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)
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What is “Competency”?

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

Source: HR University
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

Gilbert, 1976; Rummler & Brache, 1993; Stolovitch & Keeps, 1999; Crigler et al, 2006
Competencies Can Inform Workforce Planning & Management

- Organization Objectives
- Work (Products/Services)
- Competencies
  - Recruiting & Hiring Practices
  - Job Descriptions
  - Performance Expectation
  - Salary Structure
  - Career Paths
  - Training Programs
  - Organization Measurements
  - Succession Planning
  - Human Resources Planning

New Staff

Staff Development
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 (i.e., 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
Features of an effective immunization system at four levels

Summary of the work that is done

Knowledge, skills & attitudes needed to do the work

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Policy, Planning and Finance</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Communications /Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Human Resources and Performance Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Vaccines, supplies &amp; logistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Immunization and Injection Safety</td>
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<td>6. Disease Surveillance and Response</td>
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<td>7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Data Use</td>
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### Example: Attributes of Strong Immunization Program

#### Immunization and Injection Safety Domain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health Facility</th>
<th>District/Local</th>
<th>Province/State</th>
<th>National</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safe immunization practices</td>
<td>Supervision of safety measures</td>
<td>Safety measures implementation and monitoring</td>
<td>National policies for quality handling to ensure safe and effective vaccines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEFI reporting and response</td>
<td>AEFI surveillance, reporting and response</td>
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Results: Functions-Each Level of the System Does Different Work

<table>
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<th>National Level</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Develop, communicate and monitor safety policies and guidelines, including AEFI</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Develop waste management plans and guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Coordinate with the National Regulatory Authority (NRA)</td>
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<td>▪ Build private, public and international partnerships on safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Develop SOPs and reporting templates using global standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Ensure quality, effectiveness and safety of vaccines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Develop and manage AEFI surveillance, reporting and response system</td>
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Immunization and Injection Safety
Results: Competencies Needed to Do the Work

**Immunization and Injection Safety**

- Develop and monitor safety policies
- Develop, communicate, implement, and monitor vaccine safety policies
- Conduct a vaccine safety assessment
- Manage AEFI surveillance, reporting, and response system
- Assess causality
- Develop waste disposal strategies & policies
- Develop a crisis communication plan in order to respond to vaccine adverse events

**Attributes**

**Functions**

**Competencies**

**National Level**

**Leadership & Management**

Vaccine Preventable Diseases

DRAFT
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?

- Competencies
- Deliverables
- Organization Objective

**Training Program**

**Formal Instruction**
1. Class time /distance based
2. Exercises/Case studies
3. Assignments
4. Exams

**Performance Support**
1. Checklists
2. Handbooks
3. Mentoring
4. Learners’ network
5. Performance reviews