

# Defining Functions and Competencies for the Immunization Program Workforce

The Standard Immunization Program Competencies Initiative

Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on  
Immunization (SAGE)  
26 April, 2017

**Denise Traicoff**

Public Health Training Specialist

# **What is “Competency”?**

**The Knowledge, Skills and Attitude one needs to  
successfully perform a job function**

# Presentation Outline

- I. Rationale for the Competencies Initiative
- II. Goal of the Initiative
- III. Project work team
- IV. Project methodology
- V. Results: Three outputs
- VI. Limitations
- VII. Next steps

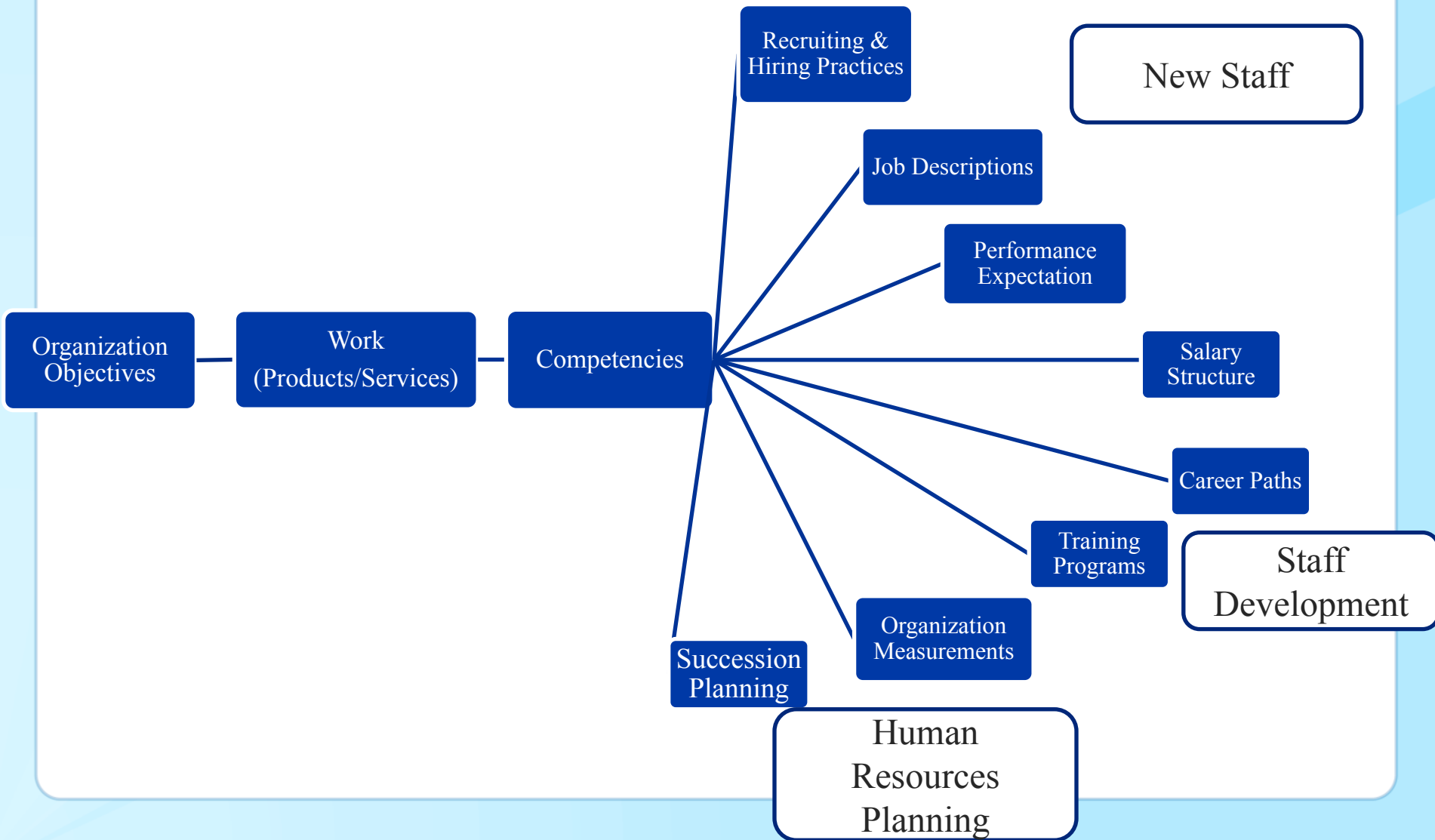
Today's focus: National Level

# There are 6 Factors that Influence Worker Performance

1. Clear expectations (eg. Job descriptions)
2. Timely performance feedback (eg. Supportive supervision)
3. Adequate environment & tools (eg. Data systems)
4. Incentives & consequences (eg. Recognition awards, warnings)
5. Knowledge & skills
6. Capacity to do the job (eg. Workload, physical requirements)

Competencies touch all of these

# Competencies Can Inform Workforce Planning & Management



# **Rationale for Establishing the Immunization Program Competencies Initiative**

- **No comprehensive description of all competencies for an immunization program workforce to succeed**
- **No standards or guidelines to assist countries for workforce planning**
- **Competency-based training materials are available from multiple organizations (eg. WHO MLM training)**
- **Countries modify or create materials to suit their needs**
- **Training frequently developed reactively, not strategically**
- **Partners agreed standardization was needed**

# What is the Immunization Program Competencies Initiative?

## Goal

Define sets of **competencies** (ie knowledge, skills & attitudes that enable performance) for key **functions** (the work that is done) in a successful immunization program

## Expected Benefits

1. Support quality training of the immunization workforce
2. Provide a common language when planning for the workforce
3. Harmonize elements of workforce planning & management
  - New Staff
  - Staff Development
  - Human Resources Planning

