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| **Abstract:** | This topic description document (TDD) specifies a standardized benchmarking for AI-based Fertility and human reproduction. It covers all scientific, technical, and administrative aspects relevant for setting up this benchmarking (and follows the template structure defined in document FGAI4H-J-105). The creation of this TDD is an ongoing iterative process until it is approved by the Focus Group on AI for Health (FG-AI4H) as deliverable DEL10.22. This draft will be a continuous input- and output document. |

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| **Change notes:** | **Version 2 (submitted as FGAI4H-O-027-A01 to meeting N in location Online)**   * Updated draft of TDD   **Version 1 (submitted as FGAI4H-M-027-A01 to meeting M in location Online)**   * First draft of TDD |

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FG-AI4H Topic Description Document

Topic group-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility

# Introduction

This topic description document specifies the standardized benchmarking for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility systems. It serves as deliverable No. 10.22 of the ITU/WHO Focus Group on AI for Health (FG-AI4H).

# Relevance

Infertility is defined as a disease of the reproductive system and brings more than quality-of-life issues, with considerable public health consequences including psychological distress, social stigmatization, economic strain, and relationship discord. Globally, infertility affects 15% of couples at reproductive age [11]. In addition, infertility has also been associated with an increased risk of subsequent chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular disease [12].

The infertility stigma is no longer associated to females exclusively. It is estimated that out of ~50 million couples suffering from the condition, 1/3 is attributed to female factors, 1/3 attributed to male factors and 1/3 classified as unexplained or a combination of both partners. This makes infertility unique to other clinical conditions, as it does not only rely in one individual, but a couple and their biological interaction [13].

Large amounts of data are generated as part of ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) treatments. This is due to the biological complexity and variability of root causes that can lead to infertility. Moreover, the stepwise and complex nature of the laboratory procedures and adjuvant techniques that aim to improve treatment outcomes contribute to the data generation. Selection of the most effective medication regimen, tailoring of treatment during the ART cycle, gamete and embryo selection; as well as optimal times of procedures are within the areas that could most benefit from AI applications by supporting clinical decision-making processes.

There have been few developments in the last few years that are particularly relevant for this area, but most of them are still in early stages:

* The development of tools that support the selection of blastocysts with highest potential of euploidy, implantation and live birth
* The development of support software that assists the clinician in making decisions pertaining to dosage adjustment and ovulation triggering during ovarian stimulation
* The development of wearables that track biomarkers such as core basal temperature to predict ovulation and diagnosis of high incidence infertility related conditions.

# Impact

Artificial intelligence has the potential to enable more affordable, accessible, and accurate diagnostics, along with the prevention, and care for people across the world who are either at risk of developing or who have existing infertility.

The use of AI for infertility could provide rapid access to information for people who may potentially be at a higher risk of needing ART treatments. It could also facilitate the work of clinicians and scientists, for example, by supporting diagnosis decisions and treatment guidance. The impact of such solutions, which may be enhanced by AI, is therefore spread across the full spectrum during the journey for infertile patients.

Recent and rapid progress of AI applications to infertility has highlighted the potential positive impact for fertility treatment, but also the importance and the need for guidelines for development and validation. It is therefore vital to develop and maintain a set of diversified and robust benchmarks to ensure accurate, safe, and scalable solutions that are applicable at different stages of treatment for varying patient populations.

# About the FG-AI4H topic group on AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility

The introduction highlights the potential of a standardized benchmarking of AI systems for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility to help solve important health issues and provide decision-makers with the necessary insight to successfully address these challenges.

To develop this benchmarking framework, FG-AI4H decided to create the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility at the meeting L in E-meeting 19-21 May 2021.

FG-AI4H assigns a *topic driver* to each topic group (similar to a moderator) who coordinates the collaboration of all topic group members on the TDD.During FG-AI4H meeting L (E-meeting 19-21 May 2021), Eleonora Lippolis and Susanna Brandi from Merck KGaA were nominated as topic drivers for the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility.

## Documentation

This document is the TDD for the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility. It introduces the health topic including the AI task, outlines its relevance and the potential impact that the benchmarking will have on the health system and patient outcome, and provides an overview of the existing AI solutions for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility. It describes the existing approaches for assessing the quality of AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility systems and provides the details that are likely relevant for setting up a new standardized benchmarking. It specifies the actual benchmarking methods for all subtopics at a level of detail that includes technological and operational implementation. There are individual subsections for all versions of the benchmarking. Finally, it summarizes the results of the topic group’s benchmarking initiative and benchmarking runs. In addition, the TDD addresses ethical and regulatory aspects.

The TDD will be developed cooperatively by all members of the topic group over time and updated TDD iterations are expected to be presented at each FG-AI4H meeting.

The final version of this TDD will be released as deliverable “DEL 10.22 AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility (TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility).” The topic group is expected to submit input documents reflecting updates to the work on this deliverable **(Table 1)** to each FG-AI4H meeting.

Table 1: Topic group output documents

| Number | Title |
| --- | --- |
| FGAI4H-x-027-A01 | Latest update of the Topic Description Document of the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility |
| FGAI4H-x-027-A02 | Latest update of the Call for Topic Group Participation (CfTGP) |
| FGAI4H-x-027-A03 | The presentation summarizing the latest update of the Topic Description Document of the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility |

The working version of this document can be found in the official topic group SharePoint directory.

* [SHAREPOINT LINK](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/tg/SitePages/TG-Fertility.aspx)

Select the following link:

* [TDD LINK](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/tg/fertility/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2Fsites%2Fitu%2Dt%2Ffocusgroups%2Fai4h%2Ftg%2Ffertility%2F02%20%2D%20Working%20Space%2F01%20%2D%20TDD&FolderCTID=0x0120002F620E891AB0004183DA3C5FCA4C39D0&View=%7bACA72B17-BBEC-4BD8-84AD-0BB94226837B%7d)

## Status of this topic group

The following subsections describe the update of the collaboration within the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility for the official focus group meetings.

### Status update for meeting M

* Since the approval of the creation of the TG-Fertility, we had recruited key opinion leaders in the fertility sector. The team is now composed of 8 members in total. The list of current partners has increased and is displayed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
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* The Topic Description Document has suffered its first round of adaptation to include project name, members and include links to supporting DEL documents
* We had our project kick-off meeting to define a strategy, identify next steps, way of working and general next steps.
* As a result, from the kick-off meeting we have agreed to start working together on specific sections of the TDD. We will focus on reviewing peer publications to ground our work and we agreed on the necessity of data harmonization. We are therefore planning to work on a fertility ontology project.

### Status update for meeting N

* The team is now composed by 11 members. We have on-boarded 3 key opinion leaders as listed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Danilo Cimadomo  GeneraLife Italy | Email: [cimadomo@generaroma.it](mailto:cimadomo@generaroma.it) |
| Nicola Toschi University of Rome, Harvard Medical School Italy | Email: [toschi@med.uniroma2.it](mailto:toschi@med.uniroma2.it) |
| Shiv Shanker Gupta Merck KGaA Germany | Email: [shiv-shanker.gupta@merckgroup.com](mailto:shiv-shanker.gupta@merckgroup.com) |

* We have established monthly meetings to coordinate the work and discuss relevant points.
* We have started working on a broad peer publication review process to ground our work while continuously working on the TDD document.

