African Population and Health Research Center

Transforming lives in Africa through research.

2023 Annual Performance Review Report

Key Highlights

Prepared by
Measurement, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Unit

Overview

Reporting period – January-December 2023

Projects Profile

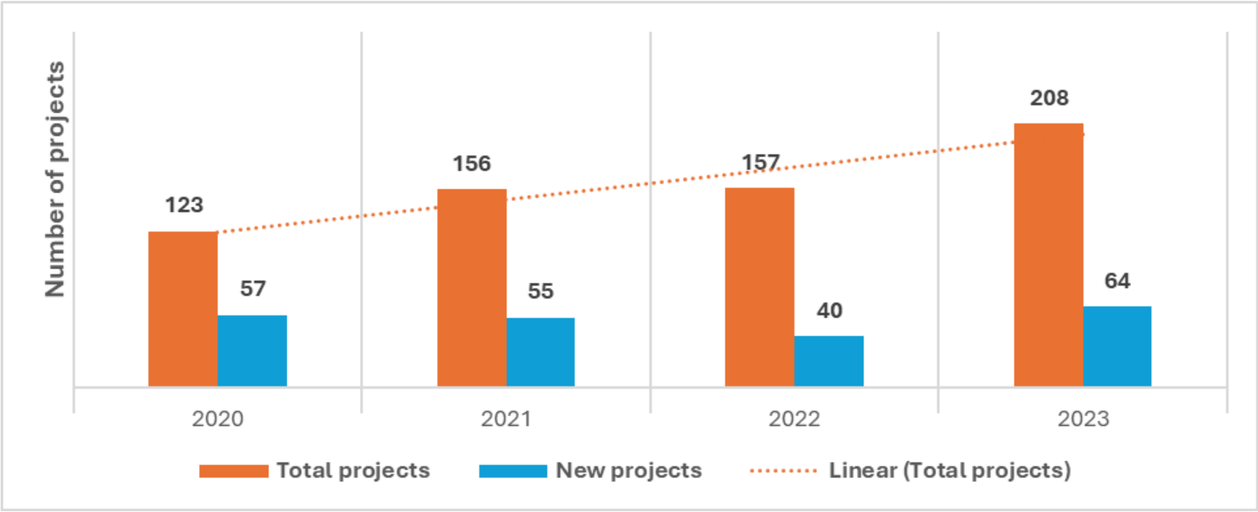
Performance of the SP objectives

SP KPIs Performance Summary

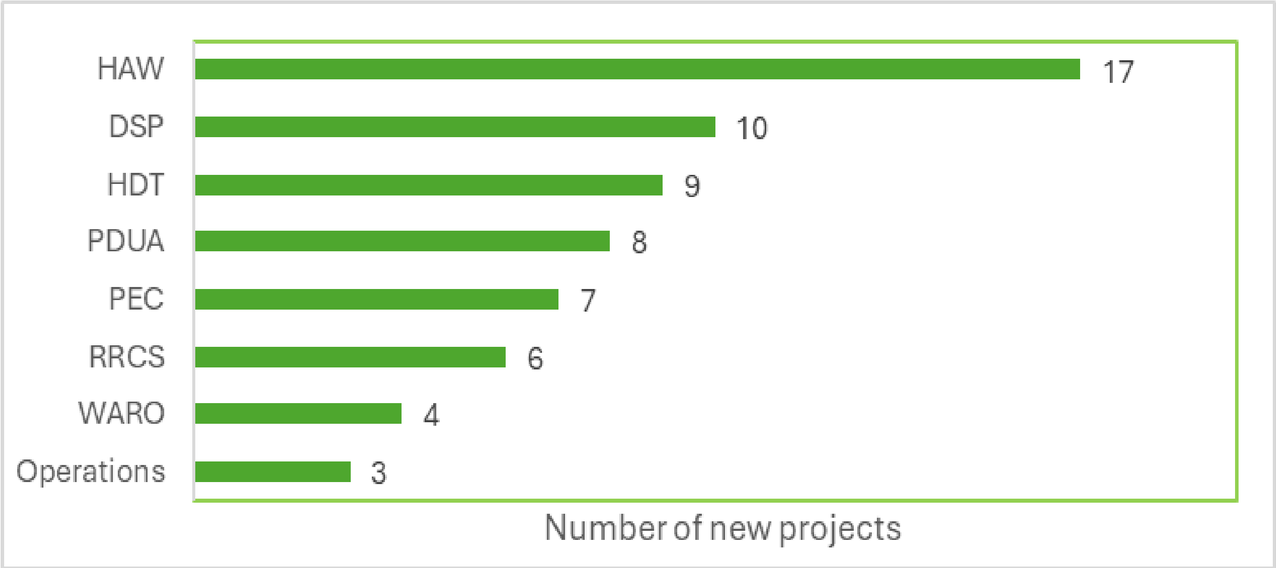
Key Challenges, Lessons Learnt And Recommendations

Projects Profile

Projects implemented in 2023



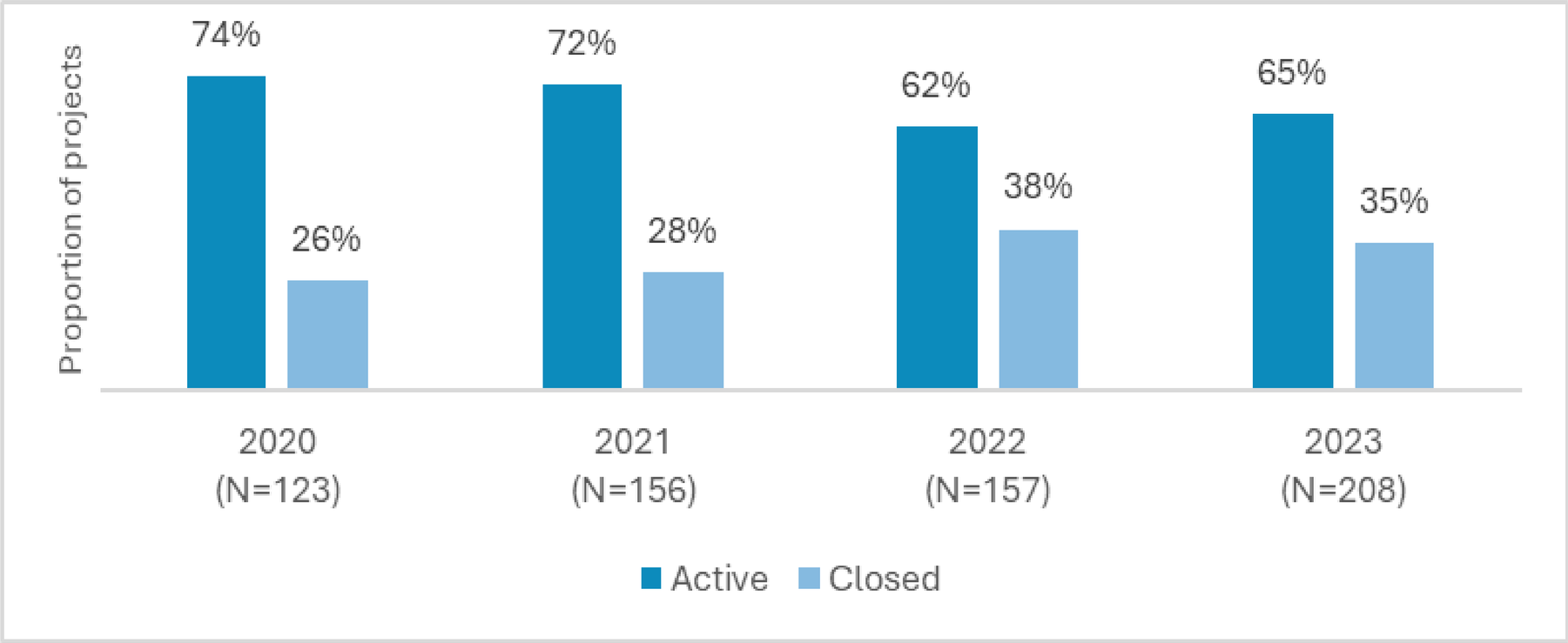
- This year recorded the highest number of projects with a steady increase from 157 in 2022 to 208 in 2023.
- This year also had the highest number of new projects compared to the previous 3 years.



- HAW and DSP had the highest number of new projects at 17 and 10 resp.

