

Introduction

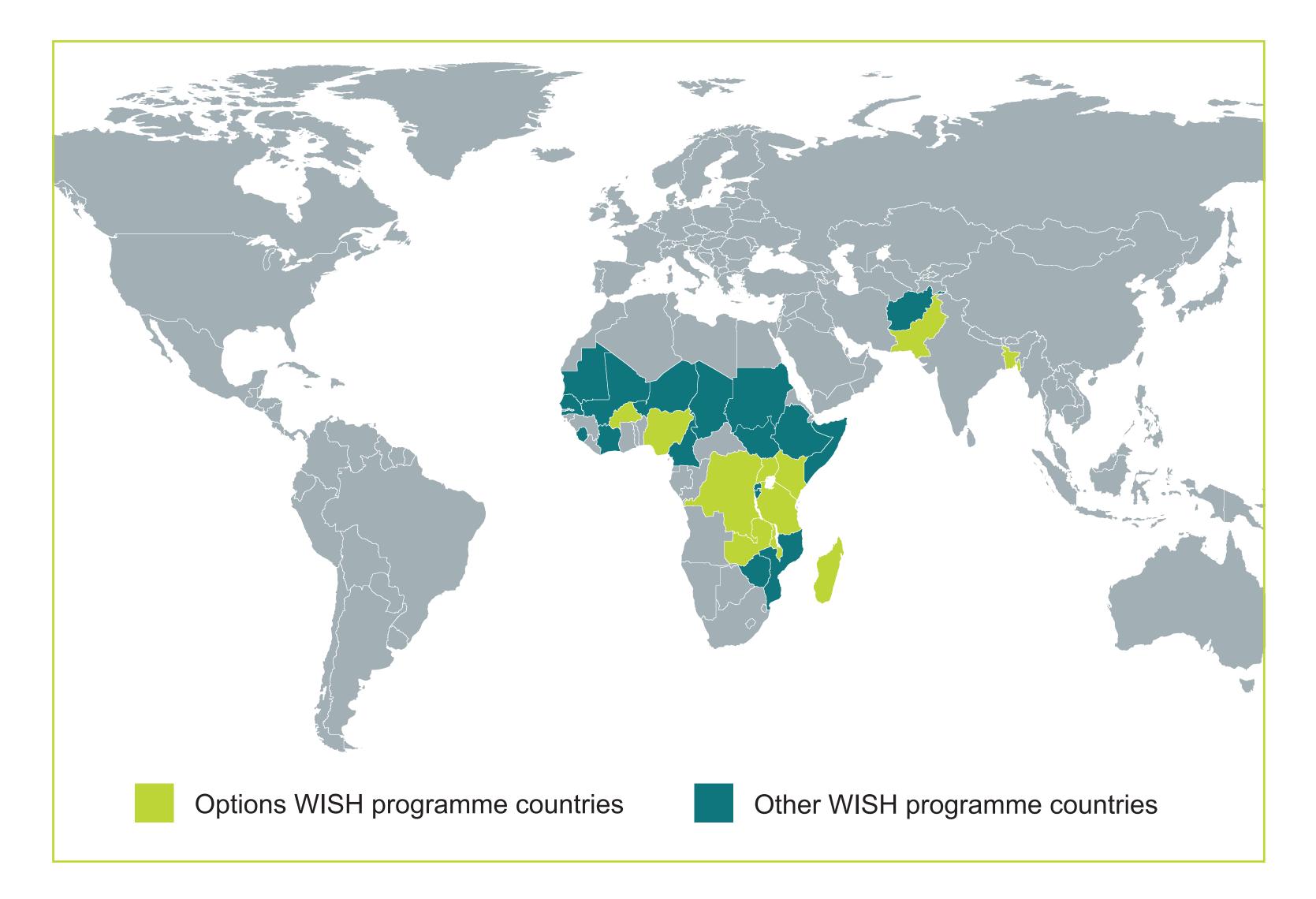
Stewardship is a key contributor for achieving the SDG health targets; mobilising capacity and commitment among stakeholders and addressing inequality and discrimination in access, coverage and uptake of health services.

Background to the programme and setting

The Women's Integrated Sexual Health programme (WISH), funded by UK Aid, is expanding sexual and reproductive health care services in 26 countries across Africa and Asia and strengthening national stewardship for delivering these services into the future.

