

**INTERSESSIONAL PANEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION  
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

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Contribution by ITU

to the CSTD 2020-2021 priority themes on “Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on Sustainable Development Goal 3 on good health and well-being” and “Harnessing blockchain for sustainable development: prospects and challenges”

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## Inputs from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

### Addressing questions 1 to 4:

ITU developed some material on blockchain technology use cases, including in the context of SDG attainment. Please see the respective chapter in the Technical Paper available at <https://www.itu.int/pub/T-TUT-DLT-2019-UC>

### Addressing question 5:

Other documentation of possible interest:

Technical Specification with terms and definitions for distributed ledger technologies including blockchain, available at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dlt/Documents/d11.pdf> (corresponding ITU-T Recommendation currently in approval process)

Technical Report providing an overview of concepts and ecosystem of distributed ledger technologies including blockchain, available at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dlt/Documents/d12.pdf>

Technical Specification providing assessment criteria for distributed ledger technology platforms, available at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/dlt/Documents/d31.pdf> (corresponding ITU-T Recommendation F.751.1 pre-published).

## AI for Health

### ITU-WHO Focus Group on Artificial Intelligence for Health

The ITU-WHO Focus Group on Artificial Intelligence for Health (FG-AI4H) is a joint initiative of ITU and WHO that is driven by member states, private-sector ITU members, academia and other IOs such as PAHO. FG-AI4H is creating a benchmarking framework to assess the accuracy of AI in health diagnostic aids, such as apps that can give a risk assessment of e.g. skin lesions, or x-ray images. The benchmarking framework will ensure that any potential biases are detected. The framework is detailed in a commentary in the Lancet (<https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736%2819%2930762-7>). More information can be found on the website: <https://www.itu.int/go/fgai4h/> For questions, please contact [tsbfgai4h@itu.int](mailto:tsbfgai4h@itu.int). [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITUWHO\\_Focus\\_Group\\_on\\_Artificial\\_Intelligence\\_for\\_Health](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITUWHO_Focus_Group_on_Artificial_Intelligence_for_Health)

### Additional inputs:

**PRIORITY THEME 2:** “Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on SDG 3, good health and well-being” under questions:

1. Can you give examples of international projects/policies aimed at using science, technology, and innovation for early warning, risk reduction and management of national risks? What are the main challenges confronted while trying to implement these projects/policies?

***ITU and WHO worked within the Safe Listening Initiative developed an [International Standard \(H.870\)](#) to prevent early onset of hearing loss due to unsafe listening devices and practices. One of the challenges was the awareness raising and the implementation of this standard and to meet the challenge a [Toolkit was developed by ITU and WHO](#).***

and

2. Could you share specific examples, projects or initiatives that have used frontier technologies (e.g., AI, drones, blockchain, 3D printing, etc.) or other forms of innovation in general in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic?

***ITU is helping countries to fully utilize digital technologies to respond to and recover from COVID-19, and to build preparedness for similar future global emergencies. (For more information see [ITU website on COVID19 Response and Recovery](#);***

***ITU also provided specialised advice to countries including by developing [guidelines on how to ensure that digital information, services and products are accessible by all people, including Persons with Disabilities during COVID-19](#) as well as [resources in digital accessibility](#) such as a series of free of charge on-line self-paced trainings (e.g. [ICT Accessibility- The Key to inclusive communication](#)) aiming at leveraging capacity of all countries in the topic and thus supporting their efforts in developing accessible digital communication, products and services, which could be vital in time of crisis such as COVID 19.***

### **Additional inputs:**

#### **On the Health side:**

The joint ITU-WHO Focus Group on Artificial Intelligence for Health (FG-AI4H, <https://www.itu.int/go/fgai4h>) is developing a framework for benchmarking AI-based health solutions for assessing quality and clinical relevance of solutions. In response to the COVID-19 emergency, its [ad hoc group on digital health for the COVID-19 health emergency](#) has collected best practices covering the use of AI and other digital technologies for the entire epidemic emergency cycle. The FG-AI4H also has an activity for collecting and developing relevant open source tools. Participation in the group is open to all interested expert. The framework is detailed in a commentary in the Lancet (<https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736%2819%2930762-7>) and an [updated whitepaper from October 2020](#). For questions, please contact: [tsbfgai4h@itu.int](mailto:tsbfgai4h@itu.int). [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITU-WHO\\_Focus\\_Group\\_on\\_Artificial\\_Intelligence\\_for\\_Health](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITU-WHO_Focus_Group_on_Artificial_Intelligence_for_Health)