### Status update for meeting [MEETING LETTER]

[…]

## Topic group participation

The participation in both, the Focus Group on AI for Health and in a TG is generally open to anyone (with a free ITU account). For this TG, the corresponding ‘Call for TG participation’ (CfTGP) can be found here:

* [CALL FOR TG PARTICIPATION (CfTGP)](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/ai4h/Documents/tg/CfP-TG-Fertility.pdf)

Each topic group also has a corresponding subpage on the ITU collaboration site. The subpage for this topic group can be found here:

* [TOPIC GROUP PAGE](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/tg/SitePages/TG-Fertility.aspx)

For participation in this topic group, interested parties can also join the regular online meetings. For all TGs, the link will be the standard ITU-TG ‘zoom’ link:

* <https://itu.zoom.us/my/fgai4h>

All relevant administrative information about FG-AI4H—like upcoming meetings or document deadlines—will be announced via the general FG-AI4H mailing list [fgai4h@lists.itu.int](mailto:fgai4h@lists.itu.int).

All TG members should subscribe to this mailing list as part of the registration process for their ITU user account by following the instructions in the ‘Call for Topic Group participation’ and this link:

* <https://itu.int/go/fgai4h/join>

In addition to the general FG-AI4H mailing list, each topic group can create an *individual mailing list:*

* [fgai4htgfertility@lists.itu.int](mailto:fgai4htgfertility@lists.itu.int)

Regular FG-AI4H workshops and meetings proceed about every two months at changing locations around the globe or remotely. More information can be found on the official FG-AI4H website:

* <https://itu.int/go/fgai4h>

# Topic description

This section contains a detailed description and background information of the specific health topic for the benchmarking of AI in AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility and how this can help to solve a relevant ‘real-world’ problem.

Topic groups summarize related benchmarking AI subjects to reduce redundancy, leverage synergies, and streamline FG-AI4H meetings. However, in some cases different subtopic groups can be established within one topic group to pursue different topic-specific fields of expertise. The TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility currently has no subtopics. Future subtopics based on potential use cases and for data harmonization might be introduced.

## Subtopic [A]

### Definition of the AI task

This section provides a detailed description of the specific task the AI systems of this TG are expected to solve. It is *not* about the benchmarking process (this will be discussed more detailed in chapter 4). This section corresponds to [DEL03](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B7997F2C1-5A1D-4409-B2A0-CBC4E9CE8CDA%7D&file=DEL03.docx&action=default) *“AI requirements specifications*,” which describes the functional, behavioural, and operational aspects of an AI system.

Artificial Intelligence generally refers to any technique that enables computers to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence. It includes different approaches from Machine Learning, which refers to techniques that enables machines to improve at tasks with experiences, to Deep Learning, that uses multilayer neural networks to learn from large amounts of data. Different tasks can be solved with different AI models such as the ability to predict an outcome of interest, classify samples into classes, discover unknown patterns in the data or learn how agents act in an environment to maximize a reward. In the context of this document, AI refers to any solution or application that support a healthcare provider (embryologists, endocrinologists, clinicians, …) in clinical decisions, providing information and insights in any step of the patient journey, from early identification of infertility to diagnosis and subsequently treatment. It has the potential to enable more affordable, accessible, and accurate diagnostics, prevention, and care for people who are either at risk of developing or who have existing infertility.

The use of AI for infertility could provide rapid access to information and identify those at risk of requiring ART treatment by accelerating and facilitating the identification process. It could also support the work of clinicians, for example, by suggesting diagnosis and personalized treatment guidance catered specifically for the individual in need. Furthermore, existing solutions are focusing on gamete and embryo selection as well as timing of key ART lab procedures which will lead to greater pregnancy success. Therefore, data inputs for models could vary from demographics, genomics, behaviours and lifestyle, medical history, prior fertility treatments, fertility treatment protocols, cycle data, and gamete and embryo development. Depending on the application, potential outputs could consist of prediction of infertility risk, probability of treatment success, suggestion of a treatment protocol or guidance pertaining to gamete for fertilization and/or embryo selection for transfer.

The table below summarizes the potential applications and the corresponding data for the listed AI solutions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Application** | **Type of Data** | **Details** |
| Patient Identification | Data on general population (patients and control group): demographics, genomics, behaviours and lifestyle, medical history (including all relevant fertility treatment data) | Early identification of potential patients based on infertility indicators and behavioural attributes |
| Consultation | Data on demographics, behaviours and lifestyle, medical history, prior fertility treatments with clinical outcomes | Predicting likelihood of success for a new patient or a new treatment cycle |
| Stimulation and Triggering | Data on patients including demographics, genomics, medical history, treatment protocols with any clinical evaluation (e.g., hormone levels, ultrasound results) and clinical outcomes | Support personalized treatment protocols to increase treatment success |
| ART Lab | Data on patients including demographics and medical history, data on cycles, on gamete quality and embryo development (e.g., images of gametes and embryo or time-lapse videos of embryo development, annotations) and clinical outcomes | Support any decision in the lab to select the most viable gametes and embryos |
| Transfer and Pregnancy | Data on patients including demographics and medical history, data on cycles with any clinical evaluation (e.g., endometrial thickness, P4, E2, etc) and clinical outcomes | Predicting receptivity of the endometrium for a successful implantation and pregnancy outcome (optimal transfer and pregnancy) |

### Current gold standard

* How is the task currently solved without AI?
* Do any issues occur with the current gold standard? Does it have limitations?
* Are there any numbers describing the performance of the current state of the art?

This section provides a description of the established gold standard of the addressed health topic.

The gold standard for current practice in Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) treatment relies solely in human judgment based on currently identified biomarkers. Because the treatment is divided in *in vivo* and *in* *vitro* phases, several professionals (fertility specialists, embryologists, nurses, andrologists, etc) are directly involved in the treatment of infertility.

During the so-called *in vivo* phase, differential diagnosis, next step guidance and appropriate treatment of care are taken under consideration by a fertility specialist who is an expert in the medical field in which they have completed many years of university education and structured training in hospitals and/or clinics. Decision making is often supported by clinical guidelines and protocols or by consulting the literature, the internet, or consultation from other experts. Despite the existence of clear guidelines on patient classification for ovarian stimulation, it is acknowledged that Controlled Ovarian Stimulation (COS) should not be a “one size fits all” approach given the wide spectrum of infertility causes and stimulation response. Consequently, during COS, there is continuous monitoring of the patient’s response to the stimulation drugs to allow for dose adjustments, establish the optimal timing of ovulation trigger administration and most importantly avoid the risk of Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHHS) (Ben W.M. et al, 2018; Ernesto Bosch & Diego Ezcurra, 2011; Farquhar C. et al, 2017). The stimulation phase consists of a complex protocol which involves several treatment possibilities (e.g., medication to be used, starting dose, adjustments, timings, supplements, etc.), and despite clear guidelines and stimulation templates, critical decisions during the stimulation phase are still a subjective assessment and vary between fertility specialists.

During the so-called *in vitro* phase of treatment, the selection and manipulation of gametes (sperm and egg) and embryos takes place in the laboratory setting and can last from two up to several days. The key activities and decisions are usually performed by the embryologist, who is also an expert in the respective medical field, with structured training in hospitals and/or clinics. The embryologist will perform procedures and make critical decisions based mostly on personal professional experience, following the clinic standard operating procedures which are often based on clinical guidelines from respective Medical Societies.

