

Evidence-based decision making on immunization

E-toolkit training module

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Purpose and audiences for this video

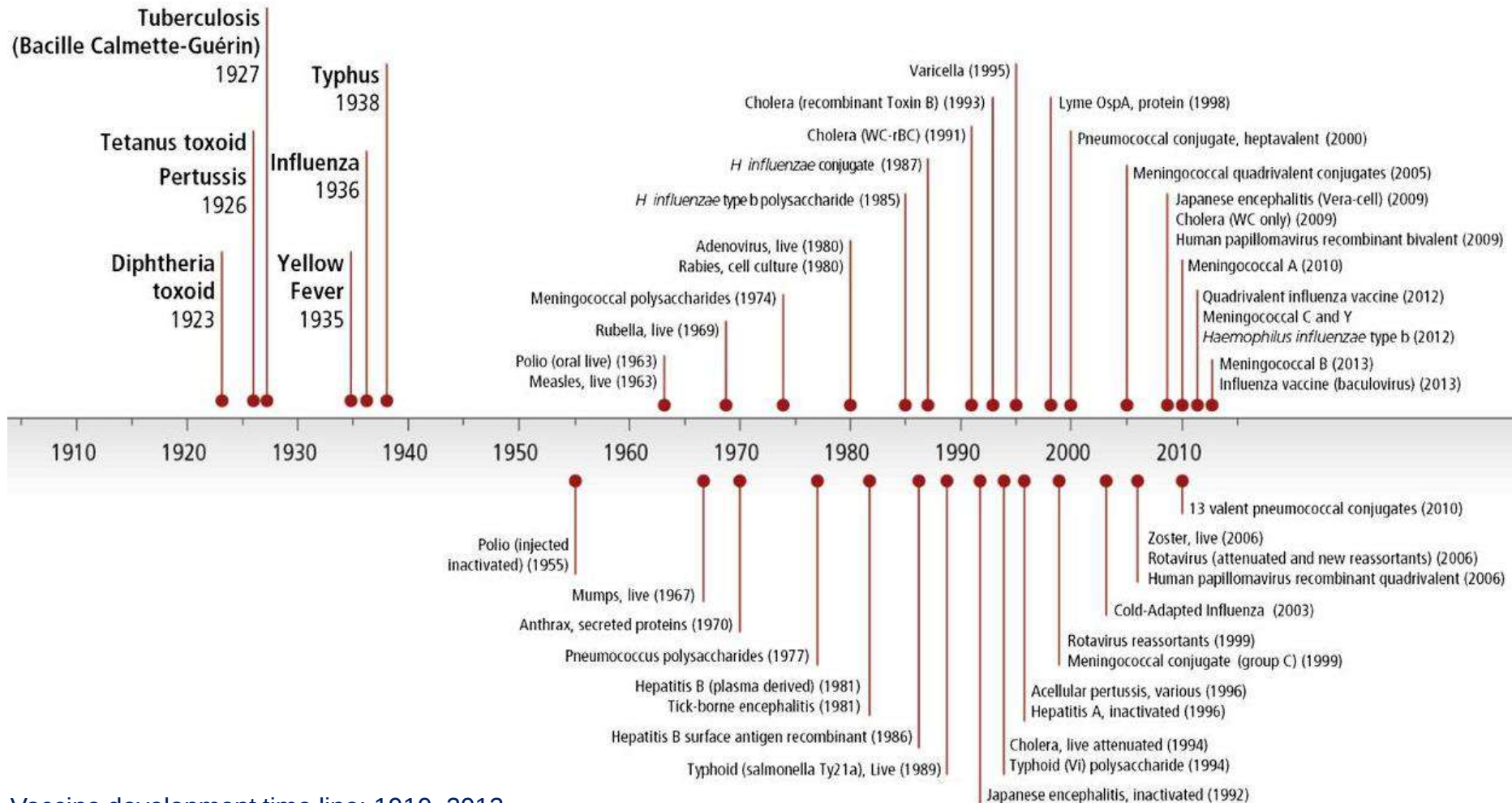
Purpose:

Present the criteria and structure for making evidence-based decisions around immunizations.

Audiences:

- Members of existing or prospective NITAGs looking to further understand how evidence-based decisions should be supported by a NITAG.
- National health policymakers who will receive recommendations from a NITAG to inform a future decision around immunization.
- Governmental, academic, or other stakeholders interested in better understanding how immunization policy decisions are supported by evidence and how NITAGs work.

Vaccine development has flourished...



Vaccine development time line: 1910–2013.

