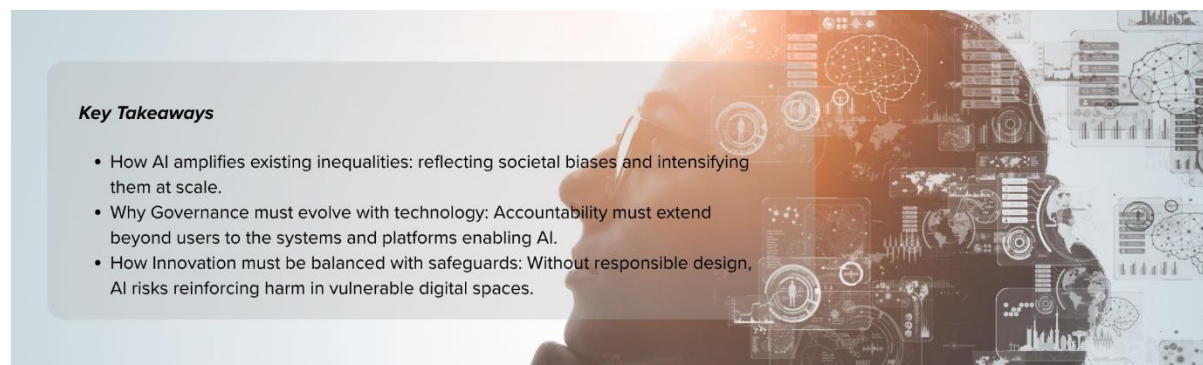


## **Women and AI Governance Lessons from the Grok Case for Indonesia's Digital Policy**

By Grisela Mutiara Ilmi



Artificial intelligence is slowly becoming a part of everyday digital life. Image generators, chatbots, and automated systems now shape how people write, design, communicate, and share information online. Tasks that once required technical skills can now be done in seconds through a simple prompt. This shift is often celebrated as technological progress. However, progress rarely arrives without consequences.

Indonesia recently restricted access to the artificial intelligence chatbot Grok after concerns emerged that the system could generate manipulated sexual imagery and potentially contribute to online gender-based violence. The issue quickly turned into a public debate about artificial intelligence and digital regulation. Yet beneath the technical discussion lies something deeper. Technology does not exist in a neutral world. It operates in societies that already carry inequalities, hierarchies, and power imbalances.

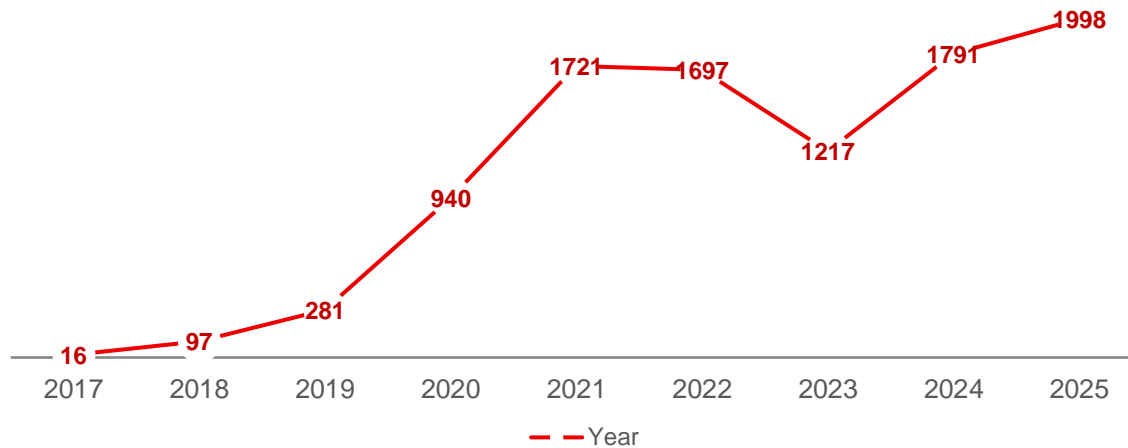
In the age of generative artificial intelligence, the question is no longer simply what technology can do. The more difficult question is who becomes responsible for what it produces. As artificial intelligence becomes embedded in digital platforms, services, and everyday products, that question increasingly concerns the companies building and deploying these technologies.

### **Misogyny in Digital Spaces**

Violence against women in digital spaces did not begin with artificial intelligence. It already existed long before these technologies became widely available. Across Indonesia, violence against women remains a persistent social problem. Data from Komnas Perempuan shows that 330,097 cases of violence against women were recorded nationwide in 2024, including domestic violence, sexual violence, and other forms of gender-based harm.

