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Immunization Programmes That Leave No One Behind

www.technet-21.org

Why develop a National Immunization Strategy?

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Strategic planning is essential for immunization

Global DPT3 coverage declined from 86% in 2019 to 81% in 2021 and 84% in 2022 (WUENIC)

- COVID-19 pandemic and consecutive disruptions put a strain on health systems
- In 2021, 25 million children missed one or more doses of DTP through routine immunization, 2 million more than in 2020 and 6 million more than in 2019
- In a context of economic crisis and limited resources whilst facing increased costs of immunization program due to C-19 but also to IA2030 ambitions

Strategic planning is essential as it allows

- Defining strategic priorities, objectives and interventions on all immunization components
- Prioritizing resources to achieve these goals and objectives
- Aligning with national, regional and global health and immunization strategies
- Advocating for resources mobilization

What is a National Immunization Strategy (NIS)?

- A *National Immunization Strategy (NIS)* defines the strategic direction that a country will take on immunization
- NIS specifies country's immunization priorities and objectives, identifies obstacles, and organizes sequence of interventions within a time-frame
- NIS brings together national stakeholders, partners and donors to develop priorities, objectives and interventions, and determine amounts and sources of funding needed
- By integrating resource mobilization discussions into NIS development process, a country can ensure that its immunization strategy is not only financially sustainable, but also politically endorsed
- Along with the *National Health Sector Strategy*, a dedicated *National Immunization Strategy* helps ensure interventions are building towards agreed objectives and optimizes use of scarce resources



Why is it important to develop a NIS?

- A well-designed NIS is comprehensive and streamlined. It reduces the fragmentation in immunization planning – a problem that continues to cause challenges and inefficiencies
- A *National Immunization Strategy* is developed considering *Universal Health Coverage* and is aligned with both its *National Health Sector Strategy*, *Immunization Agenda 2030* and its *Regional Framework*
- The NIS provides the foundation for supporting other *Primary Health Care (PHC)* services. A strong immunization strategy is a mean to strengthen the health system more generally
- Once finalized, the NIS will become an invaluable advocacy tool to hold stakeholders, partners and donors accountable for the commitments they have made towards immunization in a country
- It also helps prepare countries for internal or external alterations in financing and funding, such as decentralization, new financing opportunities, transition out of GAVI, GPEI or COVID funding