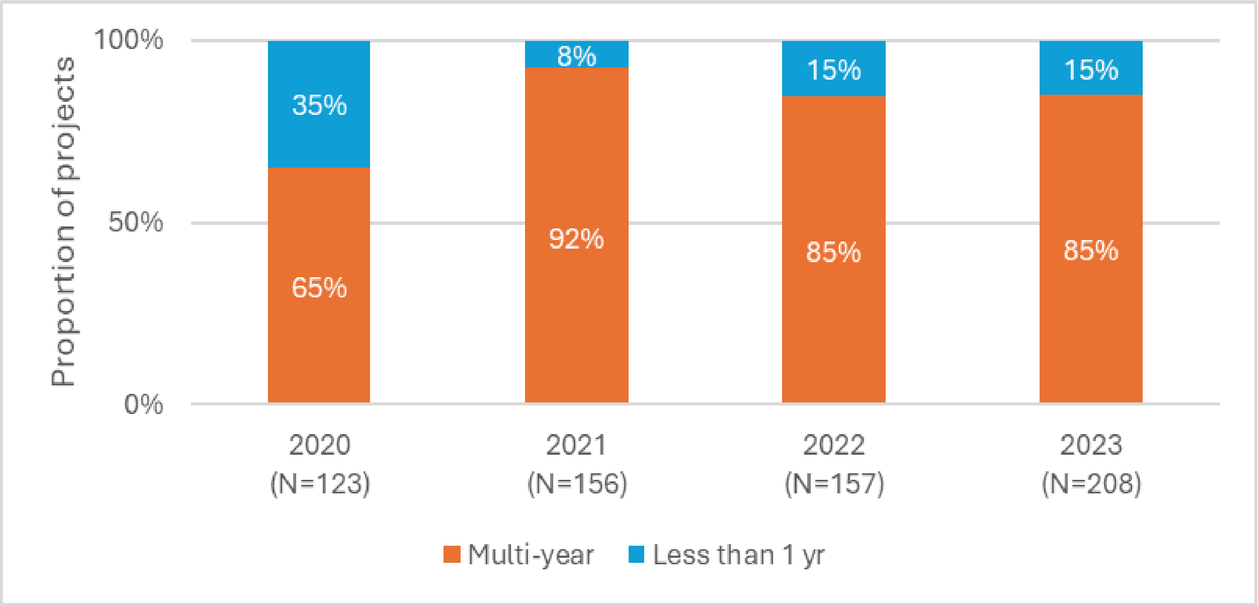
Active and Closed Projects

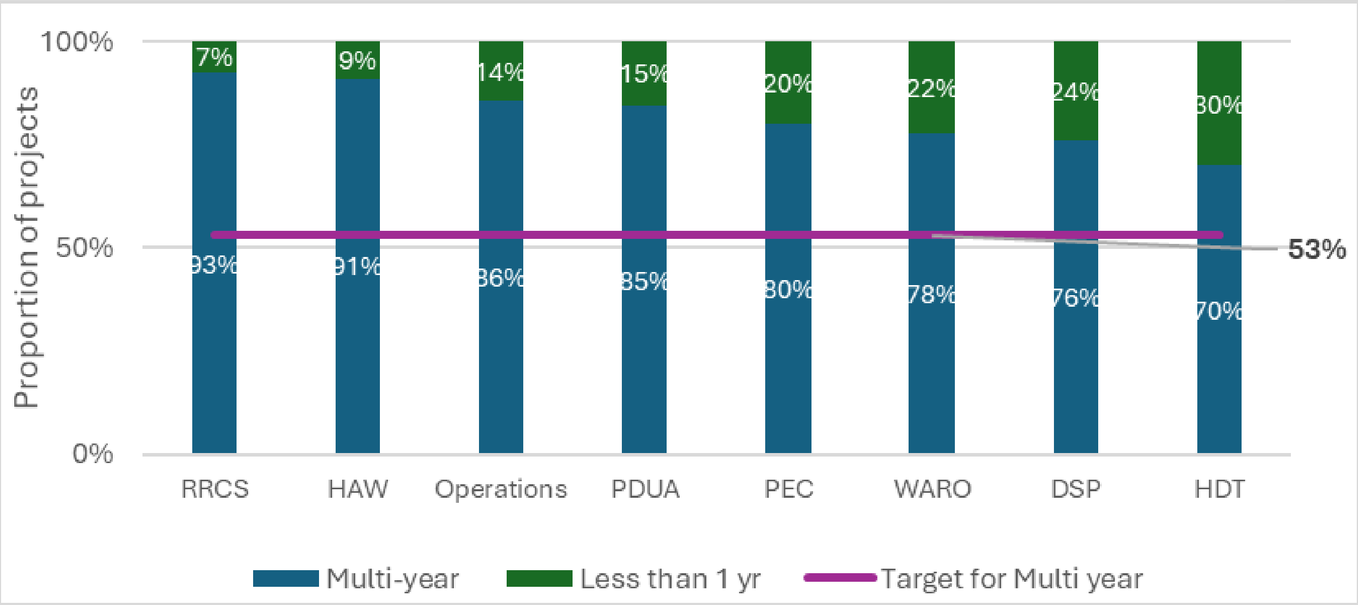
- By the end of 2023, 65% (135) of the projects were active while 35% (73) closed.



The 3Ms- Multi-Year Projects

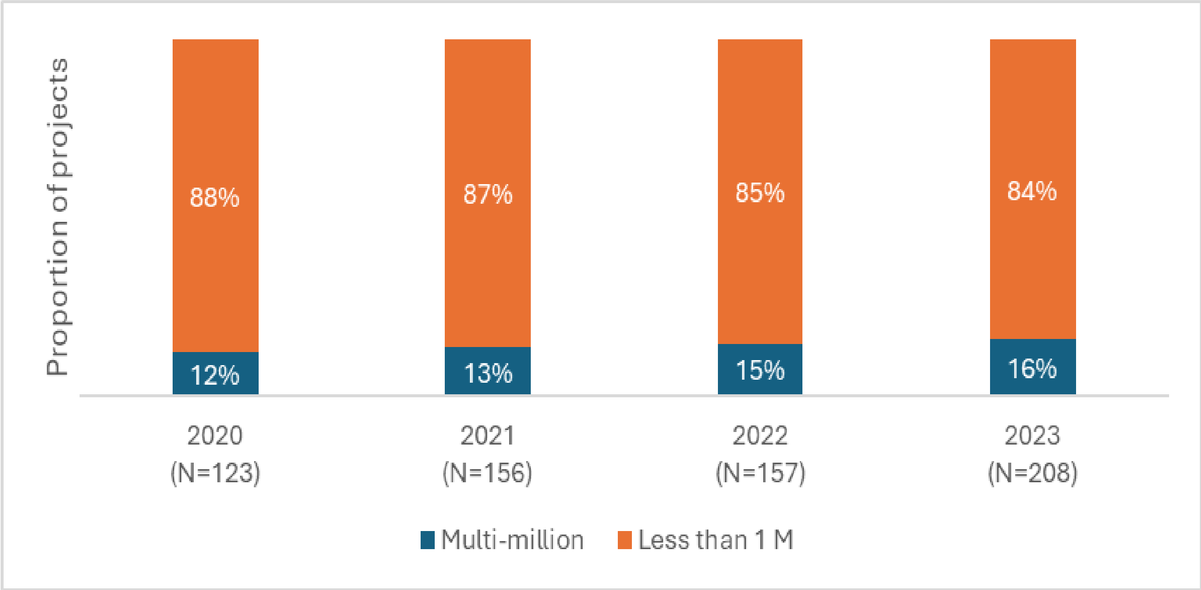
- 85% (177) of the projects were multi-year while 15% (31) were projects that were running for less than one year.
- This surpassed the set 2023 target of 53% of the projects as multi-year



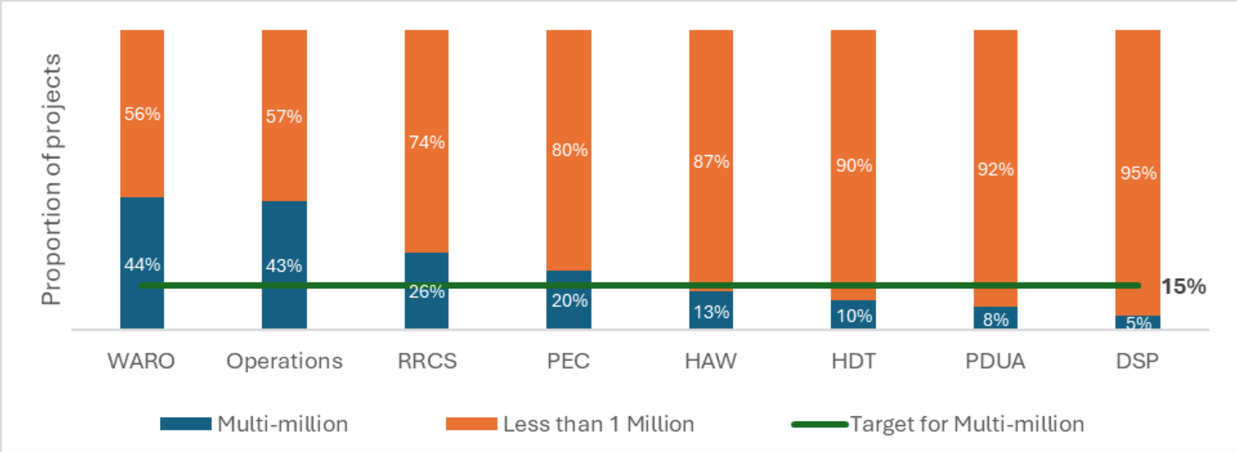


- All the themes surpassed the 2023 target of 53% of projects being multiyear projects.

3Ms - Multi-Million Projects



- In 2023, 16% (33) of the projects were multi-million while 84% (175) were less than USD 1 million.
- Slightly surpassing the multi-million target for 2023 was 15%.
- This was an increase from 2022 where 15% (22) projects were Multi-million.



