

Call for Experts

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[Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group RITAG in EMR(RITAG/EMR)]

Issued on : 18 May 2023

Deadline : 8 June 2023

The World Health Organization (WHO) is seeking experts to serve as members on the [Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group in EMR(RITAG/EMR)]. This “Call for experts” provides information about the advisory group in question, the expert profiles being sought, the process to express interest, and the process of selection.

Background

The Regional Director of WHO/EMRO formally establishes the RITAG/EMRO with reporting to the Regional Director or delegated senior official in EMRO. The mandate of RITAG/EMRO extends to advice on eradication, elimination and control of all vaccine preventable diseases as part of an integrated, people centered platform of disease prevention that spans the human life-course and in the context of health system strengthening.

The RITAG/EMRO will act according to the terms of reference under the framework of WHO adopted global and regional strategies. RITAG/EMRO will not have any direct implementation role/responsibility.

The Advisory Group (the “AG”) will act as an advisory body to WHO in this field.

Functions of the [Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group in EMR (RITAG/EMR)]

In its capacity as an advisory body to WHO, the AG shall have the following functions:

1. Monitor progress towards achieving the regional goals and targets in the light of IA2030 regional framework;
2. Identify any constraints, obstacles and threats or opportunities to the achievement of regional goals and targets;
3. Review periodically the epidemiological situation of different vaccine preventable diseases in the Region to set appropriate goals/ targets, strategies, and monitoring indicators;

4. Advise WHO on endorsing the regional strategic plan to accomplish the goals and targets and monitor its implementation;
5. Recommend suitable strategies, within the ambit of WHO recommendations/guidelines, to sustain high-quality national immunization programmes in the Region;
6. Provide advice on the appropriate choices of new vaccines and technologies;
7. Recommend suitable strategies and processes for introduction of new vaccines and technologies and integration into the national Immunization programmes, including methods and indicators of monitoring impact of the new vaccines on the diseases concerned;
8. Provide technical guidance for implementation of high-quality vaccine preventable disease surveillance, including laboratory networks for surveillance;
9. Advise WHO on promoting active support for the national immunization programmes and its different VPD eradication, elimination and control targets by the National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs), governments, political leaders and immunization partners;
10. Advise on matters of special importance for submission to the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean;
11. Identify mechanisms to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization within the regional, context where appropriate;
12. Identify and advise on appropriate areas for operation research in the fields of Immunization.

Operations of the Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group in EMR (RITAG/EMR)

1. The AG shall normally meet at least once each year. However, WHO may convene additional meetings. Additional meetings, face-to-face or virtual, might be organized to discuss urgent matters. Interaction between the Secretariat and the RITAG chairperson and members will take place whenever needed. AG meetings may be held in person (at the WHO Regional Office or another location, as determined by WHO) or virtually, via video or teleconference.

AG meetings may be held in open and/or closed session, as decided by the Chairperson in consultation with WHO.

- (a) Open sessions: Open sessions shall be convened for the sole purpose of the exchange of non-confidential information and views, and may be attended by Observers.
- (b) Closed sessions: The sessions dealing with the formulation of recommendations and/or advice to WHO shall be restricted to the members of the AG and essential WHO Secretariat staff.

who can express interest?

The [Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group in EMR (RITAG/EMR)] will be multidisciplinary, with members (8-10 members) from a range of technical knowledge, skills and experience who shall serve in

their personal capacities to represent the broad range of disciplines relevant to the aspects of immunization and vaccines, (e.g., vaccinology, epidemiology, immunology, public health, paediatrics, family medicine, internal medicine, health economics, regulations, vaccine delivery, communication), and with collective expertise necessary to address the specific functions expected from the group. In the selection of the AG members, consideration shall be given to attaining an adequate distribution of technical expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.

Submitting your expression of interest

To register your interest in being considered for the [Regional Immunization Technical Advisory Group in EMR(RITAG/EMR)], please submit the following documents by [24.00h (midnight) Cairo time on 8 June 2023] to emrgoivp@who.int using the subject line “Expression of interest for the RITAG/EMR:

- A cover letter, indicating your motivation to apply and how you satisfy the selection criteria. Please note that, if selected, membership will be in a personal capacity. Therefore, do not use the letterhead or other identification of your employer;
- Your curriculum vitae; and
- A signed and completed Declaration of Interests (DOI) form for WHO Experts, available at <https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>.

After submission, your expression of interest will be reviewed by WHO. Due to an expected high volume of interest, only selected individuals will be informed.

Important information about the selection processes and conditions of appointment

Members of WHO advisory groups (AGs) must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. To this end, applicants are required to complete the WHO Declaration of Interests for WHO Experts, and the selection as a member of a AG is, amongst other things, dependent on WHO determining that there is no conflict of interest or that any identified conflicts could be appropriately managed (in addition to WHO’s evaluation of an applicant’s experience, expertise and motivation and other criteria).

All AG members will serve in their individual expert capacity and shall not represent any governments, any commercial industries or entities, any research, academic or civil society organizations, or any other bodies, entities, institutions or organizations. They are expected to fully comply with the Code of Conduct for WHO Experts (<https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>). AG members will be expected to sign and return a completed confidentiality undertaking prior to the beginning of the first meeting.

At any point during the selection process, telephone interviews may be scheduled between an applicant and the WHO Secretariat to enable WHO to ask questions relating to the applicant’s experience and expertise and/or to assess whether the applicant meets the criteria for membership in the relevant AG.

The selection of members of the AGs will be made by WHO in its sole discretion, taking into account the following (non-exclusive) criteria: relevant technical expertise; experience in international and country

policy work; communication skills; and ability to work constructively with people from different cultural backgrounds and orientations. The selection of AG members will also take account of the need for diverse perspectives from different regions, especially from low and middle-income countries, and for gender balance.

If selected by WHO, proposed members will be sent an invitation letter and a Memorandum of Agreement. Appointment as a member of a AG will be subject to the proposed member returning to WHO the countersigned copy of these two documents.

WHO reserves the right to accept or reject any expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject all expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected applicant or applicants and without any obligation to inform the affected applicant or applicants of the grounds for WHO's action. WHO may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the establishment of the AG, disband an existing TAG or modify the work of the AG.

WHO shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any applicant, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the evaluation/selection process or to state the reasons for not choosing a member.

WHO may publish the names and a short biography of the selected individuals on the WHO-EMRO internet.

AG members will not be remunerated for their services in relation to the AG or otherwise. Travel and accommodation expenses of AG members to participate in AG meetings will be covered by WHO in accordance with its applicable policies, rules and procedures.

The appointment will be limited in time as indicated in the letter of appointment.

If you have any questions about this "Call for experts", please write to [emrgoivp@who.int] well before the applicable deadline.