

NISH: Strengthening Scientific Capacity of NITAGS in Africa

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Introducing PCV & RV
Workshop: 13-15 Sep 2023
N'Djamena, Chad



NISH 

National Immunization Technical
Advisory Group (NITAG) **Support Hub**



Presentation goals

01

The NISH project
and the
background to the
project

02

Rationale for the
scientific support
provided to
NITAGs by the
NISH

03

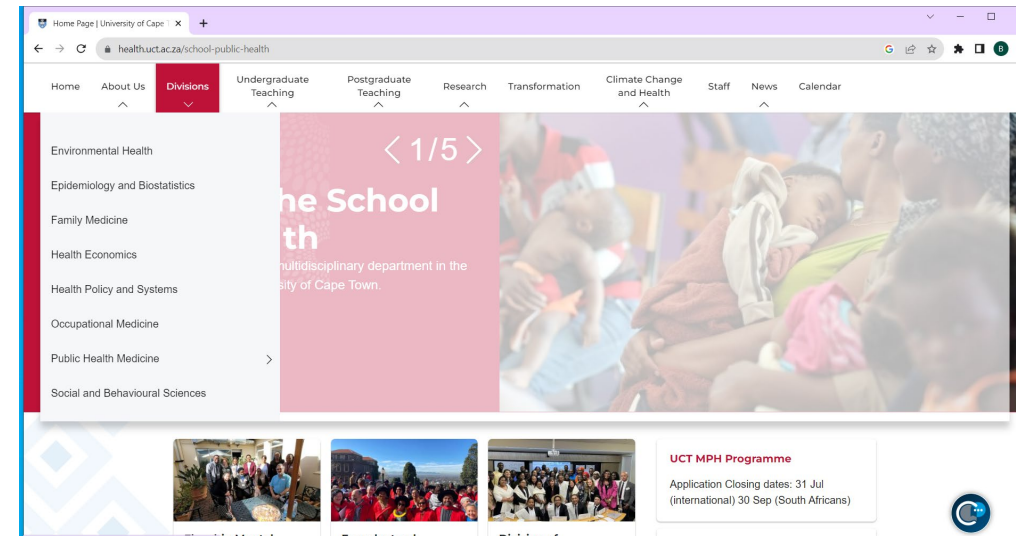
A snapshot of the
Evidence to
Recommendation
(EtR) process that
NITAGs utilize

