

WISH2 CONNECT

TEAM LEAD MESSAGE

As we close this quarter and look ahead to a new year, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the journey we have travelled together under WISH 2. Our collective efforts across the Hub and country teams continue to demonstrate what is possible when commitment, partnership, and adaptability come together in service of strengthening SRHR in some of the most fragile contexts.

This quarter has brought notable progress across all four programme outputs. We saw significant advances in SBC and community engagement; improvements in integrated, inclusive, and resilient service delivery; strengthened momentum in policy and systems work; and steady growth in data quality, evidence generation, learning, and adaptation. Our monitoring visits, country reviews, and learning exchanges further deepened our understanding of what is working well and where to focus our attention, offering valuable insights that continue to shape programme direction.

Across all countries, we have seen steady improvements in our engagements, demonstrating the resilience and commitment of our teams and partners. These achievements reflect the strength of our collaboration and the dedication each of you brings to ensuring that no one is left behind.

Our close working relationships with consortium partners including MAs, OPDs, Ministries of Health, and other stakeholders, have been instrumental in sustaining progress and driving collective ownership of results.

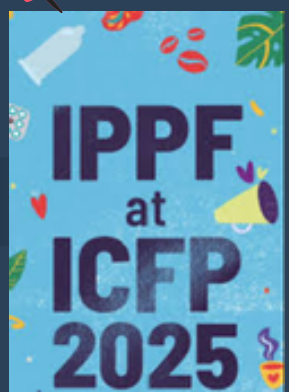
As we prepare for the next quarter, I am confident that we are entering with renewed readiness, clearer priorities, and a strong foundation of evidence and learning to guide adaptive action. I encourage all teams to maintain the same momentum, deepen collaboration, and continue sharing the innovations and experiences that are shaping WISH 2's contribution across the region.

Thank you for your hard work, professionalism, and commitment throughout the year. Wishing each of you, and all our partners, a happy and restful holiday season and a joyful, peaceful New Year. I look forward to continued progress, shared learning, and even greater impact in the new year.

Happy Reading!



WISH 2 Gains Visibility on the Global Stage at ICFP 2025 in Bogotá



WISH 2's participation at the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) 2025 in Bogotá marked a strategic investment in global influence, learning, and programme excellence at a critical moment for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The project was represented by Abok Barnabas, Deputy Director, Programmes, and Hellen Karoki, Senior Programme Manager, underscoring WISH 2's commitment to high-level technical and strategic engagement.

A key highlight was the oral presentation of the WISH 2 Cluster Model, showcasing a scalable, country-led approach to strengthening health systems in resource-constrained and humanitarian settings. The presentation generated strong interest from governments, implementers, and donors seeking sustainable SRHR solutions.

"Presenting the WISH 2 Cluster Model positioned WISH 2 not just as an implementer, but as a contributor to global solutions," noted Abok Barnabas.

Across plenaries and technical sessions, WISH 2 gained valuable insights on equity, self-care, disability inclusion, digital SRHR, and adaptive learning. Engagements through the IPPF side event and cross-programme exchanges further strengthened partnerships and learning. By translating global evidence into country-level action, WISH2 continues to advance equitable, high-quality, and sustainable SRHR services, ensuring women and girls remain at the centre of progress.



LOCAL VOICES

Gendered Insecurity and SGBV Risks in Displacement in Afar **FGAE**

The Afar region is a land of extremes, where fierce heat shapes daily survival, yet families have endured for generations with resilience, dignity, and hope.

For Meyrim Hamed, born and raised in Hurugibe Kebele, Afambo Woreda, Afar was home, until crisis and Climate-related shocks turned it into a place of fear. Everything changed one Monday afternoon when, without warning, the Awash River overflowed, unleashing a devastating flood that swallowed homes, land, and livelihoods. Forced to flee, Meyrim and her family relocated to Hadibure, six kilometres northwest of Afambo Health Centre.

Beyond the loss of property and livelihoods, displacement dismantled social protection and significantly increased women's and girls' exposure to insecurity, sexual violence, and exploitation.

While sitting in her small, fragile shelter, Meyrim heard an announcement about a community outreach session on contraception and sexual and reproductive health services, organised under the WISH 2 project in collaboration with Afambo Health Centre, as part of an integrated SRHR and SGBV service approach. Fear and embarrassment weighed heavily on her, but so did her awareness of the risks she faced. Gathering her courage, she attended the community dialogue session. Following the discussion, Meyrim made an informed decision to protect herself. She received a three-month injectable contraceptive, becoming a first-time user, supported by a health provider trained through WISH 2. This decision went beyond contraception; it marked a step toward reclaiming agency and control in circumstances that had stripped so much away.

