

Driving policy to support a life course approach to immunization

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Driving the agenda of the world's ageing populations

Vaccines4Life



Vaccines4Life is a knowledge mobilization platform that serves as a point of connection on the most urgent matters related to adult vaccination.

V4L Pillars of Action

Prevention

- 1** Prioritise immunisation throughout life as a key pillar of expanded prevention strategies and a central component of universal health coverage.

Access

- 2** Remove barriers to access for appropriate immunisation throughout life to ensure all people are protected and no one is left behind.

Equity

- 3** Reduce inequities in timely, appropriate, and affordable access to immunisation throughout life.

A life course approach to immunization

Vaccines are key to fostering healthy ageing **across the life course** and maintaining intrinsic capacity and **function in later life**

Unprecedented at-risk populations:

- ↪ Rapid population ageing
- ↪ Increasing rates of NCDs
- ↪ Immunosenescence associated with ageing

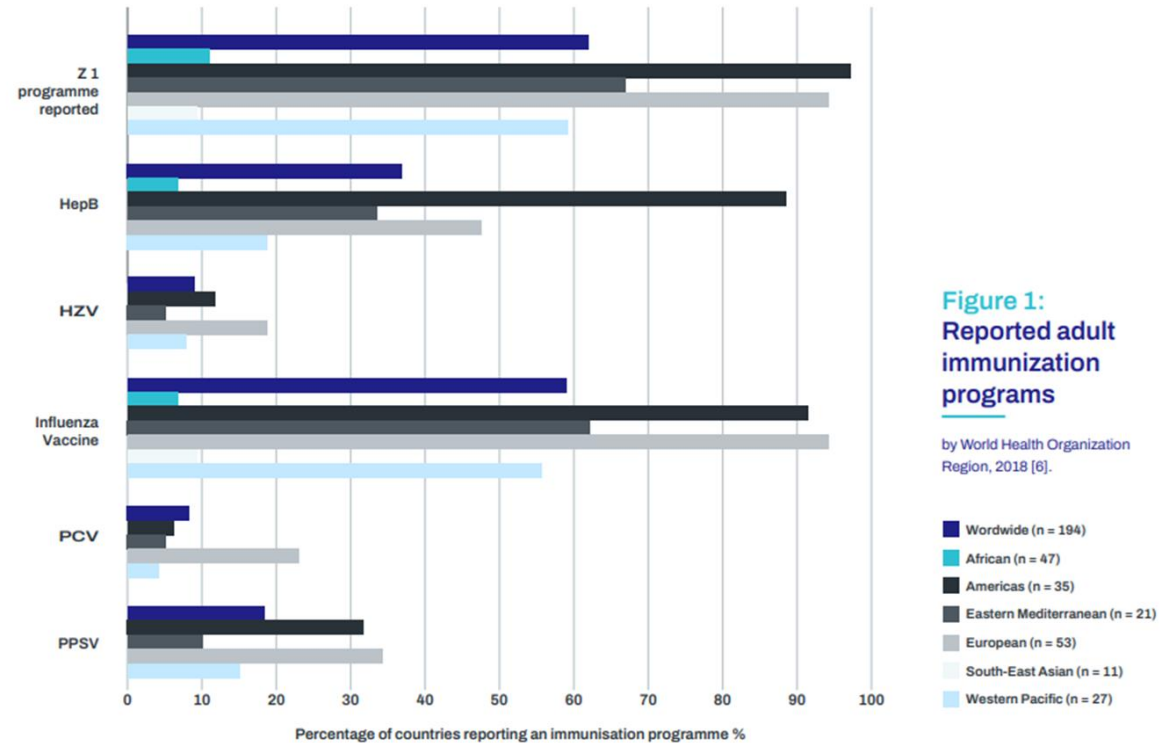


Status of adult vaccination globally

Generally poor uptake of adult vaccination, however surveillance and data on coverage and uptake is limited

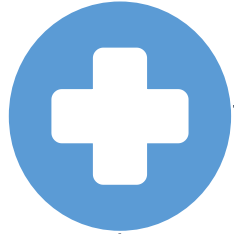
40% of countries worldwide have **no infrastructure** to provide adult immunization

60% of the world's population lives in countries **without routine adult immunization** programmes

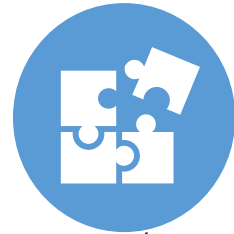


Williams SR, Driscoll AJ, LeBuhn HM, Chen WH, Neuzil KM, Ortiz JR. National routine adult immunisation programmes among World Health Organization Member States: an assessment of health systems to deploy COVID-19 vaccines. Euro Surveill. 2021 Apr;26(17):2001195. doi: 10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2021.26.17.2001195.

