



Ethiopian NITAG Status

13 November 2017

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

NITAG definition (according to WHO)

National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) are national advisory committees made up of experts, in charge of guiding health authorities and leaders of national immunization programmes in the definition and implementation of national immunization policies and strategies.

Three essential points:

- **NITAG composition:** independent national experts who sit in the committee on their own capacity, not representing entities
- **NITAG mandate:** advisory committee, meaning that final decisions are made by national authorities
- **NITAG scope of action:** covers all issues relating to vaccination concerning all populations

E-NITAG: basic facts

Appointment	The Ethiopia NITAG was officially appointed in May 2016	Orientation workshop was held to members about their roles and responsibilities.
Purpose	The NITAG is established to give advice concerning the National Immunization Policy and provide scientific evidence-based recommendations to the Federal Ministry of Health.	
Meeting frequency	Every three months	Extraordinary meeting possible if the need arise
Training	Core team provided training on evidence based decision making and systematic review process	

Orientation Workshop for NITAG Members

**16-18 May 2016
Bishoftu, Ethiopia**



Members of Ethiopian NITAG

Name	Role	Qualification
Prof. Yemane Berhane	Chair	Epidemiologist
Prof. Telahun Teka	Vice-Chair	Pediatrician and Infectious Disease, Nutrition & Vaccine specialist
Prof. Amha Mekasha	member	Pediatrician/Infectious disease and Vaccinology specialist
Prof. Bogale Worku	member	New born and Child health specialist
Dr. Yirgu G/hiwot	member	Gynecologist and Obstetrician and clinical epidemiologist
Dr. Liya Wassie	member	Immunologist
Dr. Belete Tafesse	Secretariat/FMoH/WHO	Physician/Vaccine Expert
Dr. Aschalew Teka	Liaison/WHO	Physician/Vaccine expert
Mr. Mulat Nigus	Secretariat/FMoH	EPI expert
Mrs. Nafkot Abadura	Secretariat/FMoH	EPI expert

Ex-officio representations	PFSA, FMHACA, EPHA, EPHI
Liaison	WHO, UNICEF, CDC, CHAI
Secretariat	EPI Unit, FMOH

Considering to include additional experts: health economists, pharmacologists, vaccine experts...

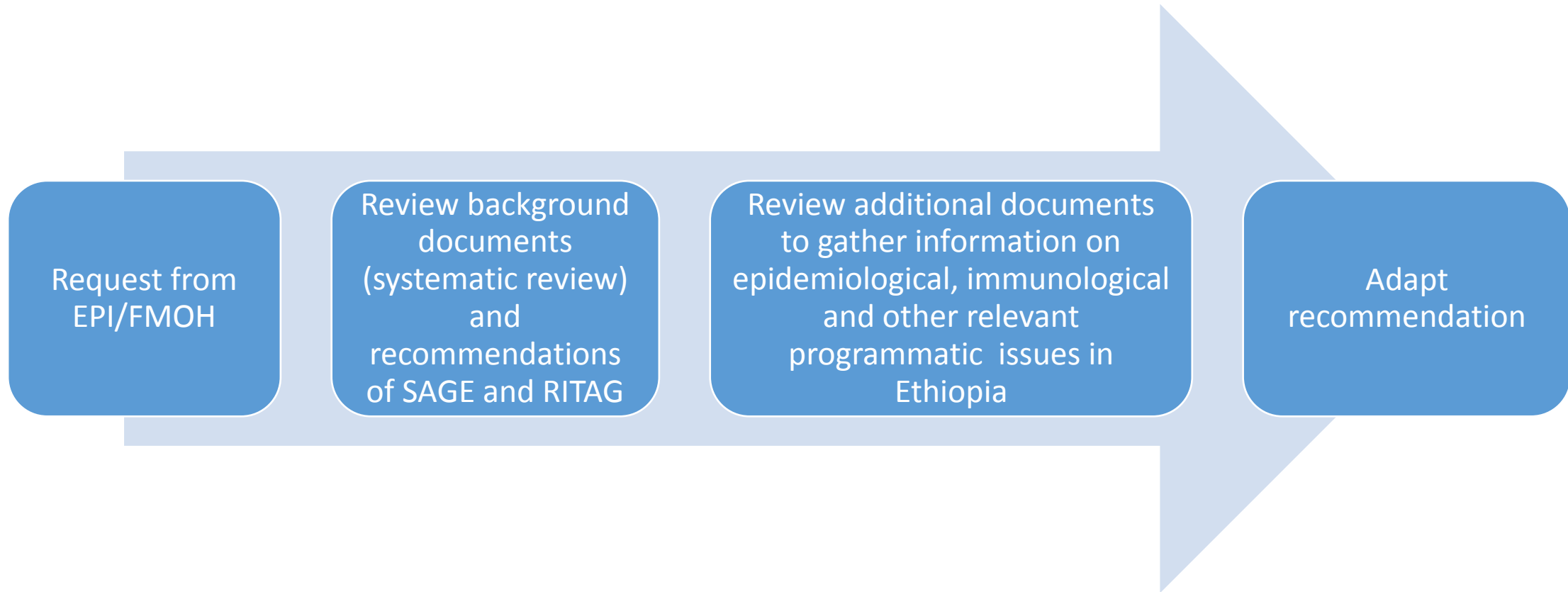
Major functions and responsibilities of the E-NITAG

- Conduct policy analysis and advise the FMOH on national immunization policy.
- Guide the government of Ethiopia and the national immunization programme (NIP) on the formulation of short and long-term strategies for the control of vaccine preventable diseases through immunization.
- Advise the national authorities in the monitoring and evaluation of the national immunization programme and provide recommendations on the continuation or modification of existing programmatic activities.
- Identify the need for further data for policy-making and advise the government in gathering relevant data.
- Provide the national authorities and the immunization programme on the latest scientific developments in the area of vaccines and vaccine-preventable diseases.