NISH is Hosted by VACFA, Based at UCT

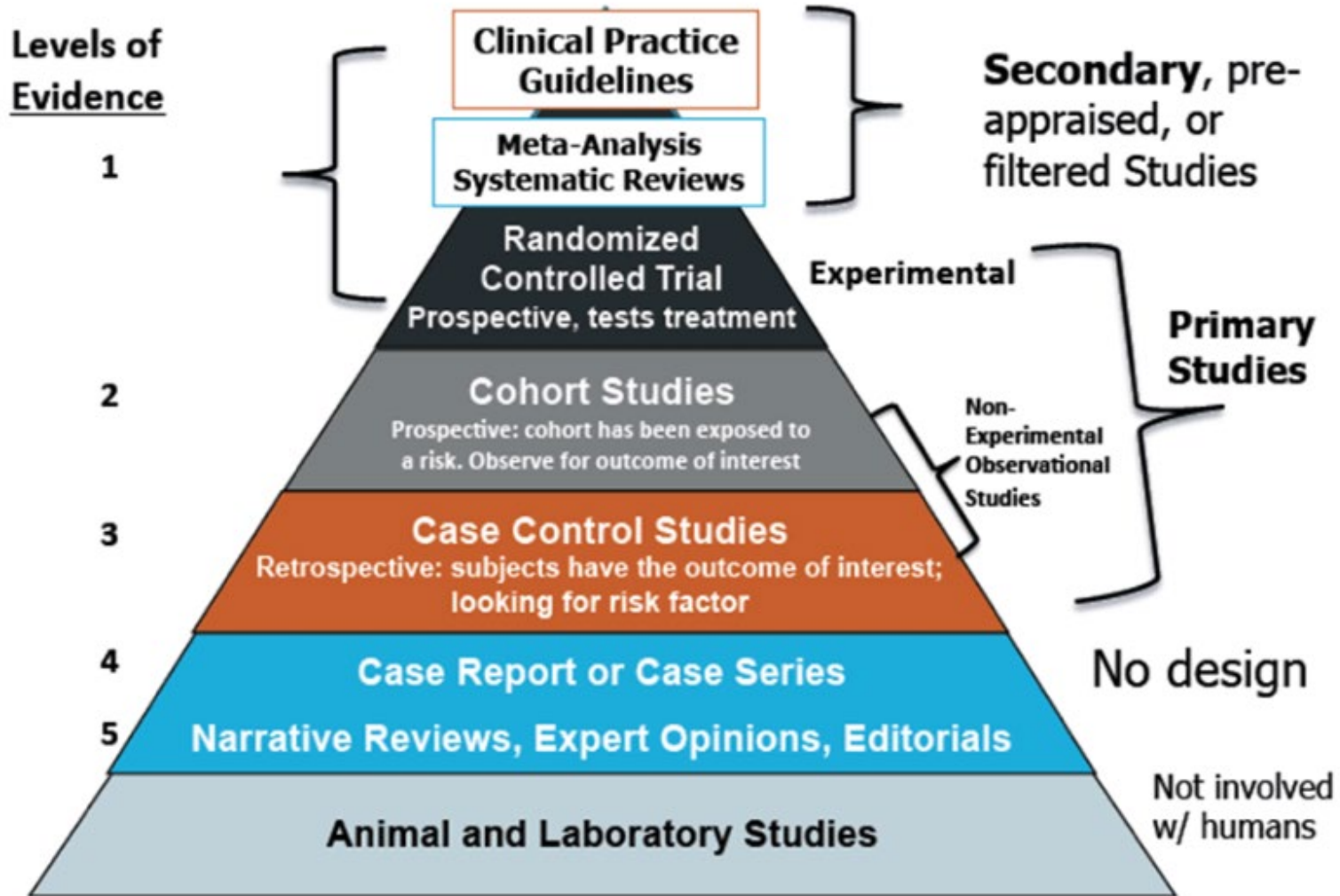
Vaccines for Africa Initiative (VACFA)



- Academic unit
- University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa
- School of Public Health (SPH)
- Greg Hussey: Former Chair of the South African NITAG (NAGI)
- Rudzani Muloiwa: A core member of NAGI
- Benjamin Kagina: SIVAC's capacity development activities of NITAGs in Africa and East Asia



Rationale for establishing the NISH project



Rationale for establishing the NISH project

- ✓ A 2-day stakeholder workshop (Nov 2018) initiated by **WHO** and **Wellcome** identified the following areas that NITAGs will need support for in the future :
 - provision of financial resources
 - **experiences sharing**
 - **capacity development**
 - **improved access to NITAG tools and research evidence**

Rationale for establishing the NISH project

To address some of the challenges, we hypothesized that:

- ✓ An academic-based approach (NISH) is a feasible support mechanism for NITAGs in Africa
- ✓ The NISH would give scientific support to NITAGs to inform immunization practices and policies
- ✓ The NISH project will accelerate growth & maturity of NITAGs to advance immunization programs in Africa

Key findings from the scoping review

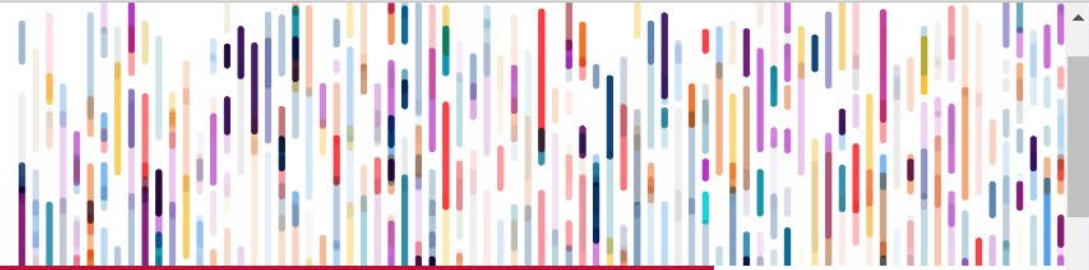
- ✓ NITAGs support the idea of setting up NISH



59 out of the 60 responses support the idea of establishing NISH



National Immunization Technical
Advisory Group (NITAG) **Support Hub**



An initiative for Africa, by Africans

NISH is a scientific support hub for National Immunisation Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) on the African continent. We assist with training, scientific support and research.