“The red book through the ages”, Pediatrics, 2013

...but budget increases become more and more challenging

- Governments' fund allocation cannot keep up with requests to introduce new vaccines.
- As new vaccines become more expensive, cost-effectiveness is not guaranteed
- Immunization decisions are more closely scrutinized

Global Vaccine Action Plan

2011–2020

Strategic objective

1

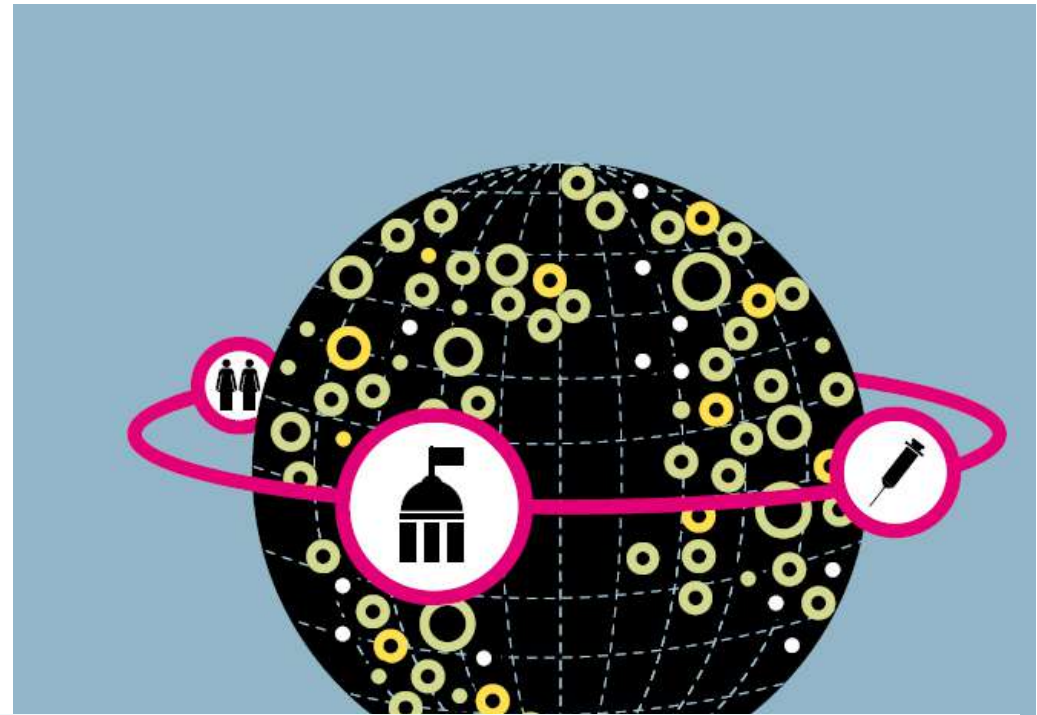
All countries commit to immunization as a priority.

Committing to immunization as a priority first and foremost means recognizing the importance of immunization as a critical public health intervention and the value that immunization represents in terms of health and economic returns. Countries demonstrate a commitment to immunization by setting ambitious but attainable national targets and allocating adequate financial and human

“National legislation, policies and resource allocation decisions should be informed by credible and current evidence regarding the direct and indirect impact of immunization”

vital health programmes.

National legislation, policies and resource allocation decisions should be informed by credible and current evidence regarding the direct and indirect impact of immunization. Much of the evidence base exists but does not reach policy-makers, as those who generate the evidence are not always those who interact with these decision-makers. Collaboration between, on the one hand, technical experts who generate the evidence and, on the other, the champions of immunization who construct context-specific messages that highlight the importance of immunization within health and social services, can unequivocally articulate the value of immunization and how immunization supports equity and economic development.



