Member States Information Session

International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR) - Non-digital and digital ICVP and other health documents for international traffic purposes

20 April 2026

Joint presentation by:

IHR Secretariat, Health Emergencies Governance Unit (EGV) &
Health Emergency Preparedness Department (HSP)
WHO Health Emergencies Programme (WHE)

Data, Digital Health, Analytics and AI (DDA) Department
Health Systems, Access and Data Division (HSD)

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Agenda

- Opening remarks
- Presentation
- Q&A
- Closing remarks

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Opening Remarks

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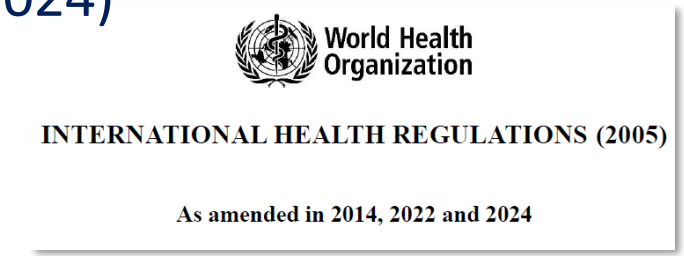
- Amendments to the IHR adopted through resolution WHA77.17 (2024)
- Entered into force on 19 September 2025* for 184 States Parties



Part VI - Health documents (Articles 35-39, Annexes 3 and 6 through 9)

Amended *Article 35 - General rule*

1. No health documents, other than those provided for under these Regulations or in recommendations issued by WHO, shall be required in international traffic, […]

New 2. Health documents […] may be issued in non-digital format or digital format, subject to the obligations of any State Party regarding the format of such documents deriving from other international agreements.

New 3. Regardless of the format in which health documents […] have been issued, [… they] shall conform to the Annexes […] and their authenticity shall be ascertainable.

New 4. WHO, in consultation with States Parties, shall develop and update, as necessary, technical guidance, including specifications or standards related to the issuance and ascertainment of authenticity of health documents, both in digital format and non-digital format. Such specifications or standards shall be in accordance with Article 45 regarding treatment of personal data.

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Amendments to Article 35 intended to address evolving IT landscape and related challenges

Use of health documents in non-digital and digital formats and their co-existence

Ability to ascertain the authenticity of health documents across borders to build trust

Varying levels of digital maturity across States Parties

Multiple, non-interoperable digital solutions require standardization and ability to establish trust

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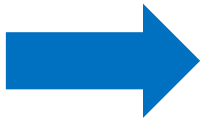
*Illustrative images generated using artificial intelligence (OpenAI DALL·E), for presentation purposes only.

Co-existence of non-digital and digital formats

Article 42 - Implementation of health measures – "[…] applied in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner."

Co-existence

- Digital does not replace non-digital (paper)
- Non-digital format to be accepted by all State Parties
- Authenticity (and validity) to be ascertainable by all States Parties regardless of the format, non-digital or digital



What co-existence enables

- Minimize interferences with international traffic
- Minimize widening of digital divide across State Parties
- Reduce circulation of fraudulent health documents
- Support mutual acceptance across State Parties

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Health documents set forth in Part VI of the IHR

Article 2 - Purpose and scope – "[…] to prevent, prepare for, protect against, control the international spread of disease […]"

Traveller-related

- *Article 36 - Certificates of vaccination or other prophylaxis*
- Amended *Annex 6 - Vaccination, prophylaxis and related certificates*, including *Model International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis* (ICVP)
- *Annex 7 - Requirements concerning vaccination or prophylaxis for specific diseases* (yellow fever vaccine)
- *Article 15 - Temporary recommendations* (polio vaccine, in the context of PHEIC)
- *Article 16 - Standing recommendations* (currently N/A)

Conveyance-related

- Amended *Article 37 - Ship Declaration of Health* (previously referred to as "Maritime Declaration of Health")
- Amended *Annex 8 - Model Ship Declaration of Health*, including the *Attachment*
- *Article 39 - Ship sanitation certificates*
- Amended *Annex 3 - Model Ship sanitation* […] *certificate*, including *Attachment*
- *Article 38 - Health Part of the Aircraft General Declaration*
- *Annex 9 - Health Part of the Aircraft General Declaration*

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Health documents set forth in Part VI of the IHR

Conveyance-related

New paragraph 2 of *Article 35 - General rule*, IHR

- "Health documents […] may be issued in non-digital format or digital format, subject to the obligations of any State Party regarding the format of such documents deriving from other international agreements."

