

Table 2. Major roles and terms of reference of the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization in India

Major roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be an advisory body to assist the Government of India in developing a nation-wide policy framework for vaccines and immunization • To prioritize immunization activities and set attainable targets • Identify critical gaps in policy and programme and identify studies, assessment and research areas to be addressed • To review periodic assessment of the national immunization programme, including immunization performance and disease incidence
Terms of reference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify reasons for the decline in immunization coverage levels, identify bottlenecks and suggest measures to revitalize the routine immunization activities • Establish criteria for ensuring a cost effective expansion/renewal plan for the cold chain • Set up norms for periodic evaluation of the immunization programme (e.g., frequency surveys, methodology to be adopted, and mechanism for data dissemination) • Examine the current status of surveillance under the Reproductive and Child Health Programme and suggest mechanism for integrating the National Polio Surveillance Project network with the existing surveillance system once the polio is eradicated • Firm up guideline for epidemic/outbreak control measures for vaccine preventable diseases • Establish standards and criteria for introduction of new vaccines under the Universal Immunization Programme • Guide policy for introduction of injection safety technology into the immunization programme • Suggest innovative strategies for introducing demand generation strategies in the programme • Examine the role of private sector vis-a-vis immunization and suggest measures for a more effective programme with private sector partnership • Identify strategies, which would be required under special circumstances for instance (a) in under served areas like urban slums and tribal areas (b) immunization during natural calamities • Identify areas that need research studies including cost effectively analysis, burden of diseases studies, operation research etc. and suggest modalities for conducting the same • Suggest mechanisms and modalities for improving the vaccine quality assurance through the National Regulatory Authority (Drug Controller General of India) • Examine the need for decentralization of programme implementation and suggest the degree and modalities for affecting the same