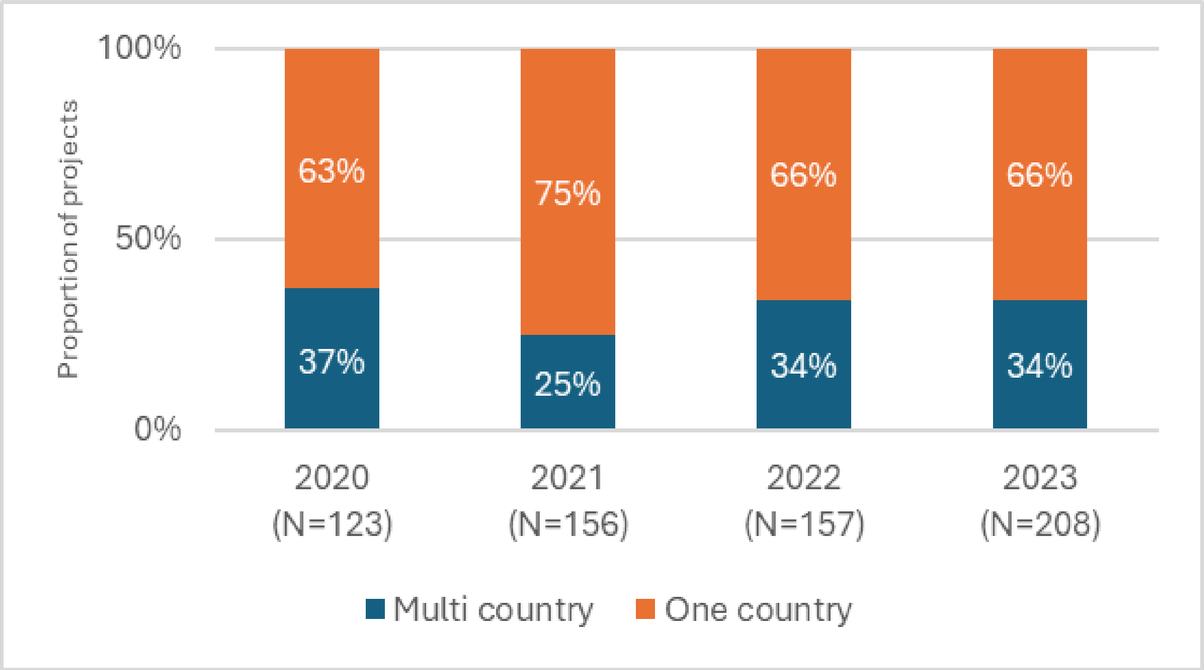
- Half of the themes surpassed the 15% target for proportion of projects that are multi-million.
- The highest was WARO at 44% and Operations at 43%.

2023 Top Funders

- The Center had 95 funders providing USD 159.3 million in total lifetime monetary value of grants. The top 5 funders of 2023 were:
  - BMGF USD 41,681,060
  - SIDA USD 25,668,342
  - Wellcome Trust USD 20,094,678
  - IDRC USD 8,361,524
  - RTI International USD 6,679,766

- BMGF, SIDA, and Wellcome trust contributed 55% of the total lifetime monetary value of projects implemented in 2023.

The 3Ms- Multi-Country Projects

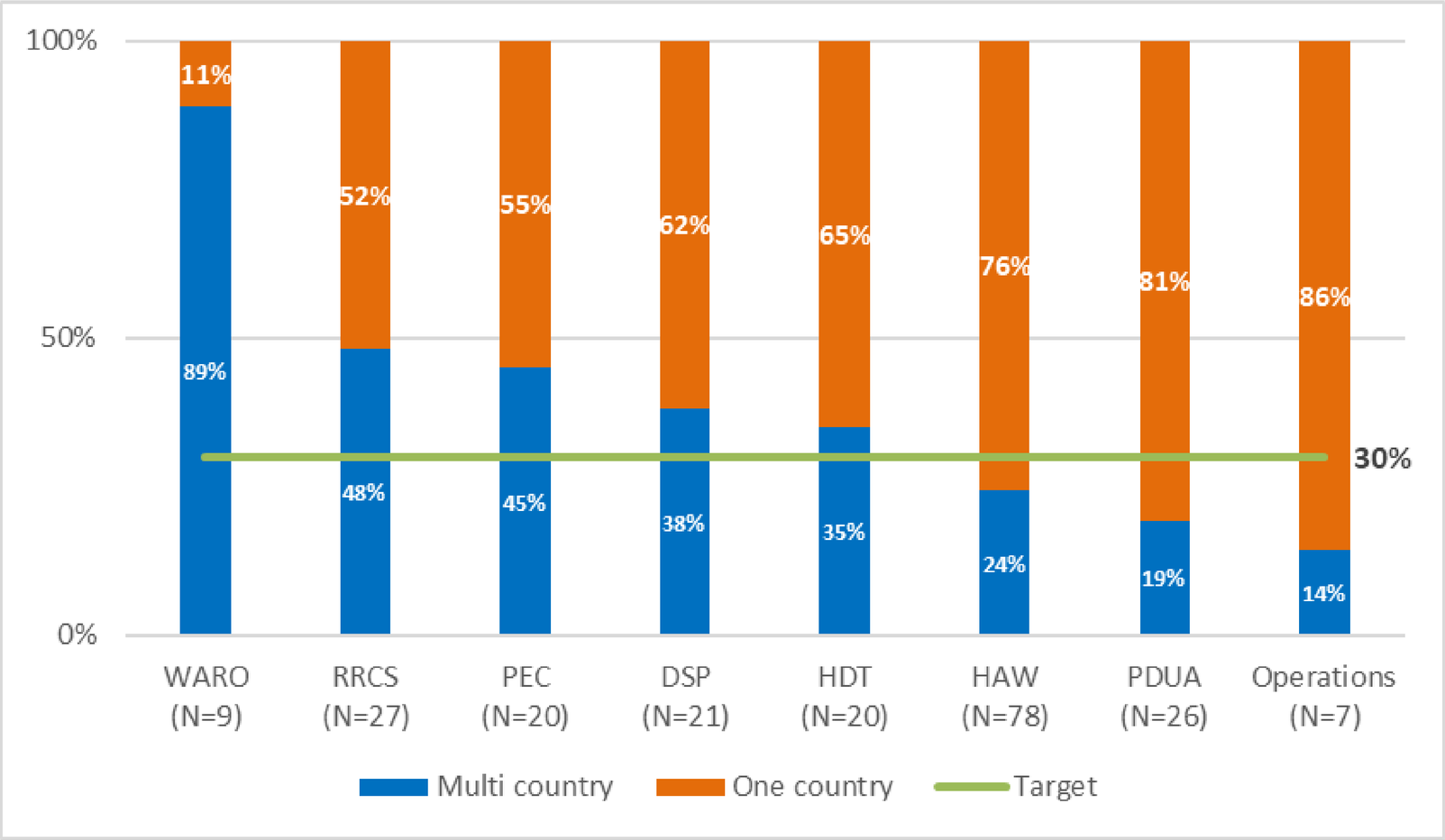


- The Center had 34% (70) of the projects implemented in more than one country. This was similar to 2022.
- The Center also surpassed the set target of 30% of projects being multi-country.

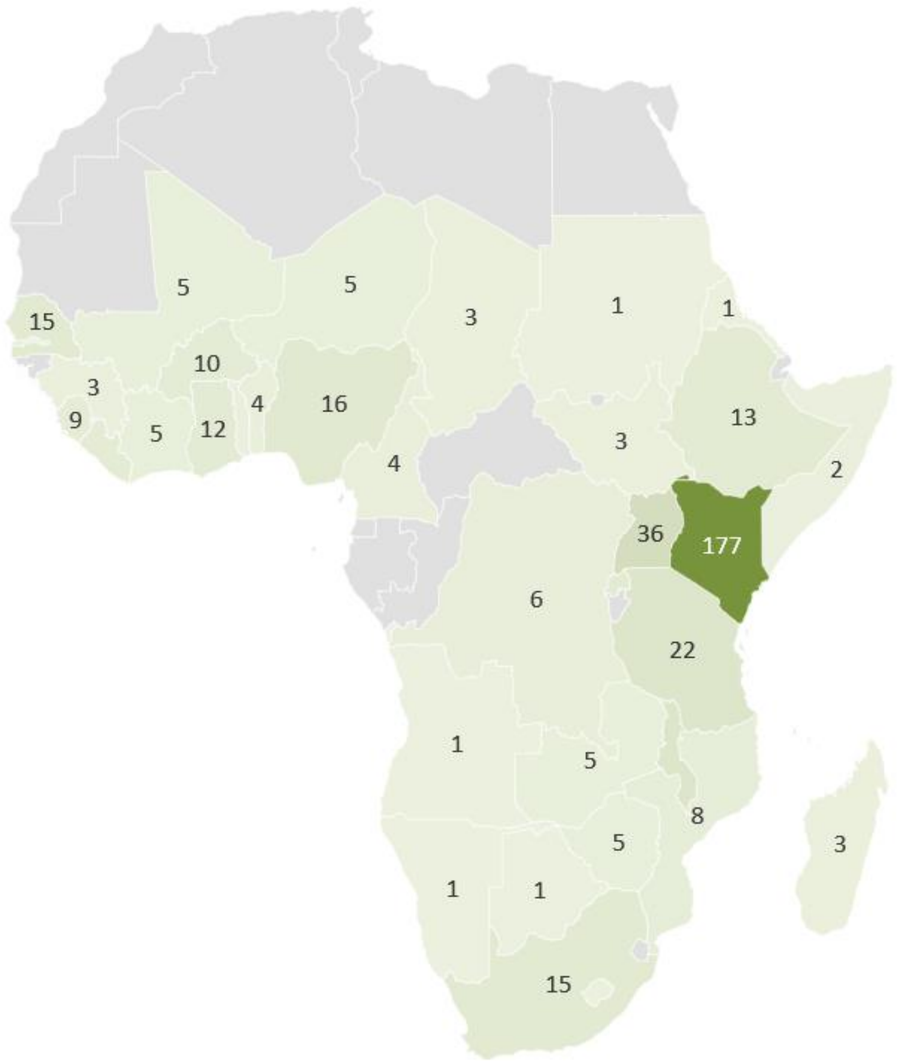
- The Center had 5 projects implemented in more than 10 African countries:
  1. Gates Countdown 2030 Phase 2 (WARO) – 28
  2. Gavi - Immunization Coverage and Inequalities (WARO) - 23
  3. CD 2030 Phase III (WARO) - 22
  4. World Bank - RMNCAH-N (WARO) - 22
  5. IDRC-Women RISE HPRO (PEC) - 17