MORE



Have you seen the new publications in the Library Guide? [Check it out now](#)

Our work

Supporting NITAGs in Africa

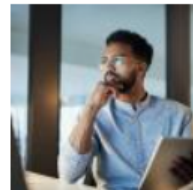
NISH, the National Immunization Technical Advisory Groups (NITAGs) Support Hub, actively supports the work of NITAGs in the WHO Africa Region. NITAGs benefit from an extensive portfolio of offerings and pool of experts to access information and tools from vaccinology and related disciplines to refine their recommendations for national immunisation policies and programmes.

Training
Scientific support
Research



Training

Courses on vaccinology and EIDM, practical skills and more



Scientific support

Expertise in health systems, economics, modelling, design thinking, evidence and more



Research

Assets and resources relevant to African contexts, skills development and more

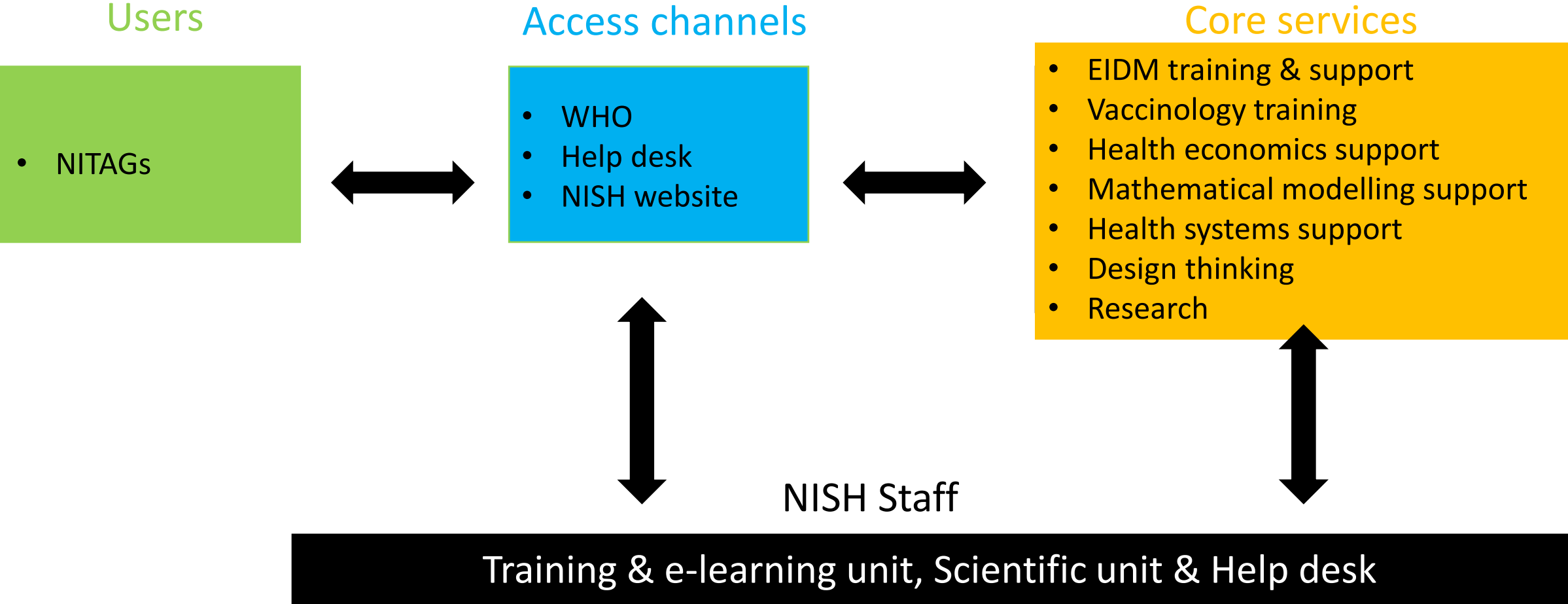


Helpdesk

Request scientific support via our online form

NISH operational & governance model

NISH Management Board



Why provide scientific support to NITAGs?