Aviation/aircraft-related

- IHR – WHO:
  - *Article 38 and Annex 9 - Health Part of the Aircraft General Declaration*
- Chicago Convention – International Civil Aviation Organization
  - Part of the *General Declaration* in Annex 9 – Facilitation to the Chicago Convention
  - As per Standard 2.9 of Annex 9 – Facilitation, Contracting States requiring a General Declaration shall accept it in either electronic or paper form

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Maritime/ship-related

- IHR – WHO:
  - *Amended Article 37 and amended Annex 8 - Ship Declaration of Health (previously referred to as "Maritime Declaration of Health"), and corresponding Model and Attachment*
  - *Article 39 and amended Annex 3 - Ship sanitation certificates, and corresponding Model and Attachment*
- IMO Convention – International Maritime Organization
  - 2022 amendments to the FAL Annex of the IMO Convention introduced an obligation for Contracting Governments to establish, maintain, and use a *Maritime Single Window (MSW)* for the electronic collection and exchange of information required on arrival, stay, and departure of ships
  - The IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business is the reference model used to harmonize data across IT systems for all maritime information, and includes the *Ship Declaration of Health* and *Ship sanitation certificates*

Health documents set forth in Part VI of the IHR

Traveller-related

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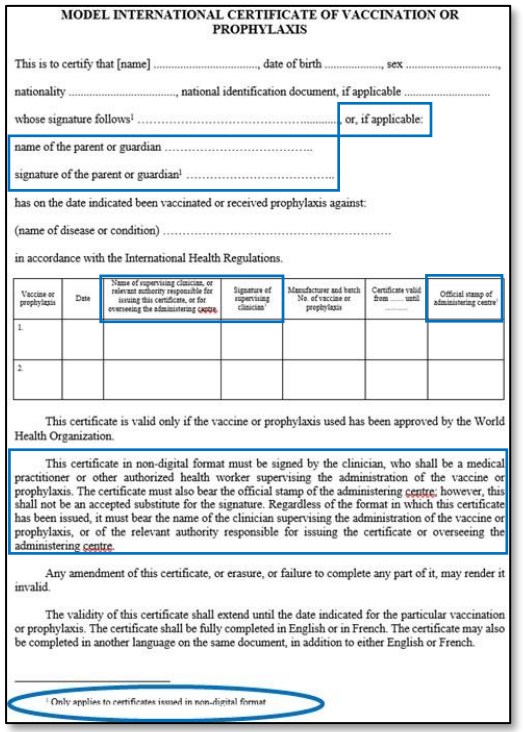

MODEL INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE OF VACCINATION OR PROPHYLAXIS

This is to certify that [name] ....., date of birth ....., sex .....,

nationality ....., national identification document, if applicable .....

whose signature follows[1] ....., or, if applicable:

name of the parent or guardian .....

signature of the parent or guardian[1] .....

has on the date indicated been vaccinated or received prophylaxis against:

(name of disease or condition) .....

in accordance with the International Health Regulations.

Vaccine or prophylaxis	Date	Name of supervising clinician, or relevant authority responsible for issuing this certificate, or for overseeing the administering centre	Signature of supervising clinician	Manufacturer and batch No. of vaccine or prophylaxis	Certificate valid from ..... until	Official stamp of administering centre[1]
1.						
2.						

This certificate is valid only if the vaccine or prophylaxis used has been approved by the World Health Organization.