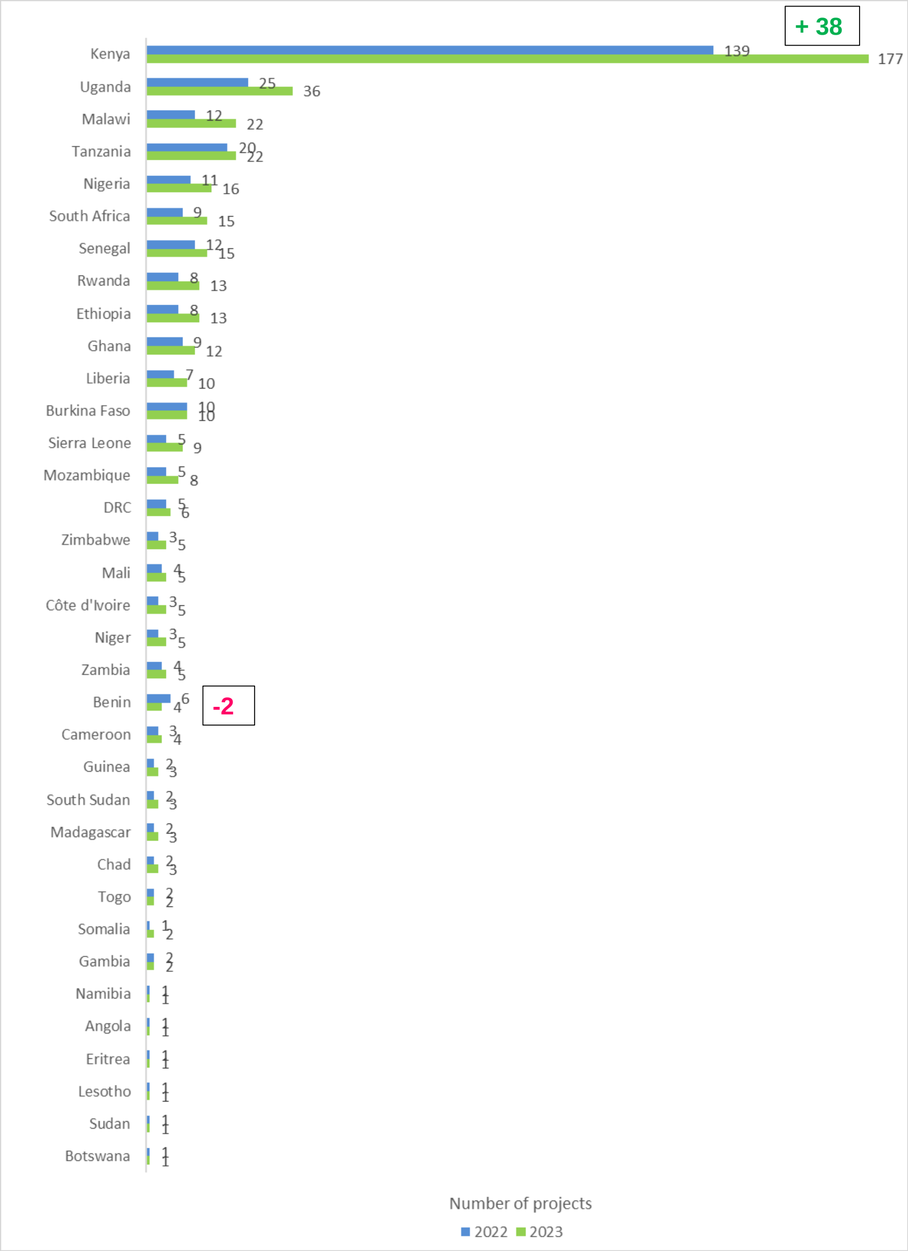
The 3Ms- Multi-Country Projects cont…

- Half of the themes surpassed the 30% target for proportion of projects that are multi-country.
- The highest was WARO at 89% and RRCS at 48%.



Countries projects are implementing activities

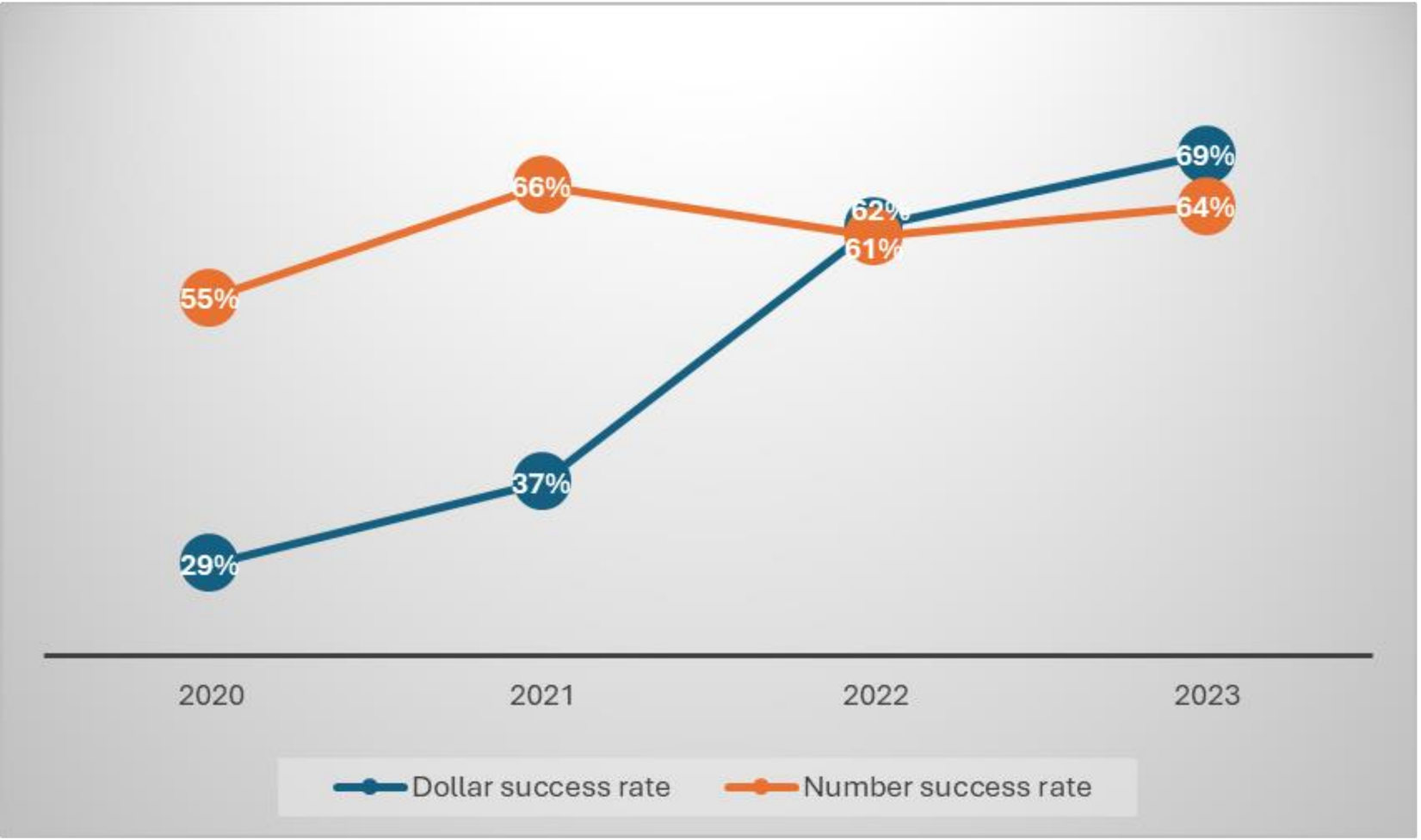




- In 2023, projects were implementing activities in 35 African countries, similar to 2022.