Ongoing and Emerging Challenges



Overburdened health systems



Gaps in routine immunization



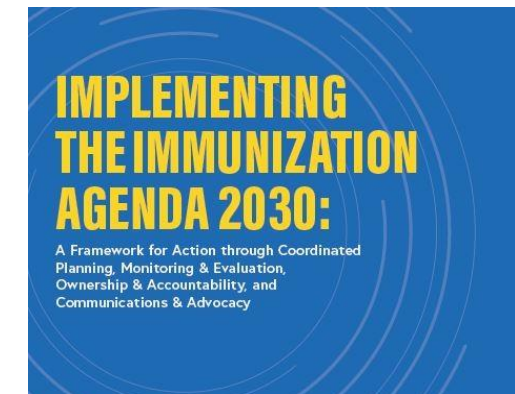
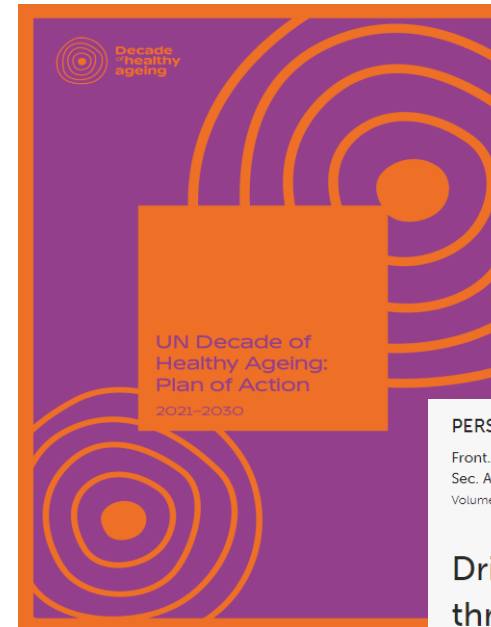
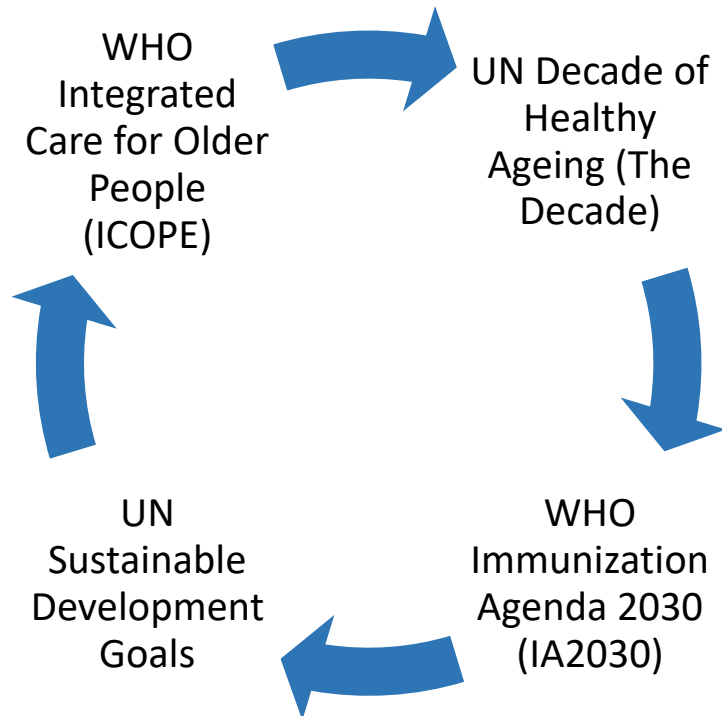
**Rising levels of vaccine
hesitancy**