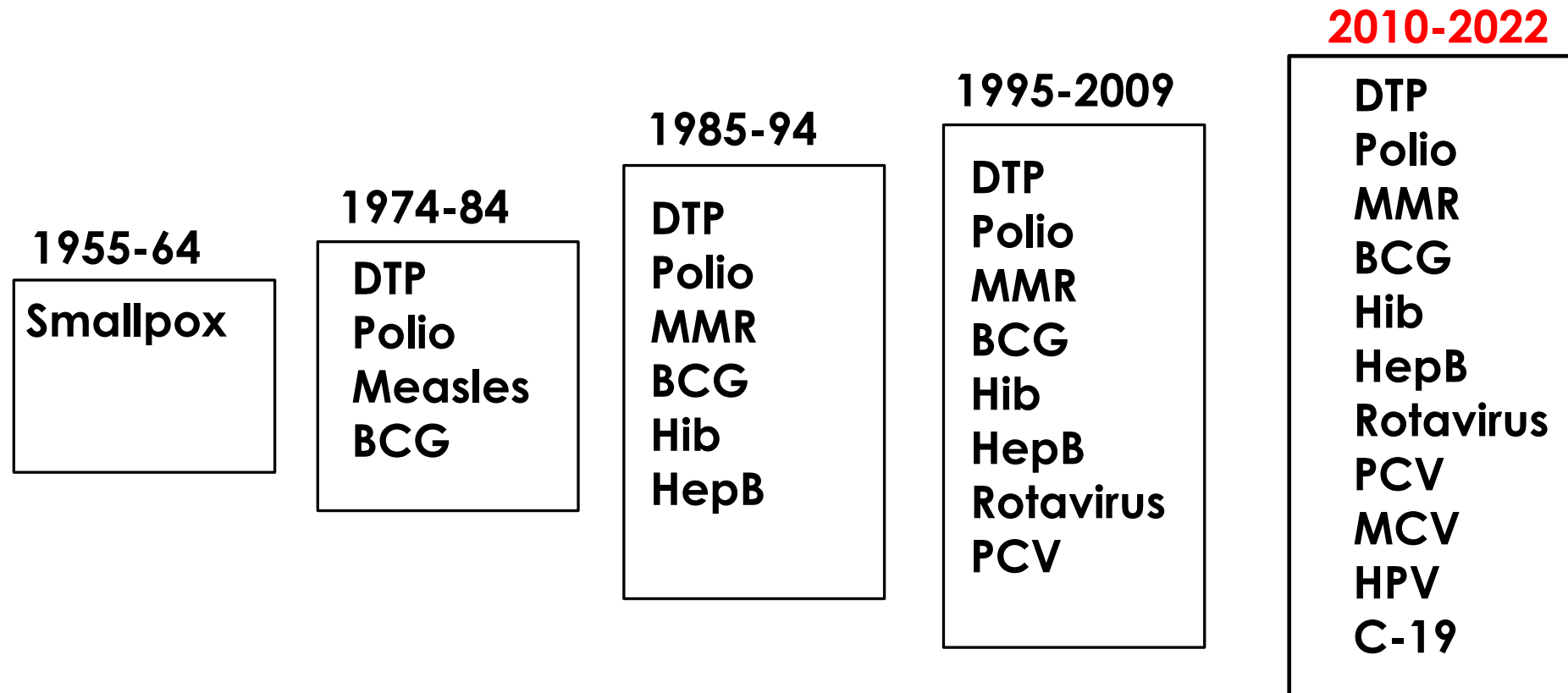
✓ *Evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM) entails:*

- *Identifying*
 - *Appraising*
 - *Mobilizing*
- the best available evidence for safe and effective vaccines and immunization policies*

✓ In the context of immunization and vaccines policies, EIDM can improve:

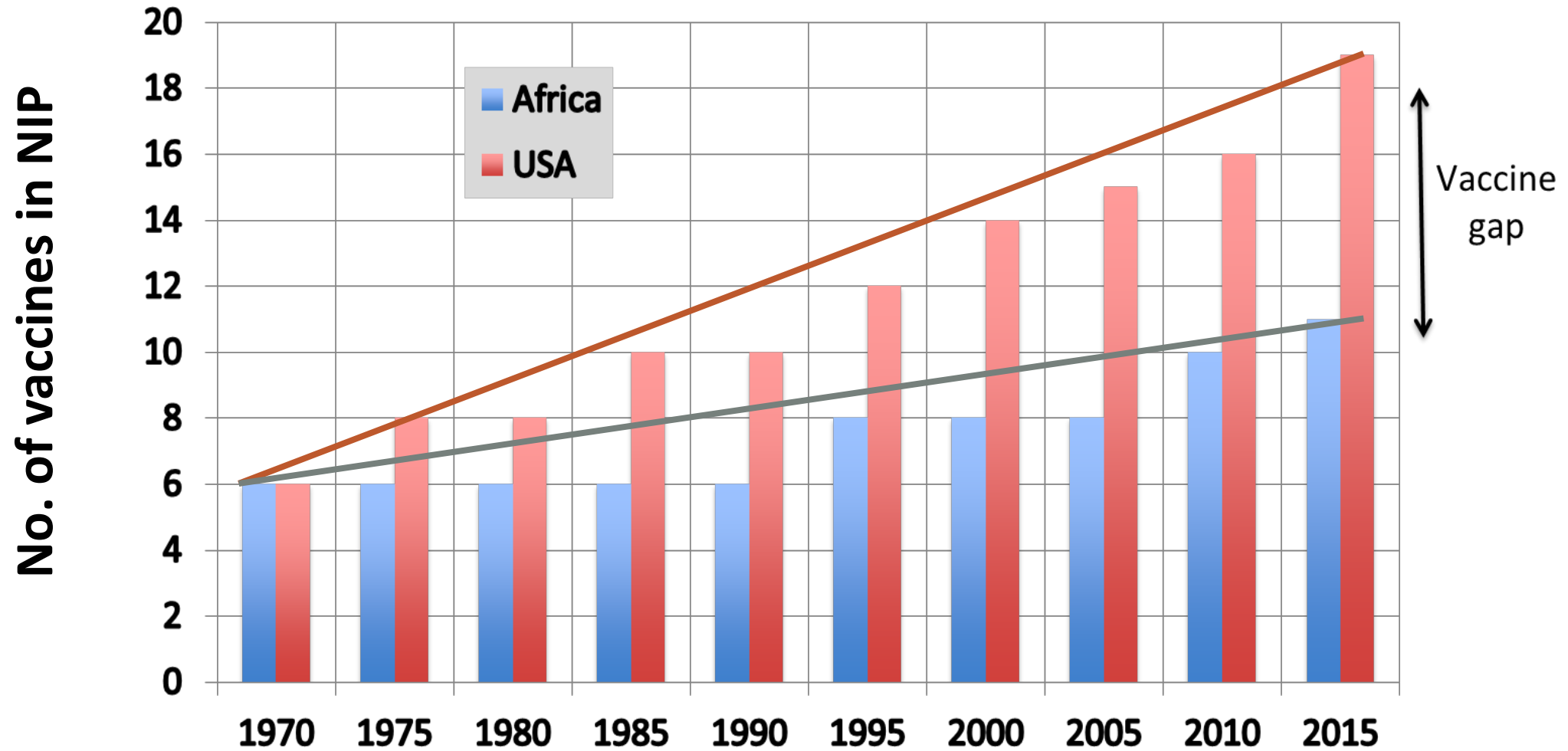
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency & optimization of the program
- Equity
- Transparency & accountability
- Reduced research waste

Why provide scientific support to NITAGs?