Business Development

Proposal Success Rates



- In 2023, the Center submitted 101 proposals with a number success rates of 64% an increase from 2022 at 62%. This was, however, below the set target of 66% for 2023.

- The Center recorded the highest dollar success rate in the last 4 years at 69% surpassing the set 2023 targets of 38%.

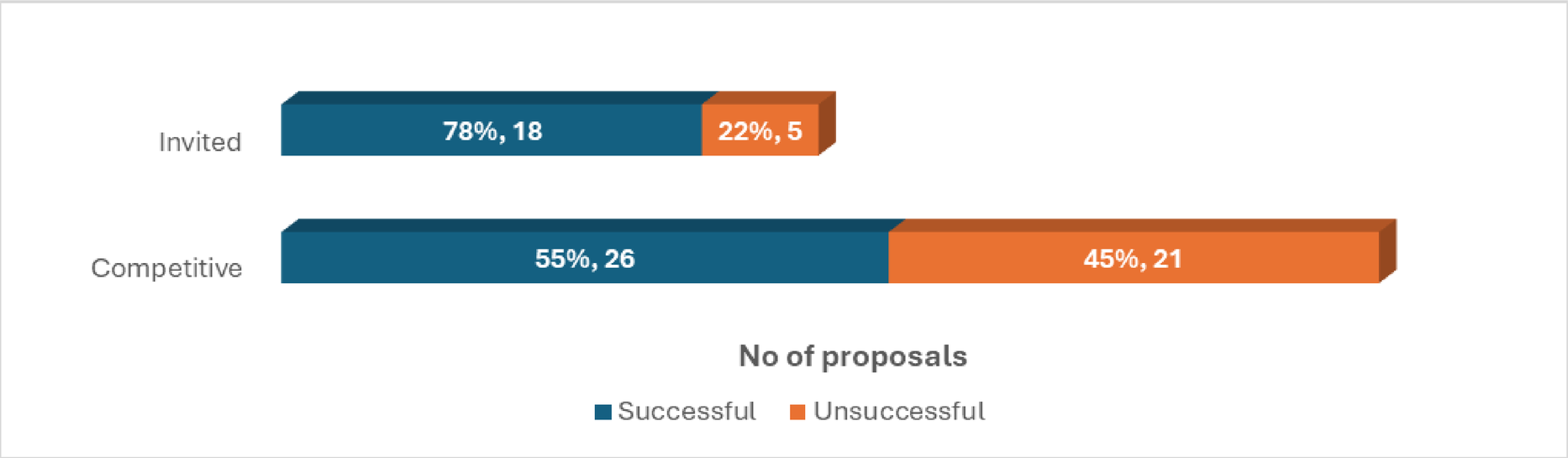
Proposal Tracker

Themes	No. of proposals	No. of Successful	No. of Unsuccessful	No. of Awaiting Feedback	Number Proposal success rate		Dollars in Success	Dollars in unsuccessful proposals	Dollar success rate	
					2022	2023			2022	2023
HAW	28	9	10	9	54%	47%	8,851,618	8,384,168	44%	51%
HD	19	9	3	7	33%	75%	5,355,321	4,800,000	46%	53%
RRCS	10	5	5	0	57%	50%	7,023,440	2,394,727	76%	75%
PEC	5	2	3	0	83%	40%	4,485,166	2,446,627	40%	65%
PDUA	8	4	2	2	43%	67%	1,229,757	627,611	82%	66%
DSP	10	4	0	6	-	100%	7,929,414	-	-	100%
DSE	12	6	1	5	90%	86%	3,125,437	149,993	67%	95%
Operations	3	3	0	0	100%	100%	4,205,000	-	100%	100%
WARO	6	3	1	2	80%	75%	2,568,605	1,045,878	95%	71%
Grand Total	101	45	25	31	61%	64%	44,773,757	19,849,004	62%	69%

- Operations, DSP and DSE had the highest number and dollar success rates.
- The Center raised a total of **USD 43.7 million** in successful proposals in 2023.
- This was higher than 2022 and 2021 where successful projects were USD 30 million anc 25.7 million resp.

Key:	Targets	
	2022	2023
Number proposal success rate	65%	66%
Dollar proposal success rate	35%	38%
Below target		
Above target		

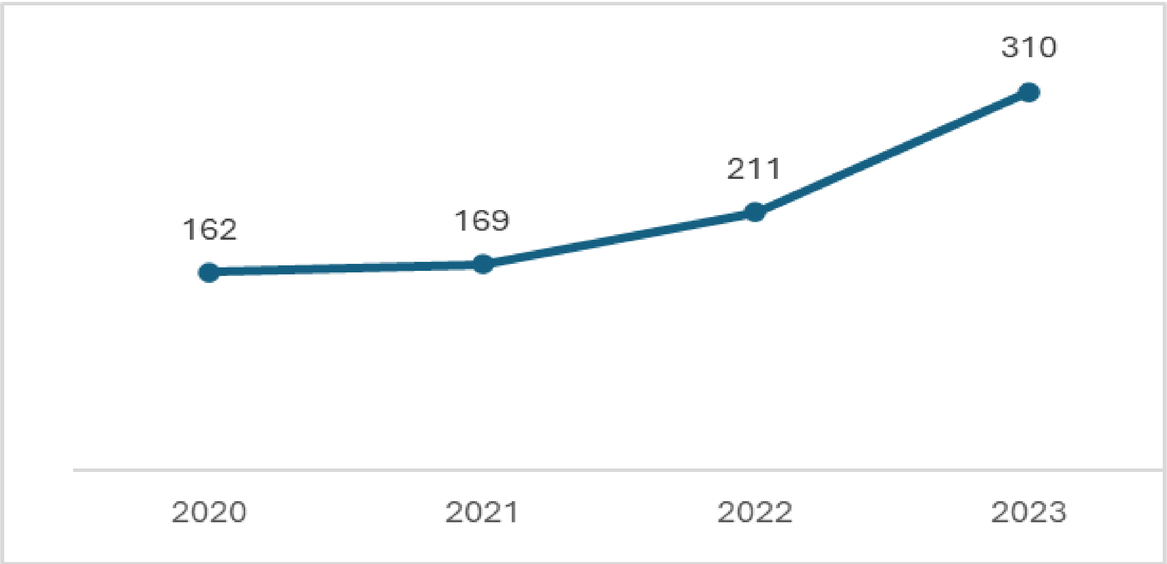
Competitive v/s invited proposals – success rates

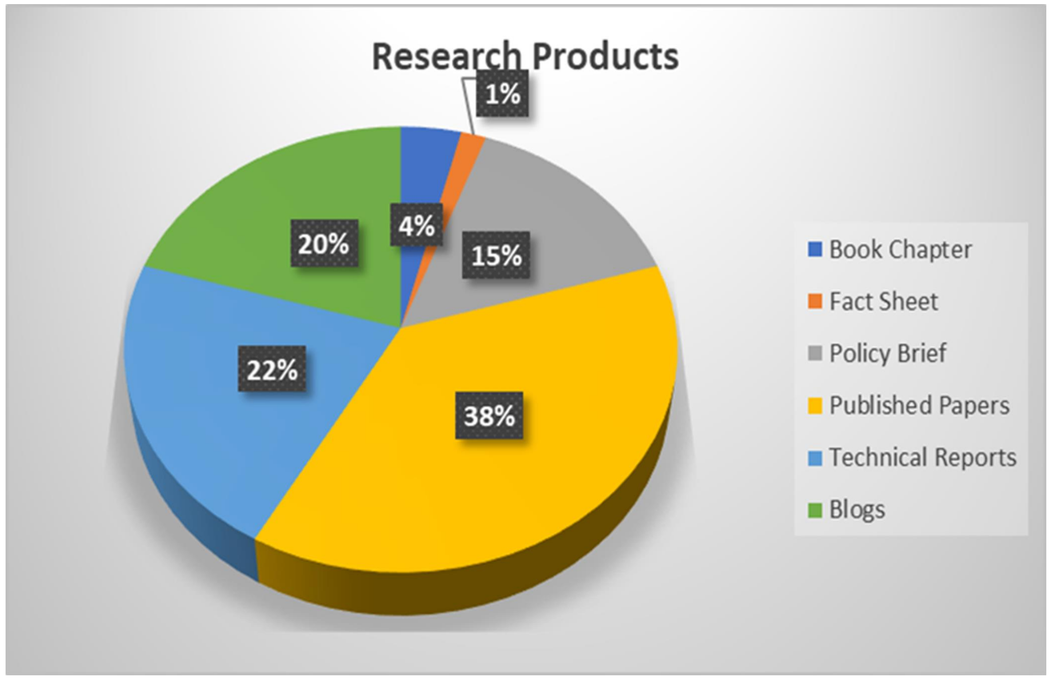


- Out of the 70 proposals that had received feedback, 23 were invited proposals while 47 were competitive proposals.
- In 2023, 78% of the invited proposals that received feedback were successful while 55% of the competitive proposals that received feedback were successful.

Strategic Objective 1:
Generate scientific knowledge aligned to local and international development agendas that affect health and development in Africa.