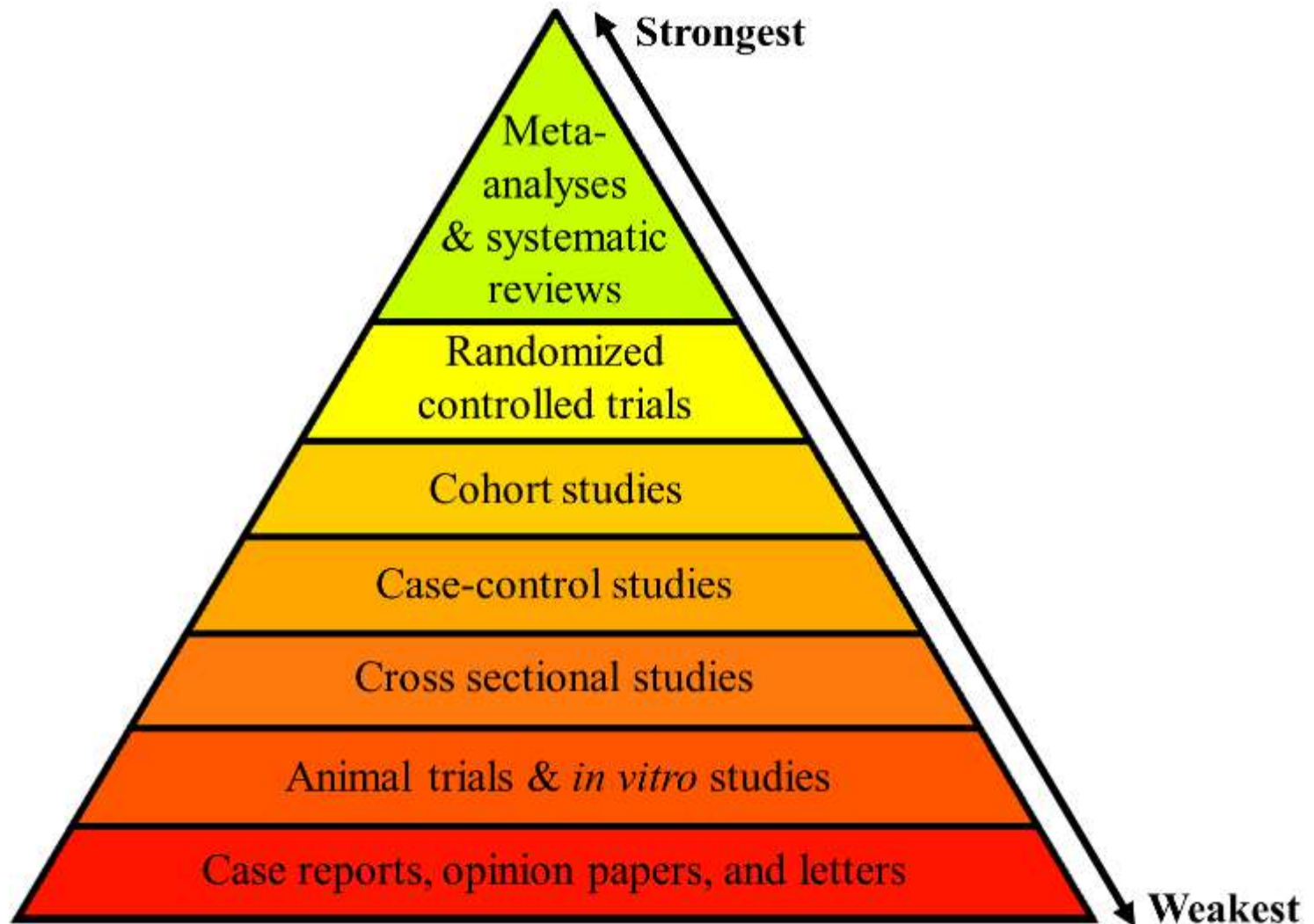
**All countries: Establish and sustain commitment to immunization;
Inform and engage opinion leaders on the value of immunization;
Strengthen national capacity to formulate evidence-based policies.**