This certificate in non-digital format must be signed by the clinician, who shall be a medical practitioner or other authorized health worker supervising the administration of the vaccine or prophylaxis. The certificate must also bear the official stamp of the administering centre; however, this shall not be an accepted substitute for the signature. Regardless of the format in which this certificate has been issued, it must bear the name of the clinician supervising the administration of the vaccine or prophylaxis, or of the relevant authority responsible for issuing the certificate or overseeing the administering centre.

Any amendment of this certificate, or erasure, or failure to complete any part of it, may render it invalid.

The validity of this certificate shall extend until the date indicated for the particular vaccination or prophylaxis. The certificate shall be fully completed in English or in French. The certificate may also be completed in another language on the same document, in addition to either English or French.

[1] Only applies to certificates issued in non-digital format

- ICVP exclusively governed by the IHR, under WHO auspices
- ICVP digitalization falls under WHO scope of work
- Amended ICVP only applies to certificates issued after 19 September 2025* (resolution WHA77.17 (2024))
- C.L.34.2025 - Until conclusion of consultative process stipulated in Article 35.4, call to States Parties to:
  - Continue issuing ICVP in non-digital format (i.e., on paper)
  - Accept ICVP issued according to either the amended or non-amended Model ICVP

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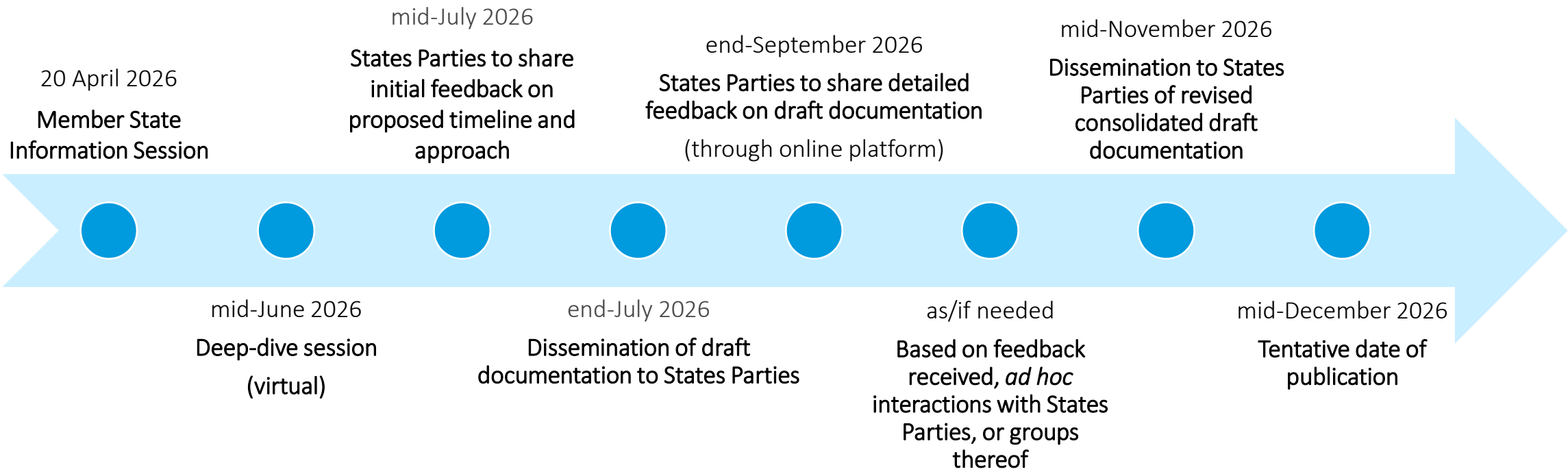
Proposed timeline and approach for the consultative process between WHO and States Parties (Article 35.4)



