

## Summary of SISN Strategic Refresh 2022

SISN was formed in 2015 to promote and support the application of implementation science in solving nutrition problems in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC). Led by a volunteer Board of Directors and a small, part-time Secretariat, SISN's inaugural five-year strategic plan (2016-2020) focussed on establishing the Society's governance structures and supporting technical work and knowledge exchange to advance theory, methods, conduct, and capacity for implementation science in nutrition. During this period, SISN published a framework for and perspectives article about implementation science in nutrition, collaborated with partners on projects to advance the field (e.g. Implementation Science Initiative, KI3 Initiative), and carried out a range of knowledge exchange and promotional activities.

In 2021, the SISN Board initiated a strategic refresh. Priority concerns underlying the next multi-year strategy included ensuring SISN's financial viability and that it is effectively engaging and serving LMIC colleagues.

Through listening sessions with a range of stakeholders, we confirmed that people recognize the value of implementation science in strengthening the delivery of nutrition actions but numerous constraints prevent its uniform, systematic, and impactful application. Stakeholders identified current unmet needs for 1) stronger linkages and effective communication between all stakeholders and levels of implementation, 2) implementation research activities embedded within programs, 3) adequate training and expertise to apply implementation science and research in LMICs, and 4) effective translation, dissemination, and exchange of information at all levels (especially locally).

SISN is well positioned to foster interpersonal networks, build skills and exchange expert, contextual, and implementation research-generated knowledge across global, national, and sub-national communities of researchers, practitioners, policy leaders, and funders. Over the next 5 years, SISN will work towards the following three strategic goals:

1. **Connection:** Build meaningful relationships between decision-makers, researchers and practitioners interested in doing implementation science in nutrition and facilitate sub-communities for peer-to-peer learning and exchange
2. **Capacity Building:** Strengthen the ability of practitioners and researchers, particularly those in contexts with less access to skills-building resources, to conduct and contribute to implementation science in nutrition, and foster future leaders who will advance the field
3. **Communication:** Promote the importance and value of implementation science in nutrition and ensure that it is clear and visible to diverse stakeholders including donors, policy makers, researchers, and implementers

Efforts to attain these goals will center around four strategic activities, namely:

1. Formation of regional, national (or sub-national) networks for implementation science in nutrition
2. Global learning conference
3. Train future leaders in implementation science in nutrition (Fellows program, small grants for graduate students/trainees)
4. Continued knowledge exchange efforts

SISN is committed to delivering on these goals but recognizes the limits of the current organizational model with a volunteer Board and part-time Secretariat. We also know that the needed cross-cutting activities are unlikely to be funded through project-centric sources of revenue (e.g., a single donor). SISN needs a new organizational model to achieve continuity, coordination, and diverse and sustainable funding. To be sustainable, SISN must work collaboratively with partners and donors whose goals are aligned with the Society. Securing multiple donor commitments that can support a full-time Executive Director to lead the implementation of the Strategic Plan is a crucial first step.