As part of this programme, Options leads the enabling environment component in 10 countries. We work directly with government and civil society actors to prioritise sexual, reproductive health and family planning (SRH/FP) by strengthening the capacity of civil societies to hold governments accountable to related commitments, supporting development and implementation of favourable policies for SRH/FP, strengthening national stewardship of quality improvement for SRH/FP and improving domestic financing.

WISH and Options supported countries



Strengthening national ownership for quality improvement of family planning services through the Women's Integrated Sexual Health (WISH) programme in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Zambia, Malawi, Madagascar, Uganda and Tanzania.

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Approach to measuring government stewardship for quality improvement

The assessment tool consists of three thematic areas that include assessments of six key stewardship roles:

Section A: structure and policy indicators (n=3) that assess the extent to which the necessary policies and structures are in place to ensure national stewardship over SRH/FP QI.

Section B: System and process indicators (n= 8) assesses the extent to which the necessary systems and processes are in place to ensure national stewardship of QI for SRH/FP.

Section C: Action and improvement indicators (n = 7): This section assesses the QI actions taken and some of the FP/SRH outcomes that would be expected as a result of these actions.

Each indicator could be scored between 0 to 3 and allocated.

Using assessments to co-create and implement action plans

Table showing the score at baseline (2019) for each country.

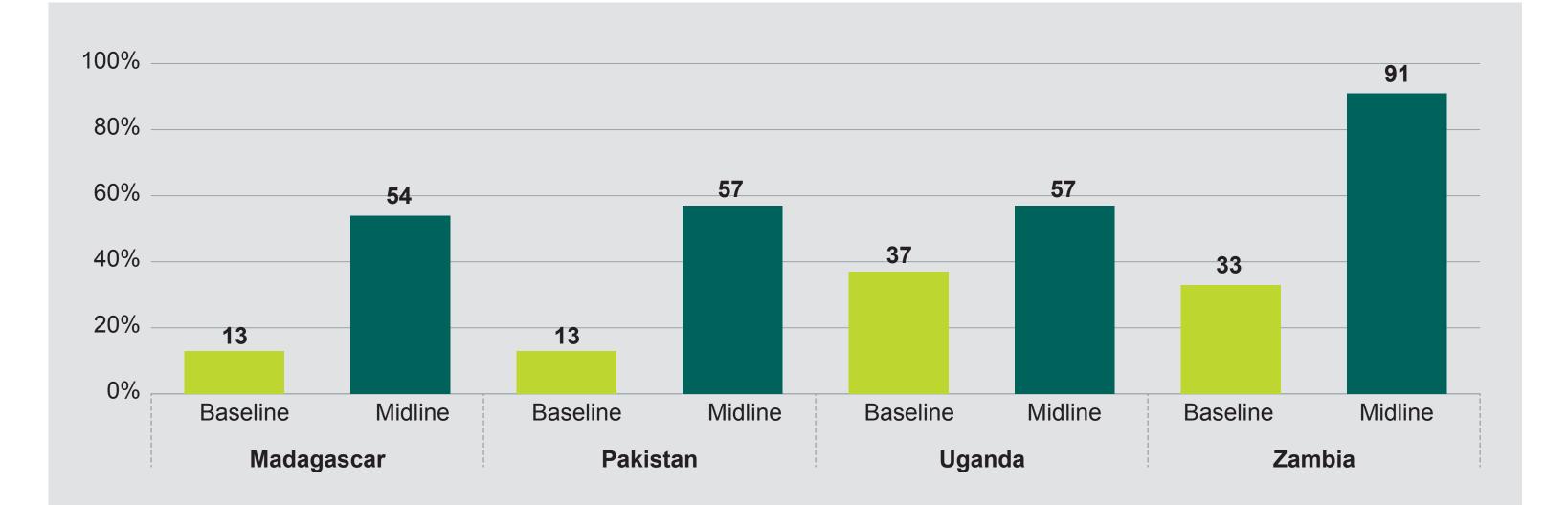
	Bangladesh	Madagascar	Malawi	Pakistan	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia
Structure and policy	78%	67%	56%	44%	0%	67%	67
Systems and processes	25%	4%	58%	8%	13%	25%	13%
Action and improvement	38%	0%	62%	5%	33%	38%	43%
Overall score	39%	13%	56%	13%	19%	37%	33%

Examples of areas that Options supported Ministries of Health include the following illustrative interventions:

- **Tanzania**: developed a 5 year regional reproductive health strategic plan.
- Madagascar, Pakistan Uganda, Malawi: developed provincial FP guidelines, model FP facility guidelines and frameworks for QI of FP.
- Malawi: revision of the reproductive health manual, including a chapter on provision of FP during emergencies and humanitarian crisis.

