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# Self-Assessment Leading to Institutional Improvement Plans

FOR THE  
NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION  
TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUPS

2023

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EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION  
OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION





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## Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank the National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) chairs, members, secretariat, staff of National Immunization Programmes (NIP) and Ministry of Health for participating in the NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool (NMAT) capacity building virtual workshop and consequently using the acquired skills to assess their NITAG and develop improvement plan. Their findings and plans shared with us, permitted us to prepare this regional report.

## Executive Summary

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Between 2019 and 2021, 7(33%) countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) of the World Health Organization (WHO) assessed their National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs). The publication of the newly developed NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool (NMAT) was an opportunity to conduct an assessment and propose institutional improvement plans.

The NMAT was presented in two virtual workshops in February and March 2023 to NITAGs from all 22 EMR countries. NITAG members and secretariat were taught how to use the tool to evaluate their NITAG and use findings to develop an improvement plan. Country teams were asked to conduct a self-assessment between February and April 2023. Assessment findings and improvement plans were presented in five follow-up sessions from May to June 2023.

A total of 20(91%) countries submitted NITAG assessment findings, except Sudan and Somalia. The overall scores per indicator varied from 36% for indicator 2 (independence and non-bias), 45% for indicator 5 (making recommendations), 47% for indicator 4 (operations), 51% for indicator 7 (stakeholder recognition), 60% for indicator 3 (resources and secretariat support), 61% for indicator 6 (integration into policy making process) and 74% for indicator 1 (establishment and composition).

Most countries had a “Basic” maturity level for indicators 2 [16(80%)], indicator 4 [14(70%)], and indicator 7 [11(55%)]. A total of 13(65%) countries were “Intermediate” for indicator 5. Very few countries attained “Leading Edge” maturity level: Oman and Pakistan for Indicator 3, Saudi Arabia for Indicator 4, Oman for Indicator 5, Afghanistan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia for indicator 6 and Tunisia for indicator 7.

All countries have established NITAGs, but terms of reference are reviewed and updated in 8(40%) of countries. A total of 7(35%) countries have a conflict of interest policy that describes the process for assessing and managing conflicts. All NITAGs have a designated secretariat that provide active administrative support and accept inputs from external experts. Standard operating procedures are formalized in an official NITAG document in 10(50%) countries. NITAGs from 4(20%) countries use a formal structure for reviewing evidence and making recommendations. There is a defined process for the Ministry of Health to officially request recommendations from the NITAG in 18(80%) of countries. The names of NITAG members are not publicly available in 11(55%) countries. Saudi Arabia met the highest proportion of criteria (91%), followed by Oman (90%). Kuwait, Iraq, Bahrain, Pakistan, Syria, Iran, United Arab Emirates, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Morocco, and Egypt scored between 50 and 75%. Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Qatar, Palestine, Yemen, and Djibouti scored less than 50%.

Nineteen countries developed an improvement plan to address country specific gaps. Some common activities include capacity building on evidence to recommendation, updating terms of reference and NITAG standard operating procedures and developing a policy to manage and prevent conflict of interest. The regional office will monitor implementation of the improvement plans. Countries will conduct a follow up assessment after 2 years. Countries interested in conducting external assessments, or with any other specific NITAG needs are requested to reach out to the regional office through their respective WHO country offices.

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## Abbreviations

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<b>CASP</b>	Critical Appraisal Skill Program
<b>CDC</b>	Centers for Disease Control and prevention
<b>COI</b>	Conflict of interest
<b>DOI</b>	Declaration of interests
<b>eJRF</b>	Electronic Joint Reporting Form
<b>EMPHNET</b>	Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network
<b>EMR</b>	Eastern Mediterranean Region
<b>EPI</b>	Expanded Programme on Immunization
<b>EtR</b>	Evidence to recommendation
<b>GRADE</b>	Grading of recommendations, assessment, development, and evaluations
<b>MOH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoPHP</b>	Ministry of Public Health and Population
<b>NISH</b>	NITAG Support Hub
<b>NITAGs</b>	National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups
<b>NMAT</b>	NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool
<b>R &amp; D</b>	Research and Development
<b>SAGE</b>	Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization
<b>SIGN</b>	Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network
<b>SOP</b>	Standard operating procedures
<b>TFGH</b>	Task Force for Global Health
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WHO AFRO</b>	Africa Regional Office of the World Health Organization
<b>WHO EMRO</b>	Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office of the World Health Organization



# 1. Background

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National Immunization Advisory Groups (NITAGs) are meant to provide technical advice to national policy makers on vaccines and immunization. For them to correctly carry out their role, they need to be functional. Countries with strong, functional NITAGs seem to have well performing immunization programs. Different tools exist to measure the functionality of NITAGs, but none disaggregates NITAG functioning into different maturity levels like the newly developed NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool (NMAT).<sup>1</sup>

NMAT is a practical planning, monitoring and evaluation tool to guide NITAG development and strengthening. It provides a mechanism to assess the maturity of a NITAG and a framework for organizing and prioritizing tangible and achievable next steps for NITAG strengthening activities. The NMAT can be used to conduct an internal (self-assessment) or external assessment.

Electronic joint reporting form (eJRF) data for 2021 shows that 12(55%) of the NITAGs in EMR were functional and between 2019 to 2021, only 7(33%) countries conducted a NITAG assessment. Mastery of the use of NMAT will lead to more country NITAG assessments and opportunities for improving performance.

## 2. Objectives and Expected Outcomes

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### 2.1 General

Build capacity of NITAGs and secretariat to plan, monitor and evaluate their activities to guide and ensure continuous development.

### 2.2 Specific

- Use the NMAT to build capacity of NITAGs for self-assessment
- Use assessment findings to propose recommendations towards NITAG maturity

### 2.3 Expected Outcome

- Conduct a NITAG self-assessment using NMAT
- Produce a NITAG maturity improvement plan from NMAT finding

## 3. Methods and Tools

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### 3.1 Virtual Training Workshops

Two virtual workshops, each lasting 3 hours were held on the 21–22 February and 28–29 March 2023.

### 3.2 Facilitators

Facilitators came from United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Task Force for Global Health (TFGH), NITAG Support Hub (NISH), Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) and Africa Regional office of the World Health Organization (WHO AFRO), Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO EMRO) and WHO Headquarters.

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<sup>1</sup> Global NITAG Network. Resources. Guidelines. NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool. CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Published 2023. Available from: <https://www.nitag-resource.org/resources/nitag-maturity-assessment-tool-nmat>. Accessed on 07 August 2023

### 3.3 Participants

NITAG chairs, NITAG secretariat, two other NITAG members and the WHO country office staff supporting NITAGs were invited to attend the workshop. Countries were encouraged to participate as a team.

### 3.4 Learning Methods

The training was a forum to present the NMAT and build capacity of participants on why and how to conduct an assessment using the tool. PowerPoint Presentations were made on the following topics:

- Meeting objectives and expected outcome
- Overview: Why and how to conduct an assessment
- Overview and walkthrough of the NMAT tool
- NMAT data collection tool
- Documenting assessment results and developing workplan
- Meeting action points and follow up sessions
- Home exercise and debriefing

Interactive group work sessions were held on both days followed by questions and answers. At the end of Day-1 indicators were shared across countries to attempt filling the tool and debrief the next day. See workshop agenda in Annex 1

### 3.5 End of Workshop Evaluation

The training team used Google Forms to create a questionnaire for the participants to provide their feedback and perspectives of the NMAT training. See user satisfaction findings in Annex 2.

### 3.6 Assessment Tools and Follow-Up Sessions

At the end of each workshop, countries were invited to conduct a self-assessment of their NITAG using the electronic NMAT, develop a work plan to improve NITAG performance as per assessment findings, share with regional office and present during debriefing sessions.

## 4. Findings

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### 4.1 Findings from Country Self-Assessment using NMAT

All 22 countries attended the NMAT capacity building workshop: 10 countries in February and 12 in March 2023. A total of 20(91%) out of 22 EMR countries conducted NITAG self-assessment and submitted findings to the regional office. Only Sudan and Somalia did not submit a report. A total of 19(90%) also submitted an improvement plan. Jordan did not submit an improvement plan.

Most countries, 9(45%) have an "Intermediate" maturity level followed by "Developing" for indicator 1. There is no country with "Leading Edge" (Figure 1). Oman and Syria have the highest maturity level (Advanced) for indicator 1.

All 20 countries have an official document creating their NITAG. NITAG membership is not opened to competition in 80% of countries. NITAG ToR is not reviewed every 3 years in 75% of countries and 65% of countries do not have a policy to terminate membership prior to completion of membership term. Palestine NITAG has no written ToR. Djibouti NITAG has <5 expertise represented (Table 1).

**Indicator 1: Establishment and Composition**

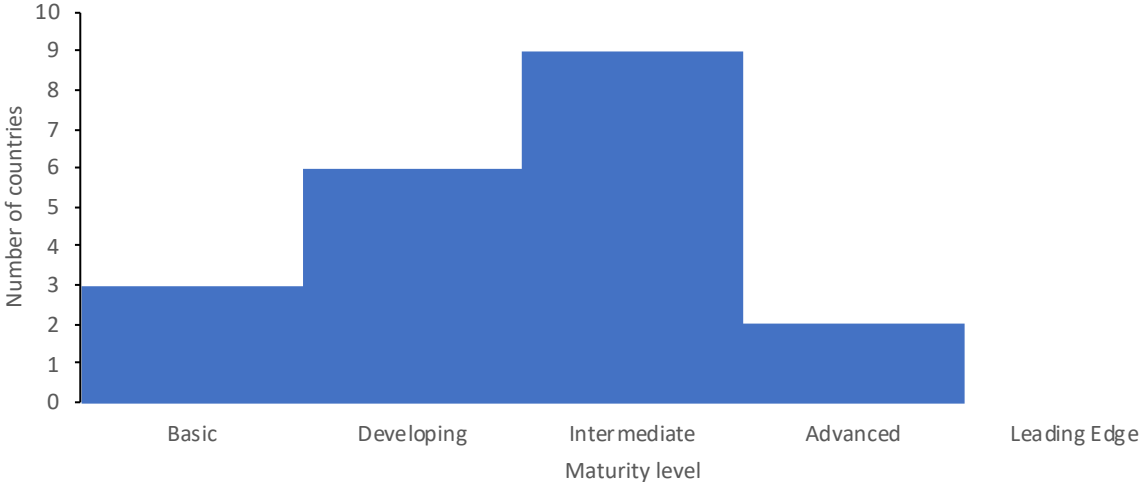


Figure 1: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 1

Table 1: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 1

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Official status	Official measures or documents have established the NITAG	20	100%
Terms of Reference (ToR)	NITAG has written terms of reference (ToRs) including a mandate defining scope of work	19	95%
	ToRs address NITAG structure and are shared with members whenever updated	15	75%
	ToRs are reviewed and updated regularly	8	40%
	ToRs are reviewed at least every 3 years and updated as needed	5	25%
Diversity of expertise	>= 5 areas of expertise represented	19	95%
	Members' areas of expertise span life course & NITAG has access to additional areas of expertise	17	85%
	There is a redundancy of experts among members so that the minimum areas of expertise are still represented when absences occur	8	40%
Membership	Core members have voting authority, while non-core members do not	18	90%
	Core membership terms are limited and staggered	13	65%
	There is a policy process for terminating membership prior to completion of membership term	7	35%
	There is open competition for membership spots	4	20%

