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BACKGROUND

- Global strategic vision to reach high vaccine coverage for all antigens remains challenging and requires a shift towards a more government-owned, sustainable, and efficient immunization model.
- Coordination systems are essential for achieving this efficient immunization model as they are crucial for the planning, implementation, & and monitoring of health programs to ensure efficiency and effectiveness, particularly in resource-constraint settings like LMICs.
- CHAI synthesized lessons learned and best practices from multi-country experiences in establishing and sustaining government-owned functional coordination units in order to strengthen Immunization program management.
- The learnings presented here will improve coordination practices within governments and with the partner community to support a more collaborative dialogue on shared outcomes and more efficient use of domestic and external funding.

AIM

To identify the critical elements for a functional coordination mechanism and how to measure the impact of coordination platforms

METHODOLOGY

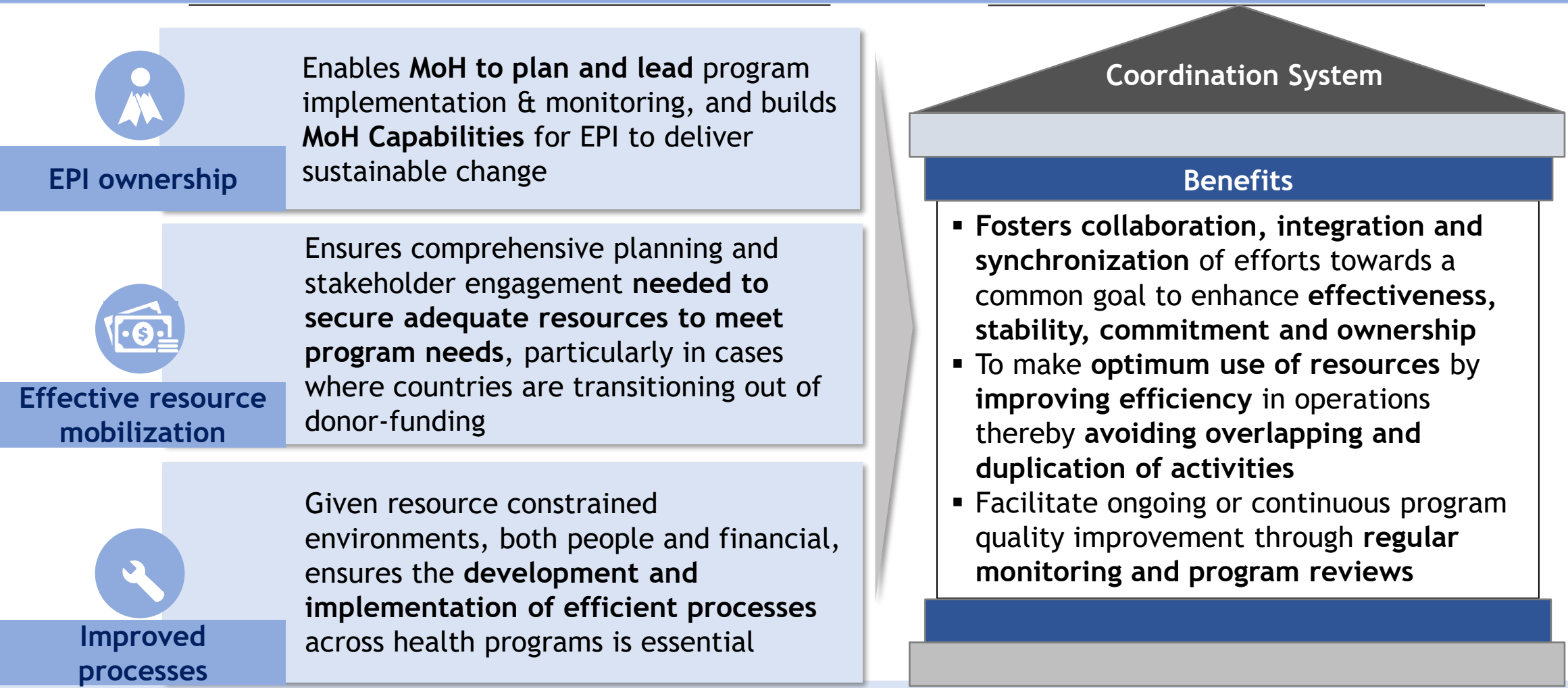
- This was a multi-country qualitative learning study conducted between 2015 to 2019 across 3 countries - **Nigeria, Cameroon and Sierra Leone**, as well as coordinating units at the **Global, National and Sub-national levels**
- It involved the review of 6 key documents:
 - The coordination and communication SOP
 - The Inter-Agency Coordination Committee operational guideline
 - The Program Performance Dashboard
 - The Nigeria Immunization Technical Advisory Group (NGI-TAG) green book
 - The functionality index tool
 - The National Emergency Routine Immunization Coordination Centre (NERICC) operational guideline (Nigeria)