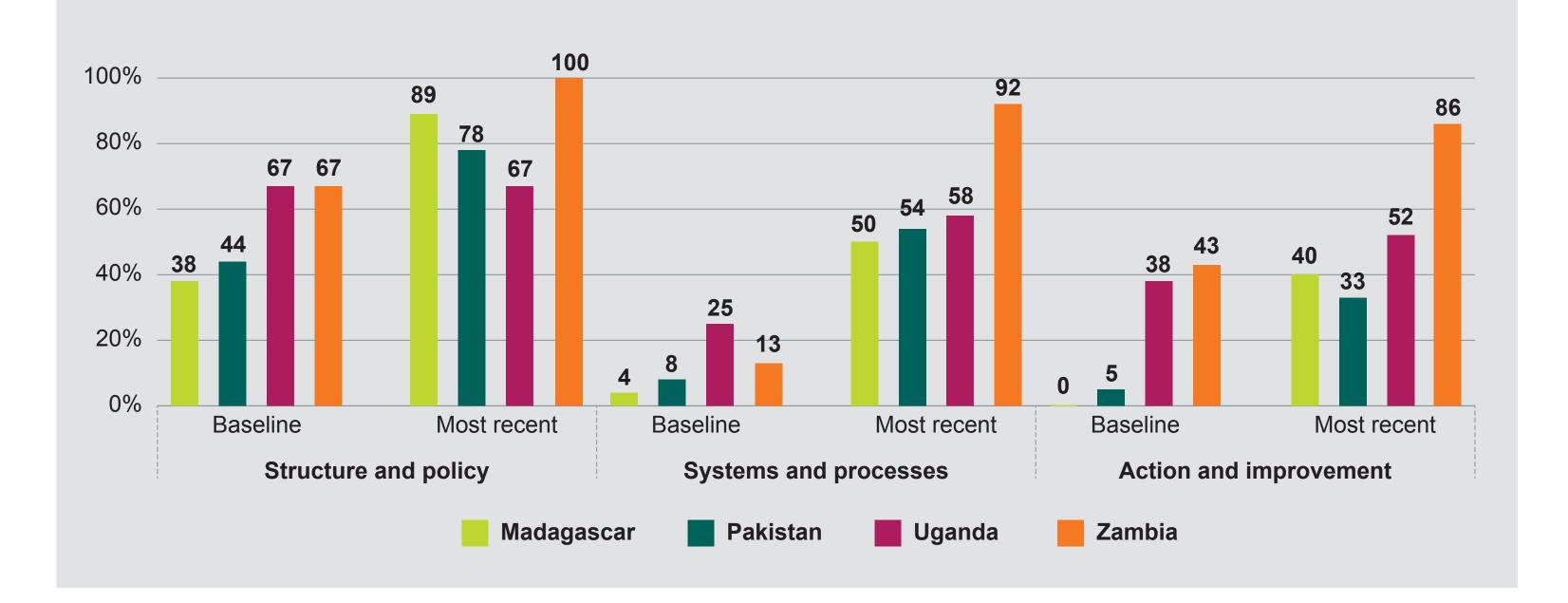
Results from scorecard assessments

Chart showing summary score for all sections of assessment among for 4 countries at baseline and most-recent assessment



The greatest increases are in the section on systems and processes – increasing from a mean of 13% (range: 4-25%) at baseline to 64% (range: 50-92%) by the most recent QI scorecard, followed by 'action and improvement' which increased from 22% to 53%.

Chart showing change in scores by section of assessment comparing baseline with most-recent assessment in four countries



Lessons



Changes in how well governments' stewardship functions are performing can be measured, and findings can solicit engagement from government and stakeholders and establish a share understanding of the context, gaps and needs to strengthen stewardship.



The QI programme scorecard can contribute to the development of a plan of action with focussed interventions, edefining roles and responsibilities and identify where technical assistance within the context of understanding the health ecosystem and actors within it.

Achievements

Achievements in strengthening stewardship and national ownership for quality improvement have been realised through the WISH programme. This included:

Strengthening QI coordination platforms	Updating or developing policies with QI frameworks	Strengthening QI assessment systems	Making data on challenges and progress towards SRH/ FP targets available and understandable to wider audiences	Holding duty bearers to account for QI	Providing evidence for advocacy for increased domestic funding for FP	Promoting multi-sectoral approach/ collaboration to FP

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