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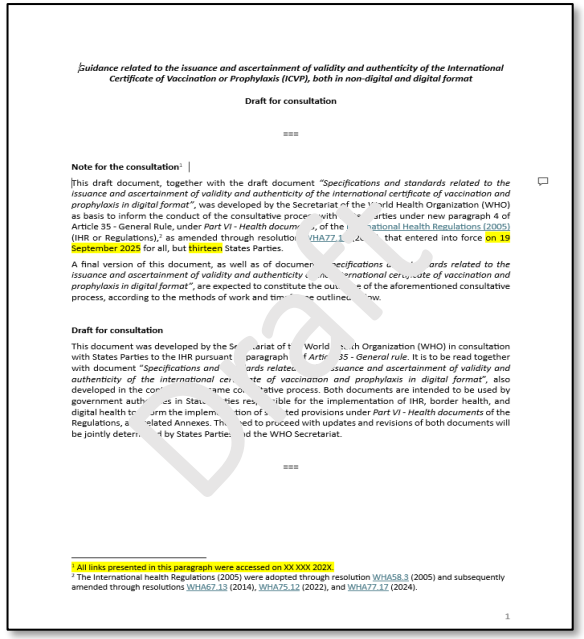
Draft documentation being prepared by the WHO Secretariat to facilitate consultative process

Draft Technical Guidance (Policy)



Guidance related to the issuance and ascertainment of validity and authenticity of the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis (ICVP), both in non-digital and digital format

Draft for consultation

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Note for the consultation[1]

This draft document, together with the draft document *"Specifications and standards related to the issuance and ascertainment of validity and authenticity of the international certificate of vaccination and prophylaxis in digital format"*, was developed by the Secretariat of the World Health Organization (WHO) as basis to inform the conduct of the consultative process with States Parties under new paragraph 4 of Article 35 - General Rule, under *Part VI - Health documents*, of the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR or Regulations),[2] as amended through resolution WHA77.1 (2024), that entered into force on 19 September 2025 for all, but thirteen States Parties.

A final version of this document, as well as of document *"Specifications and standards related to the issuance and ascertainment of validity and authenticity of the international certificate of vaccination and prophylaxis in digital format"*, are expected to constitute the outcome of the aforementioned consultative process, according to the methods of work and timelines outlined below.

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[1] All links presented in this paragraph were accessed on XX XXX 202X.
[2] The International health Regulations (2005) were adopted through resolution WHA58.3 (2005) and subsequently amended through resolutions WHA67.13 (2014), WHA75.12 (2022), and WHA77.17 (2024).

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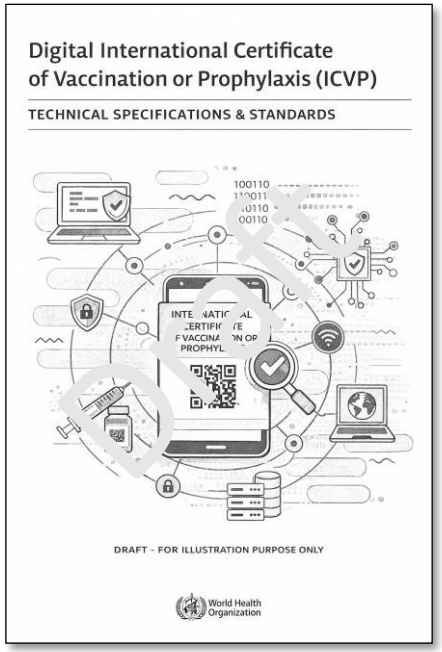
Guidance related to the issuance and ascertainment of validity and authenticity of the ICVP, both in non-digital and digital format

Draft Technical Specifications and Standards Package (IT)



Specifications and standards related to the issuance and ascertainment of validity and authenticity of the ICVP in digital format