# Who is on the Team?

**AFENET (technical advisor for South Sudan  
NSTOP)**

---

**Alternative Sante/Cameroon**

---

**Bhutan MOH**

---

**BMGF**

---

**Burnet Institute**

---

**CDC USA**

---

**Clinton Health Access Initiative/ Nigeria**

---

**GAVI HQ & Regional**

---

**Global Health Strategies, India**

---

**International Children's Center / Turkey**

---

**John Snow Institute**

---

**PAHO**

---

**PATH /Tanzania**

---

**Public Health Foundation of India**

---

**UNICEF HQ & Regional**

---

**WHO HQ & Regional**

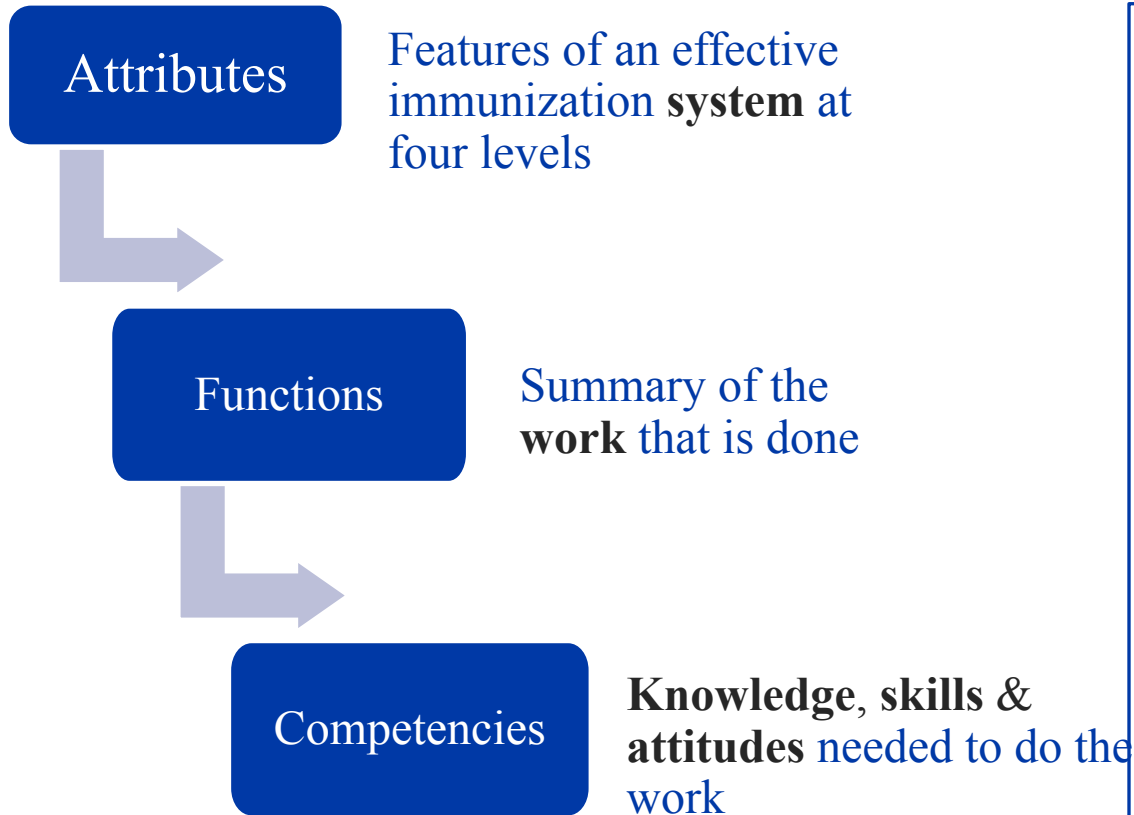
---

16  
organizations

32 team  
members

9 countries

# Stepwise Method to Define Competencies



## Methods

1. Literature Review
2. Subject matter expert input
3. Working group reviews
4. **Key informant interviews**

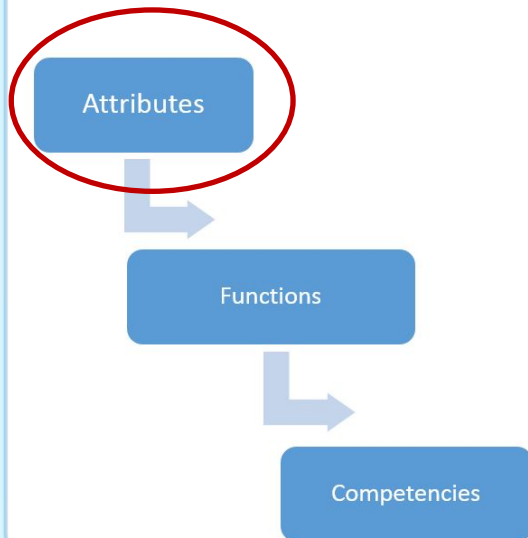
# Guiding Principles for Defining Competencies

- Countries will modify the standard based on their unique situation, ex. decentralization
- The work done at each level is not necessarily done by a single individual
- Additional competencies are essential to successful immunization programs (eg information technology, laboratory systems, & others)

# Results: The Attributes of a Strong Immunization Program

Organized in 7 domains, at 4 levels of the immunization system

Domain
1. Policy, Planning and Finance
2. Communications /Advocacy
3. Human Resources and Performance Management
4. Vaccines, supplies & logistics
5. Immunization and Injection Safety
6. Disease Surveillance and Response
7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Data Use



# Example: Attributes of Strong Immunization Program

## Immunization and Injection Safety Domain

Health Facility	District/Local	Province/State	National
Safe immunization practices	Supervision of safety measures  AEFI reporting and response	Safety measures implementation and monitoring  AEFI surveillance, reporting and response	National policies for quality handling to ensure safe and effective vaccines  AEFI surveillance, reporting and response

