



Regional NITAGs-Evidence to Recommendations (EtR) Training for RSV Vaccine Introduction

Project Information

- ◆ Department: Public Health Programs
- ◆ Unit: Polio and Immunization

Objectives

The main objective of the regional NITAGs-Evidence to Recommendations (EtR) training is to equip members of National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) from Gavi-eligible countries with the knowledge and skills necessary to make evidence-based, transparent, and informed decisions regarding the introduction and scale-up of the RSV vaccine. This training aims to ensure that immunization policies are aligned with national health priorities, ultimately improving the capacity of these countries to manage and implement RSV vaccination programs effectively.

BENEFICIARIES

Core NITAG members and secretariates in Gavi Eligible countries in the EMR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To support the introduction of the RSV vaccine in the region, EMPHNET proposes delivering a regional NITAGs-Evidence to Recommendations (EtR) training aimed at Gavi-eligible countries in the EMR. This training will take place in Amman in late June 2025 and will focus on equipping National Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NITAG) members with the knowledge and skills needed to make informed decisions regarding the introduction of the RSV vaccine. The existing EtR training material will be adapted to address RSV-specific concerns, ensuring that immunization policies are evidence-based, transparent, and aligned with national health priorities.

The training will cover key areas such as evaluating the evidence on RSV vaccine safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness, assessing the burden of RSV in target populations, and developing recommendations for the introduction and scale-up of the RSV vaccine. Around 24 participants will attend the training from Afghanistan, Djibouti, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, 3-4 participants from each country.

Facilitators for the training will include experts the EMPHNET team, WHO EMRO, The Task Force for Global Health (TFGH) and the CDC. This collaborative training aims to build the capacity of countries in the region to effectively introduce and manage the RSV vaccine, ultimately improving immunization outcomes and protecting vulnerable populations from RSV.

PROJECT PHASES

This project involves two phases as the following:

Phase I – Preparation: This phase involves mapping stakeholders, creating a database of participants, conducting a rapid community assessment to understand the current status of RSV vaccine introduction, and developing engagement strategies to ensure effective participation.

Phase II – Implementation: The training will be delivered in Amman, focusing on equipping NITAG members with the skills to evaluate RSV vaccine evidence and make informed decisions. Continuous monitoring and evaluation will assess the impact of the training, with a focus on strengthening the capacity for future RSV vaccine introduction.

Phase III – Sustainability: This phase focuses on ensuring long-term support for NITAGs in making vaccine introduction decisions, including developing strategies for ongoing capacity-building and integrating RSV vaccine monitoring into national health policies.



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| Project Start and End Date | 03/1/2025 – 07/31/2025 |
| Funded by | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) |
| Collaborators | Ministries of Health (MoH) |

Currently . . .

RSV is a major cause of severe respiratory infections in infants and young children in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR), with rates exceeding global averages in some Gavi-eligible countries like Pakistan and Sudan. This virus also significantly impacts elderly adults, particularly those over 65 with chronic health issues, leading to hospitalizations and fatalities. Despite its severity, there is no consistent strategy for RSV prevention in the EMR, including vaccine deployment. WHO and other health authorities recommend RSV vaccination for infants and pregnant women to effectively reduce its impact, citing the vaccines' safety, efficacy, and cost-effectiveness.

What is next . . .

Post-training, NITAG members will use their improved skills to update RSV vaccine policies, supported by ongoing professional development and follow-up sessions. Effective monitoring will assess policy impacts, enhance inter-country NITAG collaboration, and strengthen advocacy for RSV vaccination awareness, focusing on high-risk groups. These efforts aim to translate training into tangible public health improvements across the region.

OUTCOMES BY NUMBERS

Around 25 participants from EMR attended (EtR) training for RSV Vaccine Introduction

EMPHNET Information: Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) works at achieving its mission by responding to public health needs with deliberate efforts that allow for health promotion and disease prevention.

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