## Indicator 2: Independence and Non-Bias

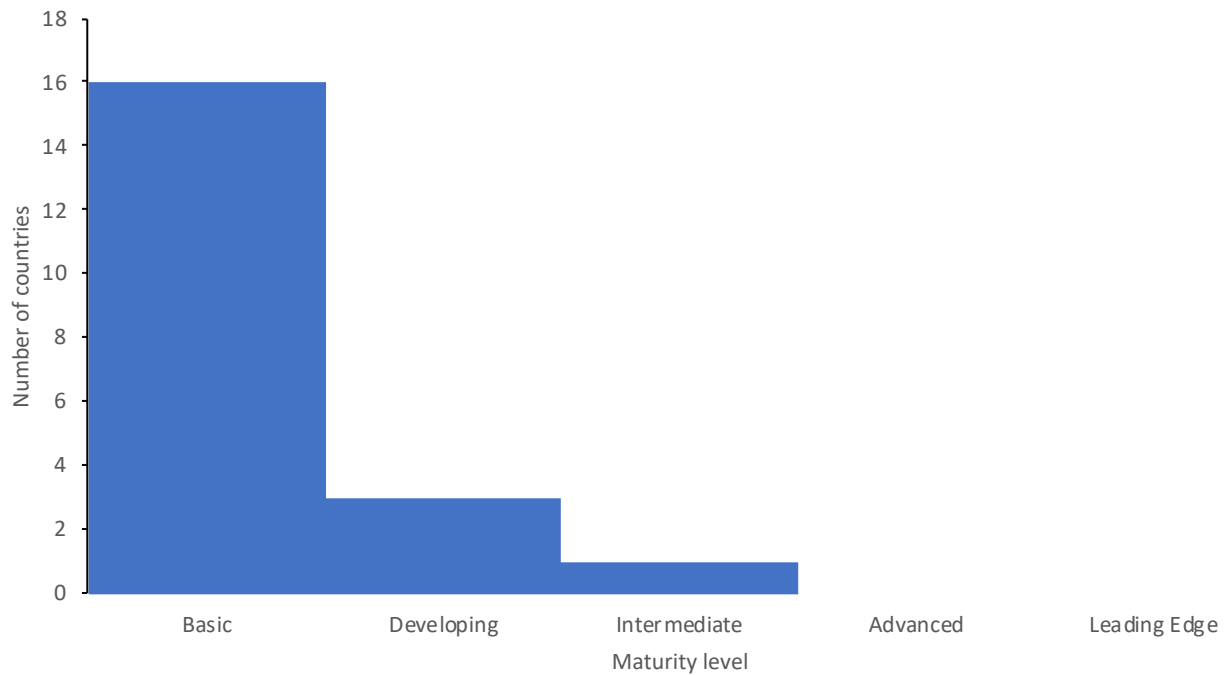


Figure 2: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 2

Most countries, 16(80%) have a “Basic” maturity level for indicator 2, followed by “Developing. There is no country with “Advanced” and “Leading Edge” maturity levels (Figure 2). Syria has the highest maturity level (Intermediate) for Indicator 2.

There is no policy to manage conflict of interest in 60% of countries. Declaration of interests (DOI) is not mandatory for core and non-core members before every meeting in 70% of countries. Declaration of interests (DOI) is not mandatory for core members from Djibouti, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and Qatar. Observation of meetings by non-members is permitted upon request or on a scheduled basis, or meetings are broadcast publicly only in Pakistan. There is no policy in place to ensure members do not promote their employers’ priorities in 50% of countries (Table 2).

Table 2: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 2

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Disclosure and conflict of interest process	DOI is mandatory for core members upon appointment	15	75%
	DOI is mandatory for secretariat and working group members & are routinely updated & NITAG follows a formal, written Conflict of Interest (COI) policy with definitions of types of COI	8	40%
	Conflict of Interest (COI) policy describes process(es) for assessing and managing COIs	7	35%
	DOI is mandatory for non-core members, upon appointment and when a change arises & DOI is mandatory for core members before every meeting	6	30%
Transparency	NITAG documentation is not publicly available	14	70%
	TORs and standard operating procedures are publicly available	4	20%
	Agendas, meeting summaries, and records of decisions are publicly available.	2	10%
	Technical reports and position papers are publicly available & NITAG actively disseminates them	2	10%
	Observation of meetings by non-members is permitted upon request or on a scheduled basis, or meetings are broadcast publicly	1	5%
Independence from primary workplace of members	There is no policy in place to ensure members do not promote their primary employer's priorities, views, and/or products	10	50%

### Indicator 3: Resources and Secretariat Support

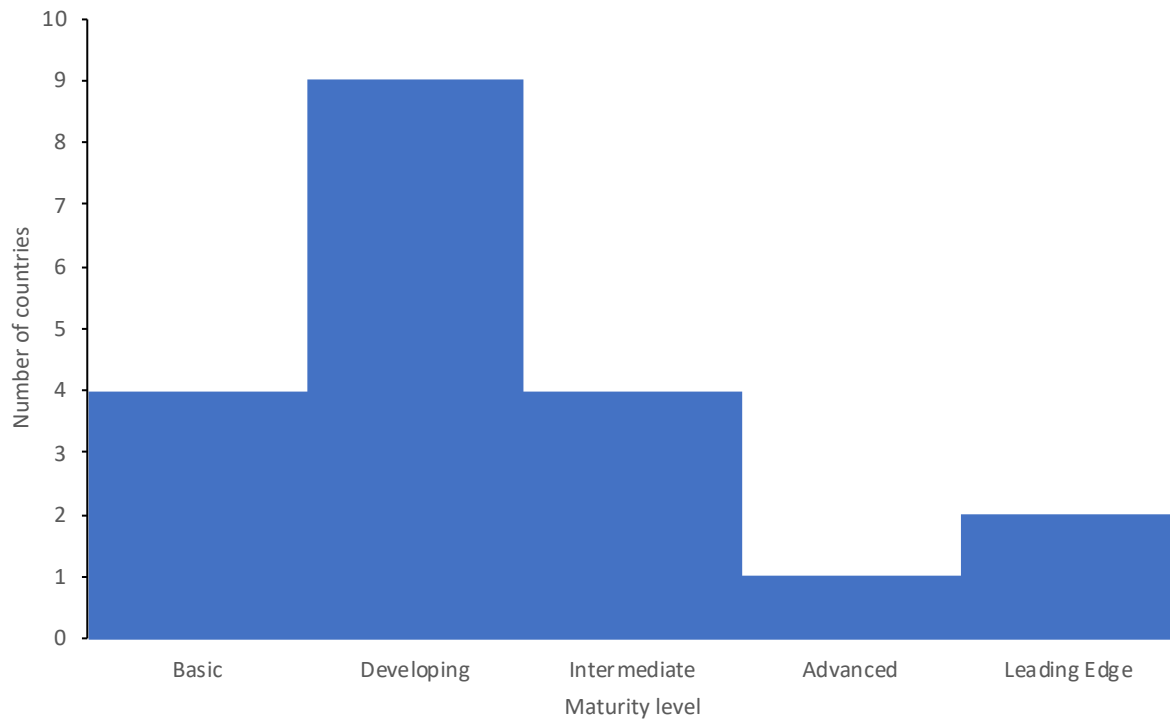


Figure 3: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 3

Most countries, 9(45%) have a “Developing” maturity level for indicator 3, followed by “Developing” and “Basic” (Figure 3). Oman and Saudi Arabia had the highest maturity level (Leading Edge) for Indicator 3.

All NITAGs have an officially designated secretariat, solicits input from external experts if needed and have consistent access to local, regional and global information. Secretariat in 80% of countries have limited full-time staff members with limited set of skills. Only 15% of countries have NITAG funding concerns (Table 3).

Table 3: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 3

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Secured Funding	A guarantee of funding from the government covers basic operational costs.	11	55%
	There is funding to cover basic operational costs.	8	40%
	There is access to funding that can cover travel expenses for national and international NITAG strengthening activities (regional or global NITAG meetings, collaborations, training).	6	30%
	Guaranteed funding is robust.	5	25%
	There is no funding to cover basic operational costs.	3	15%
Access to Relevant Data and Other Necessary Tools	NITAG has adequate access to regional and global information.	20	100%
	NITAG has consistent and comprehensive access to global and regional information, as well as adequate access to local information.	14	70%
	NITAG has consistent and comprehensive access to reliable local, regional, and global information	13	65%
	NITAG has access to raw data or can request specific analyses of the data presented	9	45%
Access to External Technical Expertise and Capacity-building Tools	NITAG solicits or accepts input from external experts	20	100%
	NITAG routinely gets input from external experts	12	60%
	As appropriate, NITAG formalizes relationships with external experts through non-core membership	9	45%
Secretariat Support	Secretariat provides active administrative support	20	100%
	Secretariat provides basic technical support	17	85%
	Secretariat or designated support services can conduct and/or outsource advanced analyses	10	50%
	Secretariat has multiple full-time staff members with a mix of skill sets	4	20%

## Indicator 4: Operations

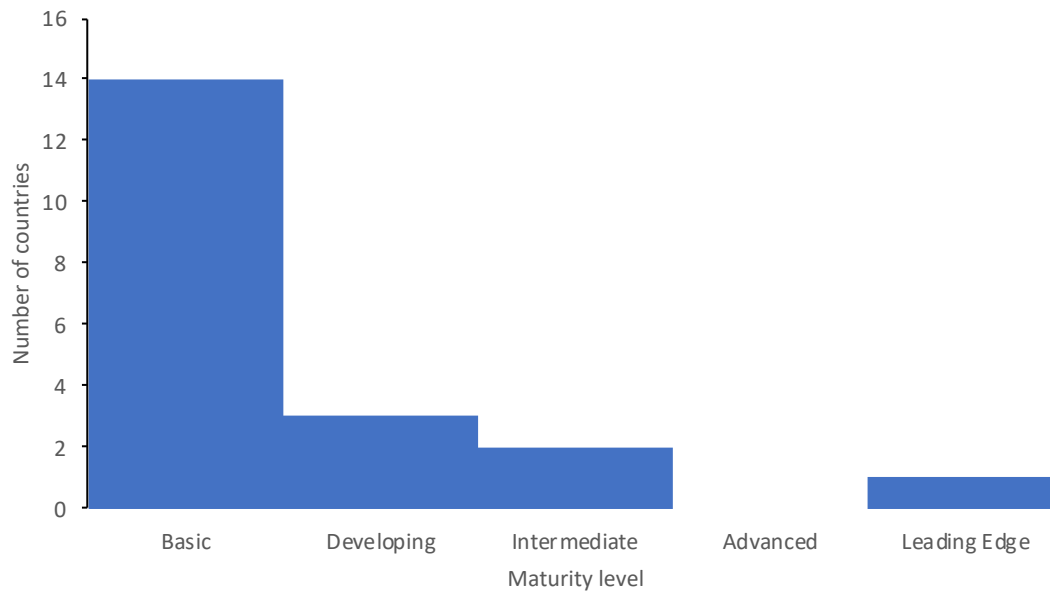


Figure 4: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 4

Most countries, 14(70%) have a “Basic” maturity level for indicator 4, followed by “Developing”. There is no country with an “Advanced” maturity level (Figure 4). Saudi Arabia has the highest maturity level (Leading Edge) for Indicator 4.

In 16(80%) of countries, NITAG meets more than once a year, and as needed. Djibouti and Yemen NITAG meet less than once a year. NITAG standard operating procedures (SOPs) not formalized in 50% of countries. In 19(95%) of countries, NITAGs are not regularly evaluated using a standardized tool. Only Saudi Arabia NITAG is regularly evaluated using a standardized tool (Table 4).