RESULTS

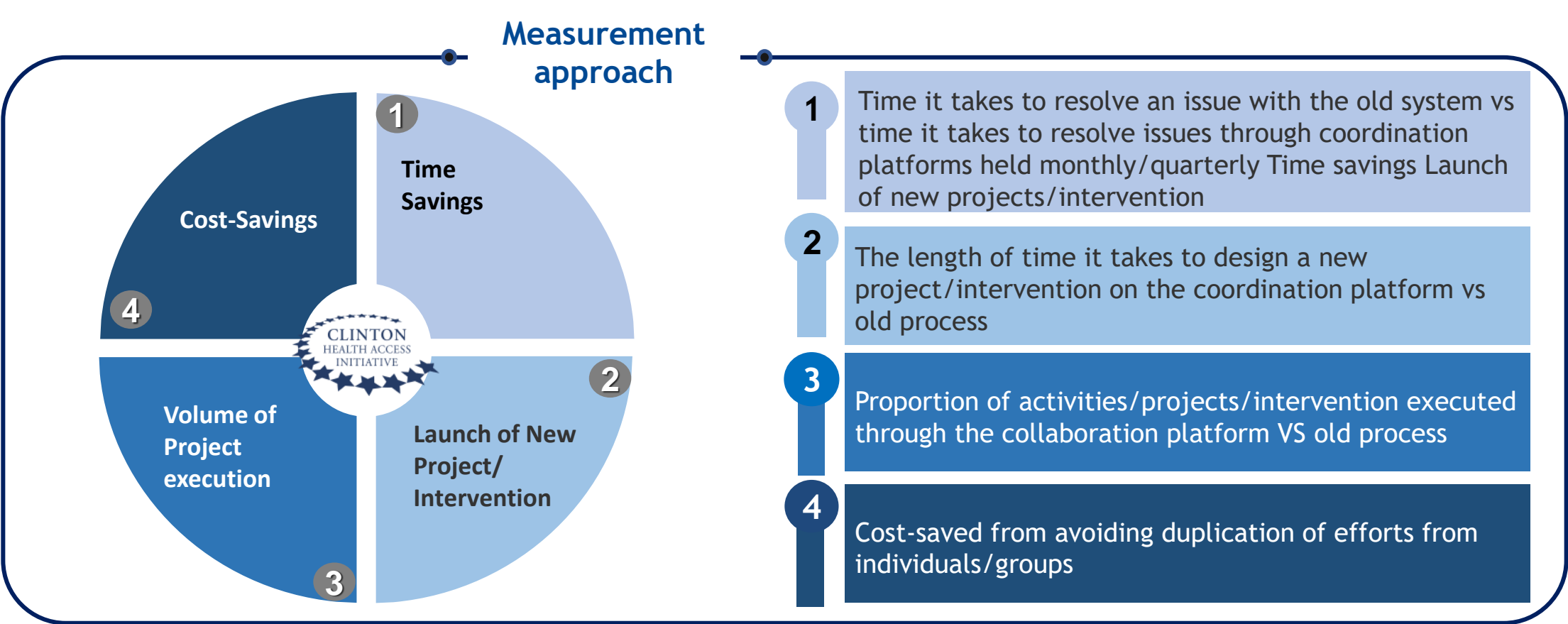
Elements of Coordinating Units

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|-------------|--|
| 1 People | Current and potential stakeholders |
| 2 Tools | Stakeholders mapping tool, Guidelines, Terms of Reference that define roles and responsibilities, Standard Operating Procedures, Functionality framework |
| 3 Processes | Information flow, coordination structure |

Importance of Coordination on National Immunization Programs



Measuring the Impact of Coordination Platforms



KEY LEARNINGS FROM MULTI-COUNTRY COORDINATION

Targeted Advocacy:

Targeted advocacy to relevant stakeholders to obtain buy-in and commitment is critical to facilitate the setting up/maintaining a strong coordination unit

Government Ownership:

Government ownership and leadership of coordination units is critical to drive functionality and sustainability of coordination platforms

Stakeholder Engagement:

Continuous stakeholder engagement through coordination units helps maintain accountability through mutual agreement on expectation by members/stakeholders

Performance Management:

Strong performance management systems can ultimately lead better evidence-based decision making and achievement of overall goals

Capacity Strengthening:

Targeted on-the-job capacity strengthening/mentorship for government officials can ultimately lead to an increased government-led execution of set objectives and sustainability of coordination unit

ENABLERS OF LEARNINGS

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stakeholder MappingIdentification of existing advocacy platforms/ opportunitiesEarly engagement with stakeholdersStrong technical assistance to core team and secretariatInvolvement of champions and influencers | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Robust information sharing via meetings, emails and timely reportingDevelopment and adoption of functionality index toolDevelopment and institutionalization of a program performance dashboard and routine evaluation of Program progress against targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilization of capacity needs assessmentDevelopment of relevant job aids/SOPs/Circulars and guidelines along with early mentorship and routine follow-upInstitutionalization of accountability framework |
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Pitfalls

- Partner-led coordination platforms in countries with little ownership from government
- Poor planning with no agenda-setting leads to wasted time and resources
- Poor consistency in who attends meeting e.g. having different individuals from different organization/groups attend meeting leads to poor contribution and lack of continuity

Recommendations

- Country coordination platforms should be government-led to drive ownership and Sustainability
- Early planning and agenda setting to facilitate better conduct of meeting to achieve set objectives
- Encourage government/partners to commit the same persons to be responsible for participating at technical coordination meetings

Conclusion

- Coordination and accountability within and across the health sector, between governments and external stakeholders, is the foundation for achieving better health outcomes.
- Coordination units are crucial to the successful planning and implementation of programs in all countries, given the presence of multiple priorities, limited resources, and numerous stakeholders.