Similarly, to *in vivo* stimulation process, the *in vitro* phase of the treatment is also comprised by a chain of events and add-on procedures that can lead to several permutations of protocol possibilities (Cairo Consensus Group, 2020). Clinics often adopt more than one protocol, and decisions are usually taken on a case-by-case basis with, usually, minimal standardization between cycles and clinics. It is current reality that the outcomes of treatments in ART laboratories are subjective to the influence of several factors (equipment, environment, staff manipulation skills, culture media selection, techniques applied, day of transfer, etc.) and often rely on the personal visual assessment and judgment of embryologists. Lastly, the key decision drivers vary greatly across clinics, being either embryologists or fertility specialists.

The overall treatment is a highly subjective decision-tree based journey which consequently leads to a vast range of success rates and variable performance across professionals and clinics (David Meldrum, 2020 ; Roger Dobson, 2002).

### Relevance and impact of an AI solution

This section addresses the relevance and impact of the AI solution (e.g., on the health system or the patient outcome) and describes how solving the task with AI improves a health issue.

* Why is solving the addressed task with AI relevant?
* Which impact of deploying such systems is expected (e.g., impact on the health system, overall health system cost, life expectancy, or gross domestic product)?
* Why is benchmarking for this topic important (e.g., does it provide stakeholders with numbers for decision-making; does it simplify regulation, build trust, or facilitate adoption)?

Infertility affects people globally, although accurate rates of prevalence are undetermined. A systematic analysis of infertility trends across 190 countries since 1990 was reported in 2012 by WHO and showed that, in relation to estimated levels and trends in women, the overall burden of infertility had remained similar during this period (Mascarenhas M.N. et al., 2012).

Because infertility is so widespread and as it can negatively affect many areas of life, including physical, emotional, economic, and psychological aspects, there is a continuous need for support and effective treatment. AI offers the facility to assess relationships between data relating to diagnosis, treatment, and outcome on a very large scale and, as such, may improve accuracy, reproducibility, accessibility, efficiency, and outcomes.

The expectation on the impact of AI for reproductive treatments is huge and benefits all stakeholders involved. For patients, AI could support them in having a better understanding on treatment success potential which in conjunction with the clinic support could lead to reduced anxiety and uncertainties. For physicians, AI solutions could impact their daily practice by providing data-driven support decision tools, reducing the risk of oversights, and potentially leading to operational efficiency gains therefore freeing up time for further education or to treat and support more patients. For embryologists and andrologists, AI has the potential to reduce inter-staff variability, standardization of procedures, introduce time efficiency gains as well as support the optimization of Quality Control processes. AI has the potential to raise standards by correlating laboratory clinical outcomes with users, devices, consumables and laboratory conditions, deviations in clinical performance can be earlier identified and addressed. Because of the potential advances offered by AI, it is anticipated that it could lead to more efficient cycles, meaning a reduced time to live birth, which therefore have a direct impact on other, not so obviously interlinked stakeholders such as clinic’s management and payers.

For clinic’s management, by enabling more efficient process, higher success rates and reduced times to live birth, the impact of AI solutions would be translated into higher brand and thanks to operational efficiency gains, allow clinics to increase patient uptake. For Payers, AI tools that enable clinics to offer more efficient infertility treatments translates to less reimbursements required for failed cycles as well as less expenses on conditions not directly linked to infertility such as psychological support programs.

### Existing AI solutions

This section provides an overview of existing AI solutions for the same health topic that are already in operation. It should contain details of the operations, limitations, robustness, and the scope of the available AI solutions. The details on performance and existing benchmarking procedures will be covered in chapter 6.

* Description of the general status and the maturity of AI systems for the health topic of your TG (e.g., exclusively prototypes, applications, and validated medical devices)
* Which are the currently known AI systems and their inputs, outputs, key features, target user groups, and intended use (if not discussed before)? This can also be provided as a table.
* What are the common features found in most AI solutions that might be benchmarked?
* What are the relevant metadata dimensions characterizing the AI systems in this field and with relevance for reporting (e.g., systems supporting offline functions, availability in certain languages, and the capability to process data in a specific format)?
* Description of existing AI systems and their scope, robustness, and other dimensions.

## Subtopic [B]

*Topic driver: If you have subtopics in your topic group, describe how the existing AI solutions in the second subtopic [B] deviate from the description in the previous section. Please use the same subsection structure as above for the first subtopic [A]. If there are no subtopics in your topic group, you can remove the “Subtopic” outline level, but - of course - you need to keep the subsections! In this case, please adapt the lower outline levels accordingly (section numbering).*

# Ethical considerations

The rapidly evolving field of AI and digital technology in the fields of medicine and public health raises several ethical, legal, and social concerns that must be considered in this context. They are discussed in deliverable [DEL01](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B0505B020-362C-45B2-94BF-215D2EBBD8F5%7D&file=DEL01.docx&action=default) “*AI4H ethics considerations,”* which was developed by the working group on “Ethical considerations on AI4H” (WG-Ethics). This section refers to DEL01 and should reflect the ethical considerations of the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility.

It is with certainty that AI technologies have the potential to revolutionize healthcare, particularly in the field of reproductive medicine where traditional subjective assessment of gametes, zygotes, and embryos takes precedence. More objective approaches to decision making (e.g., with implementation of AI technologies) must proceed with caution and transparency due to the final outcome which inherently, if favourable, is a viable human being.

Although *in vitro fertilization* (IVF) technologies have become routine for the treatment of infertility, the associated cost related to a successful outcome is often debated. To increase the efficiency and efficacy of this process, there has been a dramatic increase in technological advances which focus primarily on outcome success while attempting to decrease the overall costs associated with the treatment process. Although the augmentation of gamete and embryo selection processes with AI models are reported to be encouraging and cost efficient, and in some instances superior to conventional processes, ethical issues are still present which must not be dismissed in totality.

Currently, the most paramount ethical dilemma preventing the adoption of AI technology in the field of reproductive medicine is the lack of properly designed and executed randomized control trials (RCT’s). Failure to perform such trials inevitably increases the risk for failed assumptions and diminishes the trust in such novel technologies, be it black-box or interpretable AI models. Although majority consensus concurs that black-box models lack robustness in general, the accuracy of reported AUC values from such published studies may be debated. Similarly, the lack of robust development of interpretable AI methods may diminish the value of usability in the final decision-making processes. Ultimately, studies focused on data validation with diverse ‘never-seen’ data, which was not included in the AI training, is extremely important for model scalability and accuracy.

Although conceptually, potential AI users should thoroughly evaluate the use of AI technologies to adjunctively assist in making decisions in addition to traditional standard clinical judgement, there is currently a gap in regulatory oversight for such adopters which is worrisome. As part of the regulatory compliance and approval process, AI model developers should be required to disclose algorithmic components of black-box models thereby promoting the use of interpretable models. Additionally, public access to datasets and code used in AI models will encourage collaboration and transparency while ensuring the advancement of this technology in an ethical manner.

As advances in healthcare based artificial intelligence are occurring rapidly, it is critical to develop safeguards which maintain patient privacy and autonomy. Private custodianship of patient data can be strongly affected by competing objectives and developers should be fundamentally motivated to ensure data protection and to deter any use of such data in an alternative manner. The external risk of privacy breaches through AI-driven methods should also be evaluated making certain that patient health data remains deidentified and anonymized.

# Existing work on benchmarking

This section focuses on the existing benchmarking processes in the context of AI and AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility for quality assessment. It addresses different aspects of the existing work on benchmarking of AI systems (e.g., relevant scientific publications, benchmarking frameworks, scores and metrics, and clinical evaluation attempts). The goal is to collect all relevant learnings from previous benchmarking that could help to implement the benchmarking process in this topic group.

