap, this panel will deliberate on how the rapid pace of change in emerging technologies, including AI, has created new challenges and pathways for economic development made empowering women with digital competencies even more important for achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,* both in Asia and around the world. There will be time reserved for questions at the end of the panel session, and active audience participation is encouraged.

_____

[1] UNESCO. 2021. "Recommendation of the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence", UNESCO, Paris, France. https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000381137

[2] Mélinée Le Priol (7 Feb 2024) "A more ethical AI?: Eight major companies commit under auspices of UNESCO to build a more ethical artificial intelligence but such non-binding initiatives can prove fragile against their financial interests". La Croix International. https://international-la--croix-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/international.la-croix.com/amp/science-tech/a-more-ethical-ai/19136

[3] ASEAN Secretariat. 2021. "ASEAN Digital Masterplan 2025", ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia. https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ASEAN-Digital-Masterplan-EDITED.pdf

[4] Cazzaniga and others. 2024. "Gen-AI: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work." IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN2024/001, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC. https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/SDN/2024/English/SDNEA2024001.ashx

MEET OUR SPEAKERS
In Order of Introduction

AYAKA MATSUNO
DIRECTOR
THE SASAKAWA PEACE FOUNDATION

Ms. Ayaka Matsuno is Director of the Gender Investment and Innovation Program, which hosts the Asia Women Impact Fund (AWIF), a gender lens investing initiative at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF). Through AWIF, SPF aims to work towards a future where all women in Asia are empowered to reach their full potential by making investments to achieve favorable outcomes for women and girls across Asia.

Alongside AWIF, Ayaka oversees technical assistance projects that support women entrepreneurs and contributes to gender lens investing and inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem development in Southeast Asia. Prior to joining SPF, she worked overseas for 23 years, including positions at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). During this time, her work focused on empowering women, girls, and socially vulnerable communities across Southeast and South Asia, East Africa, and South America.

LAUREN S. POWER
LEAD RESEARCHER
DIGITAL GENDER GAP STUDY
THE SASAKAWA PEACE FOUNDATION

Lauren S. Power is an Adjunct Professor specializing in civil society and NGO management in the Faculty of International Business and Economics at Sophia University, and she is Lead Researcher for the Digital Gender Gap Study at the Sasakawa Peace Foundation think tank. In parallel, she is a Ph.D. Candidate in International Relations and Researcher at the University of Tokyo and an LLM Candidate in Law at the University of Edinburgh. Lauren is the Founder and Advisor of Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YPFP) Tokyo, an NGO committed to cultivating the next generation of foreign policy leaders. In 2024, Lauren is reprising her role as a Women7 (W7) Advisor on gender equality for the second year at the G7 Summit under the Italian Presidency. She is also serving again as a Women20 (W20) Delegate in the Delegation of the United States on gender equality to the G20 Brazil Summit, and Co-Chair for the Women in STEM Working Group.

Previously, Lauren represented the United States as Head Delegate to the G20 Youth Summit (Youth20 - Y20) and spoke at the Y20 Summit and 2020 G20 Saudi Arabia Summit. She has contributed to the Civil20 (C20) from 2021-2024. During G7 Japan 2023, she was a Civil7 (C7) Coordinator for the Open and Resilient Societies Working Group and a Women7 (W7) Japan Advisor and Co-coordinator for the Working Group on Women's Empowerment, Meaningful Participation, and Leadership. Lauren was a speaker at the C7 and W7 Summits, the G7 Digital and Tech Ministers Meeting, the G7 Gender Ministers and Civil Society Dialogue, and the W20 Summit, and she co-authored the *W7 Digital Statement* and the *C7-P7-T7-W7-Y7 Joint Statement on Gender Equality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

Lauren has previously worked as an Adjunct Professor at Temple University Japan, an Official at the OECD, and an Editorial Board Member of the Journal for Human Security Studies and contributed to projects with the UN-OHCHR, UNICEF, UN-ESCAP, UN-MGCY, and YOUNGO.