Research products





- For the past 4 years, APHRC recorded an upward trajectory on number of research products published, with 2023 recording the highest.
- Top 5 journals where the Center published in 2023 were:
    1. Research Square
    2. PLOS global public health
    3. BMJ Open
    4. Frontiers in Public Health
    5. Reproductive Health

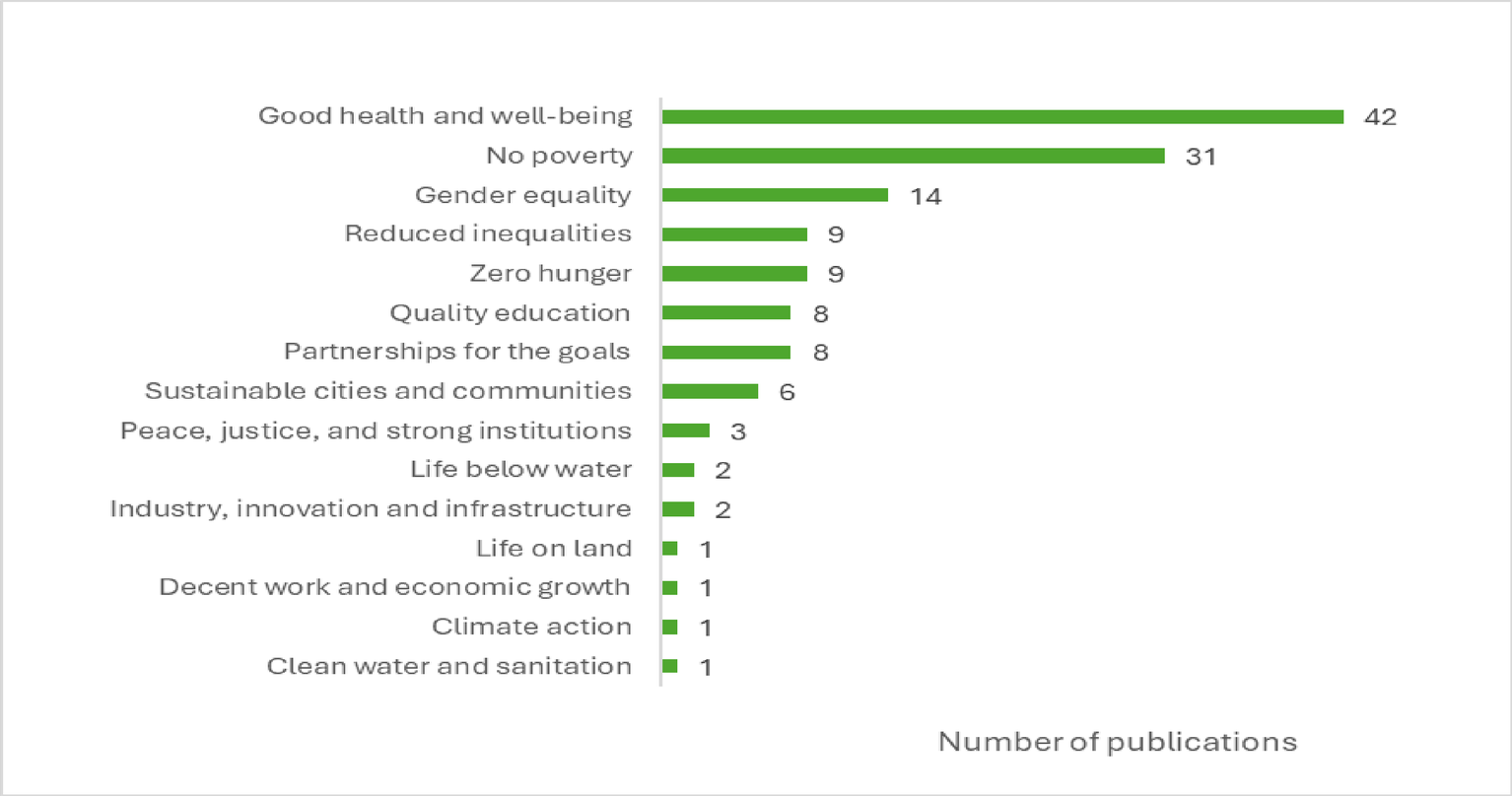
Impact of the Research Products

Citations

- At end of 2023, APHRC publications had been cited a total of 46,905 times.
- Most, 77%, of the Center publications have had been cited at least once.

Addressed the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Of the 17 SDGs, the Center's research products informed 15 (88%) of them. Good Health and Well-being (SDG 3) and No Poverty (SDG 1) were the most addressed.

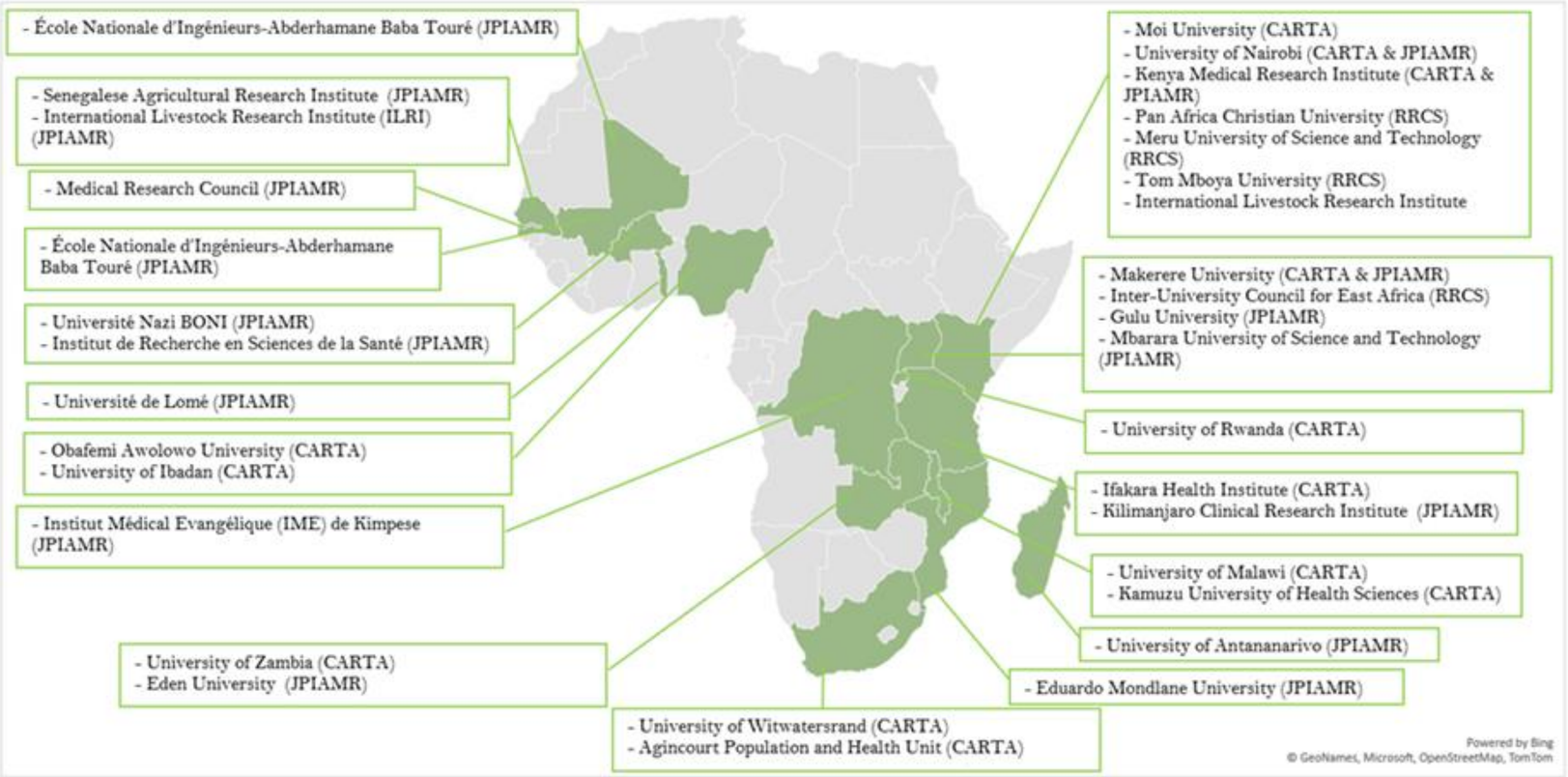


Objective 2

Develop capacities to strengthen the research ecosystem in Africa and contribute to the development and implementation of a blueprint for Africa’s self-sufficiency in R&D.

Capacity strengthening of African institutions

- Partnerships with 33 African institutions for capacity strengthening



- In 2023, there were 4 additional partnerships formed with universities and other related institutions under the RRCS.