**Lack of data and evidence-
based decision-making**

Driving policy to support a life course approach to vaccination

- Aligning Intergovernmental agendas



PERSPECTIVE article

Front. Aging, 31 July 2023

Sec. Aging and the Immune System

Volume 4 - 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fragi.2023.1200597>

This article is part of the Research Topic
Women in Aging and the Immune System

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Driving the life course approach to vaccination through the lens of key global agendas

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Driving policy to support a life course approach to vaccination

- Using the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing Action Areas and Enablers



Integrated Care



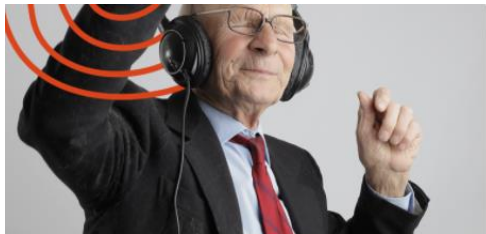
Long-term Care



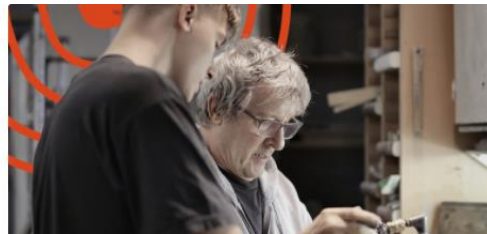
Age-friendly Environments



Combatting Ageism



Voice and engagement



Leadership and capacity building



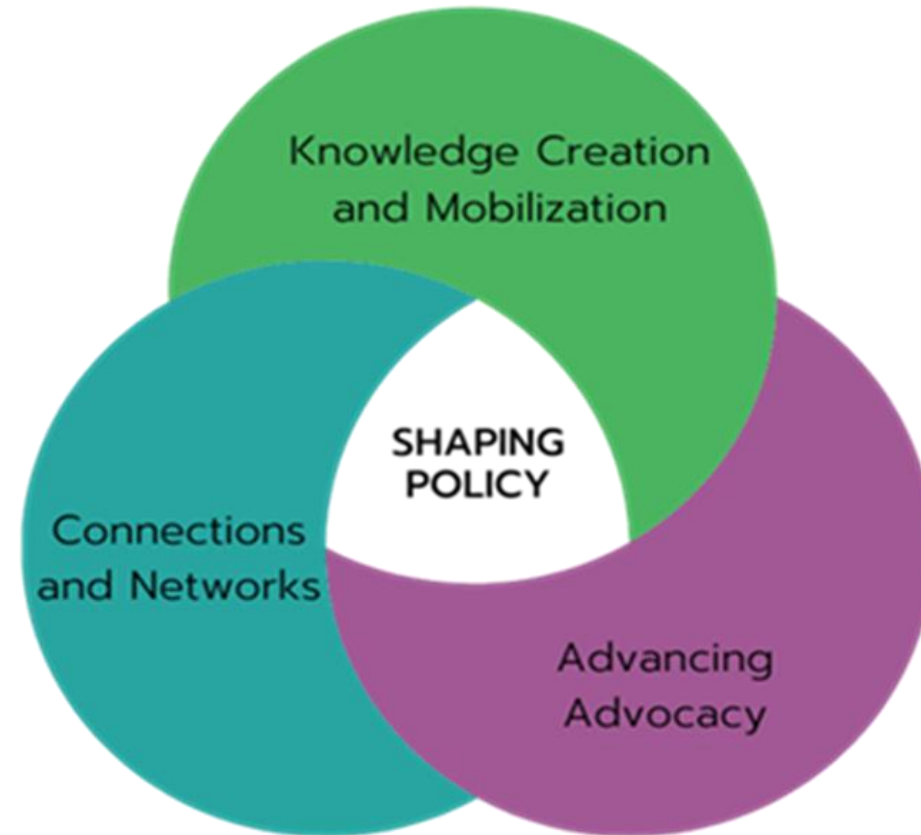
Connecting stakeholders



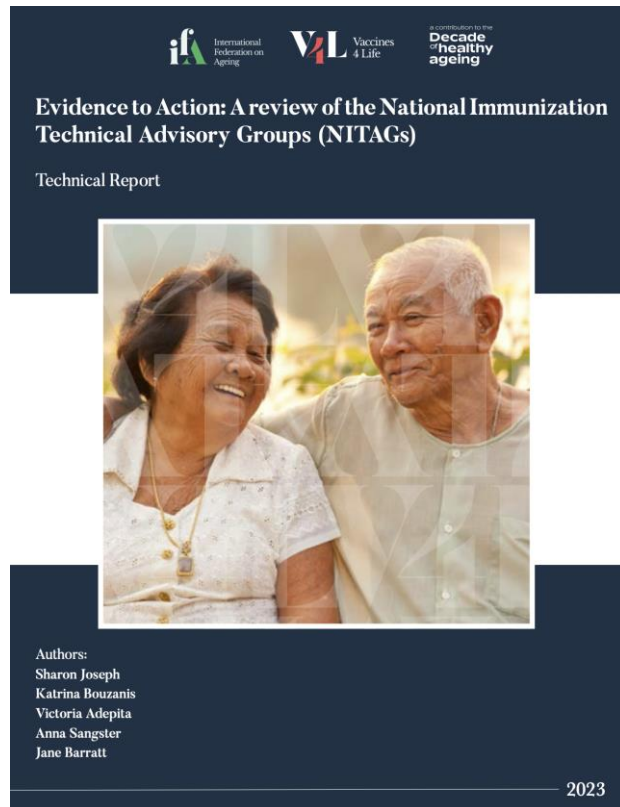
Strengthening research, data, and innovation

Driving policy to support a life-course approach to vaccination

- Strategic Vision – Knowledge creation, advocacy and communication



Case study – Integration of a life course approach within NITAGs



A high-level **review of 34 NITAGs** was conducted to better understand the **process, rigour, transparency, accountability, and composition of experts** in line with the life-course approach to immunization.

National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs)



Multidisciplinary country-level **expert committees** tasked with providing **independent, evidence-based advice** to policymakers and program managers on **immunization and vaccine policy issues**

The World Health Organization (WHO) has deemed that NITAGS “are integral to country ownership of immunization programs and have a key role to play as the number and diversity of vaccine products increase.”

Problem Identification

1 Lack of Transparency:

Lack of information and / or refereed literature on their governance, management, and impact.

2 Composition of NITAG Members:

Transparency about the degree to which composition of memberships represents a life course approach.

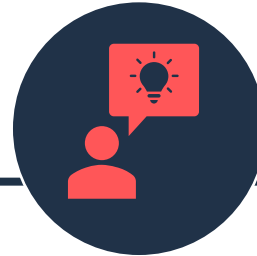
3 IA2030 Goals:

Meeting the strategic priorities of the IA2030 by strengthening policies & establishing public health interventions to target all age groups

Study Findings



32% of NITAGs have their **recommendations accessible online** through government websites.



Nearly **50% of NITAGs** publicly noted that **meetings included external experts**. Many NITAGs **did not include civil society organizations**.



Only France, Canada and El Salvador have an expert or expertise in the **field of ageing and / or adult immunization**.

Recommendations

- 1 Call upon WHO to recommend that at **least 1 of the 5 members** of the NITAG has **expertise in a life course approach to immunization**
- 2 Call upon governments to improve the **availability of public information** on NITAGs
- 3 Call upon governments to mandate **reporting of all conflicts of interest** of potential and current members of NITAGs
- 4 Call upon governments to recognize the importance of **the independence and autonomy of NITAGs** in deliberating on **decisions that inform government** immunization policy and implementation

Knowledge Creation to Stakeholder Engagement

- WHO NITAG Partners Retreat, Turkey, January 2024
- Interviews with key informants to assess barriers to achieving a life course approach within NITAGs
- Framework for Action



Conclusions

- Vaccination has been significantly **underprioritized for at-risk adults**
- The UN Decade of Healthy Ageing is an important agenda to **drive immunization across the life course**
- NITAGs have a responsibility to frame their deliberations through a **population-health lens & drive forward immunization** in the context of the IA2030 & healthy ageing



Thank you



If you would like further information, please contact

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