Digital environments are now part of this landscape. Monitoring by SAFEnet documented 1,791 reports of Online Gender-Based Violence in 2024, including cyber harassment, intimidation, and non-consensual distribution of images.

## Trend Of Online Gender Based Violence in Indonesia



Source: Komnas Perempuan CATAHU 2025

Looking at the longer trend makes the pattern even clearer. Reports compiled by Komnas Perempuan shows that, since the late 2010s, there has been a sharp increase in reported cases of gender-based violence online. Reported cases increased from just 16 reports in 2017 to nearly two thousand within less than a decade.

The Internet does not exist separately from society. Digital spaces often reproduce the same social dynamics already present offline. Artificial intelligence therefore enters an environment where harassment and misogyny are already expanding.

### Amplified Harm

Generative artificial intelligence dramatically lowers the barrier for producing manipulated images and synthetic media. In the past, creating convincing altered visuals required technical expertise and specialized software. Today, generative artificial intelligence systems can generate realistic images within seconds. A single photograph can be altered, duplicated, and circulated across digital networks almost instantly, often without the knowledge or consent of the person whose image was used.

Artificial intelligence does not invent misogyny, but it can amplify it. When manipulated content becomes easier to produce and distribute, harmful material can spread faster and reach wider audiences. The scale of online harassment can change very quickly when technology allows images, identities, and narratives to be replicated almost effortlessly.

This shift raises new questions about governance. When synthetic content can be produced automatically, responsibility becomes harder to define. The issue is no longer only about individual users. It also involves the platforms and technologies that make such content possible.

### Power in Code

The theme of International Women's Day 2026 promoted by UN Women calls for "Rights. Justice. Action. For ALL Women and Girls." In a world increasingly shaped by digital systems, conversations about equality must also include the technologies structuring everyday online life.

Indonesia has begun developing governance frameworks for artificial intelligence as part of its broader digital transformation agenda. Ethical guidelines introduced under the supervision of Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital aim to encourage responsible innovation. Yet generative artificial intelligence introduces challenges that traditional Internet policies were never designed to address. Existing frameworks largely focus on user generated content, while artificial intelligence systems are capable of generating harmful material automatically.

This creates difficult governance questions. Who should be responsible when an algorithm produces manipulated imagery? How should digital platforms detect synthetic content generated at scale? What protections exist for individuals whose identities can be altered through artificial intelligence systems? As generative artificial intelligence becomes more widely adopted, these questions are becoming increasingly relevant for companies building or operating digital platforms.

## **The Governance Gap**

For businesses operating in digital ecosystems, the Grok controversy offers an early signal of how technological innovation can quickly evolve into a governance issue. Generative artificial intelligence expands what digital systems can do, but it also introduces new risks related to synthetic media, identity manipulation, and online harm. When these technologies become widely accessible, the line between user behavior, platform responsibility, and technological design becomes increasingly blurred.

As governments begin exploring regulatory responses to artificial intelligence and digital safety, companies may face growing expectations around how these technologies are designed and deployed. Questions around governance, content moderation, and accountability for automated systems could increasingly influence regulatory compliance, public trust, and brand reputation. Organizations that start anticipating these challenges early may be better prepared to navigate the evolving landscape surrounding artificial intelligence.

## **Looking Ahead**

From a digital anthropology perspective, technology is rarely neutral. Algorithms learn from data shaped by human behavior, while digital platforms operate within economic incentives that reward attention and engagement. In online environments where misogyny already exists, automation can easily accelerate those patterns.

Artificial intelligence will continue transforming industries and digital experiences. But the long-term success of these technologies may depend on something less technical. It depends on whether the systems shaping our digital lives are designed with an awareness of the societies they operate in.

When technological innovation interacts with existing inequalities, the outcome is rarely neutral. The challenge ahead is ensuring that digital progress expands opportunity, rather than reproducing the same harms in new technological forms.

## About the author



Grisela Mutiara Ilmi is a Junior Consultant at YAMADA Consulting & Spire, Indonesia. She holds a degree in Anthropology from Universitas Padjadjaran, with a focus on gender studies. Her interest in women's issues was shaped through her work with Girl Up, a global youth-led movement on gender equality, where she served as Head of Research and Development and worked closely on women empowerment initiatives.

She later served as Editor-in-Chief of Enkultura Magazine, an anthropology-based publication, where she developed a strong voice in translating complex social issues into accessible narratives. At Y&S, her exposure to ICT and technology-driven projects has deepened her interest in AI and digital systems, particularly in understanding how data and technology influence everyday experiences.

Through a gender-informed lens, Grisela explores how emerging technologies shape representation, inclusion, and whose voices are amplified in an increasingly digital world. She joined Y&S in December 2024 as an intern and currently works as a Junior Consultant.

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