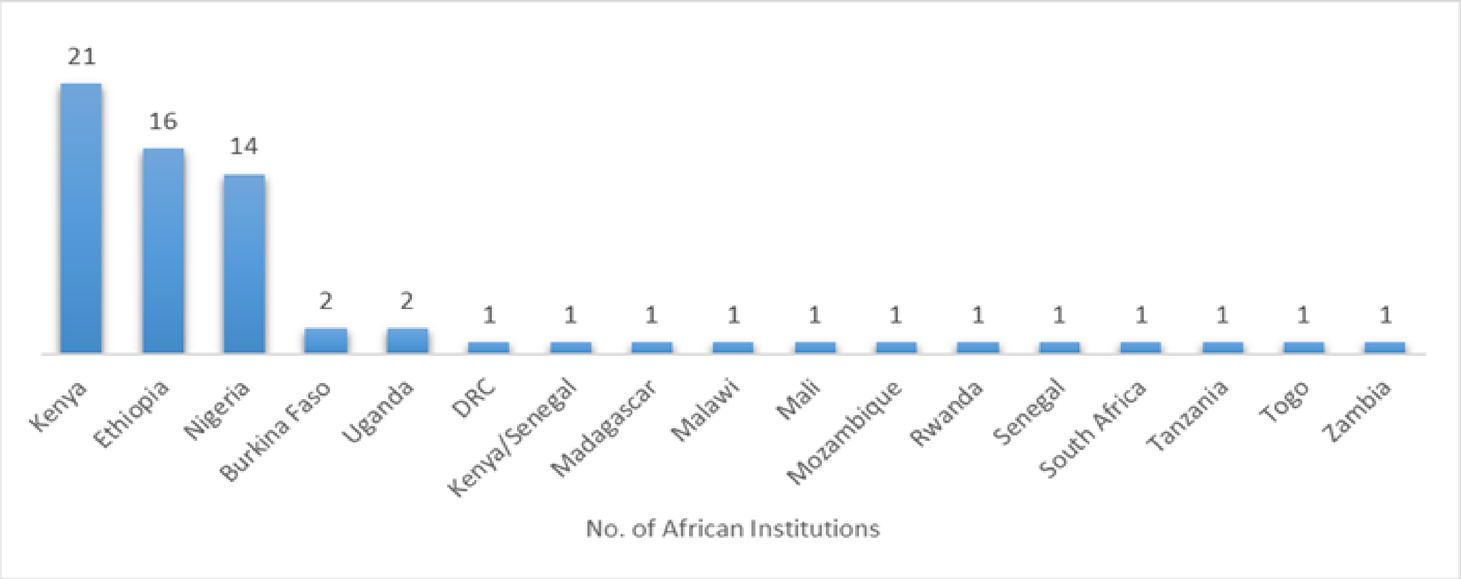
- These were Pan Africa Christian University, Inter-University Council for East Africa (renewed), Tom Mboya University, Meru University of Science and Technology (MUST)

Cont…

Institutionalization of GFGP in partner institutions

- In 2023, 67 African institutions actively underwent the Good Financial Grant Practice (GFGP) certification process.

  -46 institutions under the Catalyze project, 12 under the JPIAMR project, and 9 under the CARTA



Establishment of research hubs across Africa institutions

- In 2023, 5 institutions under CARTA were awarded preparatory grants for the initial conceptualization of research hubs and submitted extended concepts.

Capacity strengthening of individuals

CARTA

- In 2023, CARTA had a total of 93 fellows: 78 doctoral, 6 post-doctoral, and 9 re-entry grant fellows.

- 5 doctoral fellows graduated which was a decrease from 2022 where 14 fellows graduated.

ADDRF

- As at end of 2023, the ADDRF program had 29 ongoing fellowships (2 Master's and 27 PhD fellowships).

- 3 Masters fellows who completed their fellowships, and this was increase from 2022 where no fellows completed their fellowship during the year.

Countdown 2030

- By the end 2023, CD 2030 had 10 fellows.

Other fellowship programs

- DIDIDA, WHO HRP Alliance had 2 and 4 fellows respectively by the end of 2023 with only 3 fellows graduated from WHO HRP Alliance.

Outcomes of the fellowships

Publication by fellows

- CARTA fellows published 84 publications—a decrease from 2022, where fellows published 176 publications.

- ADDRF fellows published only 2 papers.

- JPIAMR partners published 5 papers

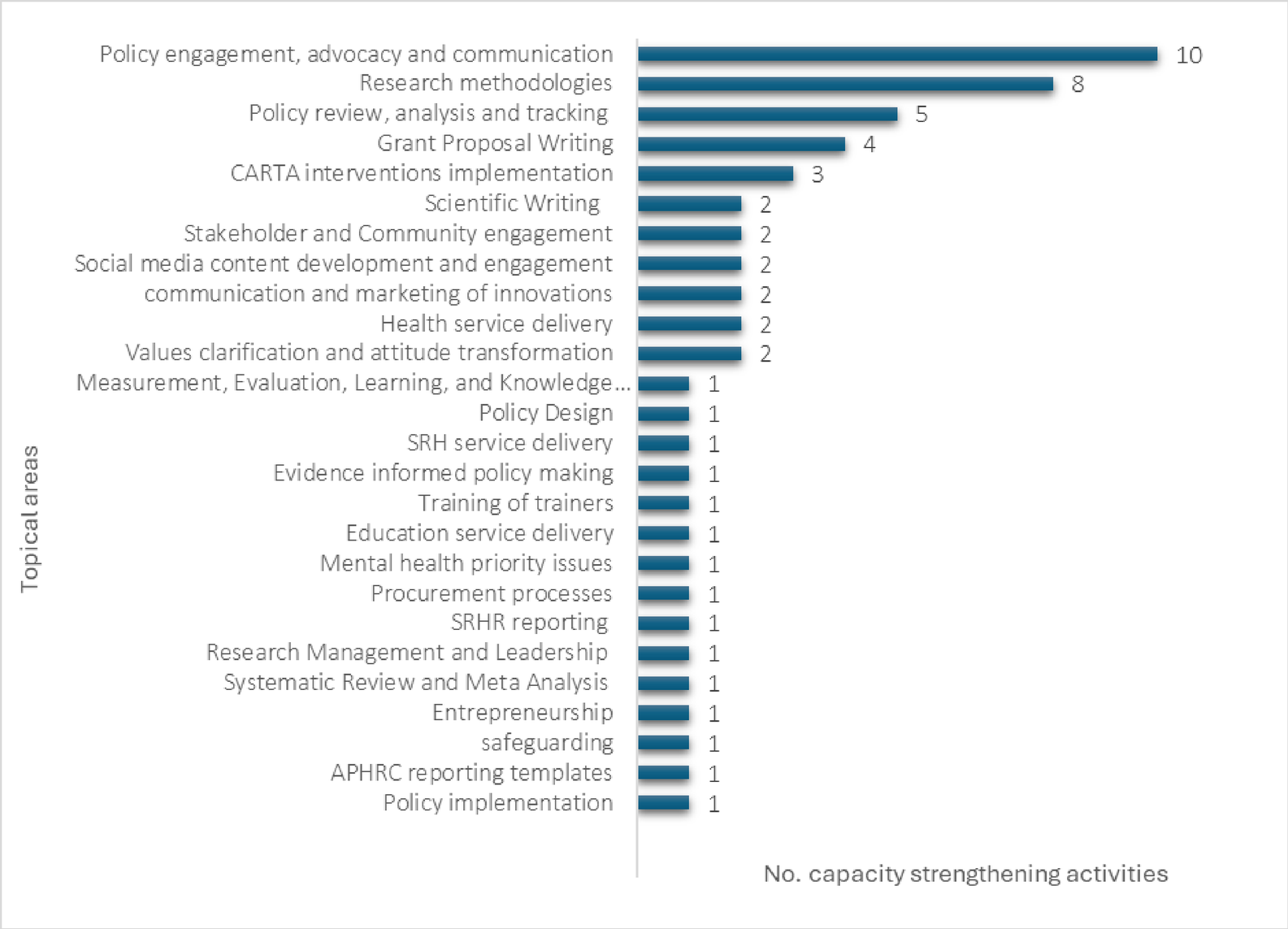
Grants won by fellows

- During this year 24 CARTA fellows won a total of USD 31 million in grants a 656% increase from 2022 where fellows won USD 4.1 million worth of grants

Career Development

- During the year 16 CARTA fellows advanced in their career where 9 were promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer, 4 from senior lecturer to associate professor, 1 from lecturer to professor and 2 from tutorial fellow to lecturer