Table 4: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 4

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Meeting logistics	NITAG meets more than once a year, and as needed beyond regular schedule & NITAG members are invited to suggest agenda items for secretariat review.	16	80%
	Background documents are comprehensive	12	60%
	NITAG meets about once a year & Agenda and background documents are circulated at least one week before meetings.	2	10%
	NITAG meets less than once a year	2	10%
Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)	SOPs are formalized in an official NITAG document.	10	50%
	SOPs is not formalized	10	50%
	SOPs include or refer to COI policy	9	45%
	SOPs include recommendations and tools for orienting and educating members & Orientation includes review of SOP	9	45%
	SOPs are regularly reviewed, updated as needed, and updates are promptly circulated to all members & SOPs include the process to make a recommendation in an emergency situation	6	30%
Evaluation	NITAG is evaluated, but without a regular schedule or standardized tool	9	45%
	There is no system for evaluating the NITAG	8	40%
	NITAG has been evaluated at least once using a standardized tool.	6	30%
	There is a process in place to monitor the implementation of evaluation recommendations	4	20%
	NITAG is regularly evaluated using a standardized tool	1	5%

## Indicator 5: Making Recommendations

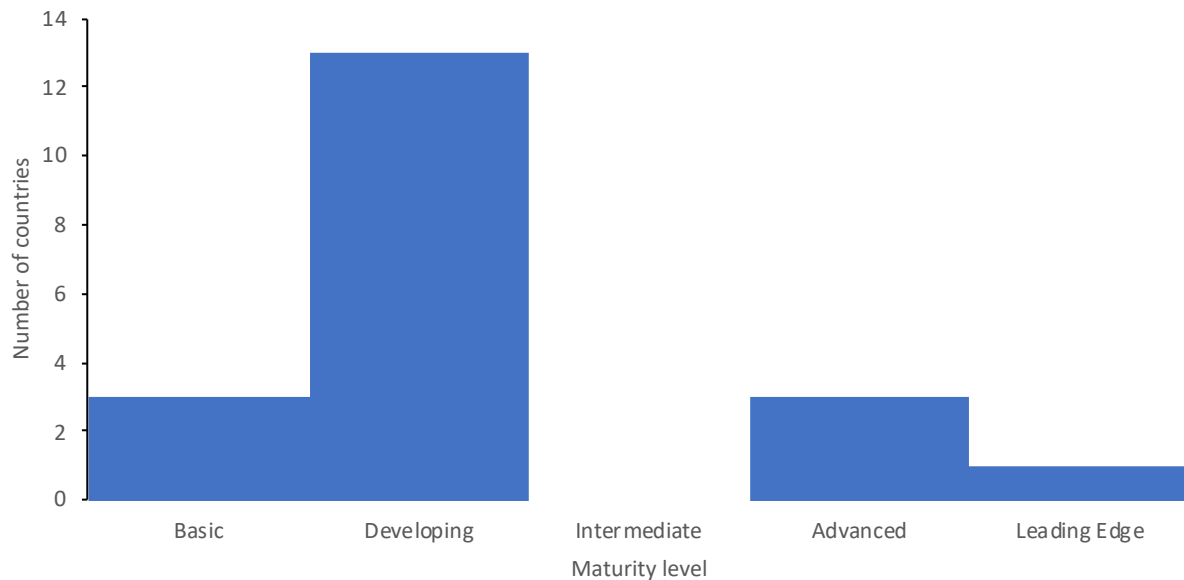


Figure 5: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 5

Most countries, 13(65%) have a “Developing” maturity level for indicator 5, followed by “Advanced”. There was no country with “Intermediate” maturity level (Figure 5). Oman has the highest maturity level (Leading Edge) for Indicator 5.

Up to 65% of countries do not use standard evidence to recommendation (EtR) process. NITAGs from 4 countries [Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates(UAE)] use a formal structure for reviewing evidence and making recommendations. In Djibouti, NITAG recommendations documentation does not meet any of the listed criteria. In 65% of countries, there is no process in place for the NITAG chair to discuss with policy makers NITAG recommendations that are not adopted by the government (Table 5).

Table 5: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 5

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Decision-making process	NITAG defines and follows a limited set of elements as the basis for decision-making for a recommendation	13	65%
	NITAG uses a formal structure for reviewing evidence and making recommendations, for example, SAGE EtR framework which can include graded evidence or systematic reviews from other groups	4	20%
	NITAG does not define or follow a standard set of elements as the basis for decision-making for a recommendation or use a formal structure for quality assessment of evidence	2	10%
	NITAG uses tools to assess quality of evidence such as Grading of recommendations, assessment, development and evaluations (GRADE), Critical Appraisal Skill Program (CASP), Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), etc	3	15%
Documentation and Communication	Recommendations are registered in meeting minute	19	95%
	Recommendations are submitted to designated policymakers in the form of a policy brief conforming to country practices	12	60%
	Recommendations follow a consistent format and refer to peer-reviewed published material and local evidence or contextual information & Recommendations are also documented separately from minutes and systematically archived	8	40%
	For recommendations that are not adopted, there is process for NITAG Chair (or designee) to discuss recommendations with policy decision makers	7	35%
	Recommendation documentation does not meet any of the criteria listed	1	5%

## Indicator 6: Integration into Policymaking Process

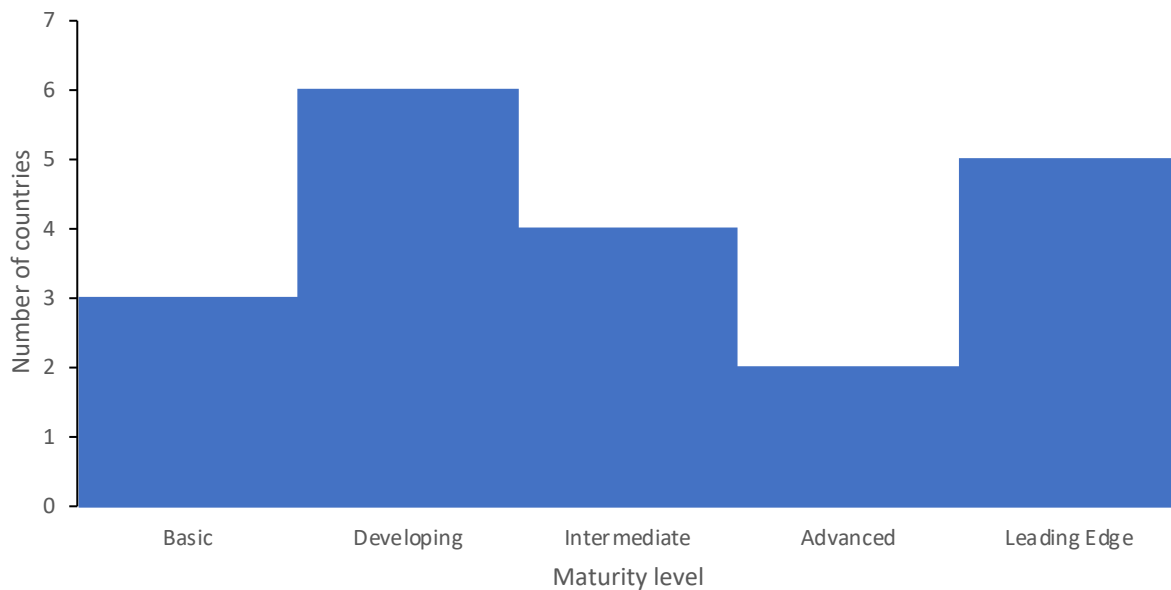


Figure 6: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 6

Most countries, 6(30%) have “Developing” maturity level for indicator 6, followed by “Leading Edge” (Figure 6). Afghanistan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia have the highest maturity level (Leading Edge) for Indicator 6.

There is a defined process for the MOH to officially request recommendations from the NITAG in 18(90%) countries. Only Djibouti and Palestine do not have such a process. In 18(90%) countries, on ad-hoc basis, NITAG is involved in reviewing or recommending any implementation, programmatic, or research activities. This is not the case in Djibouti and Qatar. In 65% of countries, NITAG is not involved in setting the policy agenda and in 35% of countries NITAG does not make evidence-based programmatic recommendations (Table 6).

Table 6: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 6

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Government consideration and solicitation	There is a defined process for the MOH to officially request recommendations from the NITAG. Process includes mutually agreed-upon timetable for NITAG response	18	90%
	NITAG monitors the recommendations accepted by the MOH & When MOH does not accept a NITAG recommendation, a clear explanation for its refusal is provided in writing to the NITAG chair	12	60%
	If warranted by MOH's explanation for not accepting NITAG recommendations, NITAG improves process for identifying new policy questions & NITAG considers topics suggested by the NITAG but not specifically requested by MOH, through mutually agreed upon process	8	40%
	There is no defined process for the MOH to officially request recommendations from the NITAG	2	10%
Implementation	NITAG is involved in ad hoc basis in reviewing or recommending any implementation, programmatic, or research activities	18	90%
	NITAG requests reports or presentations on implementation efforts and vaccine coverage so members can understand if their recommendation is successful or if further considerations are necessary	14	70%
	If appropriate, NITAG makes evidence-based programmatic recommendations (e.g., regarding logistics, delivery, access, vaccine hesitancy, etc.)	13	65%
	NITAG is involved in setting the policy agenda, i.e., recommendations for research and development (R&D), recommendation for filling gaps in programmatic implementation)	7	35%
	NITAG is not involved in reviewing or recommending any implementation, programmatic, or research activities.	2	10%

## Indicator 7: Stakeholder Recognition

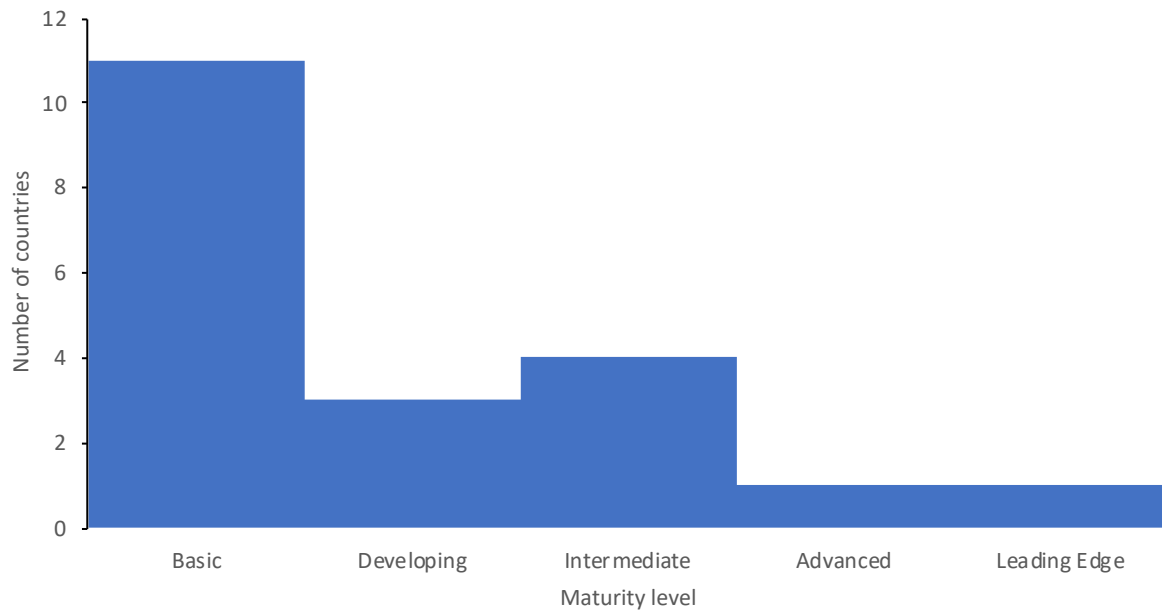


Figure 7: Number of countries per maturity level for indicator 7

Most countries, 11(55%) had a “Basic” maturity level for indicator 7, followed by “Intermediate” (Figure 7). Tunisia has the highest maturity level (Leading Edge) for Indicator 7

Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG’s role and activities in 18(90%) of countries except in Djibouti and Yemen. NITAG members from Iran, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia are co-authors and authors in peer-reviewed journals. In 55% of countries, NITAG member names are not publicly available. The NITAG chair is not allowed to be interviewed in public media in 30% of countries (Table 7).

