This study aims to demonstrate the utility of an implementation research (IR) framework in understanding trajectories of global programs. By applying the framework to the global vitamin A supplementation (VAS) program, this poster highlights key factors that have contributed to the program’s success. As VAS is widely considered a key success story, viewing it through this historical perspective offers lessons that are transferable to other programs in implementing them more effectively (see Box 2).

**OBJECTIVES**

- Awareness creation and advocacy, backed by sound evidence generation, is key to influencing policy and propelling a program forward.
- While each phase in the IR framework appears to take an equal amount of time, the reality may be that different steps will need varying amounts of time. In the VAS example, evidence to scale up took approximately twenty years. As the challenge to maximize sustainability now arises, IR will once again be necessary to decide best approaches.
- There are no shortcuts: bringing a program to scale requires significant investment of not only resources, but also of time. Progress cannot be rushed and may be cyclic. In addition, tailor-made approaches are always best; defining specific solutions to local contexts may take longer, but will ensure better sustainability.

**METHODS**

The Micronutrient Initiative (MI) adapted an IR framework (see Figure 1) from Peters et al. 2013, “Implementation research in health: a practical guide.” Using PubMed and Google Scholar, a literature review was conducted to retrospectively examine VAS using MI’s framework. Qualitative information is presented to provide insight into the history, progress, and future of the program. This information is complemented with supplementation coverage data and country examples.

**RESULTS**

The literature review identifies that the progress of VAS has not been linear, moving through phases of research and demonstration at different points in time. The program has been scaled-up, and is currently exploring best methods to ensure sustainability, for example, the literature indicates a shift towards increased national investments and integration into routine systems. During the past 20 years, VAS has established and achieved efficacy, acceptability, feasibility, affordability, replicability, coverage, and policy adoption, all of which are essential components of achieving program success. Research and events that highlight these key turning points are presented in Figure 2.

**CONCLUSIONS**

This framework was not available twenty years ago, but a retropective look shows how the VAS story has essentially followed this process. This example illustrates the utility of the framework as a tool for planning and implementing a program; it emphasizes that IR is necessary in documenting and sharing lessons that may help other nutrition interventions accelerate scale-up at national and global levels.

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