Other Capacity strengthening activities led by APHRC

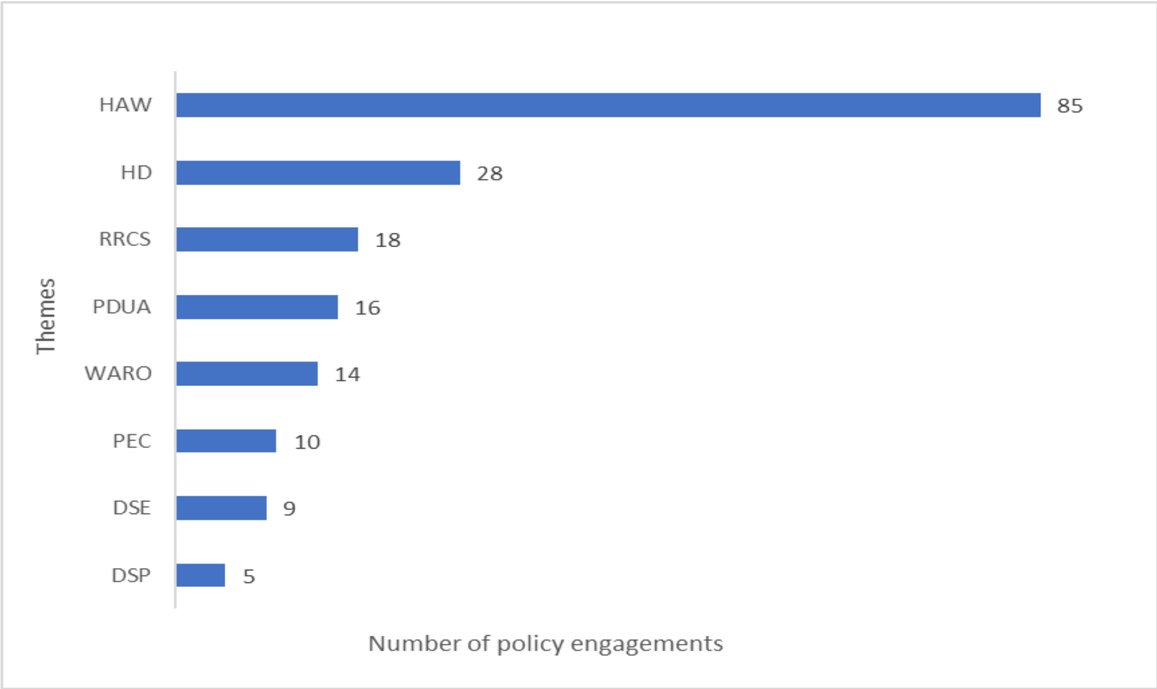


There were about 54 capacity strengthening activities across the various themes.

Most of the capacity building activities organized, 78% (42), were for external participants only, while 9% (5) were for APHRC staff only and 13% (7) were for both APHRC staff and external participants.

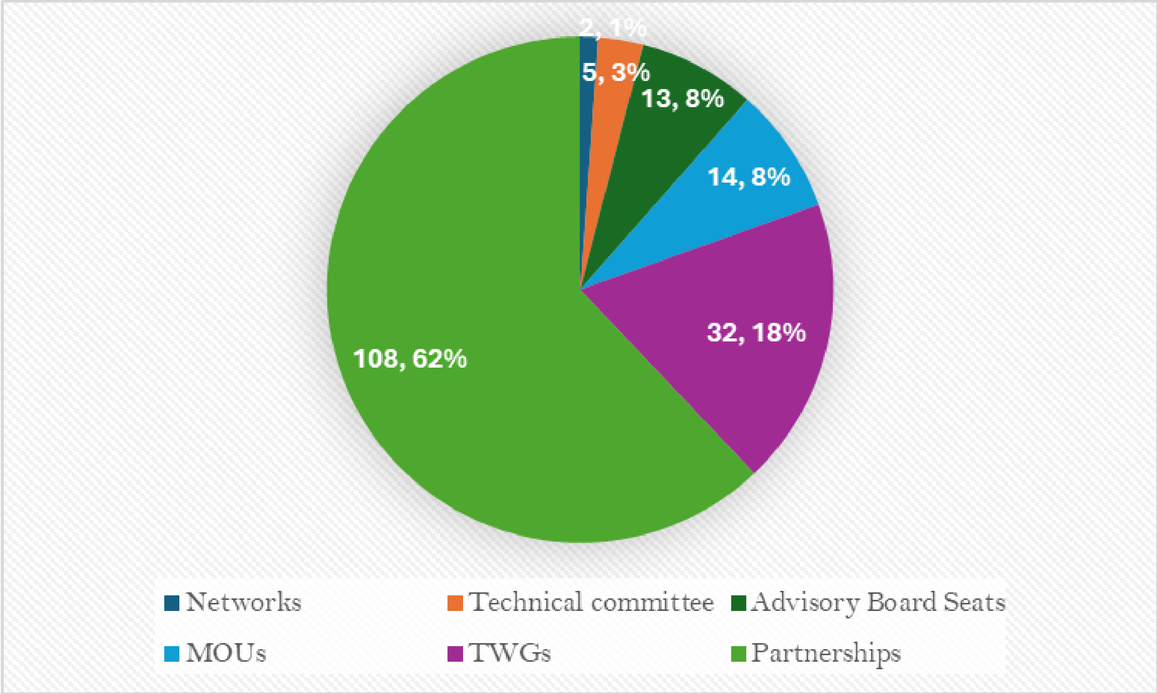
Strategic Objective 3
Use research evidence and engage policy actors and practitioners for transformative change.

Policy engagement initiatives



- In 2023, APHRC conducted about 185 policy engagements across various themes, reflecting a slight increase compared to 184 engagements in 2022.
- HAW had the most engagements at 85, followed by HD at 28

- APHRC formed alliances through 32 TWGs, 14 MOUs, 13 advisory board seats, 5 technical committees, and 2 networks,
- APHRC had partnerships with 108 institutions



Potential Impacts/ Policy wins

Theme	Contribution to potential Policy wins for further Assessment
HAW	1. Development of the **Kenya Nutrient Profile Model** (KNPM) 2. Development of guidelines on **comprehensive post-abortion care** (PAC) in Sierra Leone 3. Development of **Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Bill** in Sierra Leone. 4. The review of the **Public Health Law** in Liberia. **5. Community Handbook** for Engaging Adolescents, Parents and Community Leaders in Kenya 6. Yet to be launched Adolescent and Young People Sexual and Reproductive Health **(AYPSRH) Policy** in Kenya 7. The East Africa Community (EAC) **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights bill** 2021 8. Nairobi City County Public Health - **food safety manual** 9. Development of the Kenya **Verbal Autopsy Resource Hub** through the VA technical working group.
HD	**1. Parental empowerment and engagement (PEE)** policy, guidelines and programs in Kenya 2. Drafting of the **childcare facilities regulations** for Nairobi City County, 3. Drafting of **childcare regulations** for Kajiado and Nakuru County 4. Review and revision of the **Kenya National ECD Policy** and the **Unpaid Care and Domestic Work** Policy

Cont…

Theme	Contribution to potential Policy wins for further Assessment
PDUA	1. The Nairobi City County Assembly **Bill on Child Headed Households** (CHH) on Vulnerable and Marginalized Groups in Nairobi Informal Settlements.
RRCS	1. Wellcome is reviewing the **requirements for the early career researchers** (ECR) to be considered for their postdoctoral opportunities beyond 6 years after PhD graduation.
WARO	1. Informed the subsequent **investment case for Liberia.** 2. Countdown country reports from 20 countries have been useful for **RMNCH program planning** and implementation in those countries 3. The midterm review report for Kenya to inform the next **SP for Health** in Kenya
PEC	1. The Ministry of Finance in Sierra Leone committed to **allocating funds towards Mental Health**.

Strategic Objective 4: Strengthen operational efficiencies in systems and processes for maximum programmatic impact.

Strengthen operational efficiencies

New relationships developed for strategic initiatives

- During 2023, the Center developed 8 new relationships that had formal Teaming Agreements.

Funding management portfolio

- The Center had 3 active fund management projects: namely, JPIAMR, RELI Fund Management, and Collective Rising Leadership.

Efficiency in implementing projects - (timeliness)

- Of the 73 projects that were scheduled to close, 11% (8) received approved extensions.

Enhanced System Thinking

- Recruited a consultant in systems thinking to lead the approach

Cont…

Efficiency in the board of functions

- Board skills matrix was approved. The Board documents such as the Committee ToR, development of the Code of Ethics, Board Manual, and guidelines on approval of policies were reviewed.

- Audit committee of the board held four formal meetings. Decisions arising from the audit committee meetings were addressed with some action points being deferred to 2024.

Internal audit, risk and compliance

- Internal audit unit planned 8 audits. Out of which 6 were successfully completed, 1 was differed due to an external audit and 1 is still ongoing.

- Review of the Center's risk management processes facilitated by a consultant led to the development of 5 functional risk registers and 1 strategic register.

Enhance environmental sustainability

- Fully transition to paperless systems. - most finance payments, bid analysis, and approval of payment vouchers via ERP portal.

SP KPIs Performance Summary

Pause and Reflect after Action Review Summary

MEL unit engagement with Themes.

- Most activities that were yet to commerce by July 2023 are currently being implemented by themes.

- In relation to those that have not commenced, the themes has put in place strategies to commerce them in 2024 e.g.

    - SO 2 - Operationalization of research hubs, development of blueprint for Africa self-sufficiency in R&D ecosystem,
    - SO 3 - Implementation of system thinking and Signature Issues Approach,
    - SO 4 - Operationalisation of succession plan, establishment of endowment fund, solarization of the Center.

Key Challenges, Lessons Learnt and Recommendations

Key Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Challenges

- Difficulties in getting qualified candidates for niche areas
- Managing expectations from decision makers who are either too fast or too slow in their responses
- Bureaucracy-related barriers and Long approval processes e.g. accreditation by relevant Institutional Ethics Review Committees (IERCs)
- Lack of common understanding of key strategies like system thinking, signature issues and DEI

Recommendations

- Participatory proposal development with key stakeholders to form common understanding and easy buy-in.
- Enhance cross-functional collaboration and synergy among different themes and units
- At the organizational level, promote open access to research data while sharing findings and information to partners and stakeholders.

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Transforming lives in Africa through research.

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