Table 7: Proportion of countries that met each performance level by category for indicator 7

Criteria	Categories	# countries that met each category	%
Relationship with Stakeholders	Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG's role and activities	18	90%
	Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG's role and activities and can easily access the NITAG's recommendations	11	55%
	NITAG members exchange information and collaborate with relevant partners based on partner expertise and focus	10	50%
	In countries where multiple health authorities issue vaccine recommendations, NITAG's recommendations are recognized as the standard of care; grossly conflicting recommendations are not issued by other authorities & NITAG accepts input from the public, including organizations that are not represented among non-core members.	9	45%
	Stakeholders and partners in the community are not aware of the NITAG	2	10%
Public Recognition	NITAG chair is allowed to be interviewed in public media in his/her capacity of NITAG chair	14	70%
	NITAG member names are not publicly available	11	55%
	NITAG member names are publicly available	9	45%
	Members are co-authors or acknowledged in publications (peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed) of recommendations stemming from NITAG work	5	25%
	Members are authors on peer-reviewed publications for research or recommendations stemming from NITAG work	5	25%

## 4.2 Regional Synthesis

The highest proportion of countries have basic maturity level of 16(80%) for indicator 2, 14(70%) for indicator 4 and 11(55%) for indicator 7. Indicator 6 has the highest proportion of countries 5(25%) with leading edge maturity level. The highest proportion of countries, 13(65%) with developing maturity level is in indicator 5 while we have 9(45%) countries as maximum for indicator 1 (Figure 8).

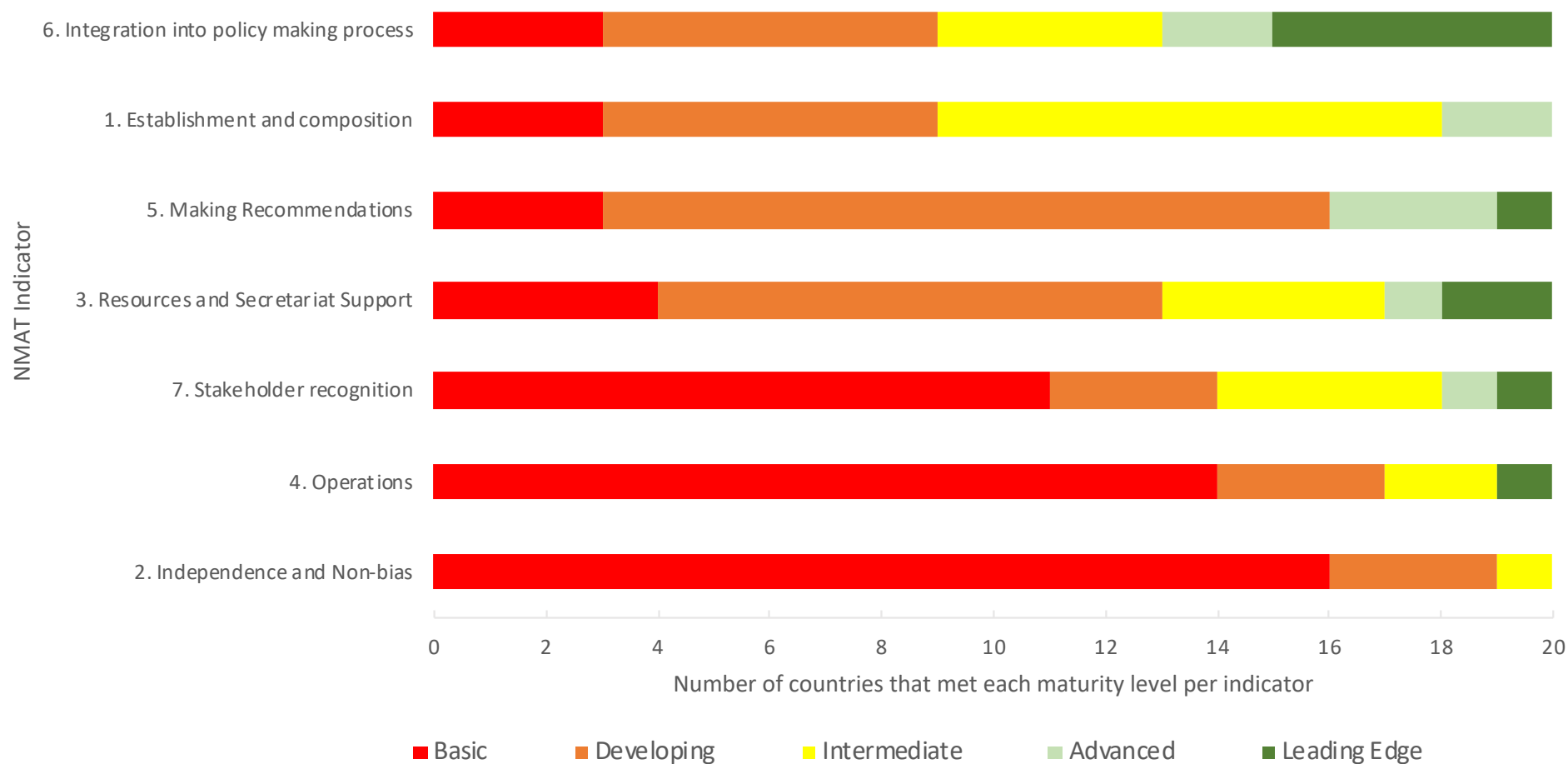


Figure 8: Number of countries per maturity level per indicator

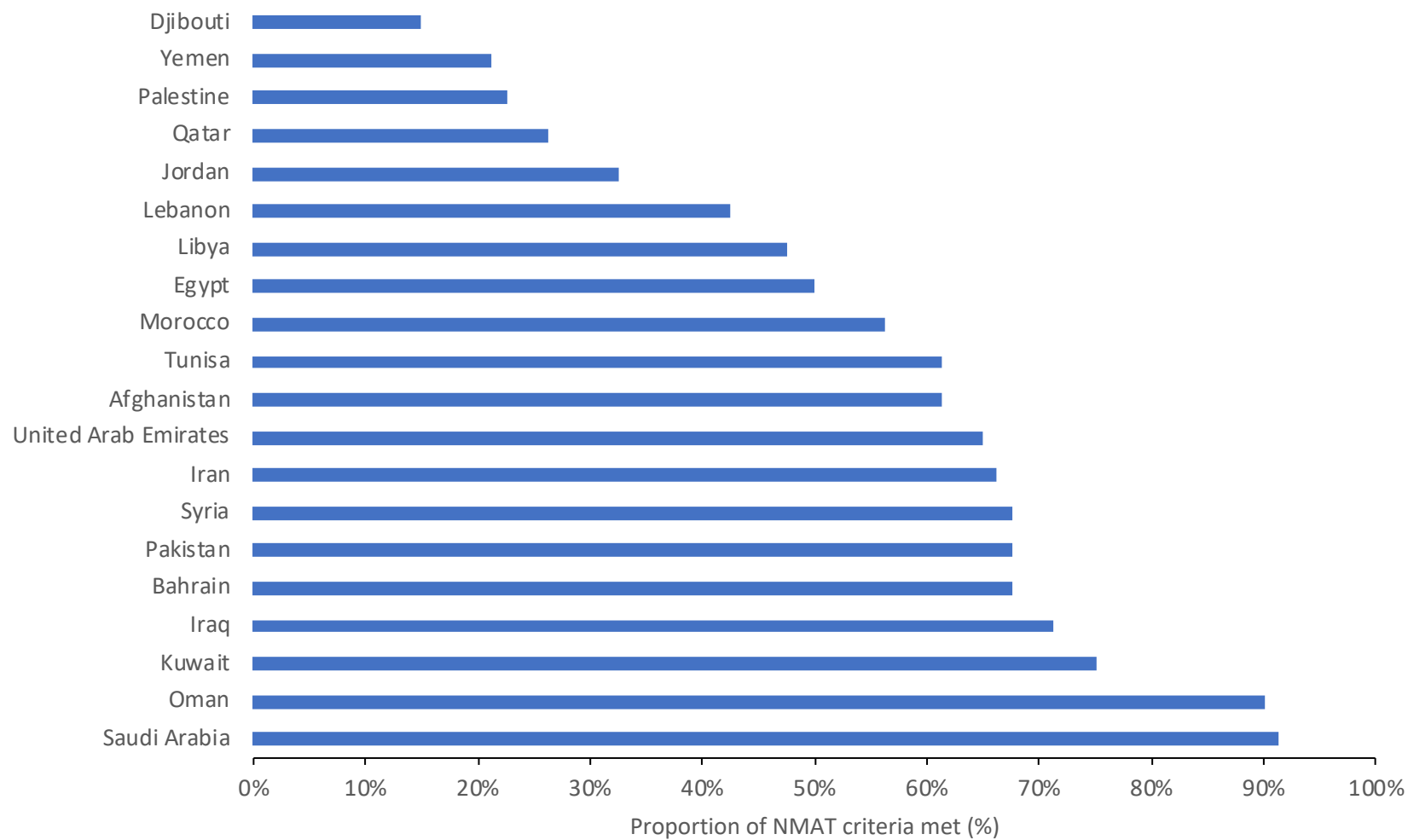


Figure 9: Overall criteria score by country

Saudi Arabia and Oman scored highest with 91% and 90%% respectively of criteria met while Djibouti was least with 15% (Figure 9).

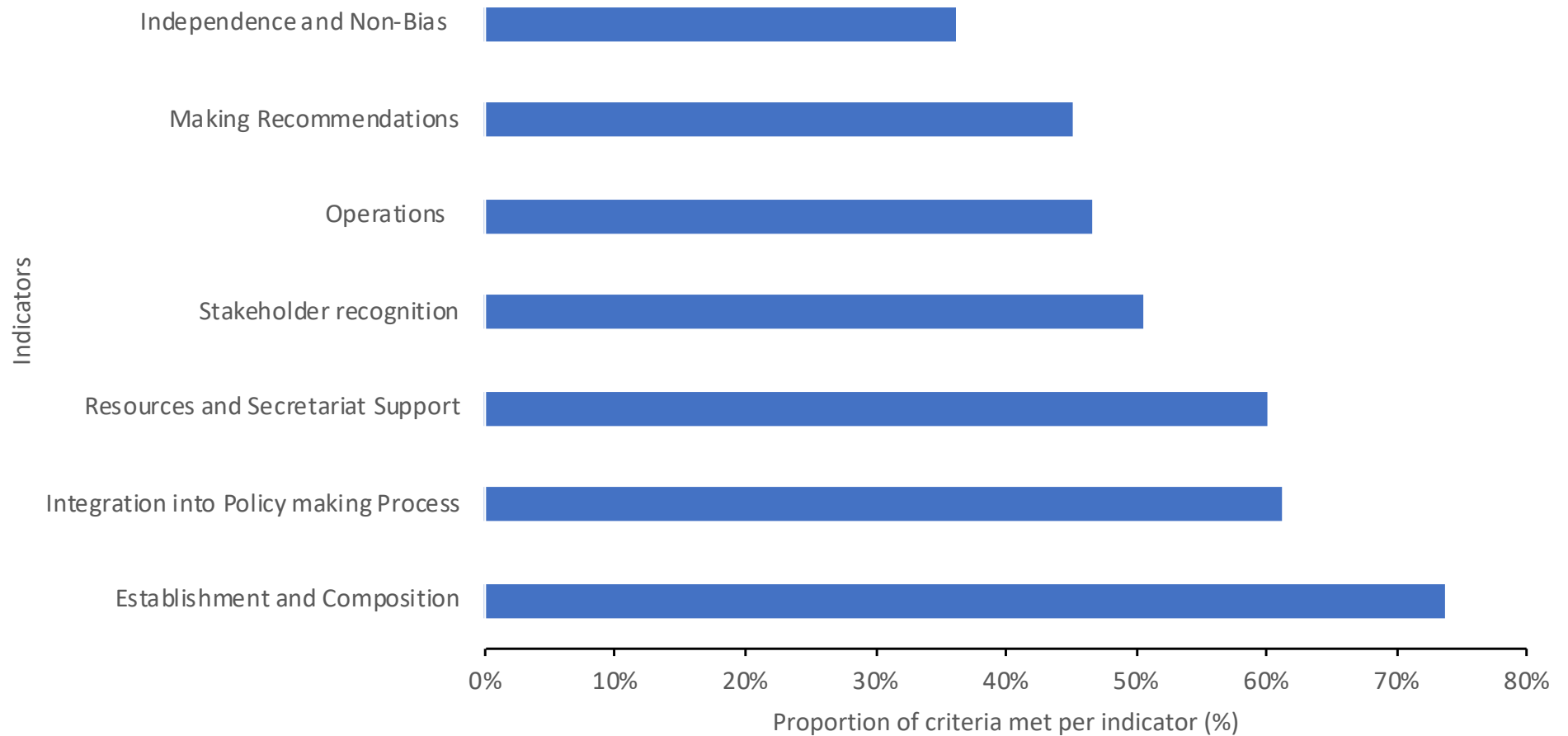


Figure 10: Overall EMR performance by indicator

The overall scores of percent criteria met per indicator and in decreasing order are 74%, 61%, 60%, 51%, 47%, 45% and 36% for indicators 1, 6, 3, 7, 4, 5 and 2 respectively (Figure 10).

