

Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization
9-12 March 2026
Hybrid Meeting, Auditorium
WHO HQ (Geneva)

Day 1: Monday, 9 March 2026 (time is Central European Time (CET))			
Time CET	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Preparation of the sessions of the day.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Opening T. Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, WHO. Director General, WHO. 5 min. Welcome – introduction of participants K. O'Brien. Director of Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals (IVB) Department, WHO. 5 min. A. Scott. SAGE Chair. 3 min. A. Wilder-Smith. SAGE Secretariat. WHO. 2 min.		15 min.
11:15	Global and regional reports – Session 1 Report from the Director of IVB, K. O'Brien. WHO. 20 min. Update from Gavi, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. S. Nishtar. GAVI. 10 min. Discussion. 45 min.	FOR INFORMATION	1h 15 min.
12:30	Lunch Break	Break	1h
13:30	Global and regional reports – Session 1 continued: Regional reports Presentations from AFRO, EMRO, EURO. 10 min. each. Discussion. 30 min. Presentations from PAHO, WPRO, SEARO. 10 min. each. Discussion. 30 min.	FOR DISCUSSION Each Regional report focuses on one theme of particular importance for the Region	2h
15:30	Break	Break	15 min.
15:45	From midterm IA2030 review to Future of Immunization – Session 2 Introduction. B. Millinchip, WHO. 5 min. IA2030 reform – the role of SAGE. B. Millinchip, WHO. 10 min. Discussion. 20 min. Future of Immunization Policy Making. E. Lemango, UNICEF. 15 min. Discussion. 30 min. Conclusions and next steps. B. Millinchip, WHO. 10 min.	FOR DISCUSSION	1h 30 min.
17:15	End of day 1		

Day 2: Tuesday, 10 March 2026			
Time CET	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Development of recommendations of day 1. Preparation of the sessions of the day. Other important discussion items.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Vaccine Portfolio Optimisation and Prioritisation (VPOP) – Session 3 Background and progress on the VPOP approach, available tools and their implementation. J. Fihman, WHO. 20 min. Country presentation on optimization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience from Iran – prioritization of NVI and perspective on future optimisation opportunities, J. Fihman on behalf of A. Fotouhi, NITAG Chair. 15 min. • Experience from Ethiopia: prioritisation of NVI and perspectives on optimisation, M. Kokebie, EPI Manager, Ethiopia. 15 min. • Experience from Mozambique: considerations on portfolio optimization, J. Sacarlal, NITAG Chair, 15 min. Opportunities and challenges to support countries in NVI prioritization and portfolio optimization. Y. Berhane, SAGE member. 5 min. Discussion. 50 min.	FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION The purpose of the session is to update SAGE on ongoing efforts on VPOP and seek guidance on the role SAGE can take to guide countries in these efforts and protect country ownership in a context of increased financial constraints.	2h
13:00	Lunch Break	Break	1h
14:00	Typhoid – Session 4 Opening, framing, and key policy questions. S. Omer, SAGE WG Chair. 10 min. Available typhoid conjugate vaccine (TCV) and market update. G. Stathopoulos. 10 min. Questions. 5 min. Global epidemiology of typhoid fever and burden of disease. J. Crump, University of Otago. 20 min. Discussion. 10 min. Overview of TCV safety, efficacy/effectiveness, duration of protection, and immunogenicity of a TCV booster dose. X. Liu. 30 min. Discussion. 20 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION The purpose of this session is to review and assess new epidemiological, empirical, and modelling evidence relevant to optimal TCV dosing schedules. In light of updated data on duration of protection following a single dose, emerging evidence on booster doses, and context-specific modelling analyses, SAGE feedback is sought on potential updates to WHO recommendations.	(3h 45 min. total) 1h 45 min.
15:45	Break	Break	15 min.
16:00	Typhoid – Session 4 continued Multi-model comparison of long-term TCV impact and booster scenarios. V. Pitzer, Yale School of Public Health. 20 min. Questions. 10 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION Specifically, SAGE advice is requested on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether evidence of waning protection following a single TCV dose supports consideration of alternative dosing strategies; 	2h

Country questionnaire on acceptability/ feasibility of TCV schedules. M. Carey. 10 min.

Questions. 5 min.