“That moment changed how I saw my future,” Meyrim said quietly. “For the first time, I felt safe and understood. You gave me hope and the confidence to believe that I could protect myself and plan for my life.”

The WISH 2 project operates in the conflict-affected Afar Region, where SGBV has increased significantly during and in the aftermath of the Northern Ethiopia conflict. According to WHO's 2024 assessment, Afar is among the regions most affected by conflict-related GBV, with prevalence rates comparable to Tigray and Amhara, estimated at 40–50%.

Displacement, armed clashes, and entrenched patriarchal norms have further heightened risks, while access to medical, psychosocial, and legal support for survivors remains severely limited. In response, WISH 2 is actively integrating SGBV prevention and response within SRHR service delivery, particularly in conflict-affected and fragile settings, ensuring that women and girls can access essential services safely, with dignity, and without discrimination.

Today, Meyrim speaks with gratitude and renewed strength. She extends heartfelt thanks to the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia for reaching marginalised and IDP communities like hers. Under the relentless Afar heat and in the heart of displacement, Meyrim found more than a service. She found dignity, choice, and the courage to reclaim her future against daunting odds.



From Values to Voice: Empowering Journalists for Stigma-Free SRHR Reporting **PPAZ**

In a media landscape where narratives shape public understanding and influence policy, strengthening journalists' capacity to report responsibly on SRHR is essential. A dedicated training on the Values Clarification and Attitude Transformation (VCAT) approach brought together 70 journalists from both national and community media platforms, equipping them with practical tools to report on SRHR through a rights-based, ethical, and stigma-free lens.

The training created a safe space for reflection and dialogue, enabling participants to examine personal values, challenge misconceptions, and better understand the lived realities behind SRHR issues. Through interactive sessions and real-world case studies, journalists explored how language, framing, and tone can either reinforce stigma or contribute to informed, respectful public discourse.

The impact of the training was quickly evident. Participants produced and published six SRHR-focused articles that prioritised accuracy, human dignity, and evidence-based reporting. These stories reached diverse audiences and helped foster more balanced conversations on sensitive topics, contributing to greater awareness and understanding at both community and national levels.

Reflecting on the experience, one participant shared: “VCAT helped me confront my own assumptions and rethink how I tell SRHR stories. I now feel more confident reporting in a way that is factual, respectful, and centred on people's rights.”

WISH 2 believes that by investing in journalists as critical agents of change, this initiative is contributing to a more informed media environment, one that supports positive social norms, counters misinformation, and advances public dialogue on SRHR grounded in rights, respect, and empathy.

LOCAL VOICES



HUMANITARIAN HIGHLIGHTS

From Fragility to Forward Momentum: Two WISH 2 Successes in Somalia

Somalia remains one of the most challenging environments for sexual and reproductive health and rights delivery. Protracted conflict, climate shocks, and repeated humanitarian crises have severely weakened the health system and disrupted service continuity. The consequences are visible in the data: maternal mortality remains high at 563 deaths per 100,000 live births, fertility rates range between 6.2 and 6.9 births per woman, modern contraceptive prevalence is approximately 1 percent, and unmet need for contraception has risen from 29 percent (SHDS 2020) to 37 percent, one of the highest globally.

Against this reality, WISH2 has delivered two interconnected successes, restoring family planning uptake at service and community level, and supporting Somalia to achieve a renewed FP2030 commitment, demonstrating impact both on the ground and at national policy level.

Success 1: Restoring Family Planning Uptake Where Services Had Declined

During WISH Phase 1 (2017–2019), FP service delivery in Somalia expanded rapidly, with annual client numbers rising from near zero to over 4,000 clients. Between 2019 and 2022, services stabilised at approximately 4,200–4,500 clients per year, indicating that systems and partnerships were functioning at optimal capacity. However, in 2023, service delivery sharply declined to around 1,200 clients, driven by escalating insecurity, facility damage, population displacement, and supply chain interruptions as WISH Phase 1 ended. This drop highlighted the fragility of SRHR gains in crisis settings without sustained investment.