## Subtopic [A]

*Topic driver: If there are subtopics in your topic group, describe the existing work on benchmarking for the first subtopic [A] in this section. If there are no sub-topics, you can remove the “Subtopic” outline level, but - of course - you need to keep the subsections below!*

### Publications on benchmarking systems

While a representative comparable benchmarking for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility does not yet exist, some work has been done in the scientific community assessing the performance of such systems. This section summarizes insights from the most relevant publications on this topic. It covers parts of the deliverable DEL07 *“AI for health evaluation considerations,”* [DEL07\_1](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B565EEC0A-D755-41C8-AC68-37B4C38C953F%7D&file=DEL07_1.docx&action=default) *“AI4H evaluation process description,”* [DEL07\_2](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B58679341-C738-40F0-A822-3AC2B24DD09F%7D&file=DEL07_2.docx&action=default) *“AI technical test specification*,*”* [DEL07\_3](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA3088882-F82B-493B-B1C5-49CFF0EEEFA8%7D&file=DEL07_3.docx&action=default) *“Data and artificial intelligence assessment methods (DAISAM),”* and [DEL07\_4](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BB846B260-373A-41FC-A892-EE5BBCFE3CF8%7D&file=DEL07_4.docx&action=default) *“Clinical Evaluation of AI for health”*.

* What is the most relevant peer-reviewed scientific publications on benchmarking or objectively measuring the performance of systems in your topic?
* State what are the most relevant approaches used in literature?
* Which scores and metrics have been used?
* How were test data collected?
* How did the AI system perform and how did it compare the current gold standard? Is the performance of the AI system equal across less represented groups? Can it be compared to other systems with a similar benchmarking performance and the same clinically meaningful endpoint (addressing comparative efficacy)?
* How can the utility of the AI system be evaluated in a real-life clinical environment (also considering specific requirements, e.g., in a low- and middle-income country setting)?
* Have there been clinical evaluation attempts (e.g., internal and external validation processes) and considerations about the use in trial settings?
* What are the most relevant gaps in the literature (what is missing concerning AI benchmarking)?

### Benchmarking by AI developers

All developers of AI solutions for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility implemented internal benchmarking systems for assessing the performance. This section will outline the insights and learnings from this work of relevance for benchmarking in this topic group.

* What are the most relevant learnings from the benchmarking by AI developers in this field (e.g., ask the members of your topic group what they want to share on their benchmarking experiences)?
* Which scores and metrics have been used?
* How did they approach the acquisition of test data?

### Relevant existing benchmarking frameworks

Triggered by the hype around AI, recent years have seen the development of a variety of benchmarking platforms where AIs can compete for the best performance on a determined dataset. Given the high complexity of implementing a new benchmarking platform, the preferred solution is to use an established one. This section reflects on the different existing options that are relevant for this topic group and includes considerations of using the assessment platform that is currently developed by FG-AI4H and presented by deliverable [DEL07\_5](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8BFCFF21-3908-4BAD-AB9C-9814EB3F9B36%7D&file=DEL07_5.docx&action=default) *“FG-AI4H assessment platform”* (the deliverable explores options for implementing an assessment platform that can be used to evaluate AI for health for the different topic groups).

* Which benchmarking platforms could be used for this topic group (e.g., EvalAI, AIcrowd, Kaggle, and CodaLab)?
* Are the benchmarking assessment platforms discussed, used, or endorsed by FG-AI4H an option?
* Are there important features in this topic group that require special attention?
* Is the reporting flexible enough to answer the questions stakeholders want to get answered by the benchmarking?
* What are the relative advantages and disadvantages of these diverse solutions?

## Subtopic [B]

*Topic driver: If there are subtopics in your topic group, describe the existing work on benchmarking for the second subtopic [B] in this section using the same subsection structure as above. (If there are no sub-topics, you can remove the “Subtopic” outline level.)*

# Benchmarking by the topic group

This section describes all technical and operational details regarding the benchmarking process for the AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility AI task including subsections for each version of the benchmarking that is iteratively improved over time.

It reflects the considerations of various deliverables: [DEL05](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B2012357A-941E-44BD-B965-370D7829F52C%7D&file=DEL05.docx&action=default) *“Data specification”* (introduction to deliverables 5.1-5.6), [DEL05\_1](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B19830259-F63B-42D4-A408-48C854D6C124%7D&file=DEL05_1.docx&action=default)*“Data requirements”* (which lists acceptance criteria for data submitted to FG-AI4H and states the governing principles and rules), [DEL05\_2](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B25141F77-E59A-45F1-B081-185C2194FE67%7D&file=DEL05_2.docx&action=default) *“Data acquisition”*, [DEL05\_3](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B05D8938E-BC2A-4A62-BCB0-1FD46AA72235%7D&file=DEL05_3.docx&action=default) *“Data annotation specification”*, [DEL05\_4](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BF267A95C-4C5B-4D63-A135-58AF487C3AD3%7D&file=DEL05_4.docx&action=default) *“Training and test data specification”* (which provides a systematic way of preparing technical requirement specifications for datasets used in training and testing of AI models), [DEL05\_5](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B71FE8B9D-ACB3-48CE-AA3F-136409B550A4%7D&file=DEL05_5.docx&action=default) *“Data handling”* (which outlines how data will be handled once they are accepted), [DEL05\_6](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B5C95327E-96A5-4175-999E-3EDB3ED147C3%7D&file=DEL05_6.docx&action=default) *“Data sharing practices”* (which provides an overview of the existing best practices for sharing health-related data based on distributed and federated environments, including the requirement to enable secure data sharing and addressing issues of data governance), [DEL06](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BF5967277-90C8-4252-A0B9-43A5692F35E2%7D&file=DEL06.docx&action=default) *“AI training best practices specification”* (which reviews best practices for proper AI model training and guidelines for model reporting), [DEL07](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B47E77197-F87B-49F4-80B3-2DD949A5F185%7D&file=DEL07.docx&action=default)*“AI for health evaluation considerations”* (which discusses the validation and evaluation of AI for health models, and considers requirements for a benchmarking platform), [DEL07\_1](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B565EEC0A-D755-41C8-AC68-37B4C38C953F%7D&file=DEL07_1.docx&action=default) *“AI4H evaluation process description”* (which provides an overview of the state of the art of AI evaluation principles and methods and serves as an initiator for the evaluation process of AI for health), [DEL07\_2](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B58679341-C738-40F0-A822-3AC2B24DD09F%7D&file=DEL07_2.docx&action=default) *“AI technical test specification”* (which specifies how an AI can and should be tested *in silico*), [DEL07\_3](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA3088882-F82B-493B-B1C5-49CFF0EEEFA8%7D&file=DEL07_3.docx&action=default) *“Data and artificial intelligence assessment methods (DAISAM)”* (which provides the reference collection of WG-DAISAM on assessment methods of data and AI quality evaluation), [DEL07\_4](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BB846B260-373A-41FC-A892-EE5BBCFE3CF8%7D&file=DEL07_4.docx&action=default)*“Clinical Evaluation of AI for health”* (which outlines the current best practices and outstanding issues related to clinical evaluation of AI models for health), [DEL07\_5](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8BFCFF21-3908-4BAD-AB9C-9814EB3F9B36%7D&file=DEL07_5.docx&action=default) *“FG-AI4H assessment platform”* (which explores assessment platform options that can be used to evaluate AI for health for the different topic groups), [DEL09](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3E940987-8D75-44B8-85E4-F0E475964F15%7D&file=DEL09.docx&action=default) *“AI for health applications and platforms”* (which introduces specific considerations of the benchmarking of mobile- and cloud-based AI applications in health), [DEL09\_1](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B1A2EC8D5-53CA-4C8C-9B09-B61CA6F428C5%7D&file=DEL09_1.docx&action=default) *“Mobile based AI applications,”* and [DEL09\_2](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3B5A31DE-D3B1-4EC1-A261-2C2E19F73810%7D&file=DEL09_2.docx&action=default) *“Cloud-based AI applications”* (which describe specific requirements for the development, testing and benchmarking of mobile- and cloud-based AI applications).

