



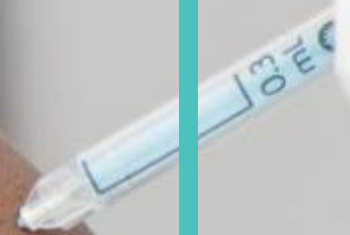
World Health
Organization

African Region

African Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group

11-14 June 2024
Kigali, Rwanda

Concept Note



1. Background

The WHO African Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group (RITAG) serves as the principal advisory group to WHO African regional Director for strategic guidance on overall regional policies and strategies for vaccines and Immunization. The mandate of RITAG is focused on an integrated, people-centered platform of disease prevention covering the control of vaccine-preventable diseases along the life-course spectrum through the context of health systems strengthening. RITAG works under the framework of WHO-adopted global and regional strategies ranging from vaccine research and development to delivery of routine Immunization services and linkages with other health interventions.

The first post-COVID-19 pandemic in-person meeting of RITAG took place at the WHO Regional Office for Africa (WHO/AFRO), in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo from 07 to 09 November 2023. During the meeting RITAG reviewed the progress, successes, and challenges of Immunization in the WHO African region, as well as the lessons learnt during the COVID-19 pandemic. The three-day meeting also provided an opportunity to reflect on current priorities, future direction, and key strategic shifts needed to get the region back on track towards achieving the Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030) goals and targets.

Following consultation with the Chair of RITAG, Professor Helen Rees, the next meeting of RITAG has been scheduled for Request for 11-14 June 2024 in Kigali, Rwanda. The planned RITAG meeting will provide a platform for in-depth discussions by leveraging the collective expertise and experiences of the RITAG members and set the stage for collaborative action towards advancing planned goals of Immunization and vaccine-preventable disease control within the region.

2. Objectives of the meeting

The main objective of this meeting is to receive evidence-based advice from RITAG on strategies and tools to improve current Immunization performance and to control vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) outbreaks in the African region.

The specific meeting objectives include:

- ▶ Review progress with implementation of 2023 RITAG meeting recommendations and reflect on emerging challenges and evolving contexts encountered in the past year and identify lessons learned.
- ▶ Present an update to RITAG on vaccine-preventable disease (VPD) control in the WHO African region and get an evidence-based assessment of the current situation and future directions.
- ▶ Share with RITAG the latest recommendations from the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization (SAGE) for contextualization to the WHO African region.
- ▶ Share the current situation of yellow fever, measles, and Ebola control in the WHO African region and get evidence-based recommendations from RITAG for accelerating the control of these diseases in the region.
- ▶ Present the Regional Strategic Plan for Immunization 2025-2030 to RITAG members for their orientation and guidance, to achieve the Immunization Agenda 2030 (IA2030) and Addis Declaration on Immunization (ADI) milestones in the WHO African region.

- ▶ Present to RITAG the ongoing work on understanding the behavioural and social drivers of vaccine uptake and get evidence-based guidance from RITAG future directions of this work.
- ▶ Develop actionable recommendations to inform policy decisions, resource allocation, strategic partnerships, and knowledge exchange among key stakeholders for improved collective action to implementation of routine programme, introduction and rollout of new and under-utilized vaccines, and overall expansion of Immunization programmes at regional and national levels.

3. Modus operandi

The proposed dates of the meeting are 11 to 14 June 2024. The meeting will feature interactive plenary sessions, breakout sessions, and side meetings filled with technical presentations and discussions. The daily meeting duration will be on average nine hours (from 09:00 to 18:00 local time) to allow for comprehensive, meaningful discussions.

The RITAG Chair will steer daily sessions with key discussion points and next steps collated by nominated rapporteurs. The technical presentations would be jointly prepared by WHO focal points and assigned RITAG members with oversight from the RITAG Chair. All final versions of background documents (including presentations) will be shared at least two weeks prior to the meeting with RITAG members for their reading and feedback. A comprehensive meeting report will be drafted by the secretariat, shared for inputs from RITAG members, revised by the secretariat and the final version endorsed by the RITAG Chair.

4. Meeting Participants

The proposed participants of the meeting are the following:

RITAG	15 RITAG Members
Regional	WHO staff from different programmes and departments, UNICEF staff, and staff from Immunization partners
Country	Programme Managers and National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) members from selected countries, WHO and UNICEF staff
Global	WHO, Gavi, UNICEF, Extended Immunization Partners, RITAG Chairs from other WHO regions, and other subject matter specialists.

5. Expected Meeting Outcomes:

The proposed meeting outcomes are as follows:

- Progress of 2023 RITAG meeting recommendations reviewed.
- First draft 2024 RITAG meeting recommendations developed.
- High level RITAG pre- and post-meeting debrief with RD conducted.