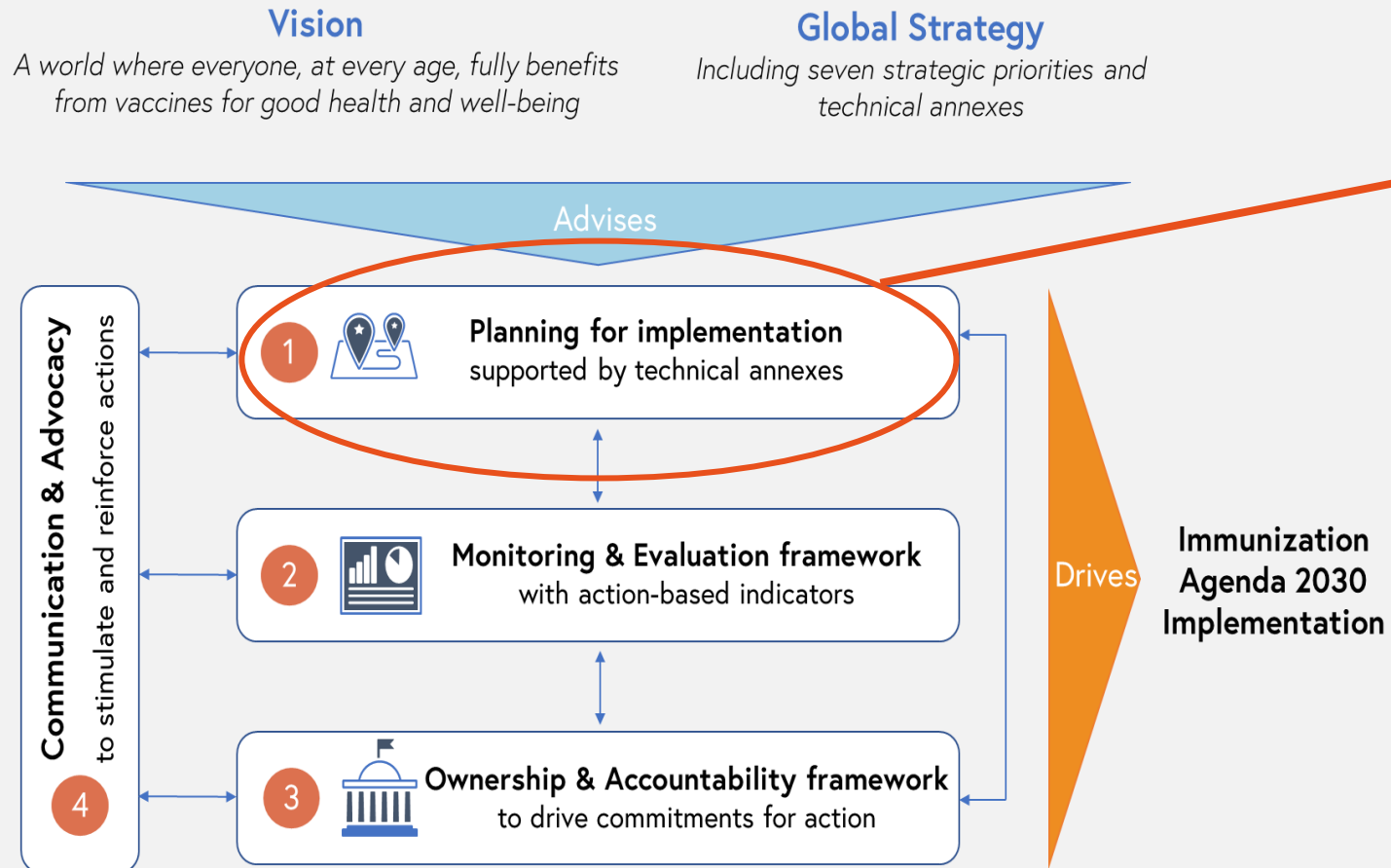


When should a country develop a NIS?

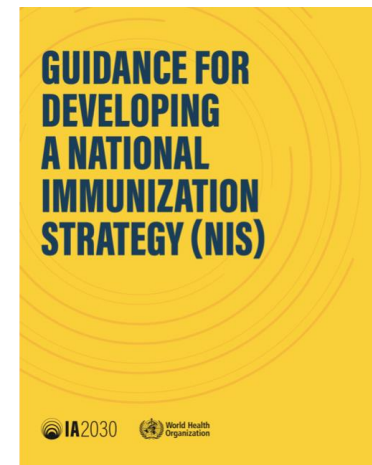
- When a government wants to plan strategically for immunization and improve efficiency
- When there is a need to ensure financial sustainability for the immunization program – either as a sole proactive decision, or in response to changes in the funding landscape
- At the end of a period covered by the previous immunization strategic plan (e.g. cMYP)
- At the time of any major change that requires a review and an update to priorities and available resources. As such it should be considered a living document
- With the need to align with the *National Health Sector Strategy, Immunization Agenda 2030* and *Regional Framework*



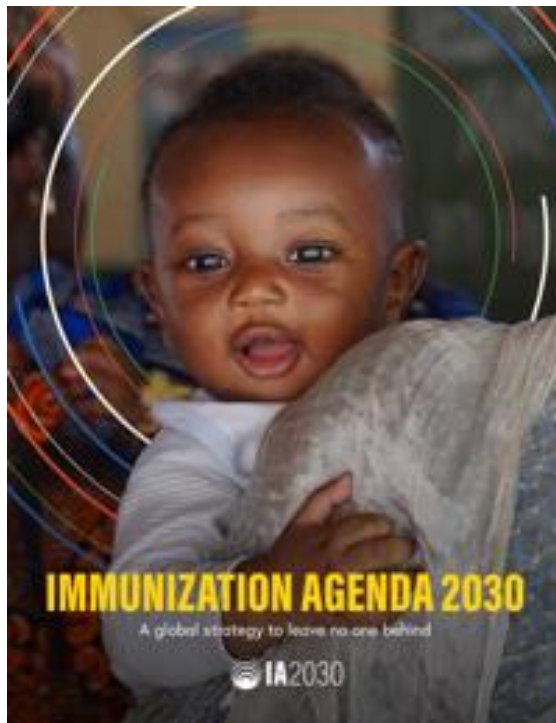
NIS, a key pillar for the success of IA 2030



- Designed as a tool to facilitate **national strategic planning and decision-making** between different stakeholders
- NIS development helps countries **identify their priorities, objectives and main interventions**



Why NIS has taken over cMYP?