Meetings and accomplishments

Meeting	Date	Achievements
1 st	22 August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attended by His Excellency Dr. Kebede Worku, state Minister of Health. Declaration of formal establishment of E-NITAG• Elected Prof. Yemane Berhane as chair of E-NITAG
2 nd	22 September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved of the E-NITAG TOR, conflict of Interest and Confidentiality agreement• Elected Prof. Telahun Teka as Vice-Chair of E-NITAG• Set priority activities for E-NITAG
3 rd	22 December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed the comprehensive multiyear plan (cMYP) 2016-2020 of EPI• Mandated the vice chairperson of the E-NITAG to finalize the draft work plan in close consultation of the secretariat and circulate the document before next NITAG meeting.• Established procedures for accepting requests from the FMOH/EPI• Requested the Secretariat to establish an archive system for minutes and other documents (in and out) of the E-NITAG
4 th	05 January 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed the HPV 2017 national rollout application under GAVI new vaccine support and recommended the introduction of quadrivalent single dose HPV vaccine.
5 th	17 Aug 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed the hepatitis B birth dose initiation request.

E-NITAG Approaches



Note: new systematic review shall be done only when there is none or old or if ENITAG thinks the available systematic review is insufficient.

HPV Vaccine Introduction recommendations

Recommendation	Additional issues that need to be followed
<p>The E-NITAG recommends that the scientific justification for introduction of HPV vaccine is strong and most attributes of the quadrivalent single dose presentation out weigh that of the double dose bivalent presentation in terms of cost and vaccine wastage; hence the preferred vaccine for introduction. Strategies stated are appropriate, however, due emphasis needs to be given to strengthen program communication, disease and AEFI surveillance for the new vaccine. Independent program evaluators need to be engaged at least during the initial implementation years.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability: HPV is not cheap vaccine so the Government needs to consider sustainability, strengthening screening is very important.• Genotypes: recent studies in Ethiopia show that HPV 16 & 18 are responsible for only 40% of cases which may warrant using polyvalent vaccines which are yet to be developed.• Cold chain capacity: the program needs to clearly plan for additional cold chain requirement.• Choosing the routine cohort: suggestion given to consider targeting girls in grade 5 (11 years) than the younger 9 years girls (grade 3) for routine HPV vaccination.• AEFIs: Serious AEFIs have been reported in other countries and the country should strengthen AEFI surveillance and preferably should conduct independent post marketing monitoring.

Hepatitis B birth dose Introduction recommendations

Recommendation	Additional suggestions
<p>The E-NITAG recommended, considering value for money, to invest on enhancing skilled delivery attendance rather than investing on hepatitis birth dose until such time that institutional delivery rate becomes reasonably high.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invest on evidence generation for prevalence of HBsAg in the general population (and also for regional variations) and in pregnant women before such multiyear decisions.• Evidence is also needed to estimate for modelling available information estimating on the number of deaths and disabilities to be averted by the investment.• The decision doesn't need to be "all or none"; some physicians encounter HBsAg positive mothers. Look for options to avail the vaccine in selected health facilities to administer for exposed infants to prevent risk of perinatal transmission as part of comprehensive care.• If the country opts for introduction of the birth dose HBV vaccine, critically investigating the cold chain capacity is necessary, especially in the periphery.

Participation in International Meetings

Name of Participant	Meeting type	Meeting Place	Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof. Yemane Berhane, chairDr. Belete Tafesse, secretariat	SAGE meeting	Geneva, Switzerland	25-27 April 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof. Telahun Teka, Vice-Chair	R-TAG meeting	Brazzaville, Congo	06-08 June 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prof. Yemane Berhane, chair	Global NITAG Network (GNN) launching meeting	Berlin, Germany	28-29 June 2017

Status of ENITAG against the Six NITAG Functionality Indicators

Indicators	E-NITAG Status	Remarks
1) Composition of core members- at least five areas	Yes	Need to consider expanding expertise
2) Meeting frequency- at least one meeting in a year	Yes	Conducted four in the first year
3) Declaration of conflict of interest by core members	Yes	Signed and deposited at the secretariat, meeting chair would ask if addition COI issues arise after handing in the signed COI form
4) Agenda sent ahead of meeting with background document- at least a week prior to the meeting	Yes	
5) Existence of legislative basis	Yes	The Minister endorsed the TOR and sent appointment letter to core members
6) Presence of TOR	Yes	TOR approved

Way forward

- Increase the number and diversify professional mix of the core E-NITAG members.
- Get continued update on the NIP progress and gaps that need the attention of the NITAG
- Mobilize funding through the MoH for full functionality