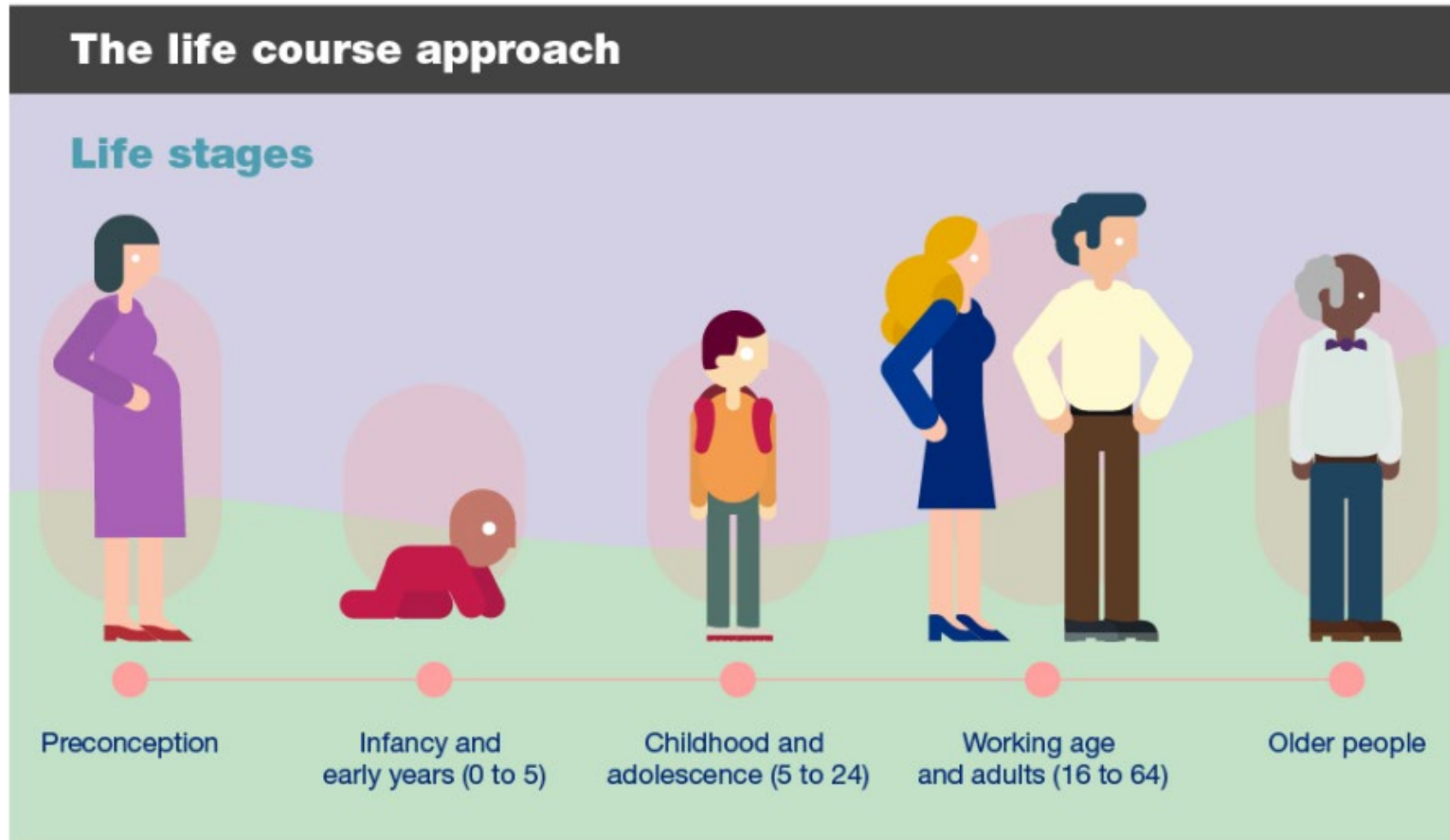


- Others routinely used in certain settings: Influenza, varicella, Hep A etc
- New & future vaccines: Malaria, Ebola, RSV, TB, HIV etc