## 4.3 Institutional Improvement Plan Synthesis

Table 8 presents a summary of frequently occurring activities in the country improvement plans per indicator:

*Table 8: Frequently occurring activities in country plans*

Indicators	Planned activities
Indicator 1	Review and update NITAGs ToR
Indicator 2	Develop a policy to manage conflict of interest for all NITAG members
Indicator 3	Advocate for more funding from MoH for basic NITAGs operations and activities
	Increase the number of skilled secretariat staff supporting NITAGs
Indicator 4	Use NMAT every 2 years to evaluate NITAGs
	Review and update NITAG SOP
Indicator 5	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR
	Develop and SOP for ETR and use the EtR process for decision making
Indicator 6	Monitor NITAG status of implementation of recommendations made to MoH for action
	Engage in open dialogue with MoH on recommendations not integrated into policy
Indicator 7	Publish NITAG recommendations and any other relevant output of public interest
	Enhance public recognition of NITAG members

## 5. Country Specific Challenges and Strengths

Countries	Challenges	Strengths
Afghanistan	<p>High turnover of technical expertise, Financial dependency, Unavailability of standard tools to regularly assess NITAG Unavailability of revised and updated guidelines and SOPs The secretariat does not have multiple skill staff</p>	<p>NITAG is independent Availability of expertise Political commitment Technical support provided by partners</p>
Bahrain	<p>No special funding Limited staff to support secretariat Limited involvement in research and development</p>	<p>Many years of experience – created in 2009 Multiple expertise throughout the life course and holds several meetings each year Has made several recommendations, most of which have been adopted by the Ministry of Health</p>
Djibouti	<p>Non-voting members not well represented Limited funding for NITAG administrative and logistics NITAG sop not updated No system in place to motivate NITAG core members</p>	<p>Presence of secretarial support Existence of forms to declare and manage interest NITAG holds regular meetings and is involved in decision making NITAG is officially established with SOPs and ToR</p>
Egypt	<p>NITAG ToR and SOPs yet to be updated No policy to manage conflict of interest Limited funding for NITAG activities Lack of public awareness of NITAG NITAG had not been evaluated in the past – no evaluation tools Absence of a standard process and tools to brief /train new members</p>	<p>NITAG has several areas of expertise NITAG is a GNN member NITAG meetings more than once a year and makes evidence-based recommendations Strong immunization programme</p>
Iran	<p>There is no open competition for membership Absence of a system to evaluate NITAG performance No SOPs There are budget limitations to provide evidence There is no formal EtR process No organized network to collaborate and share information with stakeholders</p>	<p>NITAG has several areas of expertise NITAG has written ToR NITAG holds regular meetings with open discussions and voting authority DOI and confidentiality are mandatory Funding is available for NITAG activities and operations NITAG has access to documents, information, and data</p>
Iraq	<p>Scarcity of domestic funding for NITAG operations and activities and country instability Additional expertise needed, such as health economists, communication experts, social scientists, and anthropologists. No specific website for the NITAG and limited communication between Iraq NITAG, RITAG and GNN Most NITAG meetings are held on need and members do not always participate in immunization department activities NITAG has never benefited from an evaluation using a standard tool. Most of the NITAG members have not participated in a formal training.</p>	<p>Long standing NITAG established in 2002 with committed core and non-core members NITAG is independent and has strong secretariat support There is strong coordination and stakeholder support Has expertise throughout the life course ToR and SOP spells out nomination, rotation, and termination of membership</p>

Countries	Challenges	Strengths
Jordan	ToR not updated No NITAG SOPs Absence of a budget for NITAG basic operations and activities Absence of a feedback and follow up mechanism on NITAG recommendations and advise to MoH	Historically strong NITAG with much expertise throughout the life course EPI Team acts as secretariat NITAGs is consulted in different aspects of the EPI NITAG holds several meetings a year (routine and ad-hoc)
Kuwait	Absence of a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest Limited public awareness of NITAG recommendations	Experienced long-standing, first established in 1972. Has clear ToR, diversity of expertise and experience needed for sound evidence-based decisions. Recommendations are communicated to relevant stakeholders with a clear implementation strategy
Lebanon	Limited financial support No policy to manage or prevent conflict of interest. Gaps regarding ToR and SOPs	Good collaboration between NITAG, MoH and partners Wide areas of expertise represented in NITAG with strong representation from scientific societies and academic institutions Good coordination with EPI and other departments of the MoH
Libya	Completely new membership	Long standing NITAG Many recommendations made with several vaccines introduced by MoH Motivated, new membership
Morocco	Training gaps Limited secretariat support Gaps on where to find and how to use evidence Need to restructure NITAG	Strong and good collaboration with MoH Has issued several recommendations implemented by MoH Interest of members to master EtR process
Oman	Absence of a system to evaluate member performance No policy on termination of membership Absence of written SOPs Limited public awareness of NITAG members (names and documents)	Independent and headed by a non-MoH staff Has clear ToR with several expertise throughout the life course and holds regular meetings Regularly participates in the activities of MoH Most of the recommendations of NITAG have been adopted by MoH
Palestine	No regular sustainable funding for basic operational needs Lack of evidence and research at national level Lack of documentations and follow up of recommendations Lack of standardized tools and evidence for decision making	NITAG is independent and has several expertise throughout the life course Members are highly committed and dedicated and have access to data
Pakistan	NITAG does not use a formal EtR process Limited funding and secretariat not very versed with roles and responsibilities Unfamiliar with the use of tools to assess quality of evidence	Newly re-constituted NITAG Pakistan where all provinces and federating areas are well represented Has many areas of experience with members that have extensive experience in research

Countries	Challenges	Strengths
Qatar	No rotation of members ToR and SOPs are not updated No policy to manage interests and prevent conflict No secretariat support and inadequate external support No grading or analysis of evidence	Longstanding NITAG since 2010 with ToR, SOP and expertise from more than 5 areas Holds regular meetings, including ad hoc meetings Meeting minutes well archived Funding is available if needed
Saudi Arabia	NITAG documentation is not publicly available NITAG currently does not have a uniform method to assess the quality of evidence for all topics The names of NITAG members are not available to the public	Longstanding NITAG established in 1990 Has several core and non-core members throughout the life course with mandatory DOI for all Funding for operations and activities is secured ToR and SOPs are routinely reviewed Meets four times a year Recommendations and meeting minutes submitted to designated policymakers and systematically archived. Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG's role and activities
Syria	Lack of government funding for NITAG basic operations and activities Poor communication with the SAGE and reliance on personal efforts to obtain information	Has a diversity of expertise across life course and holds routine and ad-hoc meetings Committee is independent and collaborates well with secretariat Periodic update of the task of the committee and its members
Tunisia	No SOP Absence of specific funding for NITAG basic operations and activities Limited secretarial capacity Absence of a policy to manage interest	Has a wide range of expertise Strong stakeholder involvement and integration of recommendation into policy
UAE	Inconsistent access to local data for immunization effectiveness analysis The need to train existing and new NITAG members regarding evidence-based recommendation process and the use of EtR framework	Has a ToR, variety of expertise across life course and uses an evidence-based recommendation framework NITAG makes programmatic recommendations. NITAG works collaboratively with the EPI (Expanded Programme on Immunization) and Higher National Immunization Committee in MOHAP. MOHAP provides the necessary resources for NITAG functioning
Yemen	Existence of a longstanding NITAG in the North, meanwhile that for the South is not officially designated and members are yet to be nominated	Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) and partners recognize the critical role of NITAGs

## 6. Conclusion

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NITAG members and secretariat from all 22 countries in EMR were trained on how to use the NMAT to assess their NITAGs and develop an improvement plan to ensure continuous development. A total of twenty countries conducted the assessment and shared their report, out of which nineteen also developed an improvement plan. The maturity level for most of the seven indicators is basic, developing or intermediate. The least performing indicator was Indicator 2 (independence and bias) while the best performing indicator was indicator 1 (establishment and composition). A third of the countries had overall criteria score of less than 50%.

## 7. Follow Up Actions

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### 7.1 NITAGs and Secretariat:

- Countries should plan to use NMAT for a follow up evaluation in 2 years (June 2025)
- Implement activities in work plan, monitor implementation and share implementation status with regional office every 6 months
- Express interest to conduct NITAG external assessment indicating when
- Express interest to attend EtR and roles and responsibilities workshop

### 7.2 WHO Regional Office:

- Organize a webinar (virtual) with all NITAGs on some topics of interest following assessment outcome. Examples include
  - Prevention and management of conflict of interest (Q1, 2024)
  - Introduction to EtR (Q2, 2024)
  - NITAG ToR and SOP (Q3, 2024)
  - Reporting of NITAG indicators in Joint Reporting Form (Q4, 2024)
- Organize targeted workshops to build capacity of NITAGs and secretariat on their roles and responsibilities and EtR process (Q1, 2024)
- Organize NITAG twinning encounters
- Monitor country work plan implementation and provide feedback twice a year

## 9. Annexes

### 1. Agenda for Capacity building for NITAGs and their secretariat on the use of NITAG Maturity Assessment Tool (NMAT) for self-assessment

#### Day 1 Virtual Meeting

Time	Activity	Presenter
13:00 - 13:05	Opening Remarks	EMRO
13:05 -13:30	Introduction of participants and facilitators 1. Objectives of meeting	EMRO
13:30 – 14:00	2. Overview: Why and how to conduct an assessment	CDC/TFGH
14:00 – 14:55	3. Overview and walk-through of the NMAT tool	CDC/TFGH
<b>14:55 – 15:05</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>All</b>
15:05 – 15:10	4. Collecting and reviewing data: Data Collection Tool	CDC/TFGH
15:10 – 15:35	What data do you need to gather when you prepare to use the NMAT? <i>Breakout rooms by country</i>	CDC/TFGH
15:35 – 15:50	Questions and Answers	All
15:50 – 15:55	Homework: country participants indicator review using the Electronic NMAT tool	CDC/TFGH
15:55 – 16:00	Wrap-up Day 1	EMRO

#### Day 2 Virtual Meeting

Time	Activity	Presenter
13:00 – 13:45	Debriefing of homework	CDC/TFGH
13:45 – 14:20	1. Documenting assessment results and developing workplan	CDC/TFGH
14:20 – 14:40	Open discussion on key challenges with completing NMAT in your country	CDC/TFGH
<b>14:40 – 14:50</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	<b>All</b>
14.50 – 15.40	How to handle questions and issues you may encounter about NMAT. <i>5 Breakout rooms</i>	CDC/TFGH
15.40 – 15.50	Training evaluation	NISH
15.50 – 16.00	Meeting Action points and Wrap-up Day 2	EMRO

## 2. Post Workshop Evaluation Survey

A total of 34 responses were received for both trainings. The participants generally found the training to be valuable, well organized, and professional.