With the onset of WISH Phase 2 (2024–2025), early recovery has been observed, with client numbers increasing again to approximately 1,800. This rebound reflects WISH2's adaptive strategies, including provider capacity building, strengthened referral and supply systems, and expanded community and faith-based outreach to reach populations previously cut off from care. At Arif Health Center in Mogadishu, serving around 85,000 people including internally displaced persons, FP uptake has steadily increased across both WISH phases. The contraceptive method mix has diversified, with growing acceptance of implants, injectables, and IUDs, signalling improved informed choice and community confidence. For women who previously avoided contraception due to fear or misinformation, counselling and integrated services are enabling safer, planned pregnancies and improved wellbeing. WISH 2 has supported the integration of family planning within primary health care, maternal and child health, and nutrition services. Through provider capacity building, strengthened supply chains, and community-based outreach, including faith-based engagement, women are once again accessing FP services with confidence.



- One client, a young mother of three, shared that she had previously avoided contraception due to fear and misinformation. After receiving counselling at Arif Health Center, she chose a long-acting method for the first time. “Now I feel I can care for my children better and plan for the future,” she explained.

Success 2: From Fragmented Policy Space to a National FP2030 Commitment Rationale and evidence of change

While service delivery is essential, Somalia's high unmet need for FP underscores the importance of national leadership, policy alignment, and accountability. Historically, sustained national commitments to FP have been difficult due to political instability, competing humanitarian priorities, and limited domestic financing.

Beyond service delivery, WISH 2 has also contributed to a landmark policy achievement. With leadership from IRC, the WISH 2 consortium partners, and close collaboration with the FP2030 regional team, Somalia successfully advanced its FP2030 commitment, a significant milestone in a context where policy continuity is often disrupted.

Through technical input, coordination, and advocacy with the Ministry of Health, the partnership helped align national priorities with global FP2030 goals, reinforcing commitments to expand access, address unmet need, and strengthen accountability for family planning outcomes within national health and development agendas. This achievement represents a critical shift, from fragmented and short-term planning to a clear, globally aligned commitment to expand access to family planning, address unmet need, and strengthen accountability mechanisms.

Impact: from limited national ownership to a formal, global commitment that provides a foundation for sustained FP investment and reform.

FP
2030



Why This Matters

Together, these achievements demonstrate WISH 2's dual impact in Somalia, supporting women's individual choices at community level while strengthening national ownership of family planning. The recovery in service uptake under WISH Phase 2 shows that even in fragile settings, adaptive, community-centred approaches can rebuild confidence and demand for family planning services. At the same time, Somalia's FP2030 commitment provides a critical foundation for longer-term sustainability and accountability.

In a context where progress is often fragile and easily reversed, WISH 2 is proving that evidence-informed programming, strong partnerships, and community trust can simultaneously restore services and reinforce national commitment, transforming fragility into forward momentum.



PARTNERS SPOTLIGHT

Parliamentarians Champion SRHR in IPAS

In Madagascar, advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights remains challenging due to a highly restrictive legal environment and persistent social barriers, particularly for girls and young women. Through sustained advocacy under WISH2ACTION, Ipas supported the establishment of the Parliamentary Network for Reproductive Justice (RPNJR), transforming parliamentarians from advocacy targets into active champions of SRHR reform.

RPNJR members play a central role in national SRHR dialogue, serving on the WISH project steering committee and engaging publicly on reproductive health laws and family planning. Their leadership was demonstrated during a national SRHR conference in Tamatave in July 2025, where network leaders highlighted legal provisions and the role of men in promoting bodily autonomy.

“Initially, I used to attend events out of curiosity, but now I understand the issues and advocate for SRHR wherever I go,” shared a parliamentarian and RPNJR member.

Integrated into strategies of multiple WISH2 partners, the RPNJR offers a sustainable, institutionally anchored model for advancing reproductive justice in restrictive contexts, ensuring SRHR remains on the national agenda.

In a country where cultural and religious influence remains strong, the RPNJR offers a powerful model for advancing reproductive justice from within the system.



With opportunities for study tours and peer exchange, the network also holds potential to inspire similar parliamentary initiatives in other countries facing restrictive SRHR environments.

Through WISH 2, Madagascar’s parliamentarians have moved from observers to champions, helping to shape a more enabling policy environment where the rights, dignity, and autonomy of girls and women can be progressively realised.