Aligned

Aligned to **IA2030** global strategy, regional frameworks and Gavi 5.0



Strategic & streamlined

High-level strategic document
Includes a **streamlined costing approach** that supports budget dialogue and financing



Realistic

A negotiation process with Ministries of Health and Finance leads to an agreed resource envelope to fund key strategic priorities; **framing realistic expectations**



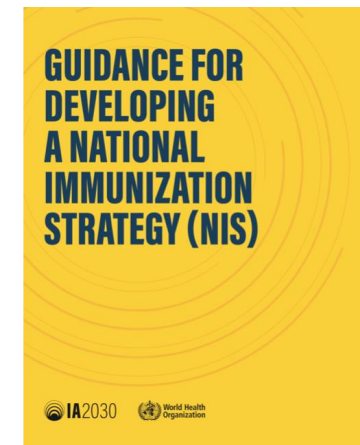
Owned

Directional document based on **national dialogue** minimizes the need for external technical support

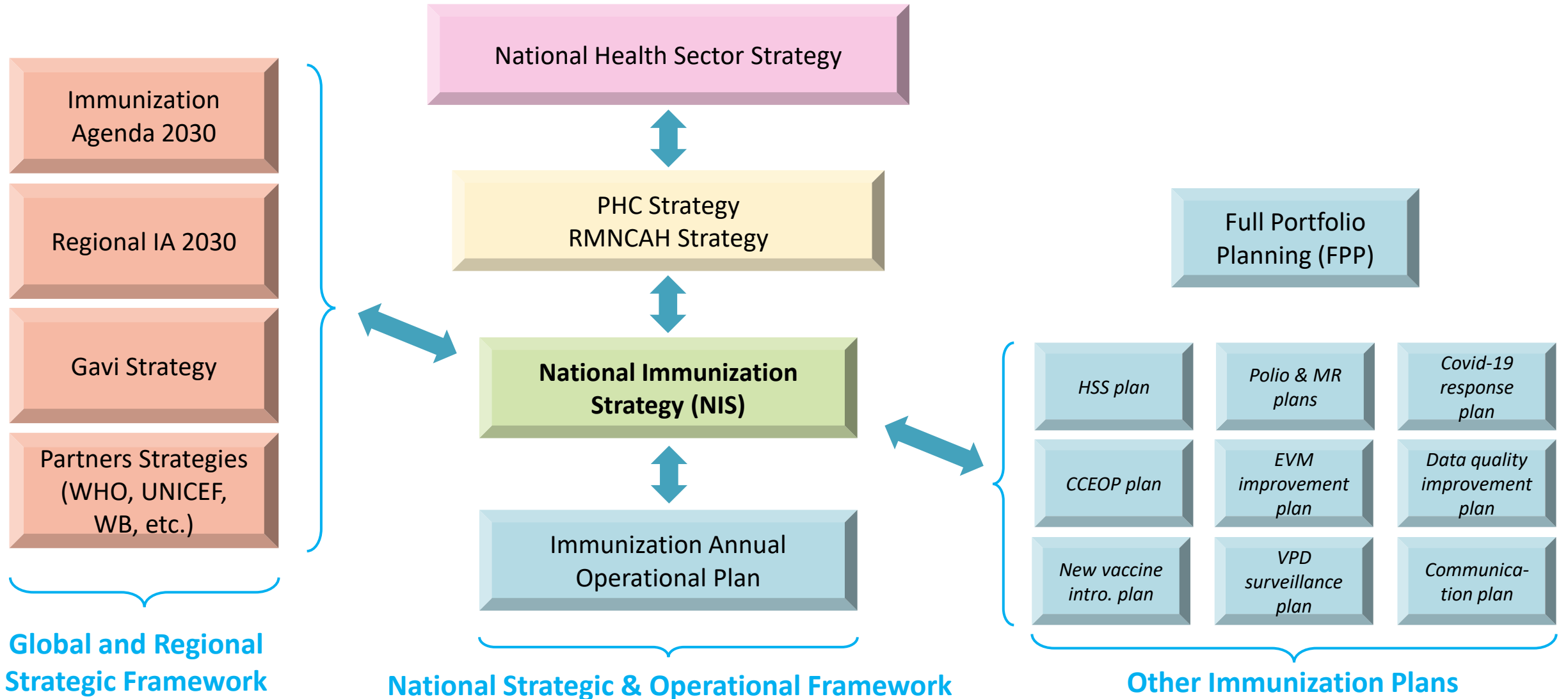


Integrated

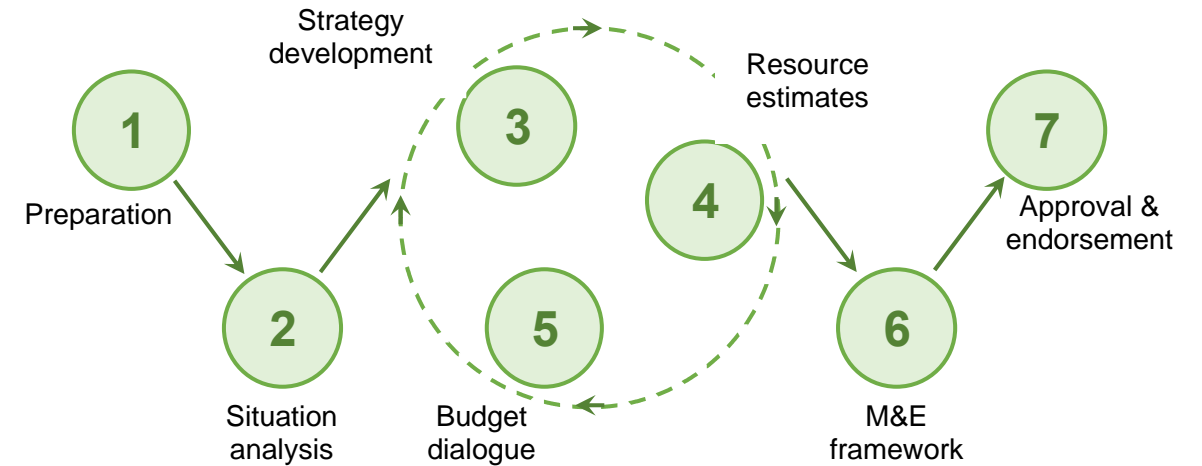
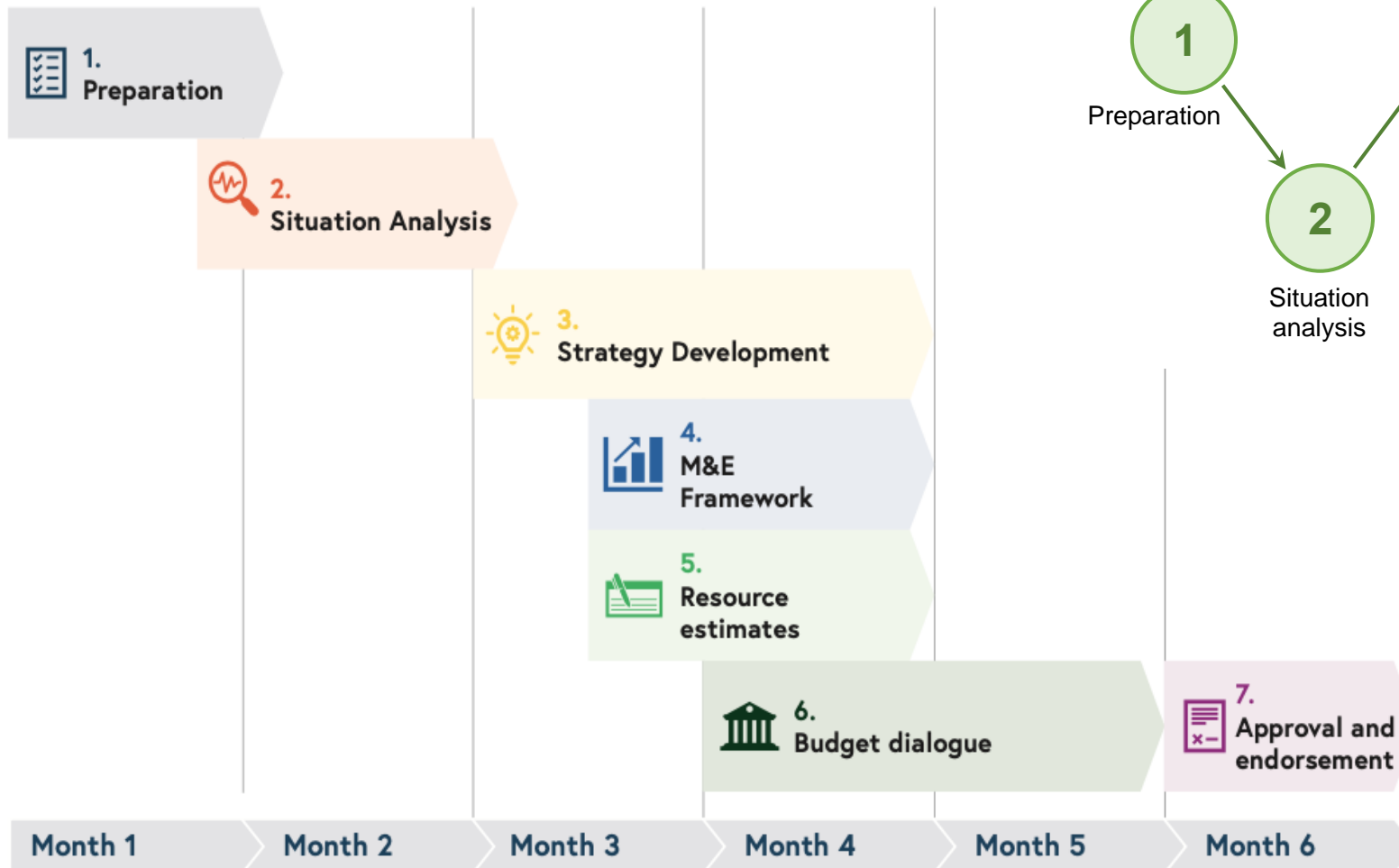
Better **integrated into national health sector planning** and adapted to in-country processes. Shaped through consultation with broader scope of stakeholders



