



**SIANI**

Swedish International Agricultural Network Initiative

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# Summary of the Round Table Dialogue Workshop at SIANI Annual Meeting 2015





2015 is an important year for international development with many decisions to be made, negotiations and agreement on Sustainable Development Goals is one of such processes. 2015 is also an International Year of Soils declared by FAO. Another crucial issue raised by FAO and acknowledged by a wider international community is nutrition and its role in food security. By no means, these are not the only topics to talk about in agricultural development, but SIANI Secretariat decided that the SDGs, Soils and Nutrition can help to build a plan for the activities during the upcoming year, and we invited our members to help us.

The workshop was held in the form Round Table Dialogue. The question for discussion was:

***This year SIANI will work with the topics of nutrition, soils and the SDGs. How would you contribute and how would you like to see SIANI engage with these topics?***

The discussion generated many diverse ideas, both specific and more general, but also some innovative and “outside the box” thinking. In the end of the workshop the participants voted for the most important and the most innovative ideas and were asked to make a visionary statement for SIANI work in 2015.





## Seven of the ideas voted

### “most important”:

#### SDGs

- SIANI should not only focus on the production side but also on waste/losses and access to food.
- SIANI should provide overview of what the SDGs are and will mean for its members as well as for others.
- SIANI should contribute with clarifications on what different terms and concepts mean (nutrition, SDGs and sustainable agriculture).

#### Nutrition:

- Making sure that food and nutrition security remains a top priority and that both the perspectives on supply and demand are included.
- Include gender issues in the perspectives of nutrition. Gender issues must be realized as one of SIANI's “points of departure” when forming its policies.
- Focus on new nutritious crops – both GMO and not.

#### Soils:

- Highlight the competition of land and the conflict between agriculture and urbanization, including trade-offs and the use of land. – Soil for food or houses and roads? How does food security look like in different conflict conditions? Maybe SIANI can arrange a seminar on the role of political stability in the perspectives of nutrition, soils and the SDGs.

## Seven of the ideas voted

### “most innovative”:

#### SDGs

- SIANI should work with how to evaluate development projects regarding impact on food security rather than production or income only.
- SIANI should have a focus on Sweden – not only developing countries.

#### Nutrition:

- Highlight how sustainable and nutritious diets look like in different contexts.

#### Soils:

- Bring the idea to media and create public awareness. Join the Department of Soil Science at SLU for their yearly activities.
- SIANI should promote collaboration between Swedish agencies (PGU) for stronger impact.
- SIANI should promote “Methods and Methodologies for monitoring healthy soils by workshops, papers, network and best practice. SIANI should also continue the collaboration and knowledge sharing on best practices for small scale farmers.
- There are several ongoing initiatives to improve soil fertility in the Sub Saharan Africa. SIANI could help those interested in organizing workshops.





## Some of the important and innovative ideas highly rated by the participants also include:

- Poor nutrition is not just a development country issue.
- SIANI should hold a workshop or forum on under-utilized local fruits/veggies of high nutritional value.
- SIANI should highlight the potential role of incentives, market chains and regulations to boost smallholder farmers as well as linking poor farmers to the market.
- SIANI should engage with Umeå Center for Global Health Research on nutrition.
- We should work on how to link knowledge on nutritional needs to consumer demands.
- We shall also work on nutrition and soils and its relation to farmers associations.
- SIANI should follow up the Montpellier report and include Sida's and KSLA's work on soils.
- SIANI shall promote the use of agroecology as a strategy for food security, sustainability and natural resource management.
- Get chefs on board! Awareness-raising and smart cooking.





### Visionary Group Statements from SIANI Members:

**1. SIANI workshops and engagements ought to embrace the complexity of food security and nutrition issues and double disease burden.** To stay relevant and influence strategic partners the focus of SIANI 2015 is to work across sectors and with multiple stakeholders, both on the production side, as well as the individual health side. We should also highlight the perspectives of social, behavior and its relation to double burden malnutrition.

**2. The focus of SIANI 2015 should embrace working towards sustainable soil fertility and innovative waste management systems.** SIANI should also work towards increased awareness about soil competition, soil fertility and the importance of nutrition. Restoration of degraded soils is one of the key issues about food production. How do you reclaim salt affected soils? How big is the problem? We shall also work towards including soils and nutrition into our work in the line of the SDGs. SIANI should focus on sustainable soil fertility methods with local resources as well as building soil fertility competence within institutions.

**3. We shall continue to work on trees in agricultural landscapes.** Work shall also include the clarification of the concept of “nutrition-friendly” landscapes as well as the issue of forests for food.

**4. SIANI should form a platform for discussion about the SDGs.** Creating a “SDG Platform” could be a way of ensuring that Swedish policymakers and public remember about food and nutrition security. It would also serve as a place to open up for more integrated

views on the topics selected for this year as well as initiate ideas and local networking around agriculture in developing countries. SIANI could also set up a “Nutrition/Soils/SDG – blog” where we could engage SIANI Members to write blog posts every month.

**5. SIANI should also highlight the difference between quality and quantity of food from nutritional perspective.** How will the production of food be affected when focus is on quality instead of quantity? We should also focus on the differences between the perspectives of nutrition and calories.

**6. We need to engage youth more actively in the network.** SIANI should organize workshops at the universities as well as be able to connect with the youth outside academia.

**7. We should focus on “soft elements” of complex issues.** E.g. – Why do livestock farmers have so many cows? We should also highlight livestock’s role for nutrition and health as well as soils.

**8. SIANI needs to have a broad approach to topics like nutrition and soils in order to include access to land and other resources in research and analysis as well as highlight the role of ecosystem services.**