## Subtopic [A]

*Topic driver: Please refer to the above comments concerning subtopics.*

The benchmarking of AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility is going to be developed and improved continuously to reflect new features of AI systems or changed requirements for benchmarking. This section outlines all benchmarking versions that have been implemented thus far and the rationale behind them. It serves as an introduction to the subsequent sections, where the actual benchmarking methodology for each version will be described.

* Which benchmarking iterations have been implemented thus far?
* What important new features are introduced with each iteration?
* What are the next planned iterations and which features are they going to add?

### Benchmarking version [Y]

This section includes all technological and operational details of the benchmarking process for the benchmarking version [Y] (latest version, chronologically reversed order).

#### Overview

This section provides an overview of the key aspects of this benchmarking iteration, version [Y].

* What is the overall scope of this benchmarking iteration (e.g., performing a first benchmarking, adding benchmarking for multi-morbidity, or introducing synthetic-data-based robustness scoring)?
* What features have been added to the benchmarking in this iteration?

#### Benchmarking methods

This section provides details about the methods of the benchmarking version [Y]. It contains detailed information about the benchmarking system architecture, the dataflow and the software for the benchmarking process (e.g., test scenarios, data sources, and legalities).

##### Benchmarking system architecture

This section covers the architecture of the benchmarking system. For well-known systems, an overview and reference to the manufacturer of the platform is sufficient. If the platform was developed by the topic group, a more detailed description of the system architecture is required.

* How does the architecture look?
* What are the most relevant components and what are they doing?
* How do the components interact on a high level?
* What underlying technologies and frameworks have been used?
* How does the hosted AI model get the required environment to execute correctly? What is the technology used (e.g., Docker/Kubernetes)?

##### Benchmarking system dataflow

This section describes the dataflow throughout the benchmarking architecture.

* How do benchmarking data access the system?
* Where and how (data format) are the data, the responses, and reports of the system stored?
* How are the inputs and the expected outputs separated?
* How are the data sent to the AI systems?
* Are the data entries versioned?
* How does the lifecycle for the data look?

##### Safe and secure system operation and hosting

*From a technical point of view, the benchmarking process is not particularly complex. It is more about agreeing on something in the topic group with potentially many competitors and implementing the benchmarking in a way that cannot be compromised. This section describes how the benchmarking system, the benchmarking data, the results, and the reports are protected against manipulation, data leakage, or data loss. Topic groups that use ready-made software might be able to refer to the corresponding materials of the manufacturers of the benchmarking system.*

This section addresses security considerations about the storage and hosting of data (benchmarking results and reports) and safety precautions for data manipulation, data leakage, or data loss.

In the case of a manufactured data source (vs. self-generated data), it is possible to refer to the manufacturer’s prescriptions.

* Based on the architecture, where is the benchmarking vulnerable to risk and how have these risks been mitigated (e.g., did you use a threat modelling approach)? A discussion could include:
* Could someone access the benchmarking data before the actual benchmarking process to gain an advantage?
* What safety control measures were taken to manage risks to the operating environment?
* Could someone have changed the AI results stored in the database (your own and/or that of competitors)?
* Could someone attack the connection between the benchmarking and the AI (e.g., to make the benchmarking result look worse)?
* How is the hosting system itself protected against attacks?
* How are the data protected against data loss (e.g., what is the backup strategy)?
* What mechanisms are in place to ensure that proprietary AI models, algorithms and trade-secrets of benchmarking participants are fully protected?
* How is it ensured that the correct version of the benchmarking software and the AIs are tested?
* How are automatic updates conducted (e.g., of the operating system)?
* How and where is the benchmarking hosted and who has access to the system and the data (e.g., virtual machines, storage, and computing resources, configurational settings)?
* How is the system’s stability monitored during benchmarking and how are attacks or issues detected?
* How are issues (e.g., with a certain AI) documented or logged?
* In case of offline benchmarking, how are the submitted AIs protected against leakage of intellectual property?

##### Benchmarking process

This section describes how the benchmarking looks from the registration of participants, through the execution and resolution of conflicts, to the final publication of the results.

* How are new benchmarking iterations scheduled (e.g., on demand or quarterly)?
* How do possible participants learn about an upcoming benchmarking?
* How can one apply for participation?
* What information and metadata do participants have to provide (e.g., AI autonomy level assignment (IMDRF), certifications, AI/machine learning technology used, company size, company location)?
* Are there any contracts or legal documents to be signed?
* Are there inclusion or exclusion criteria to be considered?
* How do participants learn about the interface they will implement for the benchmarking (e.g., input and output format specification and application program interface endpoint specification)?
* How can participants test their interface (e.g., is there a test dataset in case of file-based offline benchmarking or are there tools for dry runs with synthetic data cloud-hosted application program interface endpoints)?
* Who is going to execute the benchmarking and how is it ensured that there are no conflicts of interest?
* If there are problems with an AI, how are problems resolved (e.g., are participants informed offline that their AI fails to allow them to update their AI until it works? Or, for online benchmarking, is the benchmarking paused? Are there timeouts?)?
* How and when will the results be published (e.g., always or anonymized unless there is consent)? With or without seeing the results first? Is there an interactive drill-down tool or a static leader board? Is there a mechanism to only share the results with stakeholders approved by the AI provider as in a credit check scenario?
* In case of online benchmarking, are the benchmarking data published after the benchmarking? Is there a mechanism for collecting feedback or complaints about the data? Is there a mechanism of how the results are updated if an error was found in the benchmarking data?

#### AI input data structure for the benchmarking

This section describes the input data provided to the AI solutions as part of the benchmarking of AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility. It covers the details of the data format and coding at the level of detail needed to submit an AI for benchmarking. This is the only TDD section addressing this topic. Therefore, the description needs to be complete and precise. This section does *not* contain the encoding of the labels for the expected outcomes. It is only about the data the AI system will see as part of the benchmarking.

* What are the general data types that are fed in the AI model?
* How exactly are they encoded? For instance, discuss:
  + The exact data format with all fields and metadata (including examples or links to examples)
  + Ontologies and terminologies
  + Resolution and data value ranges (e.g., sizes, resolutions, and compressions)
  + Data size and data dimensionality

#### AI output data structure

Similar to the input data structure for the benchmarking, this section describes the output data the AI systems are expected to generate in response to the input data. It covers the details of the data format, coding, and error handling at the level of detail needed for an AI to participate in the benchmarking.

* What are the general data output types returned by the AI and what is the nature of the output (e.g., classification, detection, segmentation, or prediction)?
  + How exactly are they encoded? Discuss points like:
    - The exact data format with all fields and metadata (including examples or links to examples)
    - Ontologies and terminologies
* What types of errors should the AI generate if something is defective?

