The Implementation Science Initiative (ISI) in Kenya and Uganda

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I) Implementation Science Principles

II) The Implementation Science Initiative (ISI) in Kenya and Uganda
   I) Objectives of ISI
   II) Creation of a core team
   III) Strategies for operationalizing SISN’s framework

III) Q&A
SISN’s Integrative Framework for IS in Nutrition

1. Contextual, Tacit and Experiential Knowledge (CKE)

Implementation Science: Existing and Emerging Knowledge About Implementation

2. Contextual Implementation Research (CIR)

3. Formal and Rigorously Evaluated Implementation Trials, Proofs of Concept & Evaluation of Innovative Implementation Practices (from the same or different settings) (GKE)

Frameworks, Tools, Guidelines

Capacity Building, Technical Assistance, Knowledge Brokering, Coaching

The Goal

Collaboratively Assess, Build on Strengths and Address Weaknesses in The Five Domains in a Timely Manner During All Phases of Planning and Implementation

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Implementation Science Principles

1. Collaboratively identify implementation bottlenecks
2. Mobilize existing knowledge, frameworks and tools whenever possible
3. When research is needed, develop implementation research (IR) (rigor, practicability and timeliness)
Implementation Arena: Iron Folic Acid Supplementation (IFAS)

- Iron requirements in pregnancy are rarely met by dietary food intake alone
- IFAS during pregnancy improves health for mothers and infants
- Cost effective intervention
- Low prevalence of pregnant women who take 90+ tablets
- "Relatively simple" intervention to implement

In brief, ISI seeks to address bottlenecks and improve IFAS through the use of existing knowledge first and then, the generation of additional evidence through implementation research.
Objectives of ISI

1. Strengthen capacity for applying IS at the country level

2. Strengthen interaction and knowledge exchange among key actors (policy, program and research)

3. Strengthen implementation of IFAS programs

4. Increase knowledge about how to apply and build capacity for IS
Creation of a core team (1)

Challenge: Lack of a shared understanding

Solution: Build the collective tacit knowledge
Creation of a core team (2)

**Support Team**
- SISN
- 3ie

**National Core Team**
- MOH Official or designate
- Sr. Nutrition Expert
- NGO Project Manager
- Researcher(s)

**Policy/Program Actors**
- MOH policy makers
- MOH program managers
- NGO managers
- Donors
- Other stakeholders

**Key Actors**
- Policy
- Program
- Research
The 5 strategies refer to 5 different sources and types of knowledge
1. Knowledge Brokering

People specifically tasked with accessing and adapting knowledge to meet the needs of implementers, planners and policy makers
## Qualities and skills of KNOWLEDGE BROKERS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Qualities and skills</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Respect (seniority, reputation, authority)</td>
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<td>• Credibility (research, content, government)</td>
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<td>• Accessibility, responsiveness and flexibility for KB roles and activities</td>
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<td>• Reliability</td>
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<td>• Self-confidence</td>
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<td>• Motivational skills (enthusiastic and creative)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interpersonal skills and team builder</td>
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<td>• Oral and written communication skills</td>
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<td>• Tact, diplomatic and mediator</td>
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<td>• Tireless commitment and determination</td>
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<td>• Problem-solving skills</td>
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<td>• Networking skills and an existing network</td>
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<td>• Change management skills</td>
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Sources: synthesis of multiple sources in the references
KNOWLEDGE BROKERING team

• Difficult to identify one person with all key qualities and skills
• Five role domains¹
• ISI uses one key actor who play KB roles and a two-level KB strategy
  • Level 1: national, implementers
  • Level 2: global, SISN

Source¹: Glegg, S & Hoens, A (2016)
Raising awareness about KNOWLEDGE BROKERING

- Increase the awareness of the project coordinators on their KB roles
- Assess the dynamics of the core team members to create a favorable environment: tool such as the Belbin team roles
  - Innovator, coordinator, monitor evaluator, implementer, completer finisher, resource mobiliser, shaper, teamworker
- Develop terms of reference for the different groups
Implementation Tools

1. Knowledge Brokering
   Implementers
   Planners
   Policy Makers

2. Implementation Tools

Accessible, fit-for-purpose tools to address common implementation challenges
**Challenge:** Multiple barriers are experienced during implementation

**Strategy:** Need to use various tools in order to overcome them
Strategy 2

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS: Bottleneck assessment workshop

Pre-workshop:
• Conducted district assessment using District Assessment Tool for Anemia (DATA) tool¹

Workshop:
• Participants: ministries, academia, local government & partners
• Modified the Program Assessment Guide²
• Participatory – group and plenary discussions