Positioning NIS within national, regional, global planning environment

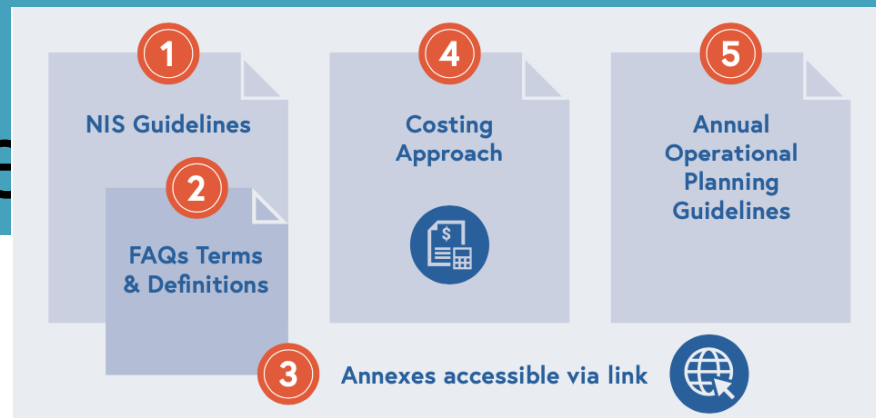


NIS development methodology and process



- Indicative timeframe
- Countries may request technical expertise for their NIS development
- Remote support available for NIS.Cost

