Experience of the South-East Asia Regional network of NITAGs

Establishment, mandate and perspectives

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Why and how was the South-East Asia Region Network of NITAGs created?

Description of the SEAR Network of NITAGs
WHO SEARO and SIVAC facilitated during the annual ITAG meeting in June 2015 a side meeting of NITAG Chairs and secretariats.

Participants noted that they have different level of experience but all face challenges and constraints; they also encounter similar problems.

Structured working relationship through a network may provide increased access to regional data, technical capacity building and resources; allow for concerted action for common problems.

WHO SEARO and SIVAC organised a consultative workshop (Colombo, April 7-8 2016) to further discuss the structure and mandate of a SEAR network of NITAGs in light of their needs and expectations (individually and collectively).
Outcomes of the Regional Consultation

- Participation of representatives, including Chairs and Secretariats, of 8 out of the 11 NITAGs of the South-East Asia Region (SEAR): Bhutan, Nepal, Indonesia, Maldives, Timor-Leste, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka

- Identification of individual NITAGs’ needs: access to specific areas of expertise; up-to-date information; strengthening of NITAG-specific technical competencies in standardized methodology for developing evidence-based recommendations (literature review and evidence appraisal)

- Formulation of expectations from a SEAR network of NITAGs:
  - **Technical support**: external expert assistance for developing evidence-based recommendations;
  - **Capacity-building**: on methodology for issuing evidence-based recommendations;
  - **Information-sharing**: access to local data from other NITAGs;
  - **Experience-sharing**: from NITAG activities, evaluations of recommendations
**Scope**

- sharing experience and data to inform recommendations;
- sharing technical resources and facilitation in technical assistance in specific immunization-related expertise (i.e., expertise on modeling, economics);
- supporting NITAG capacity-building;
- Supporting progress evaluation of NITAGs' effectiveness and functioning Mandate.
Structure/organisation

**Membership**
- The SEAR NITAG Network is a voluntary network comprising the 11 countries represented by their Chairs and Secretariats.

**Mechanism for Coordination**
- The Network will meet once a year.
- The Chair will be from the host country while the co-chair will be from the next host country.
- Host countries will be chosen on an annual rotation basis, starting with Sri Lanka and following alphabetical order of country names:
- The current Chair will involve the following year’s host country in Network coordination.

**Responsibilities of the chair, secretariat and members**
- Efficient networking requires responsiveness, attendance, acknowledgment and mutual support.
Strategic objectives (2016-2020)

2016-17:
- To have operational documents finalized.
- To initiate Network visibility.
- To implement one capacity-building activity

2017-18:
- To have a functioning Network in place

2018-20:
- To draw lessons from Network functioning.
- To explore opportunities for joining an inter-regional network
Deliverables:

- Dedicated webpage on the NRC website maintained up-to-date with relevant NITAG-related information, data, and documents, including the Strategic document, standard operating procedures, work plans, and activity reports.
- The Network will also publish an annual newsletter.
Funding

- Respective governments for individual NITAGs effective participation and contribution to the Network's activities.
- Partners: SIVAC will provide digital space, and jointly with WHO, they will support capacity-building activities and facilitate the logistics of voluntary technical assistance from experts to peers.
Thank you