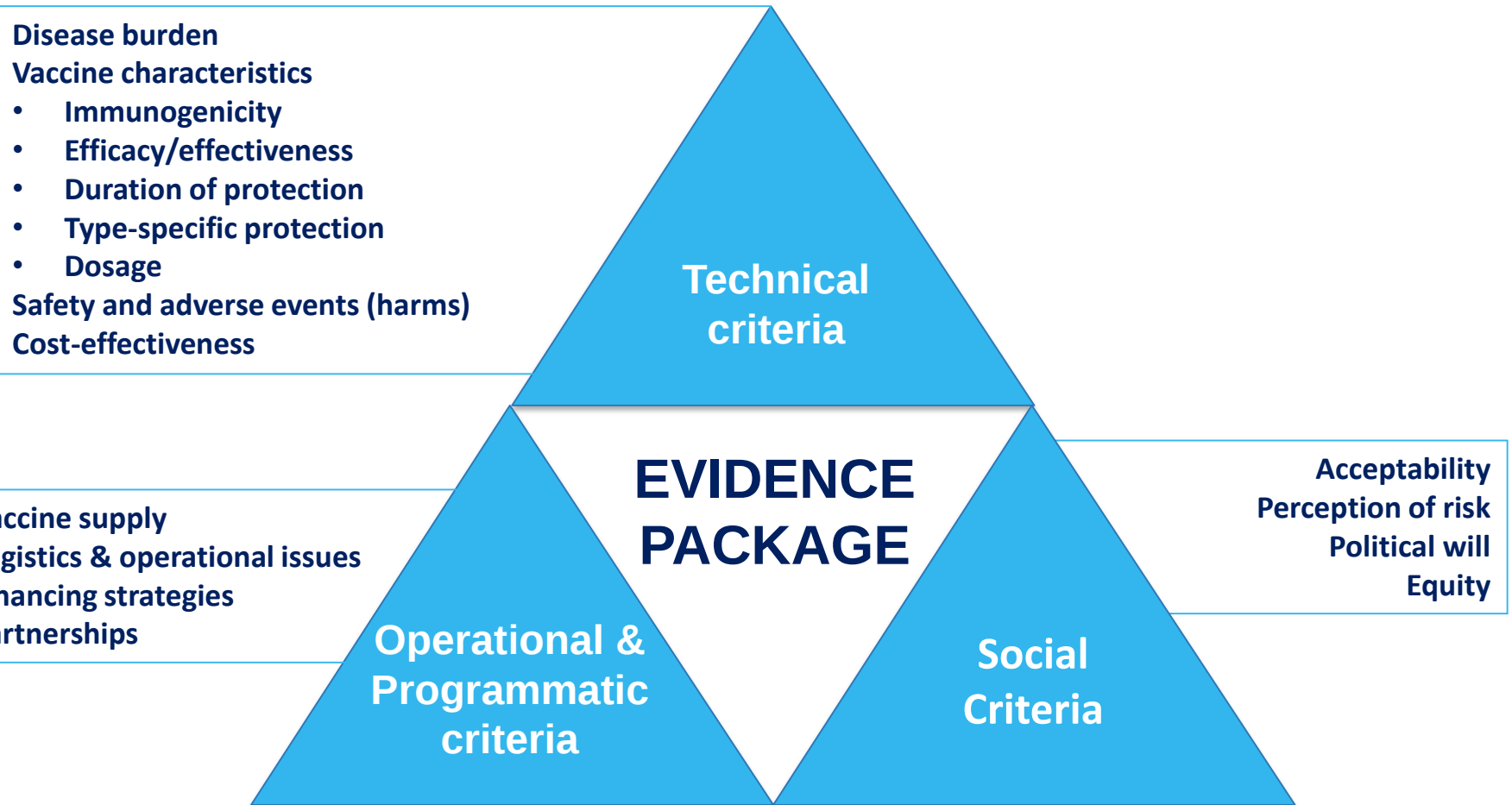
Steps of evidence-based decision making in public health

- Develop an initial statement of the issue
- Search the scientific literature and organize information
- Quantify the issue using existing data
- Develop and prioritize program options
- Implement the chosen interventions
- Evaluate the program or policy

Hierarchy of Scientific Evidence



Criteria for vaccine policymaking



Source: Andrus, JK., Toscano, CM., Lewis, M., Oliveira, L., et al. 2007, "A model for enhancing evidence-based capacity to make informed policy decisions on the introduction of new vaccines in the Americas: PAHO's ProVac Initiative", *Public Health Reports*, 122(6): 811-816.