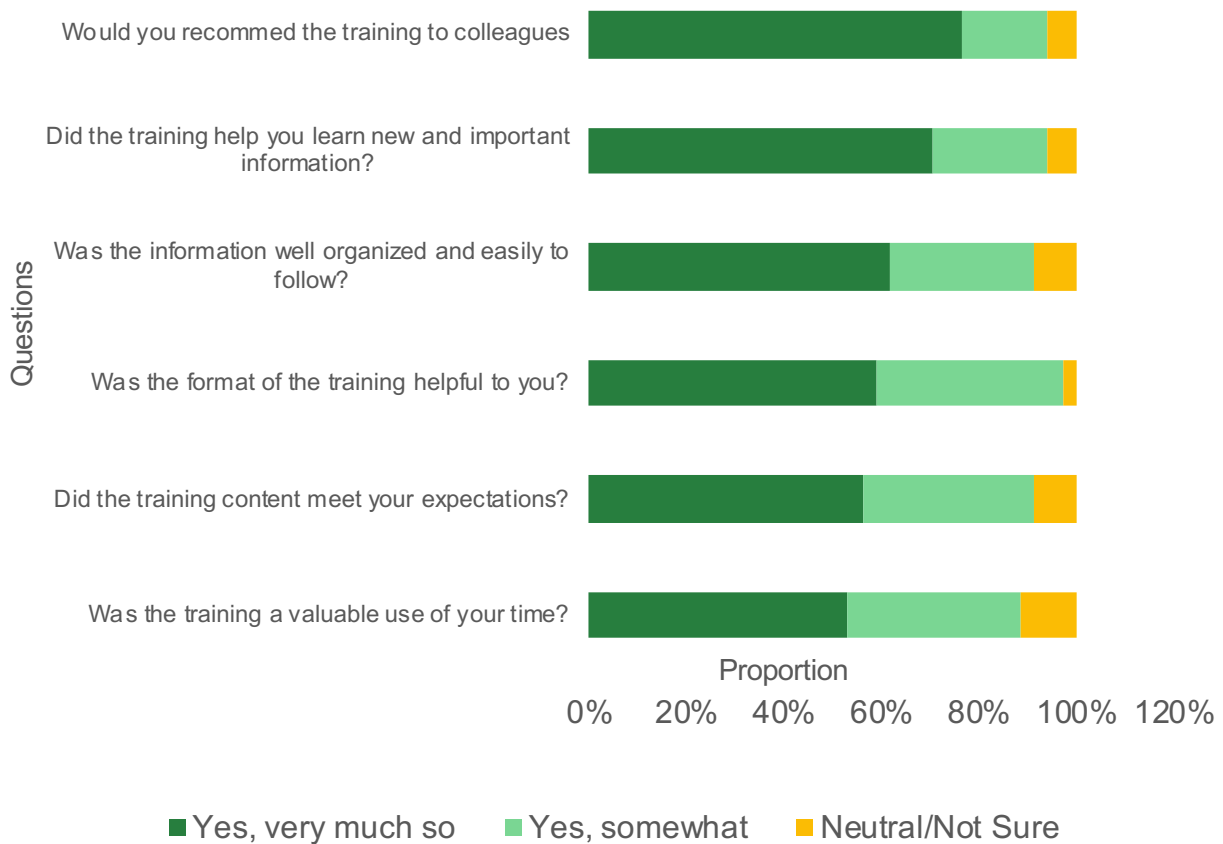


Figure 11: Closed ended questions asked to participants

In terms of what the respondents liked most about the training, they mentioned group activities, practical aspect of going through the tool, interactive sessions using jamboard and opportunities for discussions. One respondent said, “Instructors and facilitators are taking their time to ensure all questions are answered and the information is delivered in a very clear way”. The following suggestions were made to improve the training: more time to be allocated for the training, materials should be shared in advance with participants especially with French speakers, present with French slides and translate materials in French, more time to be allocated to the breakout group discussions and invite a NITAG that has used the tool to share their experience.

About the tool itself, respondents said it was easy to use, easy to understand, good evaluation and follow-up tool, clear, concise and useful, interesting, user-friendly, very practical. In all, 94% of participants were satisfied with the training (Figure 12).

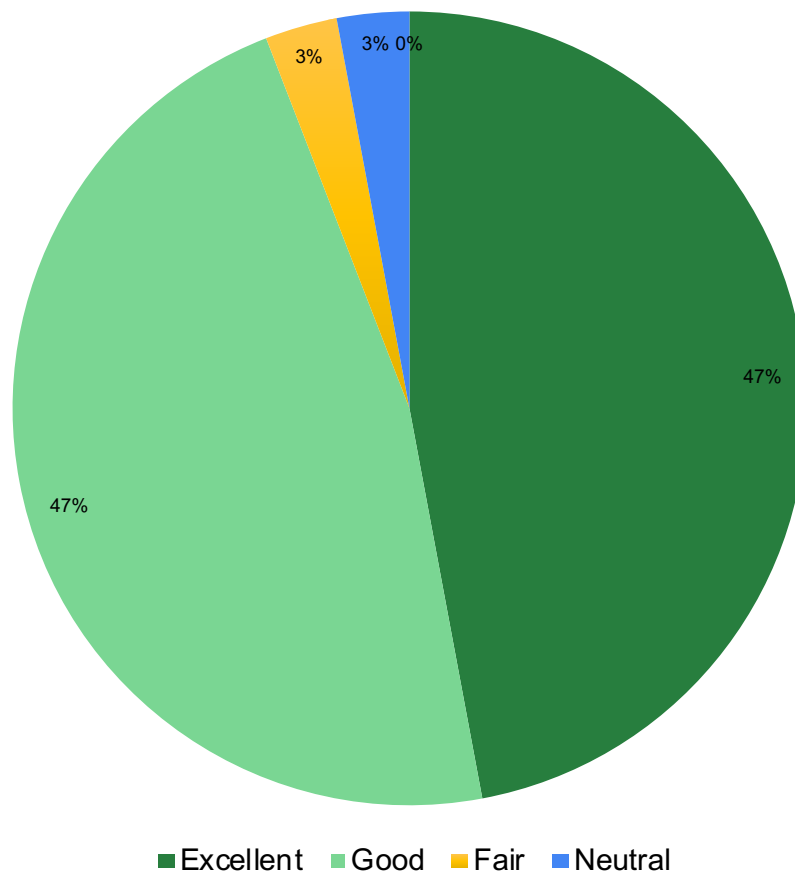


Figure 12: Overall satisfaction rating

### 3. Post Assessment Follow Up Session Debriefing Plan

Dates	16 May 2023	23 May 2023	30-31 May 2023	21 June 2023
Countries	Pakistan, Sudan	Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Afghanistan, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Somalia, Syria, Yemen	Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Tunisia
Meeting format	Virtual	Virtual	Virtual	Face-to-face in Amman, Jordan
Presenter	NITAG chair or member or secretariat			

## 4. Country Specific Indicator Tables

### Indicator 1: Establishment and Composition

Table 9: Maturity level for Indicator 1 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 10: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 1

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Official Status	No official measures or documents have established the NITAG.	Official measures or documents have established the NITAG.	Intermediate will automatically fill if you select Developing.	Advanced will automatically fill if you select Developing.	Leading Edge will automatically fill if you select Developing.
	Country names	None	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen
2	Terms of Reference	NITAG lacks written <b>Terms of Reference (TORs)</b> .	NITAG has written TORs including a <b>mandate</b> defining scope of work.	TORs address NITAG structure and are shared with members whenever updated. All members aware of TORs.	TORs are reviewed and updated regularly.	TORs are reviewed at least every 3 years and updated as needed.
	Country names	Palestine	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria
3	Diversity of Expertise	Fewer than five areas of expertise represented among NITAG members.	At least five areas of <b>expertise</b> represented among NITAG members.	Intermediate will automatically fill if you select Developing.	Members' areas of expertise span life course. NITAG has access to additional areas of expertise.	There is a redundancy of experts among members so that the minimum areas of expertise are still represented when absences occur.
	Country names	Djibouti	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE
4	Membership	There are no practices or processes in place regarding core member voting authority, recruitment, or term limits.	<b>Core members</b> have voting authority, while <b>non-core members</b> do not.	Core membership terms are limited and staggered.	There is <b>open competition</b> for membership spots.	There is a policy process for <b>terminating membership</b> prior to completion of membership term.
	Country names	Morocco, Palestine	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Bahrain, Djibouti, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia	Afghanistan, Djibouti, Oman, Syria	Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, UAE

**Indicator 2: Independence and Non-Bias**

Table 11: Maturity level for Indicator 2 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 12: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 2

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Disclosure and conflict of interest process	<b>Declaration of Interests (DOI)</b> is not mandatory for core members.	DOI is mandatory for core members upon appointment.	DOI is mandatory for secretariat and working group members. DOIs are routinely updated.  NITAG follows a formal, written Conflict of Interest (COI) policy with definitions of types of COI.	<b>Conflict of Interest (COI)</b> policy describes process(es) for assessing and managing COIs.	"DOI is mandatory for non-core members, upon appointment and when a change arises.  DOI is mandatory for core members before every meeting."
Country names		Djibouti, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria
2	Transparency	NITAG documentation is not <b>publicly available</b> .	TORs and standard operating procedures are publicly available.	Agendas, <b>meeting summaries</b> , and records of decisions are publicly available.	"Technical reports and position papers are publicly available.  NITAG actively disseminates all publicly available materials (e.g., website, a journal, or bulletin)."	Observation of meetings by non-members is permitted upon request or on a scheduled basis, or meetings are broadcast publicly.
Country names		Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen	Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Tunisia	Egypt, Syria	Pakistan, Oman	Pakistan
3	Independence from primary workplace of members	There is no <b>policy</b> in place to ensure members do not promote their primary employer's priorities, views, and/or products.	A policy is in place to ensure members do not promote their primary employer's priorities, views, and/or products.	<i>Intermediate will automatically fill if you select Developing.</i>	<i>Advanced will automatically fill if you select Developing.</i>	<i>Leading Edge will automatically fill if you select Developing.</i>
Country names		Djibouti, Libya, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria

**Indicator 3: Resources and Secretariat Support**

Table 13: Maturity level for Indicator 3 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 14: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 3

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Secured Funding	There is no funding to cover <b>basic operational costs</b> .	There is funding to cover basic operational costs.	A <b>guarantee of funding</b> from the government covers basic operational costs.	Guaranteed funding is robust.	There is access to funding that can cover travel expenses for national and international NITAG strengthening activities (regional or global NITAG meetings, collaborations, training).
Country names		Iraq, Jordan, Palestine	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen	Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE	Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE
2	Access to Relevant Data and Other Necessary Tools	NITAG has inconsistent access to regional and global <b>information</b> ; no access to local information.	NITAG has adequate access to regional and global information.	NITAG has consistent and comprehensive access to global and regional information, as well as adequate access to local information.	NITAG has consistent and comprehensive access to reliable local, regional, and global information.	NITAG has access to <b>raw data</b> or can request specific analyses of the data presented.
Country names		None	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Morocco, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia	Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia
3	Access to External Technical Expertise and Capacity-building Tools	NITAG does not solicit or accept input from external experts.	NITAG solicits or accepts input from external experts.	NITAG routinely gets input from <b>external experts</b> .	As appropriate, NITAG formalizes relationships with external experts through non-core membership.	Leading Edge will automatically fill if you select Advanced.
Country names		None	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Djibouti, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE
4	Secretariat Support	There is no officially appointed <b>Secretariat</b> to support the NITAG.	Secretariat provides active administrative support.	Secretariat provides basic technical support.	Secretariat or designated support services are able to conduct and/or outsource advanced analyses.	Secretariat has multiple full-time staff members with a mix of skill sets.
Country names		None	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria	Pakistan, Oman, Saudi Arabia

**Indicator 4: Operations**

Table 15: Maturity level for Indicator 4 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 16: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 4

