

The Current Landscape of Research on World Health Assembly Indicators in West Africa: A Systematic Map to Guide Decision-Making



Senegal

International Food Policy Research Institute

Introduction

The West Africa (WA) Region has been one of the slowest in reducing its many burdens of malnutrition. The World Health Assembly's (WHA) 2025 nutrition targets were developed to track countries' nutritional situations, and measure progress in reducing malnutrition. These indicators are therefore essential to guide decision making. Understanding the regional and in-country dynamics are an essential first step to highlight gaps and trends in evidence in the region.

Objective

This study aimed to identify and catalogue peer-reviewed research on the WHA indicators in West Africa, and create a map of recent research evidence to inform decision-making for nutrition policies and programs in the region.

Methods

The MEDLINE database was searched for research published on World Health Assembly (WHA) indicators from 2010 to June 2021

Search terms were developed to capture evidence on the prevalence, drivers, programs (Randomized Controlled Trials), and policies relating to the WHA indicators. These include stunting, wasting and overweight in children under 5, low birth weight (LBW), exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) up to 6 months, and anemia in women of reproductive age (WRA)

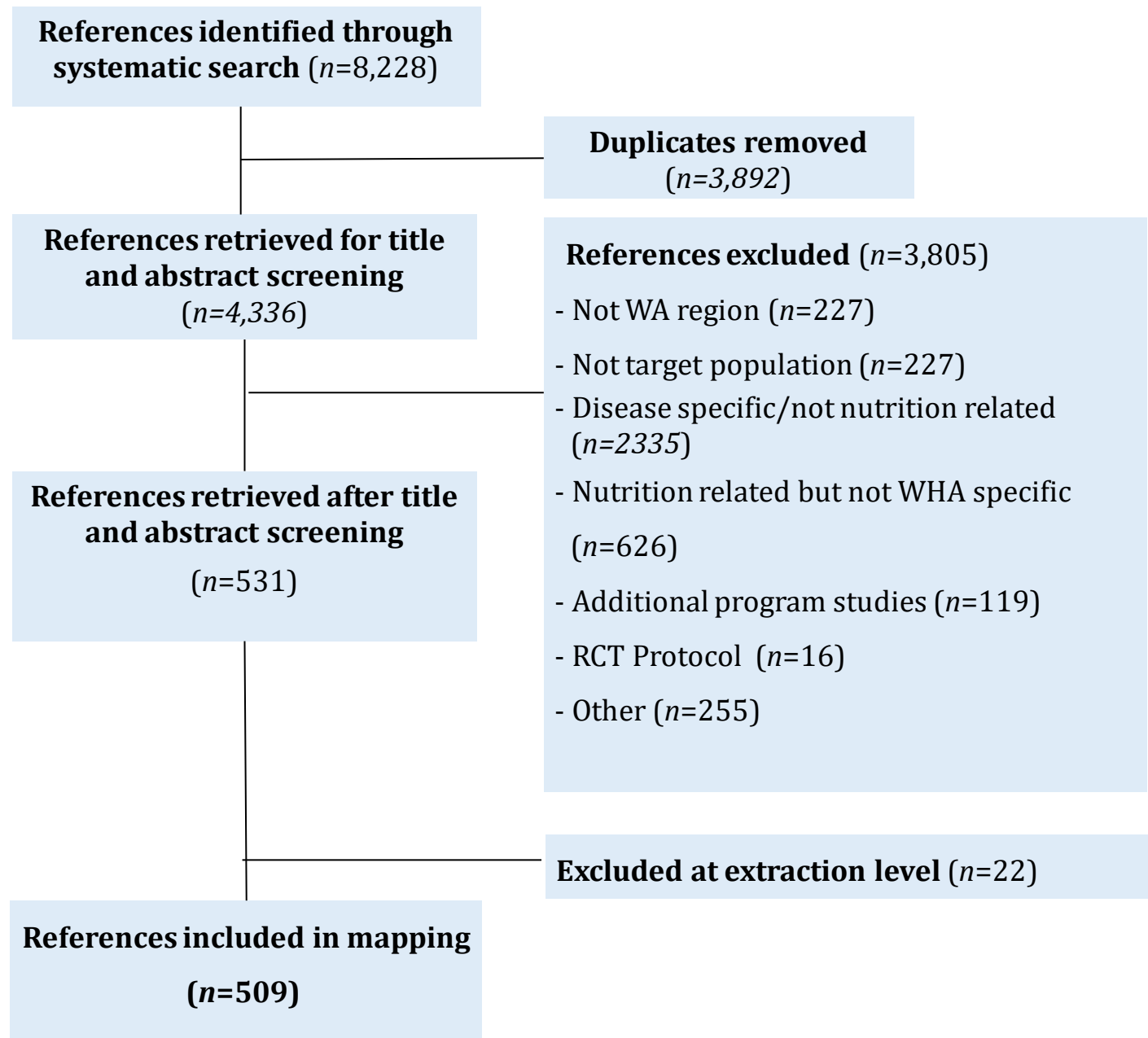


A systematic approach was applied to literature searches, developing inclusion criteria, screening, coding, taxonomy, data extraction, and study synthesis

