How Community Data Drives Change in DSD: Comparing Community Engagement Trends between 2022 and 2023 across 21 African Countries

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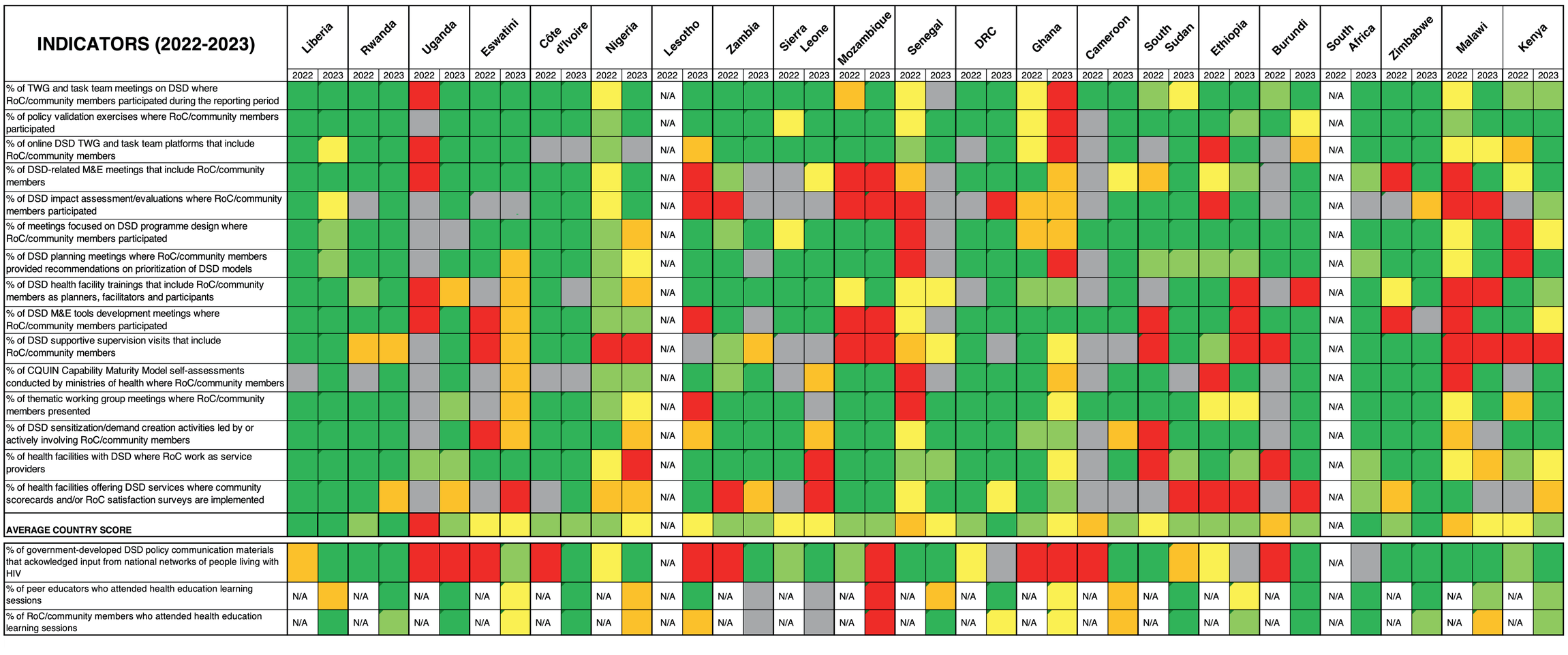

BACKGROUND

Meaningful Community Engagement (CE) enhances Differentiated Service Delivery (DSD) for efficient and high-quality HIV services. The CE monitoring tool tracks meaningful engagement for Recipients of Care (RoC) and improves the relevance, acceptability, and effectiveness of DSD programs. The main objective of the roll-out of the CE monitoring tool version 2.0 in 2023 was to bring further insight into the impact of CE and to bridge the identified gaps to strengthen meaningful CE in countries rolling-out DSD programs.

METHOD

The 2022 CE monitoring tool version 1.0 was streamlined and revised based on feedback from the Community Advocacy Network (CAN). The quantitative 18-indicator excel based tool was rolled-out across 21 CAN country partners*. The tool monitored CE retrospectively for the period 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2023 across the policy, program, and community levels of engagement as well as across the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation areas of engagement. Trends in CE were analyzed across 6 domains as follows: 0-40% (grey/red: no engagement); 21-40% (orange: RoC are not currently engaged in DSD activities); 41-60% (yellow: RoC are minimally engaged); 61-80% (light green: RoC are satisfactorily engaged in DSD activity); 81-100% (dark green: RoC are meaningfully engaged in DSD activity).

RESULTS

On average, CE scores have progressed from 57% to 69% between 2022 and 2023 (equivalent to a 21% increase). Overall, levels of CE have risen by 70% in countries tracking CE since 2022. In 2023, 69% of CE scores were satisfactory or meaningful engagement (61%-100% achievement rate) as compared to a 49% satisfactory or meaningful engagement rate in 2022. Uganda, Burundi, Cameroon, Malawi and Senegal progressed by more than 40% in 2023 within the no current engagement domain (red: 0-40%). Five countries (Rwanda, Liberia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and DRC) scored meaningful engagement in 2023 (dark green 81-100%) as compared to only one country (Liberia) in 2022. A 35% increase in the policy level in 2023 was a result meaningful engagement during the design of DSD policies, while the 18% increase in 2023 within the programme level was due to the implementation of the CQUIN Capability Maturity Model self-assessments. Meaningful CE in DSD across thematic working groups and demand creation contributed to a 10% increase across the community level in 2023.

DISCUSSION

Despite the relatively short period (18 months) since the beginning of CE tracking, several countries are already reporting significant impact on DSD programs: a more people-centered approach to community ART delivery.

**Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe*

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