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Meeting logistics	NITAG meets less than once a year.	NITAG meets about once a year. <b>Agenda and background documents</b> are circulated at least one week before meetings.	NITAG meets more than once a year, and as needed beyond regular schedule.  NITAG members are invited to suggest agenda items for secretariat review.	Background documents are comprehensive.	Leading Edge will automatically fill if you select Advanced.
	Country names	Djibouti, Yemen	Afghanistan, Egypt	Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE
2	Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)	<b>Standard operating procedures (SOPs)</b> are not formalized.	SOPs are formalized in an official NITAG document.	SOPs include or refer to COI policy.	SOPs include recommendations and tools for orienting and educating members.  Orientation includes review of SOP.	SOPs are regularly reviewed, updated as needed, and updates are promptly circulated to all members.  SOPs include the process to make a recommendation in an emergency situation.
	Country names	Djibouti, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Tunisia, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE	Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria
3	Evaluation	There is no system for <b>evaluating</b> the NITAG.	NITAG is evaluated, but without a regular schedule or standardized tool.	NITAG has been evaluated at least once using a standardized tool.	NITAG is regularly evaluated using a standardized tool.	There is a process in place to monitor the implementation of evaluation recommendations.
	Country names	Afghanistan, Djibouti, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Syria, Yemen	Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Bahrain, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia	Saudi Arabia	Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia

**Indicator 5: Making Recommendations**

Table 17: Maturity level for Indicator 5 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 18: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 5

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Decision-making process	NITAG does not define or follow a standard set of elements as the <b>basis for decision-making for a recommendation</b> or use a formal structure for quality assessment of evidence.	NITAG defines and follows a limited set of elements as the <b>basis for decision-making</b> for a recommendation.	NITAG uses a formal structure for reviewing evidence and making recommendations, for example, <b>SAGE EtR framework</b> which can include graded evidence or systematic reviews from other groups.	Advanced will automatically fill if you select Intermediate.	NITAG uses tools to assess quality of evidence such as GRADE, CASP, SIGN, etc.
Country names		Djibouti, Palestine, Qatar	Afghanistan, Egypt, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen	Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE	Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Oman,
2	Documentation and Communication	Recommendation documentation does not meet any of the criteria listed.	Recommendations are registered in meeting minutes.	Recommendations follow a consistent format and refer to peer-reviewed published material and local evidence or contextual information.  Recommendations are also documented separately from minutes and systematically <b>archived</b> .	Recommendations are submitted to designated policymakers in the form of a policy brief conforming to country practices.	For recommendations that are not adopted, there is process for NITAG Chair (or designee) to discuss recommendations with policy decision makers.
Country names		Djibouti	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen, UAE	Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE

**Indicator 6: Integration into Policymaking Process**

Table 19: Maturity level for Indicator 6 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 20: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 6

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Government consideration and solicitation	There is no defined process for the MOH to officially request recommendations from the NITAG.	There is a defined process for the MOH to officially request recommendations from the NITAG. Process includes mutually agreed-upon timetable for NITAG response.	NITAG monitors the recommendations accepted by the MOH.  When MOH does not accept a NITAG recommendation, a clear explanation for its refusal is provided in writing to the NITAG chair.	If warranted by MOH's explanation for not accepting NITAG recommendations, NITAG improves process for identifying new policy questions.  NITAG considers topics suggested by the NITAG but not specifically requested by MOH, through mutually agreed upon process.	Leading Edge will automatically fill if you select Advanced.
Country names		Djibouti, Palestine	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia
2	Implementation	NITAG is not involved in reviewing or recommending any implementation, programmatic, or research activities.	NITAG is involved in ad hoc basis in reviewing or recommending any implementation, programmatic, or research activities.	NITAG requests reports or presentations on implementation efforts and vaccine coverage so members can understand if their recommendation is successful or if further considerations are necessary.	If appropriate, NITAG makes evidence-based programmatic recommendations (e.g. regarding logistics, delivery, access, vaccine hesitancy, etc.)	NITAG is involved in setting the policy agenda; i.e., recommendations for R&D, recommendation for filling gaps in programmatic implementation).
Country names		Qatar Djibouti	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE

**Indicator 7: Stakeholder Recognition**

Table 21: Maturity level for Indicator 7 by country

Countries	Maturity level				
	Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
Afghanistan					
Bahrain					
Djibouti					
Egypt					
Iran					
Iraq					
Jordan					
Kuwait					
Lebanon					
Libya					
Morocco					
Oman					
Pakistan					
Palestine					
Qatar					
Saudi Arabia					
Syria					
Tunisia					
United Arab Emirates					
Yemen					

NB: Green indicates maturity level achieved by each country for the given indicator

Table 22: Listing of countries by criteria met for Indicator 7

		Basic	Developing	Intermediate	Advanced	Leading Edge
1	Relationship with Stakeholders	Stakeholders and partners in the community are not aware of the NITAG.	Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG's role and activities.	Members of the scientific and professional community are aware of the NITAG's role and activities and can easily access the NITAG's recommendations.	In countries where multiple health authorities issue vaccine recommendations, NITAG's recommendations are recognized as the standard of care; grossly conflicting recommendations are not issued by other authorities.  NITAG accepts input from the public, including organizations that are not represented among non-core members.	NITAG members exchange information and collaborate with relevant partners based on partner expertise and focus.
	Country names	Djibouti, Yemen	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia	Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia
2	Public Recognition	NITAG member names are not publicly available.	NITAG member names are publicly available.	NITAG chair is allowed to be interviewed in public media in his/her capacity of NITAG chair.	Members are co-authors or acknowledged in publications (peer-reviewed or non-peer-reviewed) of recommendations stemming from NITAG work.	Members are authors on peer-reviewed publications for research or recommendations stemming from NITAG work.
	Country names	Bahrain, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Yemen	Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Tunisia, UAE	Afghanistan, Bahrain, Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Morocco, Palestine, Pakistan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, UAE	Iran, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia	Iran, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia

## 5. Country NITAG Strengthening Work Plan

Below we present the detailed workplan of 19 countries

Afghanistan				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Developing	Revise NITAG ToR	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
		Increase the number of NITAG core numbers	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Introduce mandatory DOI for secretariat	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
		Commence DOI by all before each meeting and routinely update DOI	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
		Update and disseminate NITAG SOP	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate with government to provide basic operational cost for NITAG activities	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
		Identify external experts and solicit inputs on NITAG work as need arises	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
		Increase the number of skilled secretariat staff supporting NITAG	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
Indicator 4	Basic	Use NMAT every 2 years to evaluate NITAG	EPI Manager & NITAG Chair	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR	EMRO	Jun-24
		Use EtR process for decision making	NITAG Chair	Jul-24
Indicator 6	Leading Edge	Follow up with Ministry of Health to ensure NITAG recommendations are integrated in policy or review as appropriate	NITAG Chair	Dec-24
Indicator 7	Developing	Organize a 1-day sensitization meeting targeting the scientific and professional community on the role and activities of NITAG	NITAG Chair	Dec-24
		Prepare a manuscript on the work of NITAG and publish in a scientific journal	NITAG Chair	Dec-24

<b>Bahrain</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Present maturity level</b>	<b>Planned activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Update NITAG SOP clearly stating membership termination policy	NITAG Chair	Jan-24
Indicator 2	Basic	Publish/disseminate NITAG recommendations	NITAG chair & Secretariat	Dec-24
Indicator 3	Developing	Increase number of skilled staff supporting NITAG secretariat	NITAG Chair	Jan-24
Indicator 4	Intermediate	Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG chair & Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Develop an SOP for Evidence to Recommendation (EtR), as an annex to the NITAG SOP	NITAG chair & Secretariat	Mar-24
		Build capacity of NITAG members on the EtR SOP	NITAG Chair	Jun-24
Indicator 6	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	NITAG chair & Secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Sensitize public on NITAG recommendations or any other immunization topics of public interest through the media	NITAG Chair	Continuous

Djibouti				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Basic	Update NITAG ToR	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
		Update NITAG membership by including members with other areas of expertise	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
		Improve NITAG operations in terms of meeting frequency, agenda, documentation, reports, recording and distribution process	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to manage conflict of interest for all NITAG members	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
		Implement measures to ensure that members do not promote the priorities, views and/or products of their principal employer	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Basic	Advocate for funding from MoH for basic NITAG operations and activities	NITAG Chair & Sec	Feb-24
		Advocate to MoH to set up and implement a motivation mechanism for core members	NITAG Chair & Sec	Feb-24
		Request for external expertise during NITAG operations whenever the need arises	NITAG Chair & Sec	Feb-24
		Strengthen secretariat to provide active administrative and technical support	NITAG Chair & Sec	Feb-24
Indicator 4	Basic	Organize at least 2 NITAG meetings each year	NITAG Chair & Sec	continuous
		Update NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair & Sec	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Basic	Develop an SOP for EtR, as an annex to the NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Sec	Jun-24
		Build capacity of NITAG members on the EtR SOP and use routinely	NITAG Chair & Sec	Jul-24
		Improve the process for examining and sharing evidence and research results (SAGE, EtR Framework, MedRA, PubMed, etc.)	NITAG Chair & Sec	continuous
		Involve other sectors of the country's health system pyramid in NITAG processes	NITAG Chair & Sec	continuous
Indicator 6	Basic	Organize twinning of Djibouti NITAG with any other as relevant	EMRO	Mar-24
		Attend NISH Training in Cape Town, South Africa	EMRO	Jul-24
		Enhance capacity of secretariat to search and use data for informed decision making	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23
Indicator 7	Basic	Set up a system to collaborate with other experts and national scientific committees (professional associations, etc.)	NITAG Chair & Sec	continuous
		Communicate NITAG members officially	NITAG Chair & Sec	Dec-23

Sec = Secretariat

Egypt				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Developing	Update NITAG ToR	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Mar-24
		Brief all new NITAG members on the updated ToR	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jun-24
Indicator 2	Developing	Develop a policy to manage conflict of interest for all NITAG members	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jun-24
		Institute mandatory Declaration of interest for all NITAG core members before each meeting	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jul-24
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate for more funding from MoH for basic NITAG operations and activities	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-24
Indicator 4	Developing	Update NITAG SOPs	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Mar-24
		Brief all new NITAG members on the updated SOPs	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jun-24
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Debrief NITAG members on EtR process	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Aug-23
Indicator 6	Developing	Follow up with Ministry of Health to ensure NITAG recommendations are integrated in policy or review as appropriate	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	continuous
Indicator 7	Developing	Disseminate NITAG recommendations	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-25

Iran				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Review and update NITAG ToR	Secretariat	Sep-23
		Consider initiating a mechanism for open competition for membership	Secretariat	Dec-24
Indicator 2	Basic	Obtain permission from senior officials to publish NITAG meetings summaries and decisions on MOH and CDC websites	Secretariat	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Intermediate	Advocate for additional funding to support NITAG evidence generation	Secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 4	Basic	Develop NITAG SOPs	Secretariat	Aug-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Develop SOP to conduct EtR	Secretariat	Jan-24
		Brief NITAG members on the use of the SOP	Secretariat	Mar-24
Indicator 6	Advanced	Hold meetings with senior MoH officials to advocate for integration of NITAG recommendations into policy	Secretariat and NITAG Chair	Continuous
		Hold meetings with Iran FDA officials to advocate for integration of NITAG recommendations into policy	Secretariat and NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 7	Advanced	Develop a collaboration and information sharing framework with stakeholders	Secretariat	Sep-24

Iraq				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Review and update the ToR every 2 years	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
Indicator 2	Developing	Disseminate NITAG recommendations and other relevant information as appropriate	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
Indicator 3	Basic	Advocate for additional funding to support NITAG basic operations and activities	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
Indicator 4	Basic	Conduct an external evaluation of Iraq NITAG	NITAG Chair & secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of NITAG members on how to assess quality of evidence	EMRO	Jun-24
		Build capacity of NITAG members on EtR	EMRO	Jun-24
		Develop EtR SOP and use for decision making	NITAG Chair & secretariat	Jul-24
Indicator 6	Intermediate	Discuss agenda items proposed by NITAG members	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
		Hold meetings with policy makers of MoH to advocate for integration of NITAG recommendations into policy	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Enhance research from the work of NITAG	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continuous
		Create a website for NITAG members and activities	NITAG Chair & secretariat	Dec-24
		Create videos for NITAG chair and members to sensitize the public	NITAG Chair & secretariat	Dec-24