WISH 2’s Adolescent Wellness Days Boost Youth Engagement in JHU



Adolescents in Lusaka often face significant barriers to accessing SRH services, including stigma, lack of privacy, and limited availability of adolescent-responsive care. To address these challenges, the WISH 2 project, in collaboration with JHU-CCP and the Ministry of Health, introduced the Adolescent and Young People Wellness Day Approach in selected WISH 2-supported facilities.

The Wellness Day model provides integrated, facility-based services, including SRH, HIV testing, nutrition screening, mental health support, and hygiene education, within a safe and welcoming environment.

On 2 September 2025, JHU-CCP and PPAZ, with support from the Lusaka Provincial Health Office, oriented 26 adolescent focal persons from 21 facilities on the approach. The participatory training emphasised empathy, confidentiality, and non-judgemental counselling, reinforced through a signed privacy pledge.

“After the orientation, I am better equipped to support adolescents with SRH services while ensuring confidentiality and privacy. The Wellness Days are a complete package for empowering adolescents and young people,” shared an adolescent focal person from Fumbelo Health Facility.

Implementation began in 12 facilities, with Ngo’mbe Health Facility hosting the first Wellness Day. The event reached 317 adolescents and young people, with 35 accessing contraceptive services.

“Including services like weight and blood-pressure checks excited adolescents to participate,” noted Ngo’mbe’s adolescent health focal person.

With phased scale-up planned, the AYP Wellness Day approach shows strong potential for national adoption under the Ministry of Health’s Adolescent Health Strategy, demonstrating how integrated, youth-friendly care can increase service uptake and trust.

PROJECT HIGHPOINTS

Strengthening Client Voice through WISH 2 CEIs

In early September 2025, Addis Ababa became a hub of learning, collaboration, and shared commitment to evidence-driven programming as WISH 2 partners convened for the Round 1 Client Exit Interviews Training of Trainers. Hosted by the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia, the five-day training brought together Monitoring and Evaluation managers, research teams, and fieldwork partners from seven WISH2 countries, Burundi, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Zambia, with a common goal: to ensure that client voices are captured ethically, consistently, and meaningfully across diverse and often fragile contexts.

Client Exit Interviews sit at the heart of WISH 2's Evidence and Learning agenda, providing a structured way to listen directly to women and girls accessing sexual and reproductive health and family planning services. Facilitated jointly by the WISH2 Hub, Member Associations, and IRC, the training reinforced how CEIs link service delivery, policy, accountability, and learning.

The ToT combined technical instruction with hands-on practice, covering ethical research principles, informed consent, sampling methodologies, and quality assurance. Strong emphasis was placed on ethical rigour, confidentiality, and adherence to sampling protocols to protect data validity and comparability.

“One of the most valuable aspects of the ToT was the cross-country exchange of experiences,” noted Abutalib Eljack from SPPA, highlighting the diversity of delivery models across humanitarian settings.

“The ToT marks a critical milestone,” added Musa Muga, Senior MERL Manager, IPPF, “laying the foundation for credible, ethical, and actionable evidence.” Following the ToT, five countries have completed enumerator training and begun data collection. Through this collective investment, WISH2 continues to demonstrate that evidence is not just about numbers—but about listening, improving, and leaving no one behind.



Instructions

- Two volunteers should come to the front of the class to demonstrate the consent process.
- One volunteer should act as the client while the other should act as the enumerator.
- The class is to listen to the process and then give constructive feedback.

Practice amongst yourselves for 10 minutes

- Note: divide into pairs and take turns practicing administering the consent form

Accelerating Results in Zambia: WISH 2's Hands-On Support in Action



From 28 September to 4 October 2025, the WISH 2 Hub conducted a programme management visit to Zambia to support implementation, strengthen coordination, and accelerate results under IPPF's flagship WISH 2 project. The visit demonstrated WISH 2's commitment to hands-on partner support, adaptive management, and evidence-informed decision-making.

The Hub team engaged closely with the Planned Parenthood Association of Zambia (PPAZ), consortium partners, government counterparts, and service delivery sites to review progress and identify opportunities to scale impact.

Notable progress was observed in social and behaviour change (SBC) programming, including the localisation of WISH 1 materials and the introduction of a Wellness Days approach in partnership with the Ministry of Health. Visits to static clinics, public facilities, and mobile outreach services, many located in hard-to-reach areas, demonstrated readiness to deliver quality services, while also highlighting the need to further strengthen sub-national staffing, logistics, and differentiated facility support. The visit reinforced strategic alignment with the Keeping Girls in School (KGS) programme, illustrating how coordinated investments improve adolescent- and youth-responsive services.