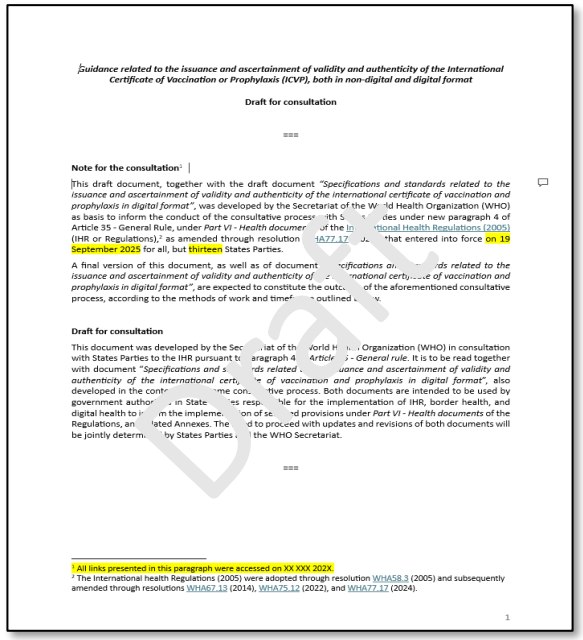
ICVP Implementation Guide

Global Digital Health Certification Network

World Health Organization

*ICVP – Technical specifications & standards image was generated using artificial intelligence (OpenAI DALL·E), for presentation purposes only.

Draft Technical Guidance (Policy)



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- Defines
  - Formats of ICVPs – "non-digital" and "digital"
  - Format in which ICVPs are issued – "non-digital format" and "digital format"
- Describes models of ICVP in use following applicable rules for the two subsets of States Parties, as determined by their relationship vis-à-vis the 2024 amendments
- Describes practical aspects for the traveller allowing for the co-existence of ICVPs issued in the two formats
- Regardless of the format the ICVP are issued, describes criteria, and additional procedures if/when necessary, for all States Parties to ascertain:
  - Validity
  - Authenticity
- Describes public health actions that States Parties may take when invalid or non authentic ICVPs are identified

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Draft Technical Specifications and Standards Package (IT)

ICVPs in digital format across the traveller's journey

Provides:

- Human-readable specifications for programme managers and implementation teams in the States Parties
- Machine-readable components including standards-based implementation guide to support system development and interoperability

Enables:

- Consistent implementation with draft technical guidance (policy)
- Integration with national systems (i.e. EIR)
- Interoperability
- Use of GDHCN to support trust and cross-border ascertainment
- Aligned with *Article 45 - Treatment of personal data* of the IHR

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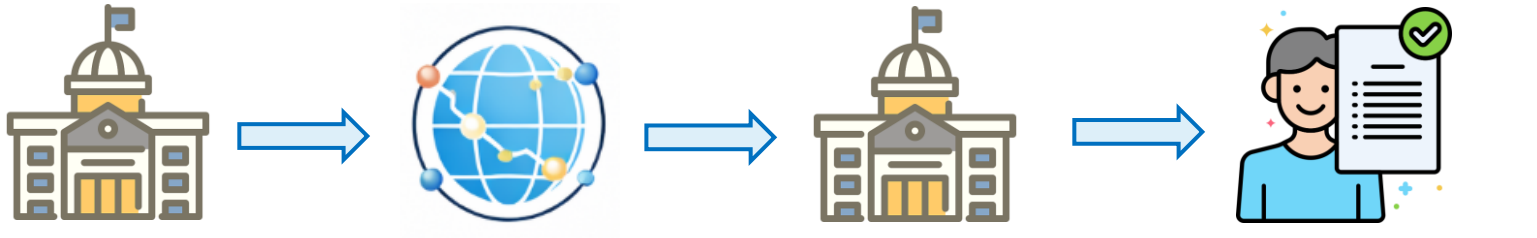
Note: Illustrative images generated using artificial intelligence (OpenAI DALL·E), for presentation purposes only.

Global Digital Health Certification Network (GDHCN) Provides the infrastructure for trusted digital ICVPs



Building off existing infrastructure, GDHCN allows State Parties to ascertain the authenticity (and validity) of ICVPs in digital format, securely issued by another State Party, so they can trust the data contained in the health document

- Use of GDHCN does not require new technical infrastructure to be built
- Enables cross border acceptance of digital ICVPs
- Supports interoperability across systems and trust networks - 82 participants[1] currently using GDHCN
- Builds on experiences from COVID-19 pandemic with verifiable credentials
- Builds on regional initiatives (i.e. EU DCC, Latin America/LACPass)
- Shown success in expanding to other use cases (i.e. Hajj health record)

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[1]as of 9 March 2026

[2]Illustrative images generated using artificial intelligence (OpenAI DALL·E), for presentation purposes only.