#### Test data label/annotation structure

*Topic driver: Please describe how the expected AI outputs are encoded in the benchmarking test data. Please note that it is essential that the AIs never access the expected outputs to prevent cheating. The topic group should carefully discuss whether more detailed labelling is needed. Depending on the topic, it might make sense to separate between the best possible output of the AI given the input data and the correct disease (that might be known but cannot be derived from the input data alone). Sometimes it is also helpful to encode acceptable other results or results that can be clearly ruled out given the evidence. This provides a much more detailed benchmarking with more fine-grained metrics and expressive reports than the often too simplistic leader boards of many AI competitions.*

While the AI systems can only receive the input data described in the previous sections, the benchmarking system needs to know the expected correct answer (sometimes called ‘labels’) for each element of the input data so that it can compare the expected AI output with the actual one. Since this is only needed for benchmarking, it is encoded separately. The details are described in the following section.

* What are the general label types (e.g., expected results, acceptable results, correct results, and impossible results)?
* How exactly are they encoded? Discuss points like:
  + The exact data format with all fields and metadata (including examples or links to examples)
  + Ontologies and terminologies
* How are additional metadata about labelling encoded (e.g., author, data, pre-reviewing details, dates, and tools)?
* How and where are the labels embedded in the input data set (including an example; e.g., are there separate files or is it an embedded section in the input data that is removed before sending to the AI)?

#### Scores and metrics

*Topic drivers: This section describes the scores and metrics that are used for benchmarking. It includes details about the testing of the AI model and its effectiveness, performance, transparency, etc. Please note that this is only the description of the scores and metrics actually used in* ***this*** *benchmarking iteration. A general description of the state of the art of scores and metrics and how they have been used in previous work is provided in section 3.*

Scores and metrics are at the core of the benchmarking. This section describes the scores and metrics used to measure the performance, robustness, and general characteristics of the submitted AI systems.

* Who are the stakeholders and what decisions should be supported by the scores and metrics of the benchmarking?
* What general criteria have been applied for selecting scores and metrics?
* What scores and metrics have been chosen/defined for robustness?
* What scores and metrics have been chosen/defined for medical performance?
* What scores and metrics have been chosen/defined for non-medical performance?
  + Metrics for technical performance tracking (e.g., monitoring and reporting when the performance accuracy of the model drops below a predefined threshold level as a function of time; computational efficiency rating, response times, memory consumption)
* What scores and metrics have been chosen/defined for model explainability?
* Describe for each aspect
  + The exact definition/formula of the score based on the labels and the AI output data structures defined in the previous sections and how they are aggregated/accumulated over the whole dataset (e.g., for a single test set entry, the result might be the probability of the expected correct class which is then aggregated to the average probability of the correct class)
  + Does it use some kind of approach for correcting dataset bias (e.g., the test dataset usually has a different distribution compared to the distribution of a condition in a real-world scenario. For estimating the real-world performance, metrics need to compensate this difference.)
  + What are the origins of these scores and metrics?
  + Why were they chosen?
  + What are the known advantages and disadvantages?
  + How easily can the results be compared between or among AI solutions?
  + Can the results from benchmarking iterations be easily compared or does it depend too much on the dataset (e.g., how reproducible are the results)?
* How does this consider the general guidance of WG-DAISAM in [DEL07\_3](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA3088882-F82B-493B-B1C5-49CFF0EEEFA8%7D&file=DEL07_3.docx&action=default) “Data and artificial intelligence assessment methods (DAISAM)”?
* Have there been any relevant changes compared to previous benchmarking iterations? If so, why?

#### Test dataset acquisition

Test dataset acquisition includes a detailed description of the test dataset for the AI model and, in particular, its benchmarking procedure including quality control of the dataset, control mechanisms, data sources, and storage.

* How does the overall dataset acquisition and annotation process look?
* How have the data been collected/generated (e.g., external sources vs. a process organized by the TG)?
* Have the design goals for the benchmarking dataset been reached (e.g., please provide a discussion of the necessary size of the test dataset for relevant benchmarking results, statistical significance, and representativeness)?
* How was the dataset documented and which metadata were collected?
  + Where were the data acquired?
  + Were they collected in an ethical-conform way?
  + Which legal status exists (e.g., intellectual property, licenses, copyright, privacy laws, patient consent, and confidentiality)?
  + Do the data contain ‘sensitive information’ (e.g., socially, politically, or culturally sensitive information; personal identifiable information)? Are the data sufficiently anonymized?
  + What kind of data anonymization or deidentification has been applied?
  + Are the data self-contained (i.e., independent from externally linked datasets)?
  + How is the bias of the dataset documented (e.g., sampling or measurement bias, representation bias, or practitioner/labelling bias)?
  + What addition metadata were collected (e.g., for a subsequent detailed analysis that compares the performance on old cases with new cases)? How was the risk of benchmarking participants accessing the data?
* Have any scores, metrics, or tests been used to assess the quality of the dataset (e.g., quality control mechanisms in terms of data integrity, data completeness, and data bias)?
* Which inclusion and exclusion criteria for a given dataset have been applied (e.g., comprehensiveness, coverage of target demographic setting, or size of the dataset)?
* How was the data submission, collection, and handling organized from the technical and operational point of view (e.g., folder structures, file formats, technical metadata encoding, compression, encryption, and password exchange)?
* Specific data governance derived by the general data governance document (currently [F-103](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/ai4h/Documents/FGAI4H-F-103-DataPolicy.pdf) and the deliverables beginning with [DEL05](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B2012357A-941E-44BD-B965-370D7829F52C%7D&file=DEL05.docx&action=default))
* How was the overall quality, coverage, and bias of the accumulated dataset assessed (e.g., if several datasets from several hospitals were merged with the goal to have better coverage of all regions and ethnicities)?
* Was any kind of post-processing applied to the data (e.g., data transformations, repackaging, or merging)?
* How was the annotation organized?
  + How many annotators/peer reviewers were engaged?
  + Which scores, metrics, and thresholds were used to assess the label quality and the need for an arbitration process?
  + How have inter-annotator disagreements been resolved (i.e., what was the arbitration process)?
  + If annotations were part of the submitted dataset, how was the quality of the annotations controlled?
  + How was the annotation of each case documented?
  + Were metadata on the annotation process included in the data (e.g., is it possible to compare the benchmarking performance based on the annotator agreement)?
* Were data/label update/amendment policies and/or criteria in place?
* How was access to test data controlled (e.g., to ensure that no one could access, manipulate, and/or leak data and data labels)? Please address authentication, authorization, monitoring, logging, and auditing
* How was data loss avoided (e.g., backups, recovery, and possibility for later reproduction of the results)?
* Is there assurance that the test dataset is undisclosed and was never previously used for training or testing of any AI model?
* What mechanisms are in place to ensure that test datasets are used only once for benchmarking? (Each benchmarking session will need to run with a new and previously undisclosed test dataset to ensure fairness and no data leakage to subsequent sessions)

#### Data sharing policies

This section provides details about legalities in the context of benchmarking. Each dataset that is shared should be protected by special agreements or contracts that cover, for instance, the data sharing period, patient consent, and update procedure (see also [DEL05\_5](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B71FE8B9D-ACB3-48CE-AA3F-136409B550A4%7D&file=DEL05_5.docx&action=default) on *data handling* and [DEL05\_6](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B5C95327E-96A5-4175-999E-3EDB3ED147C3%7D&file=DEL05_6.docx&action=default) on *data sharing practices*).