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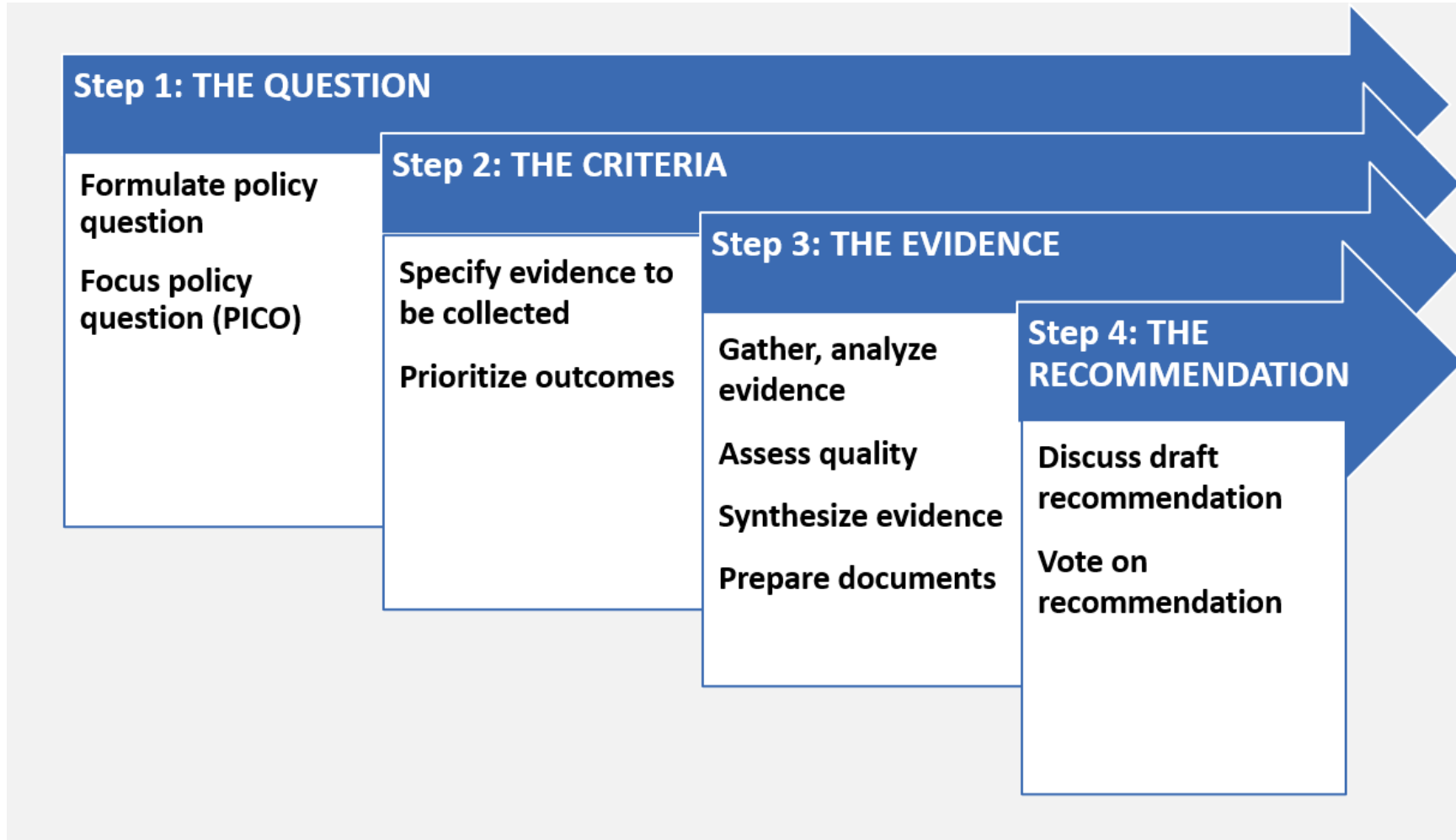
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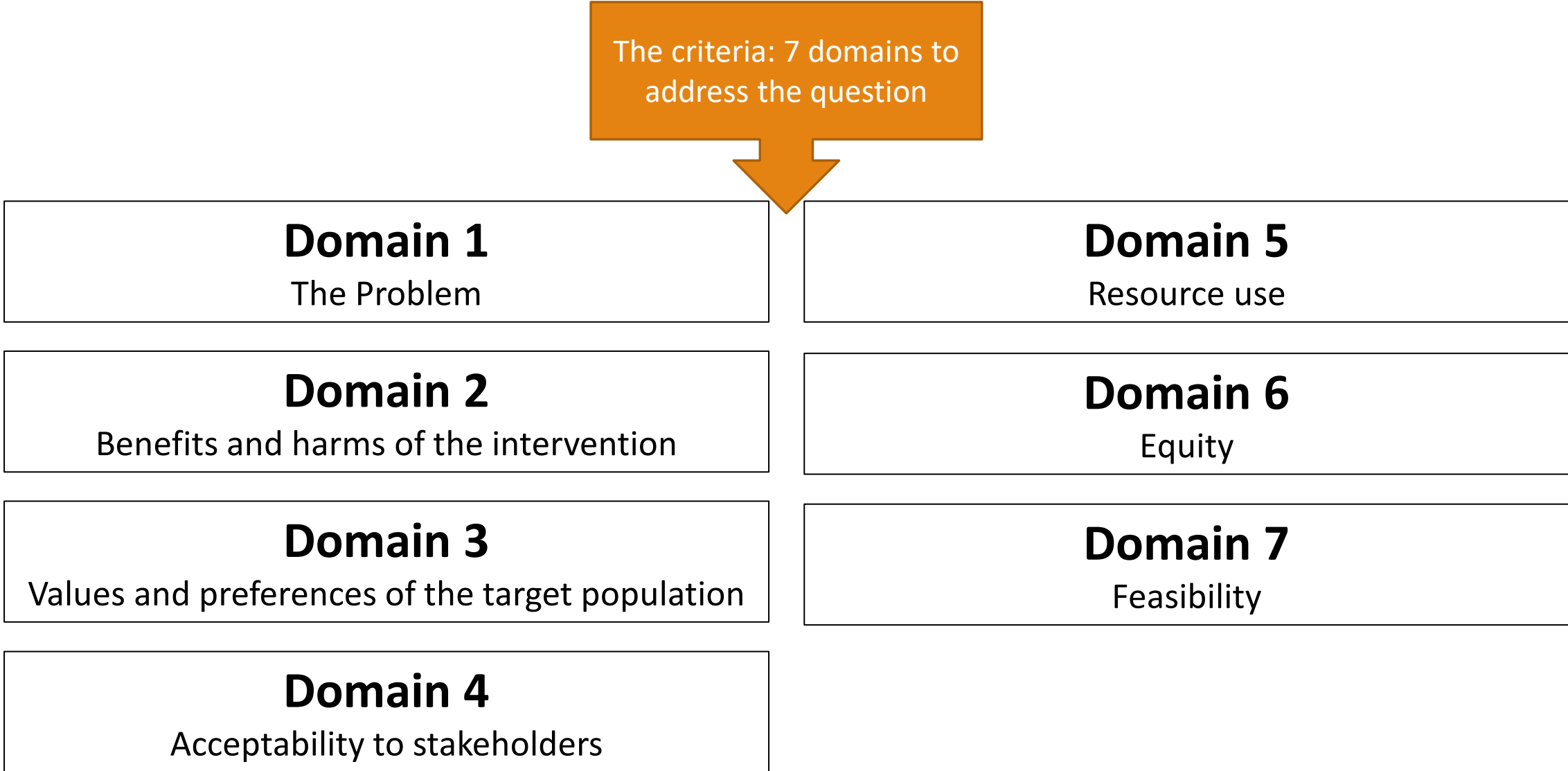
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Evidence to Recommendation (EtR) Steps



