

SQ-LNS Research Priorities

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SQ-LNS Task Force



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Background

- Meta-analyses of efficacy and effectiveness trials of SQ-LNS have demonstrated clear benefits on child survival, growth, development, anemia, and micronutrient status
- Organizations are interested in scaling-up SQ-LNS, but knowledge gaps remain.
- Research is needed to inform the delivery and implementation of new and expanding SQ-LNS programs

Adapted CHNRI Process

- Child Health and Nutrition Research Initiative (CHNRI) method was developed to assist decision-making and priority setting in health research investments
- Produces results for a target audience of international agencies, research funding donors, national governments, and policy-makers
- Proposed research options are evaluated against a pre-defined set of criteria in a systematic, transparent, and democratic way

RE-AIM Framework Evaluation Criteria

- RE-AIM is a framework developed to improve the adoption and sustainable implementation of evidence-based interventions in public health and other settings (re-aim.org)
 - **REACH:** would the research enable programs to better reach key target groups?
 - **EFFECTIVENESS:** would the research improve or provide new insights into the effectiveness or impact of the intervention?
 - **ADOPTION:** would the research enable greater adoption by key actors?
 - **IMPLEMENTATION:** would the research improve the fidelity or quality of implementation?
 - **MAINTENANCE:** would the research evaluate or support the institutionalization or maintenance of the intervention in routine organizational practices and policies?
 - **RESEARCH AFFORDABILITY:** would the research activities be affordable to implement within a realistic timeframe?

Development of research question list

- Question list developed by the Operational Research Working Group, SQ-LNS Task Force
- Shortened to 20 questions in 3 domains
 - 11 in Delivery
 - 3 in Efficiency
 - 6 in Discovery

Survey design

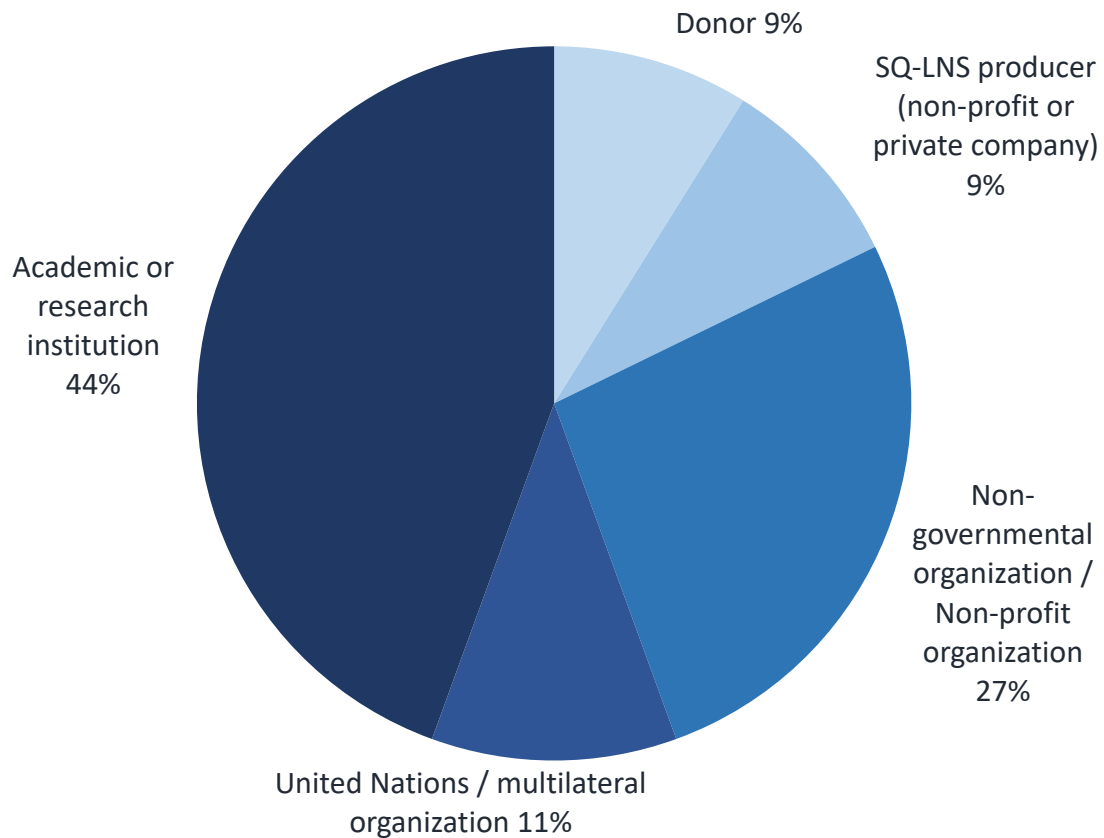
- Survey developed in Qualtrics in English and French
- Research questions evaluated against their ability to achieve each of the 5 specified criteria using a Likert scale
- Respondents asked to weight the importance of each of the five criteria
- Emailed to 140 respondents from academia, NGOs, UN Agencies, donors, producers, and governments
- Respondents encouraged to share with their professional networks