NIS resources package

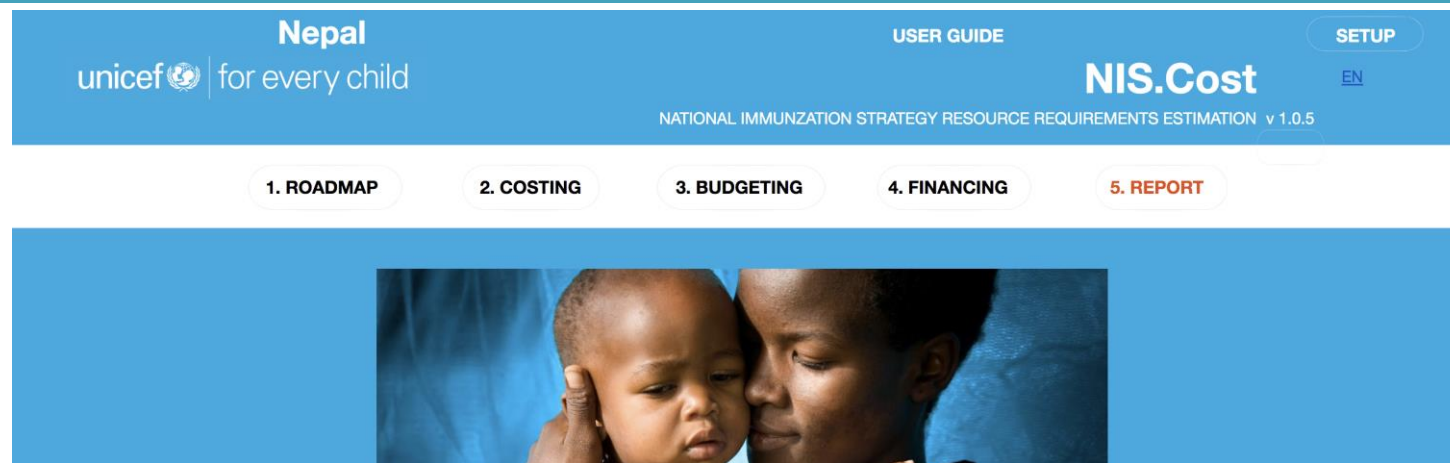


- 1 NIS Guidelines:** A step-by-step guide for country stakeholders on how to develop an NIS
- 2 NIS FAQs:** Further details and descriptions, including definitions of key concepts and terms
- 3 NIS Annexes:** Further supporting documents, including templates and country examples, regularly updated
- 4 NIS Costing Application (NIS.Cost):** Google sheet application to support the estimation of NIS resource requirements
- 5 Annual Operational Planning (AOP) guidelines:** Guidance and tools to support transition from NIS into actionable tasks

Full NIS Package accessible via below links:

- NIS guidelines: <https://www.who.int/teams/immunization-vaccines-and-biologicals/vaccine-access/planning-and-financing/nis>
- NIS forum: www.technet-21.org/en/topics/national-immunization-strategy
- NIS.Cost App: <https://immunizationeconomics.org/unicef-niscost>
- Annual Operational Planning (AOP) guidelines: <https://immunizationeconomics.org/unicef-national-planning-and-budgeting>

New costing instrument “NIS.Cost App”



A structured and easy-to-use online costing instrument

NIS.Cost App supports planning, costing, budgeting and financial analysis during NIS development

- Easy to populate with the **NIS roadmap** including activities, timelines and unit costs
- Supports the **budget negotiation process** during the NIS development
- Enables country teams to work on **prioritization scenarios** aligned to different resource levels
- Could be **used on a rolling basis** when developing and costing annual operational plans
- Existing **service desk function** allows access to technical support in real time

<https://immunizationeconomics.org/unicef-niscost>

NIS development brief update 2021-2023

- More than 2 years of practices on NIS development and use of online NIS.Cost App
- 22 countries already fully developed NIS – 21 ongoing NIS – 27 planned NIS for 2023-2024
- 4 NIS regional workshops (Cotonou, Pretoria, Dakar, Amman) held – 65 countries participated
- Regional webinars held in EAPRO and LACRO, and other regions' webinar under planning
- NIS.Cost App with regular enhancements – will evolve into full web-based application
- Specific training on NIS.Cost App provided upon demand
- “NIS Regional Stewardship” within UNICEF RO and WHO RO for regular exchanges with countries
- Technical assistance provided to countries – pool of experts trained and long-term consultants in place
- NIS countries tracking:

https://worldhealthorg-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/fihmanj_who_int/EXkhlGm1Rm1EueolSXCyW6ABeuphwL2SNCEg-EZAMSIHyw?rttime=Rlk0-iuG20g

Conclusions and take-away

- NIS promotes strategic planning and meant to reflect countries priorities for several years, with buy-in from relevant stakeholders
- NIS also gives opportunity to identify high-level strategic priorities that can be a game changer
- Budget dialogue component is essential to ensure that priorities are funded and implemented
- NIS is a living document and can be updated when there are major shocks affecting the priorities
- No «one size fits all» NIS – depends on countries specific context – peer learning and sharing country experiences is helpful

Technical assistance

- NIS development is extensive and complex – technical expertise should not be underestimated
- National consultants with good knowledge and experience in developing NIS are necessary
- Countries can also benefit from international technical expertise
- UNICEF and WHO are working in tandem to provide such a technical assistance
- Availability of NIS long-term experts within an existing UNICEF pool of experts



Thank You!

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