* Which legal framework was used for data sharing?
* Was a data sharing contract signed and what was the content? Did it contain:
  + Purpose and intended use of data
  + Period of agreement
  + Description of data
  + Metadata registry
  + Data harmonization
  + Data update procedure
  + Data sharing scenarios
    - Data can be shared in public repositories
    - Data are stored in local private databases (e.g., hospitals)
  + Rules and regulation for patients’ consent
  + Data anonymization and de-identification procedure
  + Roles and responsibilities
    - Data provider
    - Data protection officer
    - Data controllers
    - Data processors
    - Data receivers
* Which legal framework was used for sharing the AI?
* Was a contract signed and what was the content?

#### Baseline acquisition

The main purpose of benchmarking is to provide stakeholders with the numbers they need to decide whether AI models provide a viable solution for a given health problem in a designated context. To achieve this, the performance of the AI models needs to be compared with available options achieving the same clinically meaningful endpoint. This, in turn, requires data on the performance of the alternatives, ideally using the same benchmarking data. As the current alternatives typically involve doctors, it might make sense to combine the test data acquisition and labelling with additional tasks that allow the performance of the different types of health workers to be assessed.

* Does this topic require comparison of the AI model with a baseline (gold standard) so that stakeholders can make decisions?
* Is the baseline known for all relevant application contexts (e.g., region, subtask, sex, age group, and ethnicity)?
* Was a baseline assessed as part of the benchmarking?
* How was the process of collecting the baseline organized? If the data acquisition process was also used to assess the baseline, please describe additions made to the process described in the previous section.
* What are the actual numbers (e.g., for the performance of the different types of health workers doing the task)?

#### Reporting methodology

*After the benchmarking, the next step is to describe how the results are compiled into reports that allow stakeholders to make decisions (e.g., which AI systems can be used to solve a pre-diagnosis task in an offline –field –clinic scenario in central America). For some topic groups, the report might be as simple as a classical AI competition leader board using the most relevant performance indicator. For other tasks, it could be an interactive user interface that allows stakeholders to compare the performance of the different AI systems in a designated context with existing non-AI options. For the latter, statistical issues must be carefully considered (e.g., the multiple comparisons problem). Sometimes, a hybrid of prepared reports on common aspects are generated in addition to interactive options. There is also the question of how and where the results are published and to what degree benchmarking participants can opt in or opt out of the publication of their performance.*

This section discusses how the results of the benchmarking runs will be shared with the participants, stakeholders, and general public.

* What is the general approach for reporting results (e.g., leader board vs. drill down)?
* How can participants analyse their results (e.g., are there tools or are detailed results shared with them)?
* How are the participants and their AI models (e.g., versions of model, code, and configuration) identified?
* What additional metadata describing the AI models have been selected for reporting?
* How is the relationship between AI results, baselines, previous benchmarking iterations, and/or other benchmarking iterations communicated?
* What is the policy for sharing participant results (e.g., opt in or opt out)? Can participants share their results privately with their clients (e.g., as in a credit check scenario)?
* What is the publication strategy for the results (e.g., website, paper, and conferences)?
* Is there an online version of the results?
* Are there feedback channels through which participants can flag technical or medical issues (especially if the benchmarking data was published afterwards)?
* Are there any known limitations to the value, expressiveness, or interpretability of the reports?

#### Result

This section gives an overview of the results from runs of this benchmarking version of your topic. Even if your topic group prefers an interactive drill-down rather than a leader board, pick some context of common interest to give some examples.

* When was the benchmarking executed?
* Who participated in the benchmarking?
* What overall performance of the AI systems concerning medical accuracy, robustness, and technical performance (minimum, maximum, average etc.) has been achieved?
* What are the results of this benchmarking iteration for the participants (who opted in to share their results)?

#### Discussion of the benchmarking

This section discusses insights of this benchmarking iterations and provides details about the ‘outcome’ of the benchmarking process (e.g., giving an overview of the benchmark results and process).

* What was the general outcome of this benchmarking iteration?
* How does this compare to the goals for this benchmarking iteration (e.g., was there a focus on a new aspect to benchmark)?
* Are there real benchmarking results and interesting insights from this data?
  + How was the performance of the AI system compared to the baseline?
  + How was the performance of the AI system compared to other benchmarking initiatives (e.g., are the numbers plausible and consistent with clinical experience)?
  + How did the results change in comparison to the last benchmarking iteration?
* Are there any technical lessons?
  + Did the architecture, implementation, configuration, and hosting of the benchmarking system fulfil its objectives?
  + How was the performance and operational efficiency of the benchmarking itself (e.g., how long did it take to run the benchmarking for all AI models vs. one AI model; was the hardware sufficient)?
* Are there any lessons concerning data acquisition?
  + Was it possible to collect enough data?
  + Were the data as representative as needed and expected?
  + How good was the quality of the benchmarking data (e.g., how much work went into conflict resolution)?
  + Was it possible to find annotators?
  + Was there any relevant feedback from the annotators?
  + How long did it take to create the dataset?
* Is there any feedback from stakeholders about how the benchmarking helped them with decision-making?
  + Are metrics missing?
  + Do the stakeholders need different reports or additional metadata (e.g., do they need the “offline capability” included in the AI metadata so that they can have a report on the best offline system for a certain task)?
* Are there insights on the benchmarking process?
  + How was the interest in participation?
  + Are there reasons that someone could not join the benchmarking?
  + What was the feedback of participants on the benchmarking processes?
  + How did the participants learn about the benchmarking?

#### Retirement

*Topic driver: describe what happens to the benchmarking data and the submitted AI models after the benchmarking.*

This section addresses what happens to the AI system and data after the benchmarking activity is completed. It might be desirable to keep the database for traceability and future use. Alternatively, there may be security or privacy reasons for deleting the data. Further details can be found in the reference document of this section [DEL04](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BC68833D1-9B31-4E8E-8A4A-3939D7DEA56F%7D&file=DEL04.docx&action=default) “*AI software lifecycle specification”* (identification of standards and best practices that are relevant for the AI for health software life cycle).

* What happens with the data after the benchmarking (e.g., will they be deleted, stored for transparency, or published)?
* What happens to the submitted AI models after the benchmarking?
* Could the results be reproduced?
* Are there legal or compliance requirements to respond to data deletion requests?

### Benchmarking version [X]

This section includes all technological and operational details of the benchmarking process for the benchmarking version [X].

*Topic driver: Provide details of previous benchmarking versions here using the same subsection structure as above.*

## Subtopic [B]

*Topic driver: If there are subtopics in your topic group, please provide the details about the benchmarking of the second subtopic [B] here using the same subsection structure as above (please refer to earlier comments – in red fonts - concerning subtopics).*

# Overall discussion of the benchmarking

This section discusses the overall insights gained from benchmarking work in this topic group. This should not be confused with the discussion of the results of a concrete benchmarking run (e.g., in 4.2.11).

* What is the overall outcome of the benchmarking thus far?
* Have there been important lessons?
* Are there any field implementation success stories?
* Are there any insights showing how the benchmarking results correspond to, for instance, clinical evaluation?
* Are there any insights showing the impact (e.g., health economic effects) of using AI systems that were selected based on the benchmarking?
* Was there any feedback from users of the AI system that provides insights on the effectiveness of benchmarking?
  + Did the AI system perform as predicted relative to the baselines?
  + Did other important factors prevent the use of the AI system despite a good benchmarking performance (e.g., usability, access, explainability, trust, and quality of service)?
* Were there instances of the benchmarking not meeting the expectations (or helping) the stakeholders? What was learned (and changed) as a result?
* What was learned from executing the benchmarking process and methodology (e.g., technical architecture, data acquisition, benchmarking process, benchmarking results, and legal/contractual framing)?