Evidence to Recommendation (EtR) Steps

The criteria: 7 domains to address the question



Domain 1

The Problem

Domain 2

Benefits and harms of the intervention

Domain 3

Values and preferences of the target population

Domain 4

Acceptability to stakeholders

Domain 5

Resource use

Domain 6

Equity

Domain 7

Feasibility

EtR Framework

PICO Question				
Background				
DOMAIN	CRITERIA	JUDGEMENTS	EVIDENCE	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
1. Problem	Is the problem of public health importance?			
2. Benefits & harms of the options	Are desirable anticipated effects large? Are undesirable anticipated effects small? Balance between benefits and harms. What is the quality of evidence for critical outcomes?			
3. Values & preferences	Does the target population feel the desirable effects are large relative to the undesirable effects?			
4. Resource use	Are the resources required small? What is the cost-effectiveness?			
5. Equity	What would be the impact on health inequities?			
6. Acceptability	Which option is acceptable to key stakeholders? To the target population?			
7. Feasibility	Is the intervention feasible to implement?			
Balance of consequences				
Type of recommendation				
Recommendation (text)				
Implementation considerations				
Monitoring and evaluation				
Research priorities				

EtR Online training for NITAGs

Curriculum Modules

1

Preparing for the Evidence to Recommendation Process

2

Formulating and Focusing the Policy Question

3A

Defining Generic Criteria for Decision Making

3B

Defining PICO-Specific Criteria for Decision Making

4

Prioritizing Criteria for Decision Making

5

Gathering Evidence: Vaccine Efficacy, Safety, & Global Policy

6

Gathering Evidence: General & Local Data

7

Synthesizing Evidence for Decision Making

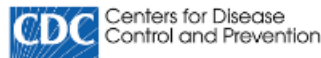


Opportunities for improvements

- 1) Pivoting on existing support & networks can expand the reach of NITAG support with a potential to minimize logistics/costs
- 2) Partnerships and collaborations with NITAG stakeholders is critical
- 3) Aligning the support with the needs of the NITAGs will improve the translation of knowledge gained to action
- 4) Post support follow ups



Acknowledgements



Special thanks to the NISH project team & Management Board



Thank you