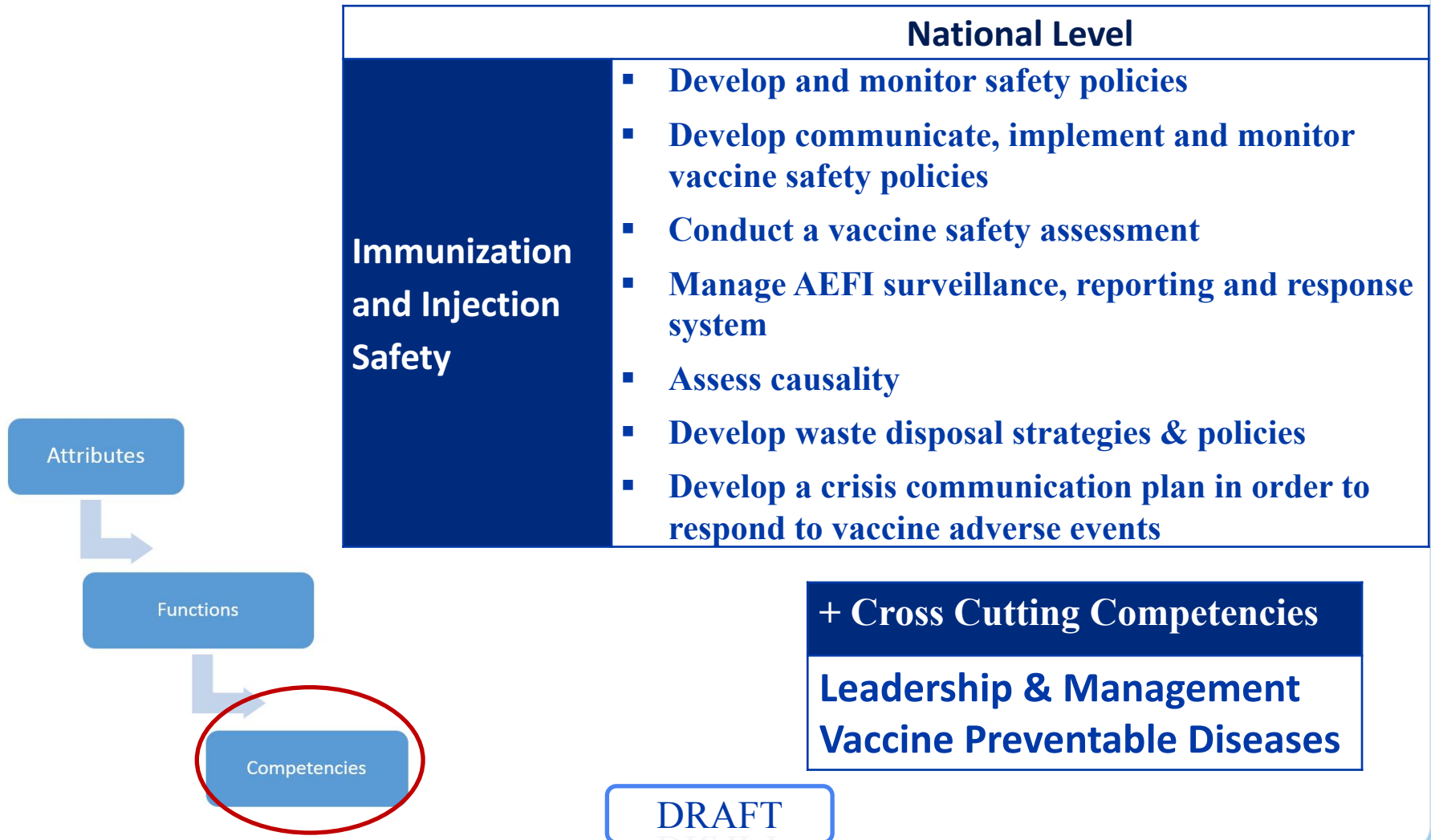
DRAFT

# Results: Functions-Each Level of the System Does Different Work



DRAFT

# Results: Competencies Needed to Do the Work



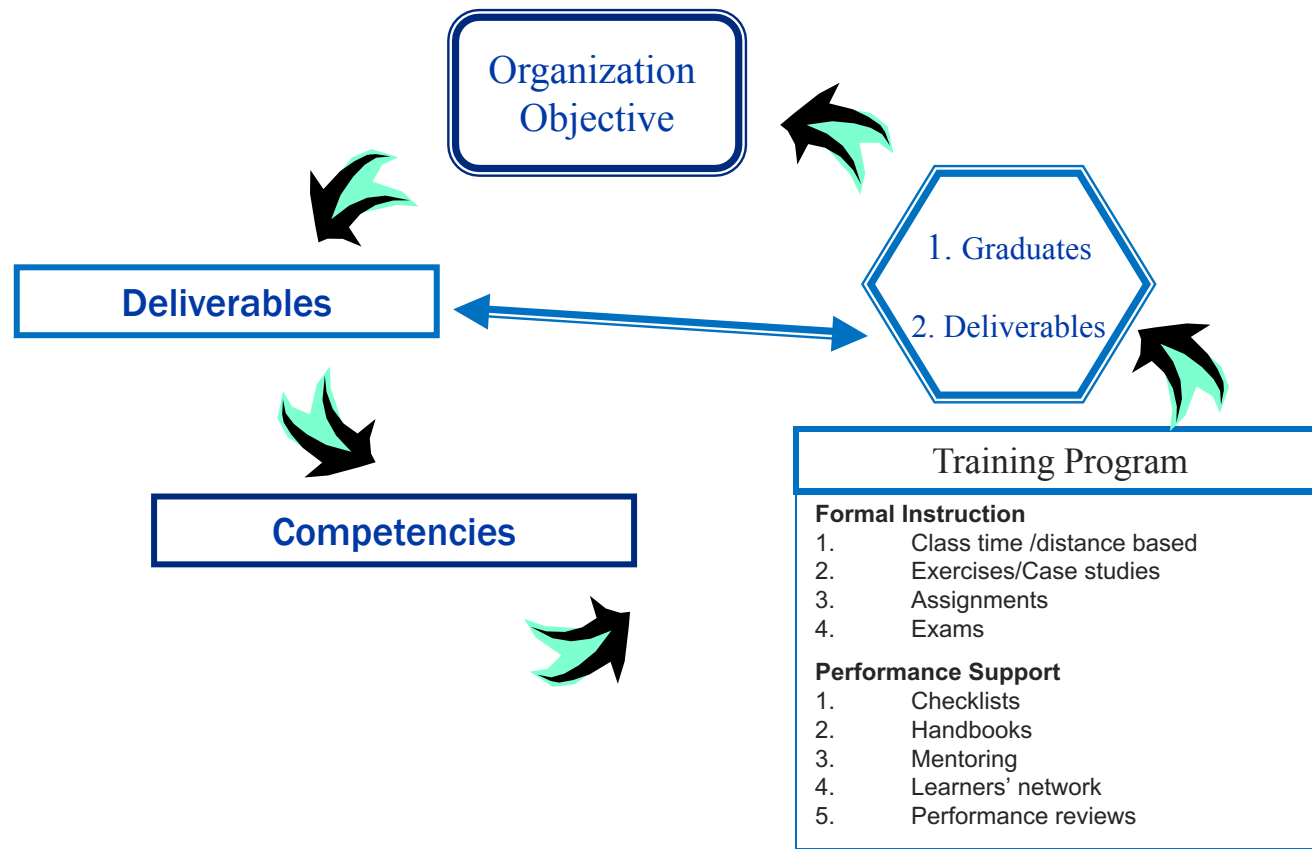
# Limitations

- **Obtaining consistent geographical & domain representation**
- **Determining the appropriate level of detail**
- **Key informant responses: an element of confidentiality when speaking to people about their work responsibilities**

# **Next Steps for the Competencies Initiative**

- **More formal review and development leading to draft normative guidelines**
- **Distribute for countries to pilot**
- **Develop tools for workforce mapping, worker performance gap analysis, curriculum development**

# WHAT IS COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING?



# Attributes of Strong Immunization Programs