Data analysis

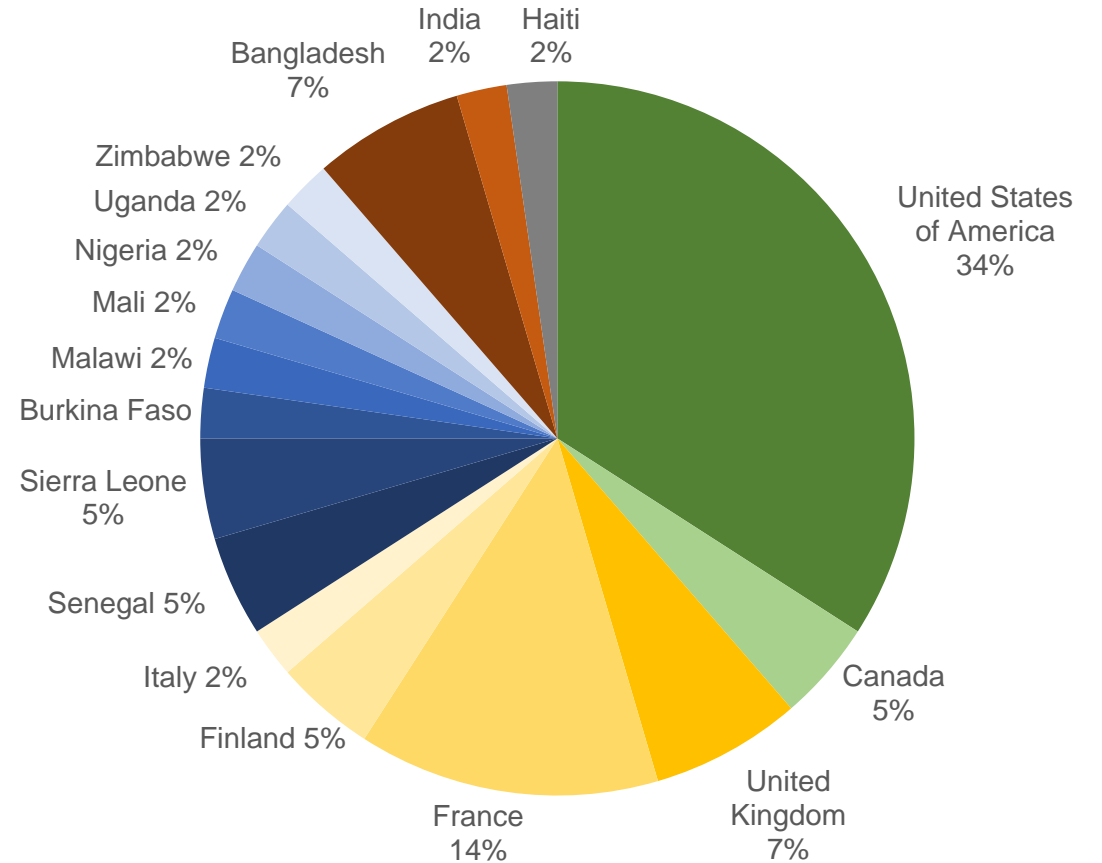
- Research priority scores: average of the scores for each of the five RE- AIM criteria and the overall mean score across criteria
- Weighted research priority scores
 - Calculated the mean weight assigned to each of the criteria
 - Weights applied to the research priority scores to calculate weighted average scores

Respondent characteristics (N=45)

Respondent's organization



Countries represented



Average criteria weighting scores

Criteria	Average priority weight
Implementation	24.2
Reach	21.7
Effectiveness	21.0
Adoption	16.9
Research affordability	16.3

Top 5 weighted research priority scores

Research topics	Domain	Weighted Priority Score
What criteria (e.g. food insecurity, stunting burden, wasting burden, etc.) should be used to identify geographic regions to target for SQ-LNS distribution for maximum benefits?	Delivery	0.83
How can integration into delivery platforms be optimized to maximize coverage, reach, and achievement of broader health goals?	Delivery	0.82
Does incorporation of SQ-LNS into other child health services (e.g. vaccine delivery, community health worker visits, mother's groups, etc.) incentivize utilization or participation rates in those services?	Delivery	0.80
Are social protection programs an effective platform for delivery of SQ-LNS? What methods are needed to integrate SQ-LNS into social protection programs targeted at the household level? How can such programs identify households with children eligible for SQ-LNS?	Delivery	0.77
What are the main cost drivers of SQ-LNS distribution within different delivery platforms and how can they be reduced?	Efficiency	0.73

Additional questions in ranked in top 5 under the criteria of implementation, reach, or effectiveness

- One additional question prioritized under effectiveness criteria:

Research topics	Domain	Priority Score
Would the inclusion of SQ-LNS into acute malnutrition treatment programs reduce the risk of relapse?	Discovery	0.82

Summary and implications of research priorities to support scaling-up SQ-LNS

- Focus on research that supports implementation, effectiveness, and reach of SQ-LNS programs
- Research themes ranked as of the highest priority:
 - How to best target SQ-LNS programs
 - Integration of SQ-LNS into health systems, social protection programs, and wasting management programs
- We would like to expand the response rate to include broad representation of people with an interest in this topic. Survey will remain open.



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