

# A REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP (NITAGs)

## FUNCTION OF NITAGs

NITAGs are multidisciplinary country-level expert committees tasked with providing independent, *evidence-based* advice to policymakers and programme managers on immunization and *vaccine policy* issues.



### NITAGs Role

NITAGs provide *scientific recommendations* to respective Ministries of Health to inform National Immunization Plan.

NITAGs also advise on public health needs and address vaccine quality and safety issues

### Problem Identification

There is a *scarcity* of accurate information about the transparency, accountability, level of authority and degree to which the composition of membership represent a *life course approach to immunization* and therein supports healthy ageing

## METHODOLOGY

Comprehensive environmental scans of NITAGs in *34 countries* across all WHO regions were performed using a framework that integrates the TAPIC governance framework and the 6 WHO processes indicators to evaluate level of development of each NITAG

## NITAG EVALUATION MATRIX

1. Legislative or administrative basis

2. Formal written Terms of Reference

3. Diverse expertise/representation among core members

4. At least one meeting per year

5. Circulation of agenda and background documents at least one week prior to meeting

6. Mandatory disclosure of any conflict of interest

## TAPIC GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Framework incorporates the five attributes of *good governance*: transparency, accountability, participation, integrity, and policy making capacity

WHO Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030)



World Health Organization

The IA2030 is an extensive vision & strategy for immunization for the decade

- **Section 2.5** - each country is responsible for developing coordinated national immunization strategies to achieve aligned contributions to the IA2030
- **Strategic priority 4** - outlines responsibility of NITAGs to extend immunization beyond childhood & promote legislative/policy changes to mobilize funding for older adult vaccination

## STUDY FINDINGS

2.

Lack of publicly available information on the selection processes of members & processes to develop and grade evidence-based recommendations

4.

Data on countries with the highest ageing populations does not reflect a mature and well-performing NITAG

There is little or no data indicating membership of experts in the field of healthy ageing.

1.

Maturity of the NITAGs & the lack of availability of data was not associated with country income

3.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Reevaluation of the WHO NITAG process indicators to employ a criterion which mandates at least one of the five expert members to include a representative who draws upon a life course approach to immunization

Call on Member States to improve transparency & availability of public information on NITAG processes to develop & grade evidence based recommendations.