Draft recommendations. S. Omer, SAGE WG Chair. 15 min.

Discussion. 60 min.

- how available data on booster doses, including immunogenicity and safety in the absence of direct efficacy data, should be interpreted for policy.

18:00 End of day 2

Day 3: Wednesday, 11 March 2026

Time CET	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Development of recommendations of day 2. Preparation of the sessions of the day. Other important discussion items.	1h 45 min.
11:00	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	COVID-19– Session 5	FOR RECOMMENDATION	(4h 45 min. total)
	Opening remarks. S. Kochhar, Chair SAGE COVID-19 vaccines Working Group. 10 min.	The purpose of this session is to review the latest global COVID-19 epidemiological situation, evidence on COVID-19 vaccines safety and effectiveness by population group, and the cost-effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination in the current context. SAGE will be asked to advise on the proposed recommendations from the SAGE Working Group on COVID-19 vaccines. SAGE’s deliberations will inform the development of a WHO Position Paper on COVID-19 vaccines.	1h 30 min.
	Global COVID-19 epidemiological update. S. von Dobschütz, WHO. 15 min.		
	Pregnancy and infant burden in the Omicron era. E. R. Smith, Milken Institute School of Public Health, The George Washington University. 15 min.		
	Questions. 10 min.		
	Overview of COVID-19 vaccines safety. J. Scott, Stanford University School of Medicine. T. Cherian, MMGH. 15 min.		
	Pregnancy safety updates of COVID-19 vaccines. A. Ciapponi, Instituto de Efectividad Clínica y Sanitaria (IECS). E.M. Kim, WHO. 15 min.		
	Questions. 10 min.		
12:45	Lunch Break	Break	1h
13:45	COVID-19– Session 5 continued	FOR RECOMMENDATION	1h 15 min.
	Overview of COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness. M. Deloria Knoll, International Vaccine Access Center (IVAC), the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. 30 min.		
	Questions. 10 min.		
	Post-Covid Conditions. M. Marti, WHO. 10 min.		
	Questions. 5 min.		
	Cost-effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccination. A. Tuite, Public Health Agency of Canada. 10 min.		
	Questions. 10 min.		
15:00	Break	Break	15 min.
15:15	COVID-19– Session 5 continued	FOR RECOMMENDATION	2h
	Discussion of proposed COVID-19 vaccination recommendations based on Evidence to Recommendation		

(ETr) tables by population group and research priorities. S. Kochhar, Chair SAGE COVID-19 Working Group; A. Vilajeliu, WHO. 2h

- Older adults
- People with comorbidities or immunocompromised
- Health and care workers
- Healthy adults
- Healthy children
- Pregnant persons

17:15 End of the plenary meeting Day 3

Day 4: Thursday, 12 March 2026

Time CET	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Development of recommendations of day 3. Preparation of the sessions of the day. Other important discussion items.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Polio - Session 6	FOR RECOMMENDATION	2h
	Session overview by Z. Memish, SAGE member. 5 min.	SAGE will be informed on the current status of the polio eradication program and on the implementation of the new polio action plan.	
	Update from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) including brief on GPEI governance. J. Ahmed, WHO. 15 min.		
	Questions. 15 min.		
	Update on bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) Cessation Planning. O. Mach, WHO. 5 min.	SAGE will be informed about current status of bOPV Cessation Planning; and about development of novel OPV1 and 3.	
	Presentation of data on number of bOPV doses needed in routine immunization; O. Mach, WHO; R. Lopez, WHO & A. Bandyopadhyay, Gates Foundation. 15 min.		
	Questions. 20 min.	SAGE will be asked to review and consider for endorsement:	
	Report from the SAGE Polio Working Group including update on novel OPV2 (nOPV2) development; use of nOPV2 outside vaccination campaigns, duration of IPV use post-bOPV cessation, and proposed recommendations. Z. Memish, SAGE Member. 15 min.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation on number of bOPV doses in routine immunization when ≥ 3 IPV doses are included. 	
	Discussion: 30 min.		
13:00	Closing of plenary meeting		
13:10	End of the plenary meeting Day 4		
13:10	Break	Break	50 min.
14:30	Closed SAGE meeting	Development of recommendations of the day 4 morning session.	2h
16:30	End of the SAGE meeting		