Sources: 1) www.spring-nutrition.org ; 2) www.a2zproject.org/pdf/PAG.pdf
Strategy 2

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS:
Bottleneck inventory

Inquiry approach: Triple-A cycle helps to assess bottlenecks in an ongoing manner

Bottleneck inventory: documentation helps building a rich repertoire of bottlenecks related to IFAS
Strategy 3

Published or unpublished findings, frameworks, tools and guidelines from:

- implementation research in other countries (including formal trials and evaluations)
- implementation experience in other countries

AND

Experiential knowledge of practitioners from other countries
Use EXISTING global knowledge and experience

- Carry out selected literature review on selected topics
  - IFAS
  - Quality Improvement approaches
  - Research design
  - Bottleneck assessments
- Develop various guidance notes
- Refer to SISN technical working group
Implementation Research

Practical inquiries embedded in and connected to implementation in a given country, such as:

- formative research,
- stakeholder analysis,
- opinion leader research,
- rapid assessments,
- operations research,
- special studies,
- process evaluation,
- costing studies,
- Delphi studies,
- various forms of quality improvement or quality assurance, etc.
Challenge: Knowledge gaps on various implementation aspects limit progress

Strategy: Develop research questions based on:
- gaps identified
- implementation priorities
- potential solutions
1. Uncoordinated health education

2. Regular stock-outs of IFA

3. Lack of male involvement in supporting pregnant women to seek ANC services

INTERVENTION: quality improvement approach to improve IFAS
Quality Improvement Approach

- URC supports Quality Improvement (QI) teams in health facilities
- PDSA cycles on a package of health interventions

INTERVENTION: QI-enhanced process for IFAS
- Bi-monthly mentorship and coaching session
- Bi-weekly data management and reporting
- QI work planning meetings
- Collaborative learning networks...
Effectiveness-implementation hybrid design

**INTERVENTION AREA**
- QI-standard health services + QI-enhanced IFAS
  - Orientation on QI-enhanced IFAS
  - Series of QI cycles (PDSA) on IFAS
  - IFAS delivery adjustments
  - QI-enhanced IFAS delivery

**COMPARISON AREA**
- QI-standard health services + Standard IFAS
  - Series of QI cycles (PDSA) on the package of health interventions
  - Delivery adjustments for health interventions
  - Standard IFAS delivery

**Study 1:** Process evaluation of QI implementation

**Study 2:** Evaluation of QI effectiveness
The knowledge and experience of actors in a given country used in everyday decision when planning and implementing programs, including:

- Stakeholder relations, histories and dynamics,
- Capacity strengths and weaknesses,
- What has or has not worked, where, when, how, why
- Formal and informal administrative procedures, etc.
**Challenge:** Limited or sparse efforts on IS in health and nutrition in the country

**Strategy:** Build an IS network in the country and link with global networks and key actors
Five Strategies for Operationalizing the SISN’ Framework

1. Knowledge Brokering
2. Implementation Tools
3. Global Sources of Implementation Knowledge and Experience
4. Country-Based Implementation Research
5. National Sources of Implementation Knowledge

Five Strategies for Operationalizing the SISN’ Framework:

1. Knowledge Brokering
   - Implementers
   - Planners
   - Policy Makers

2. Implementation Tools

3. Global Sources of Implementation Knowledge and Experience

4. Country-Based Implementation Research

5. National Sources of Implementation Knowledge
Challenge: Limited understanding of how to strengthen capacity for IS while improving implementation of a specific program

Strategy: Reflective practice with key actors and documentation of the overall experiences
Implementation Science in Nutrition: Concepts and Frameworks for an Emerging Field of Science and Practice

Alison Tumilowicz, Marie T Ruel, Gretel Pelto, David Pelletier, Eva C Monterroso, Karin Lapping, Klaus Kraemer, Luz Maria De Regil, Gilles Bergeron, Mandana Arabi, Lynnette Neufeld, Rachel Sturke, on behalf of The Society for Implementation Science in Nutrition

1 Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition; 2 International Food Policy Research Institute; 3 Cornell University; 4 Sight and Life; 5 FHI360; 6 Nutrition International; 7 NY Academy of Sciences; 8 Save the Children US; and 9 National Institutes of Health
References (1)

- Damschroeder et al. Fostering implementation of health services research findings into practice: a consolidated framework for advancing implementation science Imp Sci, 2009 4:50
References (2)


• Hering, Janet G. (2016). Do we need “more research” or better implementation through knowledge brokering? *Sustainability Science, 11*(2), 363-369.

References (3)


SISN’s vision is a world where actions to improve nutrition are designed and implemented with the best available scientific knowledge and practical experience.

www.implementnutrition.org