At community level, frontline workers reported increasing trust and outreach. “Through WISH 2, we are better equipped to reach women and young people with confidence and dignity, even in hard-to-reach areas,” said Elector Siyapwaya, Community Health Worker, Sinazongwe.

The visit also identified priorities for strengthening data quality, learning, and the adaptive use of evidence. Engagements with the Ministry of Health and FCDO Zambia reaffirmed strong partnerships and a shared commitment to value for money and sustainable impact.

PROJECT HIGHPOINTS

OPM & Routine Country Assessment Visit in Ethiopia

Strengthening SRHR Delivery Through Evidence and Partnership

This quarter marked an important milestone for WISH 2 in Ethiopia with the first Oxford Policy Management monitoring visit, combined with the implementation of the Routine Country Assessment (RCA). Together, these processes strengthened oversight, learning, and evidence-informed programme delivery under the WISH Dividend programme.

The objective of the RCA was to provide FCDO with a comprehensive overview of the status of WISH Dividend implementation in Ethiopia. The assessment was treated as a pilot, designed to test and ground the RCA protocol, approach, and assessment tools. The assessment and monitoring activities were conducted by a multidisciplinary team of six members with expertise across programme review, data systems, and clinical due diligence. The team spent six working days in-country between 23 and 30 September 2025, including two days at headquarters level in Addis Ababa and three days in the Afar Region.

A country brief analysis was undertaken prior to the visit to guide priorities and site selection. Based on this analysis, Afar Region was selected as the primary focus due to its operational complexity, hard-to-reach populations, and strategic relevance to WISH 2's equity and value-for-money objectives. In Afar, the team held discussions with the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE), implementing partners, regional government health authorities, and other key stakeholders, and conducted visits to four health facilities, including three public facilities and one FGAE-owned facility.

Key observations highlighted strong programme foundations, alignment with national and regional priorities, and committed partnerships at both national and sub-national levels. The visit also identified opportunities to strengthen data quality, documentation of learning, and adaptive use of evidence to further enhance programme effectiveness.

WISH 2 will act on the findings by developing a clear, time-bound action plan in collaboration with FGAE and partners. Recommendations will be integrated into routine programme reviews to strengthen data quality, learning, and adaptive management.



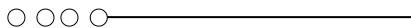
Follow the Stories Behind the Impact

Behind every service delivered through WISH, there is a story of resilience, choice, and change. Across fragile and hard-to-reach settings, women, girls, young people, and marginalised communities navigate conflict, displacement, poverty, and inequality while striving to protect their health, rights, and futures.

We invite you to follow, read, and share these stories on the IPPF website, consortium partner websites, and across our social media platforms.

Stay connected. Follow the stories. Be part of the impact.

IPPF: <https://africa.ippf.org/our-approach/programmes/womens-integrated-sexual-health-wish-2>
<https://africa.ippf.org/blogs/wish-2-client-stories-south-sudan-one-project-many-journeys>



NEXT ON THE CALEDAR



Next on the Calendar (January - 2026)

Internal

Jan - Feb 2026

29 29 January-Webinar: SGBV implementations in WISH 2 -Topic TBC

17 Feb (TBC)- Sensitization Session on the Cluster Model

External

Jan - Feb 2026

22 22 January - International Conference on SRHA, Nairobi, Kenya

17 Late January (Date TBC) - Global Health Supply Chain & Family Planning Forums, These technical workshops are focused on contraceptive security and health systems strengthening. UNFPA Supply Chain Management Unit coordinates global contraceptive supply efforts. [United Nations Population Fund](https://www.unfpa.org/). [UNFPA Supply Chain overview and coordination: UNFPA events and calendar: https://www.unfpa.org/events](https://www.unfpa.org/)

17 Anticipated: January 2026 (to be confirmed) UNFPA & Partner Technical Consultations (SRHR/FP) - UNFPA and partner consultations on SRHR priorities, adolescent and youth SRHR, and humanitarian sexual health planning are typically held early in the year but exact 2026 dates and links are pending official announcement. <https://www.unfpa.org/events>

17 6 February: International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation

17 12 February - International Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Day



Wishing you a joyful

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR 2026!



With warm wishes from the WISH 2 Team

WISH 2 Connect - E- Newsletter
Eastern and Southern Africa
Email: info-WISH2@ippf.org

Internal Link: <https://ippfglobal.sharepoint.com/>



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Women's Integrated Sexual Health
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