Kuwait				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Create an avenue to recruit members through open competition, prior to renewing the term for the committee	NITAG Chair	Dec-24
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest	MoH Legal Team	Dec-24
Indicator 3	Advanced	Explore the need to hire full time secretariat staff for the committee	Chair and vice chair	Dec-24
Indicator 4	Developing	Integrate COI management policy into the NITAG SOP	Secretariat	Dec-24
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Advanced	Review and agree on standardized tools to use for assessing the quality of the evidence	NITAG members	
Indicator 6	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat	continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Make publicly available the names of NITAG members	NITAG chair	Dec-24
		Publish NITAG recommendations and any other relevant output of public interest	NITAG chair & secretariat	Dec-24

<b>Lebanon</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Present maturity level</b>	<b>Planned activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Review, update and validate NITAG ToR	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Aug-23
		Brief all new NITAG members on the updated ToR	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Aug-23
		Disseminate NITAG recommendations to enhance visibility	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate for funding for basic NITAG operations and activities	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 4	Basic	Develop NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Aug-23
		Brief all new NITAG members on SOP	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Dec-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Share Policy briefs and educative video	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous
		Finalize EtR SOP and integrate as an annex to the NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Aug-23
		Brief NITAG members on the use of EtR	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Dec-23
		Use EtR process as per SOP to make evidence-base decisions	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 6	Developing	Conduct Epidemiology and Cost-Effectiveness studies as need arises	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous
		Engage in open dialogue with MoH on recommendations not integrated into policy	NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 7	Intermediate	Publish NITAG recommendations and any other relevant output of public interest	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Continuous

Libya				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Identify and nominate non-core members into NITAG membership	NITAG Chair, Director NCDC	May-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest for all members	NITAG Chair, Director NCDC	Aug-23
Indicator 3	Developing	Provide NITAG members and secretariat access to raw data and relevant local information	NITAG Chair, Director NCDC	Dec-23
		Build capacity of NITAG members on how to access relevant global information	Secretariat EMRO	Dec-23
Indicator 4	Basic	Develop NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Aug-23
		Brief all new NITAG members on SOP	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Dec-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair and secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of NITAG members on EtR process	secretariat and EMRO	Dec-24
Indicator 6	Developing	Monitor NITAG status of implementation of recommendations made to MoH for action	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 7	Intermediate	Publish NITAG recommendations and any other relevant output of public interest	NITAG Chair	Continuous
		Enhance public recognition of NITAG members	NITAG Chair, Director NCDC	Continuous

<b>Morocco</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Present maturity level</b>	<b>Planned activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Indicator 1	Basic	Plaidoyer pour la révision du texte de création du Comité sa composition	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-24
		Renforcer les équipes avec des experts en recherche et en éthique	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-24
Indicator 2	Basic	Renforcer les procédures de fonctionnement du Comité	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-24
		Formaliser la déclaration d'intérêt	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-24
Indicator 3	Developing	Plaidoyer pour l'obtention d'un budget de fonctionnement	Secrétariat / Président /MSPS	Continu
Indicator 4	Basic	Etablir un système d'évaluation du Comité sur la base des référentiel et des outils disponibles	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-24
		Utiliser le NMAT pour évaluer le NITAG tous les 2 ans	Secrétariat / Président	Juin 2025
Indicator 5	Developing	Établir pour les membres un plan de formation et de renforcement des capacités	Secrétariat / Président	Dec-23
		Renforcer le secrétariat dans la méthodologie d'évaluation de la littérature scientifique		Continu
Indicator 6	Developing	Définir un mécanisme de suivi de la mise en œuvre des recommandations avec identification d'un processus de feedback	Comité et MSPS	Dec-23
Indicator 7	Intermediate	Explorer les possibilités de partenariat et de jumelage	Comité/ Secrétariat	Jan-24

<b>Oman</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Present maturity level</b>	<b>Planned activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Indicator 1	Advanced	Update NITAG SOP with a policy on membership termination	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Jan-24
Indicator 2	Basic	Maintain present disposition	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 3	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 4	Developing	Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 6	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Publish the names of NITAG members on the website of MoH	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Jan-24

Palestine				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Basic	Review, update and validate NITAG ToR	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Aug-23
		Brief all new NITAG members on the updated ToR	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest for all members and integrate into the NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Aug-23
Indicator 3	Basic	Advocate and secure funds for NITAG basic operations and activities	MoH/WHO/Unicef	Dec-23
Indicator 4	Basic	Develop NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Aug-23
		Brief all new NITAG members on SOP	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Dec-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Basic	Debrief NITAG members on the EtR process	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Aug-23
		Finalize EtR process SOP	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Dec-23
		Brief NITAG members on the EtR SOP	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Jan-24
Indicator 6	Basic	Involve NITAGs in making evidence-based programmatic recommendations (e.g. regarding logistics, delivery, access, vaccine hesitancy, etc.)	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Share NITAG ToR with other scientific committees and professional	NITAG Chair/secretariat/MoH	Continuous

Pakistan				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Review and update NITAG ToR every 3 years	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jul-05
		Create NITAG Working groups as needed using expertise from within and outside NITAG	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	continuous
Indicator 2	Intermediate	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest for all members after consultation with Pakistan relevant Ministry and integrate into the NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate with MoH for funding for basic NITAG operations and activities	Director Technical FDI	continuous
		Increase the number of skilled secretariat staff supporting NITAG	Director Technical FDI	Dec-23
Indicator 4	Basic	Update NITAG SOP yearly and brief members on any changes	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	annual
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR process	EMRO	Jun-24
		Develop an SOP for EtR process and integrate into NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jul-25
Indicator 6	Intermediate	Monitor implementation status of all recommendations made to the MoH	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	continuous
		Set up a system to review and address any concerns regarding recommendations not integrated into policy by MoH	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jan-24
Indicator 7	Intermediate	Publish NITAG recommendations and any other relevant output of public interest	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	continuous

Qatar				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Developing	Update the NITAG TOR to include NITAG structure, and rotation of members	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest for all members and integrate into the NITAG SOP	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Dec-23
		Develop a policy to ensure that NITAG members do not promote the interests of their primary employer	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Developing	Establish an independent secretariat for NITAG committee	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Jun-24
		Formalize external support through non-core membership	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Jun-24
		Strengthen communication with SAGE	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Continuous
		Obtain access to regional and local data and incorporate this into decision making process	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Continuous
Indicator 4	Basic	Review and update NITAG SOP	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Dec-23
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Basic	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR process	EMRO	Jun-24
		Develop an SOP for EtR process and integrate into NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jul-25
Indicator 6	Basic	Monitor implementation status of all recommendations made to the MoH	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Continuous
		Set up a system to review and address any concerns regarding recommendations not integrated into policy by MoH	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jan-24
		Review some key implementation, programmatic and research activities related to immunization	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Improve awareness of the role of NITAG amongst in key stakeholders and public	EPI, NITAG Chair & MoH	Continuous

<b>Saudi Arabia</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Present maturity level</b>	<b>Planned activities</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Maintain present disposition	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	continuous
Indicator 2	Basic	Establish an official NITAG web page on the website of Public Health Authority	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	continuous
Indicator 4	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	continuous
Indicator 5	Advanced	Define a system/method/tool to evaluate the quality of evidence	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Dec-23
Indicator 6	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	continuous
Indicator 7	Basic	Discuss possibility and process of publishing the names of NITAG members internally	Secretariat & NITAG Chair	Dec-23

Syria				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Advanced	Sensitize scientific and institutional bodies on the committee and its tasks	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-24
		Update NITAG SOP to include guidance on membership termination	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-24
Indicator 2	Intermediate	Create a website for NITAG to publish updates, results, and activities	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-24
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate for government funds to basic NITAG operational cost and logistics	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 4	Basic	Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR process	EMRO	Jun-24
		Develop an SOP for EtR process and integrate into NITAG SOP	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Jul-25
Indicator 6	Developing	Conduct annual meetings with decision makers to review the performance of the committee and the recommendations	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Dec-23
		Monitor implementation status of all recommendations made to the MoH	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Continuous
Indicator 8	Basic	Increase awareness on NITAG through media interviews	NITAG Chair & Secretariat	Continuous
		Attend scientific seminars	NITAG members & secretariat	Continuous

Tunisia				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Intermediate	Conserver l'acquis lors du renouvellement des membres du CTV	MSP	Jan-24
		Réviser périodique de l'arrêté ministériel	MSP	Jan-24
Indicator 2	Developing	Elaborer une politique pour gerer les conflits d'interet	Secretariat et NITAG	Dec-23
Indicator 3	Intermediate	Allouer budget propre pour les activites de base du NITAG	Ministère de la santé	continu
		Renforcer secrétariat en ressource humaine pour appui le NITAG	Ministère de la santé	Dec-24
Indicator 4	Basic	Utiliser le NMAT pour faire l'evaluatuib des NUTAGs tous les 2 ans	Secretariat et NITAG	Juin 2025
		Rédiger les SOPs	Secretariat et NITAG	Dec-24
Indicator 5	Developing	Utiliser le cadre cadre "Evidence to recommendation" pour formuler les recommandations	Secretariat et NITAG	Continue
Indicator 6	Advanced	Sustain performance	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continu
Indicator 7	Leading Edge	Sustain performance	NITAG Chair & secretariat	continu

United Arab Emirates				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Developing	Review ToR every 3 years	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-25
Indicator 2	Basic	Introduce a policy to ensure members do not promote their primary employer's priorities, views, and/or products	NITAG/MOHAP	Jun-24
Indicator 3	Intermediate	Nominate another secretariat staff to provide support services to conduct and/or outsource advanced analyses.	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-23
		Develop a platform that permits all members to comprehensive access to NITAG documents and data. For example: - one drive	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-23
Indicator 4	Developing	Review and update NITAG SOP every 2 years	NITAG/MOHAP	Jun-25
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years		Jun-25
Indicator 5	Advanced	NITAG members to consider using evidence grading tools such as GRADE regarding policy questions that were not graded by other leading NITAGs	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-24
Indicator 6	Intermediate	Improve the process and strengthen the relevance between the MOHAP and policy recommendations from NITAG	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-24
Indicator 7	Developing	To consider having access to the public AND professional communities to NITAG recommendations	NITAG/MOHAP	Dec-24

Yemen				
Indicator	Present maturity level	Planned activities	Responsible	Timeline
Indicator 1	Developing	Officially create a NITAG in South Yemen, designating members and chair	NITAG/MoPHP	Sep-23
		Develop ToR for Yemen South	NITAG/MoPHP	Dec-23
Indicator 2	Basic	Develop a policy to prevent and manage conflict of interest for all members and integrate into the NITAG SOP	NITAG/MoPHP	Jun-24
Indicator 3	Developing	Advocate with MoH for funding for basic NITAG operations and activities	NITAG/MoPHP	Continuous
Indicator 4	Developing	Develop NITAG SOP	NITAG/MoPHP	Jun-24
		Brief all new NITAG members on SOP	NITAG/MoPHP	Aug-24
		Use NMAT to evaluate NITAG every 2 years	NITAG/MoPHP	Jun-25
Indicator 5	Developing	Build capacity of all NITAG members on EtR process	EMRO	Jun-24
		Develop an SOP for EtR process and integrate into NITAG SOP	NITAG/MoPHP	Jul-25
Indicator 6	Developing	Monitor implementation status of all recommendations made to the MoH	NITAG/MoPHP	Continuous
		Set up a system to review and address any concerns regarding recommendations not integrated into policy by MoH	NITAG/MoPHP	Continuous
		review some key implementation, programmatic and research activities related to immunization	NITAG/MoPHP	Continuous
Indicator 8	Basic	Provide NITAGs' members info/CV at official sites of MoPHP	NITAG/MoPHP	Dec-24

**Report prepared by:**

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