For more information about Lauren S. Power's work, please visit:
- www.linkedin.com/in/lauren-s-power

DIGITALLY EMPOWERED AND WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA
AN NGO CSW68 PARALLEL EVENT

YUKO ITATSU
INTERFACULTY INITIATIVE IN INFORMATION STUDIES, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF INTERDISCIPLINARY INFORMATION STUDIES DIRECTOR, B'AI GLOBAL FORUM, THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

Yuko Itatsu is a Professor at the Graduate School of Interdisciplinary Information Studies at the University of Tokyo. She serves as the principal investigator and director of the B'AI Global Forum project, a 10-year grant on the social implications of artificial intelligence especially as it affects women and other socially marginalized populations. The B'AI Global Forum was selected as one of the 10 long term projects by the Institute of AI and Beyond which was founded as a joint collaboration between the University of Tokyo and Softbank. As part of their work, Yuko co-edited a complication with the B'AI Global Forum and Ai Hisano entitled Understanding Society through AI: How technology exerts power (University of Tokyo Press, 2023). This book is a call for action towards humanities scholars and social scientists to engage more willingly with the latest digital technology such as artificial intelligence to examine critically the political, social and cultural implications of digital technologies for vulnerable populations.

She was a recipient of the Fulbright Scholarship as she embarked on her doctoral program at the University of Southern California, from which she received her Ph.D. in History in 2009. She holds a B.A. and M.A. in American Studies from Tsuda College (now University). She has been teaching at the University of Tokyo since 2008. Her academic interests lie in the intersections of 20th and 21st century US and Japanese history, minority studies, geopolitics of transnational cultural negotiations, media studies, leisure discourse, and power politics in the everyday life. She has also given more than 80 public lectures including keynote presentations on AI and social justice at the Data Summit hosted by the Data Lab Innovation Centre, University of Edinburgh (Nov 2023) and Japan Society for Educational Technology (Sept 2023). Since 2020, she has been offering the AI and Social Justice Summer Program, which is open to university students from around the world, arguably the first of its kind in the world.

For more information about Yuko Itatsu's work, please visit:
- https://baiforum.jp/en/
- https://www.linkedin.com/in/yuko-itatsu-8a5a7524/
- https://researchmap.jp/itatsu

DIGITALLY EMPOWERED AND WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AN NGO CSW68 PARALLEL EVENT

ANDREW W. WYCKOFF

VISITING SENIOR FELLOW, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
NONRESIDENT SENIOR FELLOW, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION
ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, GEORGETOWN WALSH SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE

Andrew Wyckoff is a visiting Senior Fellow at the European University Institute's School of Transnational Governance specializing in digital policy, a nonresident Senior Fellow at The Brookings Institution supporting the Forum for Cooperation on AI and an adjunct professor at Georgetown's Walsh School of Foreign Service.

In July 2023, he retired from the OECD where for more than a decade he was the Director of the OECD's Directorate for Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). In that role, he oversaw OECD's work on innovation, business dynamics, science and technology, information and communication technology policy as well as the statistical work associated with each of these areas. As Director, he represented the OECD in relationships with international organizations, including participating in G-7 and G-20 work on innovation, digital policy and excess steel capacity. Prior to being Director, he worked as the Head of STI's Digital Economy Policy division at the OECD as well as Head of STI's Economic Analysis and Statistics Division.

His experience prior to joining the OECD in 1995 includes positions at the US Congressional Office of Technology Assessment as the Program Manager of the IT and Commerce program, the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and The Brookings Institution.

He is currently a member of the Committee of Experts for the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) Digital Gender Gap Study and a member of the Global Task Force on Predictive Analytics convoked by Igarapé Institute. Previously he has served as a commissioner on the Lancet Commission Global Health Futures 2030 and co-chaired the US National Academies' panel on Developing Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators for the Future.

He is a graduate of Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government with a Master of Public Policy and the University of Vermont with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics with honors.

DIGITALLY EMPOWERED AND WOMEN-LED DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA
AN NGO CSW68 PARALLEL EVENT

For more information about Andrew W. Wyckoff's work, please visit:
- https://www.brookings.edu/projects/the-forum-for-cooperation-on-artificial-intelligence/
- https://www.eui.eu/en/academic-units/school-of-transnational-governance
- https://sfs.georgetown.edu/academics/graduate/
- https://oecd.ai/en/community/andrew-wyckoff