

Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization
5–8 October 2026
Draft agenda
Hybrid Meeting, Executive Board Room
WHO HQ (Geneva)

Day 1: Monday, 5 October 2026 (time is Central European Summer Time (CEST))			
Time CEST	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Preparation for the sessions of the day.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Opening B. Aylward, Assistant Director-General, Division of Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Control, 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, IVB. WHO. 2 min.		15 min.
11:15	Global reports– Session 1 (Part 1) Report from the Director of IVB. K. O'Brien, WHO. 30 min. Update from Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. E. Capobianco, Gavi. 15 min. Discussion. 1h	FOR INFORMATION	1h 45 min.
13:00	Lunch break	Break	1h
14:00	Regional reports – Session 1 (Part 2) Presentations from AFRO, EMRO, EURO. 10 min. each. Discussion. 20 min. Presentations from PAHO, WPRO, SEARO. 10 min. each. Discussion. 20 min.	FOR DISCUSSION Each regional report will focus on one theme of particular importance to the region.	2h
15:40	Break	Break	20 min.
16:00	Ebola vaccines – Session 2 Introduction. Helen Rees, Chair of SAGE Working Group on Ebola vaccines. 5 min. Epidemiological update on the BVD outbreak. E. Koua, WHO AFRO. 10 min. Emerging evidence on Ervebo® vaccine cross-reactivity and potential cross-protection against BVD. E. Stadler, UNSW. 10 min. BVD-specific vaccine R&D: candidate status, phase 1 studies and anticipated timelines. M. Doherty, WHO. 10 min. Ring vaccination trial: design, operational readiness and anticipated initiation. H. Kavunga, INRB. 15 min.	FOR INFORMATION SAGE will receive an update on the epidemiology of Bundibugyo virus disease (BVD) outbreak and the progress of BVD-specific vaccine candidates. SAGE will also be presented with the emerging evidence on the cross-protection of Ervebo® vaccine against BVD and the progress of related planned and ongoing research studies.	1h 30 min.

Observational evidence and planned Ervebo® vaccine effectiveness studies against BVD. R. Doshi, WHO AFRO. 15 min.

Discussion. 25 min.

17:30 End of day 1

Day 2: Tuesday, 6 October 2026

Time CEST	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Finalization of recommendations from Day 1. Preparation for the sessions of the day. Discussion of other important items.	1 h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Yellow Fever vaccines – Session 3 Introduction. G. Gray, SAGE member and Chair of the SAGE yellow fever vaccine Working Group. 5 min. Yellow fever epidemiology and current vaccination strategies. K. Salami. WHO. 15 min. Minimum vaccine potency requirements. M. Niedrig, German Accreditation Society. 10 min. Systematic review of the immunogenicity and safety of fractional-dose yellow fever vaccination. C. Iwu-Jaja. Stellenbosch University. 20 min. Yellow fever vaccine market study. G. Stathopoulos, WHO. 10 min. Discussion on draft recommendations. G. Gray. 60 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION Present SAGE with updated evidence on fractional-dose yellow fever vaccination, including its potential role in the context of financial constraints affecting vaccination campaigns. SAGE will review and discuss whether the current recommendations on fractional-dose vaccination for outbreak response should be updated and, in particular, whether fractional-dose vaccination could be used in preventive vaccination campaigns to improve their affordability and facilitate implementation at scale.	2h
13:00	Lunch break	Break	1h
14:00	HPV vaccines – Session 4 Introduction and key questions. C. Vizzotti, SAGE member and Chair of the SAGE HPV vaccines Working Group. 10 min. WHO update on HPV programming landscape and vaccine introduction progress. P. Bloem, WHO. 15 min. Key new evidence on single-dose HPV vaccine schedules to inform decision-making on reduced schedules. A. Pollard, University of Oxford. 15 min. Systematic reviews of evidence on HPV vaccine. N. Henschke, Cochrane Response. 15 min. Modelling. M. Brisson, Laval University. 10 min. Discussion. 25 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION Present SAGE with updated evidence on a single-dose HPV vaccination schedule to consider strengthening the permissive recommendation on a single-dose schedule and extending its use to a wider age range.	1 h 30 min.
15:30	Break	Break	15 min.
15:45	HPV vaccines – Session 4 Conclusions and proposed recommendations. C. Vizzotti. 15 min. Discussion. 75 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION	1h 30 min.

