

**EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP ON THE
STRATEGIC GROUP OF EXPERTS ON IMMUNIZATION (SAGE)
EVALUATION (EAGSE)**

Terms of Reference

Version 2 Mai 2018

The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on immunization (SAGE), WHO's principal advisory body on immunization, was evaluated ten years ago. Since then, the committee has made important progress and adaptations to its functions and processes. SAGE is now firmly established as the authoritative global advisory body in immunization and as a highly influential group among immunization stakeholders. SAGE members and the SAGE Secretariat share a desire for a new assessment aimed at ensuring that the SAGE is not only fit for purpose for today's challenges but also well-prepared to fulfil its mission into the next decade. This evaluation will be carried out during 2018/19 and has been launched during a retreat with participation of SAGE members, chairs of other WHO HQ immunization advisory committees, chairs of the Regional Immunization Advisory Groups and senior WHO staff. A consulting firm was contracted to support the SAGE Secretariat with this evaluation, under supervision of the Director of IVB.

Objective and scope of the SAGE evaluation

The evaluation will review the appropriateness of the present SAGE Terms of Reference, current working processes, including those of the SAGE Workgroups and roles and responsibilities across the three tiers of the SAGE-RITAG-NITAG model. It will also include a review of present approaches for dissemination of SAGE outputs (e.g. policies, recommendations and other information) as well as an assessment of the used communication tools. The assessment will also cover the utilization of SAGE outputs by the global immunization community, including country MOHs and NITAGs, WHO Regions and RITAGs, major partners (UNICEF, Gavi, CDC, others), donors and other stakeholders. SAGE's role and function will be assessed taking into account important developments within (e.g., Global Vaccine Action Plan) and beyond the immunization field (e.g., emphasis on Universal Health Coverage, Health Security, and the increasing importance of non-communicable diseases). Special emphasis will be placed on the role that SAGE should play in a likely future scenario where immunisation policies and services will be more integrated with other health services, and timely and authoritative guidance will be solicited at global, regional and country level.

Key objectives of the evaluation

- Assess current SAGE mission, scope and objectives, working mechanisms and dissemination processes in terms of their relevance, effectiveness and quality to assure that SAGE continues to provide high quality strategic advice in all areas of the evolving immunization and global health agenda.

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- Assess the relationship of SAGE with RITAGs and NITAGs and their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Review the role of SAGE as the key advisory body on WHO immunization policy and strategy development and the relationship with other WHO advisory bodies relevant to immunization.¹ The latter will be reviewed in terms of how their roles, functions, and alignment contribute or relate to SAGE objectives, and if interactions can be optimized.

Desired outputs of the evaluation

- To ascertain SAGE's role as overall normative and strategic advisory body for the evolving immunization and health agenda, addressing needs at a global, regional, and national level.
- To identify the optimal links with other WHO immunization and public health decision making and advisory bodies.
- To ensure optimal coordination with WHO regions and regional committees, as well as key partners and stakeholders.
- To ensure SAGE working mechanisms' effectiveness and ability to meet highest quality standards.
- To ensure effective presentation, communication and dissemination of SAGE and WHO recommendations in terms of format, presentation and reach.
- To ensure the format of plenary meetings and other interactions remains effective in terms of timing, frequency, duration, and content.
- To revisit the WHO SAGE Secretariat composition and resource needs.

EAGSE Objectives

The Expert Advisory Group on SAGE Evaluation (EAGSE) will be constituted to provide oversight to the evaluation process, the appraisal of findings and the development of recommendations. It is expected to provide substantial technical and scientific input and ongoing feedback throughout the evaluation process.

The EAGSE will specifically ensure the use of an appropriate evaluation methodology including the selection and adaptation of appropriate evaluation tools and will monitor the interaction of the evaluation team with identified stakeholders. The EAGSE will review summaries of evaluation results and of interim and final reports as well as the development of recommendations to ensure SAGE's continued fitness-for-purpose during next decade.

Constitution of the EAGSE

- The EAGSE will include members with a broad range of expertise including in public health, communications, policy making, vaccinology and evaluation. The EAGSE should include individuals with experience in NITAGs or RITAGs, CSOs, programme implementation from developing and developed countries
- EAGSE members will be selected by the secretariat and confirmed by Director IVB

¹ Product Development for Vaccines Advisory Committee (PDVAC); Expert Committee on Biological Standardization (ECBS); Immunization Practices Advisory Committee (IPAC); Programmatic Suitability of Prequalified Vaccines Standing Committee (PSPQ-SC); Immunization and Vaccine Related Implementation Research Advisory Committee (IVIR-AC); Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS).

- IAGE meetings will be planned and supported by WHO IVB and its consultants.
- An EAGSE chairperson will assist WHO IVB and its consultants to coordinate IEAG activities, provide strategic advice, and lead teleconferences and meetings.
- Observers may be considered by the WHO Secretariat as per the information needs evolving during the project.

IAG Terms of Reference

- Members are required to participate in EAGSE meetings. There will be two face-to-face meetings and a limited number of phone calls over the time period May 2018 to June 2019. There may be subgroups with additional tasks as needed.
- Members are expected to prepare for EAGSE meetings by reviewing pre-reads and perform other tasks assigned by the Chairperson.
- Members will input to and review the evaluation process and the interim and final evaluation reports.
- Members will maintain confidentiality, and sign confidentiality agreements. They may have access to certain information which WHO or its collaborators consider to be proprietary. Access to such information may be necessary for Members to perform their responsibilities in connection with the EAGSE. WHO will make such information available to the Members, provided that they undertake to treat the information as confidential and proprietary.
- Members will sign declarations to identify potential conflicts of interest related to the work of the EAGSE. It will be at the discretion of WHO IVB to assess these conflicts and to advise on their appropriate management.
- No honoraria will be paid for participation in the EAGSE. The costs incurred for the participation (travels, etc.) of EAGSE members to meetings will covered by WHO in line with WHO's travel policy.
- The EAGSE will sunset at the end of the evaluation period (scheduled for June 2019).

Reason for termination

- Members may be asked to terminate their participation by the EAGSE Chairperson, in consultation with the WHO, in case of newly emerging substantial conflicts of interest, high absenteeism, or other activities that adversely affect the Member's ability to provide timely and objective assistance to the advisory group.