# Regulatory considerations

*Topic Driver: This section reflects the requirements of the working group on* [***Regulatory considerations on AI for health (WG-RC)***](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/wg/SitePages/WG-RC.aspx) *and their various deliverables. It is* ***NOT requested to re-produce regulatory frameworks****, but to show the regulatory frameworks that have to be applied in the context of your AIs and their benchmarking (****2 pages max****).*

For AI-based technologies in healthcare, regulation is not only crucial to ensure the safety of patients and users, but also to accomplish market acceptance of these devices. This is challenging because there is a lack of universally accepted regulatory policies and guidelines for AI-based medical devices. To ensure that the benchmarking procedures and validation principles of FG-AI4H are secure and relevant for regulators and other stakeholders, the working group on *“*[*Regulatory considerations on AI for health”* *(WG-RC)*](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/wg/SitePages/WG-RC.aspx) compiled the requirements that consider these challenges.

The deliverables with relevance for regulatory considerations are [DEL02](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BF2F46A99-7457-4BC8-81A3-0E1E63D6072A%7D&file=DEL02.docx&action=default) *“AI4H regulatory considerations”* (which provides an educational overview of some key regulatory considerations), [DEL02\_1](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B6AF7C004-8BCE-4151-9F44-45F041A1EB1D%7D&file=DEL02_1.docx&action=default) *“Mapping of IMDRF essential principles to AI for health software”,* and[DEL02\_2](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B1ED0D4D1-876C-4A0F-AEF7-06D3F445F5E6%7D&file=DEL02_2.docx&action=default) *“Guidelines for AI based medical device (AI-MD): Regulatory requirements”* (which provides a checklist to understand expectations of regulators, promotes step-by-step implementation of safety and effectiveness of AI-based medical devices, and compensates for the lack of a harmonized standard). [DEL04](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BC68833D1-9B31-4E8E-8A4A-3939D7DEA56F%7D&file=DEL04.docx&action=default) identifies standards and best practices that are relevant for the “*AI software lifecycle specification*.*”* The following sections discuss how the different regulatory aspects relate to the TG-AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility.

## Existing applicable regulatory frameworks

Most of the AI systems that are part of the FG-AI4H benchmarking process can be classified as *software as medical device* (SaMD) and eligible for a multitude of regulatory frameworks that are already in place. In addition, these AI systems often process sensitive personal health information that is controlled by another set of regulatory frameworks. The following section summarizes the most important aspects that AI manufacturers need to address if they are developing AI systems for AI for Human Reproduction and Fertility.

* What existing regulatory frameworks cover the type of AI in this TDD (e.g., MDR, FDA, GDPR, and ISO; maybe the systems in this topic group always require at least “MDR class 2b” or maybe they are not considered a medical device)?
* Are there any aspects to this AI system that require additional specific regulatory considerations?

## Regulatory features to be reported by benchmarking participants

In most countries, benchmarked AI solutions can only be used legally if they comply with the respective regulatory frameworks for the application context. This section outlines the compliance features and certifications that the benchmarking participants need to provide as part of the metadata. It facilitates a screening of the AI benchmarking results for special requirements (e.g., the prediction of prediabetes in a certain subpopulation in a country compliant to the particular regional regulatory requirements).

* Which certifications and regulatory framework components of the previous section should be part of the metadata (e.g., as a table with structured selection of the points described in the previous section)?

## Regulatory requirements for the benchmarking systems

The benchmarking system itself needs to comply with regulatory frameworks (e.g., some regulatory frameworks explicitly require that all tools in the quality management are also implemented with a quality management system in place). This section outlines the regulatory requirements for software used for benchmarking in this topic group.

* Which regulatory frameworks apply to the benchmarking system itself?
* Are viable solutions with the necessary certifications already available?
* Could the TG implement such a solution?

## Regulatory approach for the topic group

*Topic Driver: Please select the points relevant for your type of AI and the corresponding benchmarking systems. If your AIs and your benchmarking are not a medical device, this might be quite short.*

Building on the outlined regulatory requirements, this section describes how the topic group plans to address the relevant points in order to be compliant. The discussion here focuses on the guidance and best practice provided by the [DEL02](https://extranet.itu.int/sites/itu-t/focusgroups/ai4h/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BF2F46A99-7457-4BC8-81A3-0E1E63D6072A%7D&file=DEL02.docx&action=default) *“AI4H regulatory considerations.”*

* Documentation & Transparency
  + How will the development process of the benchmarking be documented in an effective, transparent, and traceable way?
* Risk management & Lifecycle approach
  + How will the risk management be implemented?
  + How is a life cycle approach throughout development and deployment of the benchmarking system structured?
* Data quality
  + How is the test data quality ensured (e.g., the process of harmonizing data of different sources, standards, and formats into a single dataset may cause bias, missing values, outliers, and errors)?
  + How are the corresponding processes document?
* Intended Use & Analytical and Clinical Validation
  + How are technical and clinical validation steps (as part of the lifecycle) ensured (e.g., as proposed in the IMDRF clinical evaluation framework)?
* Data Protection & Information Privacy
  + How is data privacy in the context of data protection regulations ensured, considering regional differences (e.g., securing large data sets against unauthorized access, collection, storage, management, transport, analysis, and destruction)? This is especially relevant if real patient data is used for the benchmarking.
* Engagement & Collaboration
  + How is stakeholder (regulators, developers, healthcare policymakers) feedback on the benchmarking collected, documented, and implemented?

# References

*Topic driver: Add the bibliography here.*

*Topic driver: If you include figures in this document, please use the following MS Word format/style (otherwise the figure won’t be included in the table of figures).*

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Captions for figures use WinWord style "Figure\_No & title"

Figure 1: Example of a figure

Annex A:  
Glossary

This section lists all the relevant abbreviations, acronyms and uncommon terms used in the document.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Acronym/Term | Expansion | Comment |
| TDD | Topic Description Document | Document specifying the standardized benchmarking for a topic on which the FG AI4H Topic Group works. This document is the TDD for the Topic Group [YOUR TOPIC GROUP] |
| TG | Topic Group |  |
| WG | Working Group |  |
| FGAI4H | Focus Group on AI for Health |  |
| AI | Artificial intelligence |  |
| ITU | International Telecommunication Union |  |
| WHO | World Health Organization |  |
| DEL | Deliverable |  |
| CfTGP | Call for topic group participation |  |
| AI4H | Artificial intelligence for health |  |
| IMDRF | International Medical Device Regulators Forum |  |
| MDR | Medical Device Regulation |  |
| ISO | International Standardization Organization |  |
| GDPR | General Data Protection Regulation |  |
| FDA | Food and Drug administration |  |
| SaMD | Software as a medical device |  |
| AI-MD | AI based medical device |  |
| LMIC | Low-and middle-income countries |  |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |  |
| API | Application programming interface |  |
| IP | Intellectual property |  |
| PII | Personal identifiable information |  |
| […] |  |  |

Annex B:  
Declaration of conflict of interests

In accordance with the ITU transparency rules, this section lists the conflict-of-interest declarations for everyone who contributed to this document. Please see the guidelines in FGAI4H-F-105 “ToRs for the WG-Experts and call for experts” and the respective forms (Application form & Conflict of interest form).

Company/Institution/Individual XYZ

A short explanation of the company’s area of activity and how the work on this document might benefit the company and/or harm competitors. A list of all people who contributed to this document on behalf of this company and any personal interest in this company (e.g., shares).

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