17:15 End of day 2

Day 3: Wednesday, 7 October 2026

Time CEST	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Finalization of recommendations from Day 2. Preparation for the sessions of the day. Discussion of other important items.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Mpox vaccines – Session 5 Problem statement. R. Grais, SAGE member and Chair of the SAGE Working Group on Mpox Vaccines. 15 min. Global mpox epidemiology and vaccine use. R. Lewis, WHO. 25 min. Systematic review on mpox vaccine effectiveness and safety. L. Pischel, Yale University. 15 min. Discussion on draft recommendations. R. Grais 65 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION Present SAGE with updated epidemiological information and evidence on mpox and discuss potential updates to the current recommendations for mpox vaccination in outbreak settings, as well as the potential expansion of preventive vaccination recommendations to additional populations at increased risk.	2h
13:00	Lunch break	Break	1h
14:00	Diphtheria-containing vaccines for outbreak response – Session 6 Problem statement. S. Kochhar, SAGE member and chair of ad hoc SAGE expert group. A. Vilajeliu, WHO. 15 min. Regional updates on diphtheria epidemiology and outbreak response experience. WHO Regional Representatives. 5 min each. Discussion. 15 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION In the context of diphtheria outbreaks reported globally, SAGE will be asked to provide guidance on optimising the use of diphtheria-containing vaccines for outbreak response, particularly for mass vaccination campaigns. This guidance will complement the existing WHO Position Paper on diphtheria vaccines.	1h
15:00	Break	Break	15 min.
15:15	Diphtheria-containing vaccines for outbreak response – Session 6 Modelling of the use of diphtheria-containing vaccines to optimise outbreak response. S. Truelove, Johns Hopkins University and L. Keegan, Utah University. 30 min, followed by 30 min for questions. Proposed recommendations and discussion. S. Kochhar, SAGE member and Chair of the ad hoc SAGE expert group. 60 min.	FOR RECOMMENDATION	2h
17:15	End of the plenary meeting, Day 3		

Day 4: Thursday, 8 October 2026

Time CEST	Session	Purpose of session, target outcomes and questions for SAGE	Duration
9:00	Closed SAGE meeting	Finalization of recommendations from Day 3. Preparation for the sessions of the day. Discussion of other important items.	1h 45 min.
10:45	Break	Break	15 min.
11:00	Polio vaccines – Session 7	FOR RECOMMENDATION	2h
	Session overview. Z. Memish, SAGE member and Chair of the Polio Working Group. 5 min.	SAGE will be informed on the current status of the polio eradication programme and on the implementation of the new polio action plan.	
	Update from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI). Z. Wadood, WHO. 15 min.	SAGE will be informed about current status of bOPV cessation planning and the development of novel OPV types 1 and 3.	
	Questions. 15 min.		
	Update on bOPV cessation planning, O. Mach, WHO. 5 min.		
	Proposed recommendation on IPV use in routine and outbreak immunization for countries with persistent poliovirus transmission (WPV or VDPV). O. Mach & A. Bandyopadhyay, Gates Foundation. 15 min.	SAGE will be asked to review and consider for recommendation:	
	Questions. 20 min.	A recommendation on IPV use in routine and outbreak immunization for countries with persistent poliovirus transmission (WPV or VDPV).	
	Report from the SAGE Polio Working Group, including an update on nOPV development and proposed recommendations. Z. Memish, SAGE member and Chair of the Polio Working Group. 15 min.		
	Discussion. 30 min.		
13:00	Closing of the plenary meeting		10 min.
13:10	Break	Break	80 min.
14:30	Closed SAGE meeting and next steps	Finalization of recommendations from the Day 4 morning session.	1h
15:30	Closed SAGE meeting	Meeting with RITAG Chairs	1h
		Parallel meetings	
16:30	Closing session with SAGE members and the WHO SAGE Secretariat		45 min.
17:15	End of the SAGE meeting		