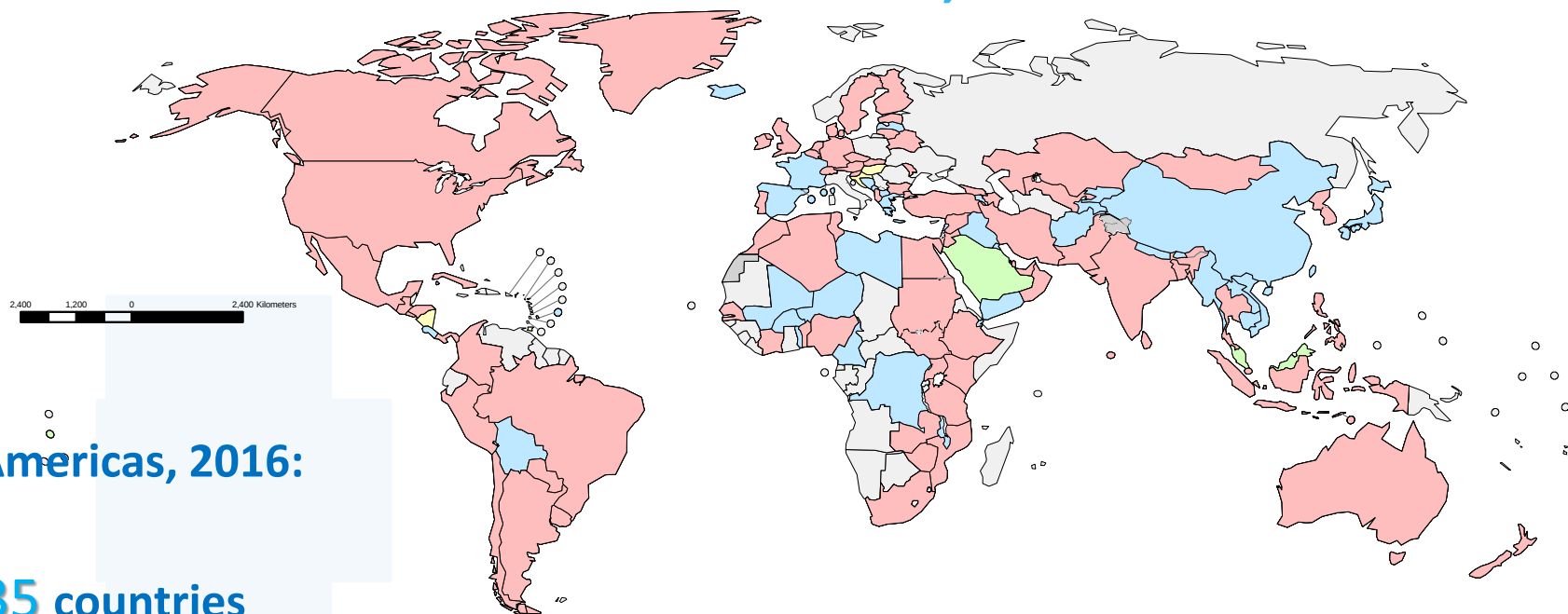
National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs)

- Technical resource and deliberative body
- PROVIDES RECOMMENDATIONS to policy makers and program managers to make **evidence-based** immunization-related **policy decisions**

Empowers government:

- comprehensive and integrated approach
 - neutral forum
 - credibility of process
 - help resist pressure from interest groups
- Facilitates systematic and transparent country-owned processes for developing immunization policies.

NITAGs around the world, 2014



In the Americas, 2016:

20 of 35 countries
have an active NITAG

Where 93% of the total population
in the region lives

15 NITAGs meet the minimum
criteria for 'good functionality'

- 82 Countries meeting the 6 NITAG criteria
- 120 Countries having a NITAG with administrative or legislative basis
- 120 Countries Reporting the Existence of A NITAG with Terms of Reference
- 127 Countries Reporting the Existence of a NITAG
- Not available
- Not applicable

NITAG establishment

- Official and formal (e.g. decree)
- Terms of reference
- Rigorous membership selection process
- Guidelines for nomination, mode of functioning, reporting/ communication
- Prior to appointment, members should complete a **declaration of interests** and sign a confidentiality agreement

NITAG membership: Size and Composition

- **10 to 15 expert** members, majority should not be affiliated with Ministry of Health
- Multidisciplinary - sufficient range and breadth of expertise
 - Clinical medicine (paediatrics and adolescent medicine, adult medicine, geriatrics)
 - Infectious disease
 - Epidemiology
 - Public health
 - Immunology
 - Microbiology
 - Vaccinology
 - Other (health economics, immunization program, and health systems and delivery clinical research (clinical trials design)...))
- Ex-officio and liaison members

NITAG functioning

- Guidelines to specify mode of operation and conduct of meetings
 - Frequency
 - Open versus closed sessions
 - Decision making process and basis for review of evidence
 - Establishment of working groups
 - Administrative support
 - Recording and adequate communication on declarations of interest
 - Agenda setting
 - Communications and reporting of recommendations
- Direct communication with senior officials in Ministry of Health
- Evaluation
 - Process indicators
 - Implementation of recommendations and referrals to the NITAG prior to decision making = potential measures to assess impact

Sub-regional immunization strategies

- Sub-regional and regional strategies should provide a comprehensive evidence base for countries.
- Countries should not feel obligated to conduct analyses for all vaccines.
- Global, regional and sub-regional recommendations should be adapted to the national level.

Final considerations

- Robust, transparent decision-making structures and processes are essential.
- NITAGs are important resources to improve process, its transparency and increase credibility.
- Global, regional and sub-regional recommendations should be considered and adapted.
- Strengthening the decisionmaking process implies both NITAG strengthening and immunization program capacity building.

If you want to know more about...

- The PAHO/WHO Provac initiative

<http://www.paho.org/provac/index.php?lang=en>

- The Provac toolkit

<http://www.provac-toolkit.com/>

- Partners



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™



Federal University of Goiás
Public university in Brazil





Thank you
Gracias
Obrigada
Merci

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