Dedicated ICVP Trust Domain within the GDHCN in which State Parties can onboard to

Each GDHCN Trust Domain is defined by	Applicability to Digital ICVP

1. Defined **use cases** and **business processes**	• **Use case:** Ability to ascertain the authenticity (and validity) of a digital ICVP
	• **Business processes:**
	  - Issuing a digital ICVP
	  - Ascertaining a digital ICVP's authenticity and validity

2. Open, interoperable **technical specifications** for the use case	• **Technical Specification and Standards Package (IT)**
3. Set of **policy and regulatory standards** describing expected conduct of participants for the use case	• International Health Regulations (2005), as amended in 2014, 2022 and 2024 • Additional **Technical Guidance (Policy)**

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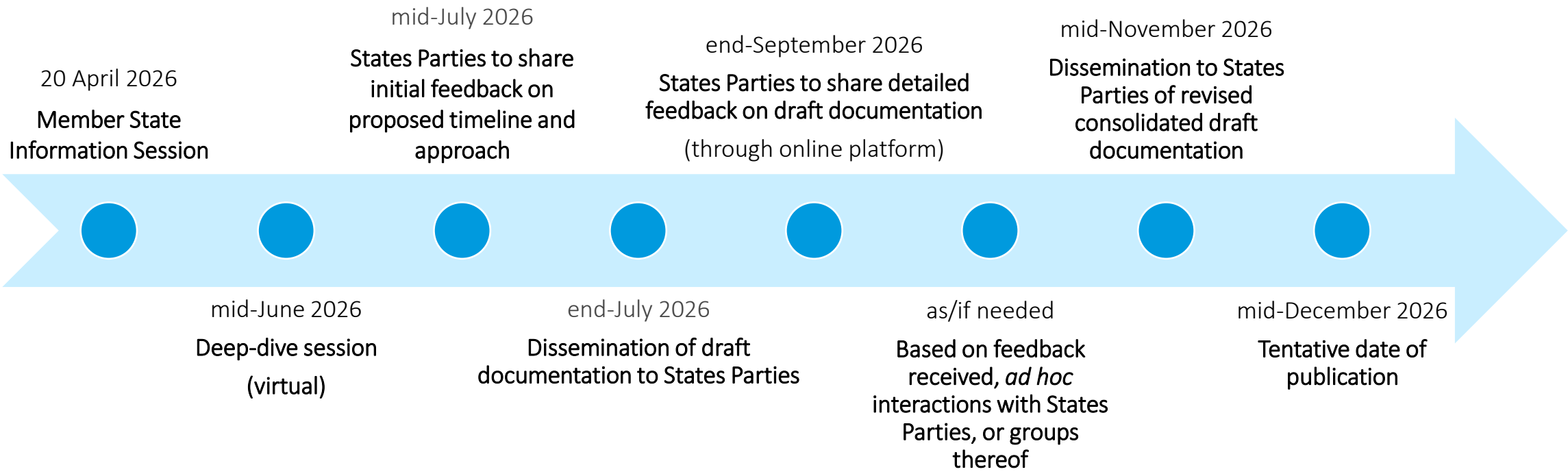
Proposed timeline and approach for the consultative process between WHO and States Parties (Article 35.4)



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As a first step, we seek your engagement and feedback on the proposed timeline and approach for the consultative process between WHO and States Parties (Article 35.4)

Questions for States Parties

Do you have any comments on the proposed consultative process?

Do you have any comments on starting the consultative process with the draft documents prepared by the WHO secretariat?

What assistance do you foresee needing, if any, to adopt GDHCN ICVP Trust Domain for digital ICVP?

Please provide initial feedback on proposed timeline and approach by 15 July 2026:

ICVP@who.int

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Q&A

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Closing remarks

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Thank you

This presentation has been designed to be accessible, for a positive and inclusive user experience for all.

For more information, please contact:

ICVP@who.int

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