Data were extracted at abstract level.

No quality appraisal of publications was undertaken

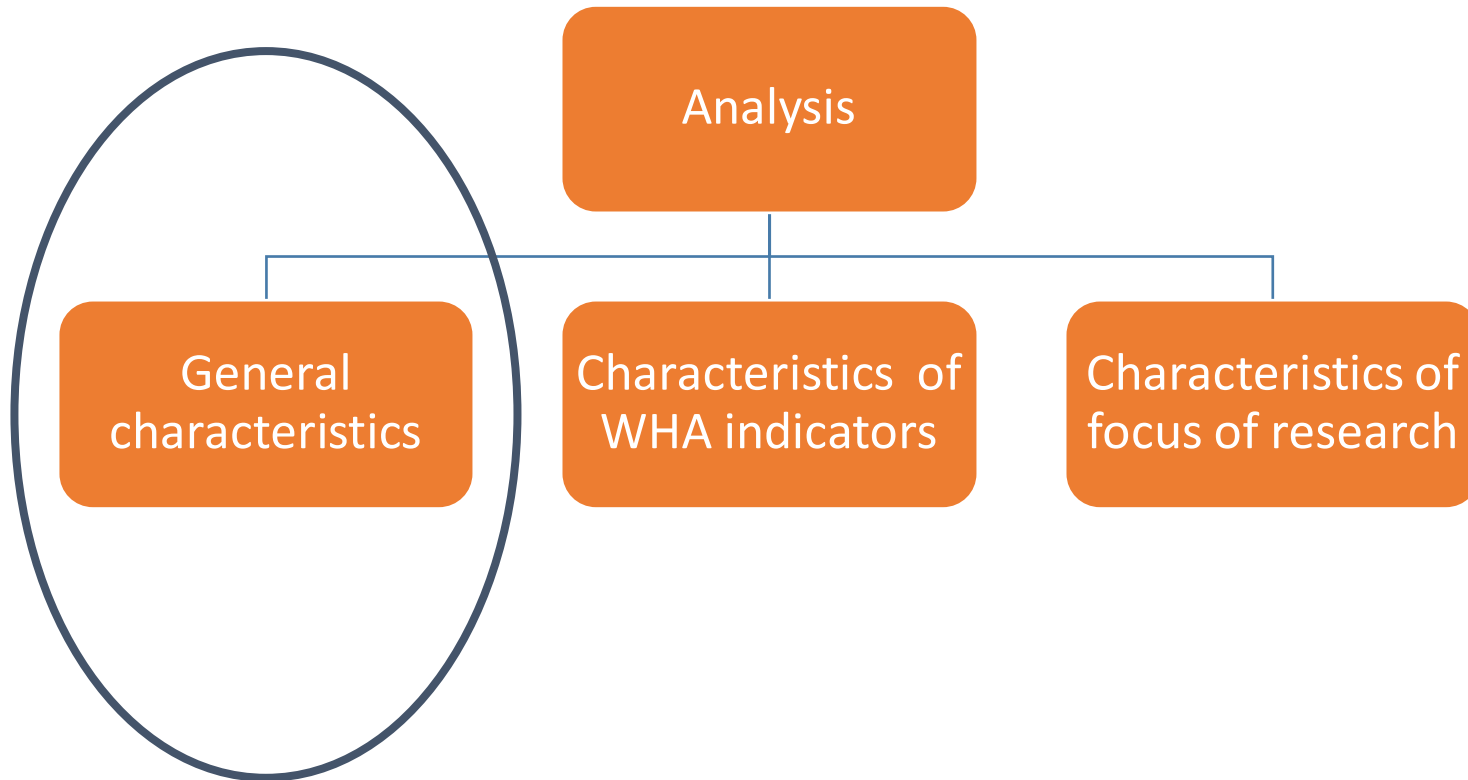
Flow chart of search approach



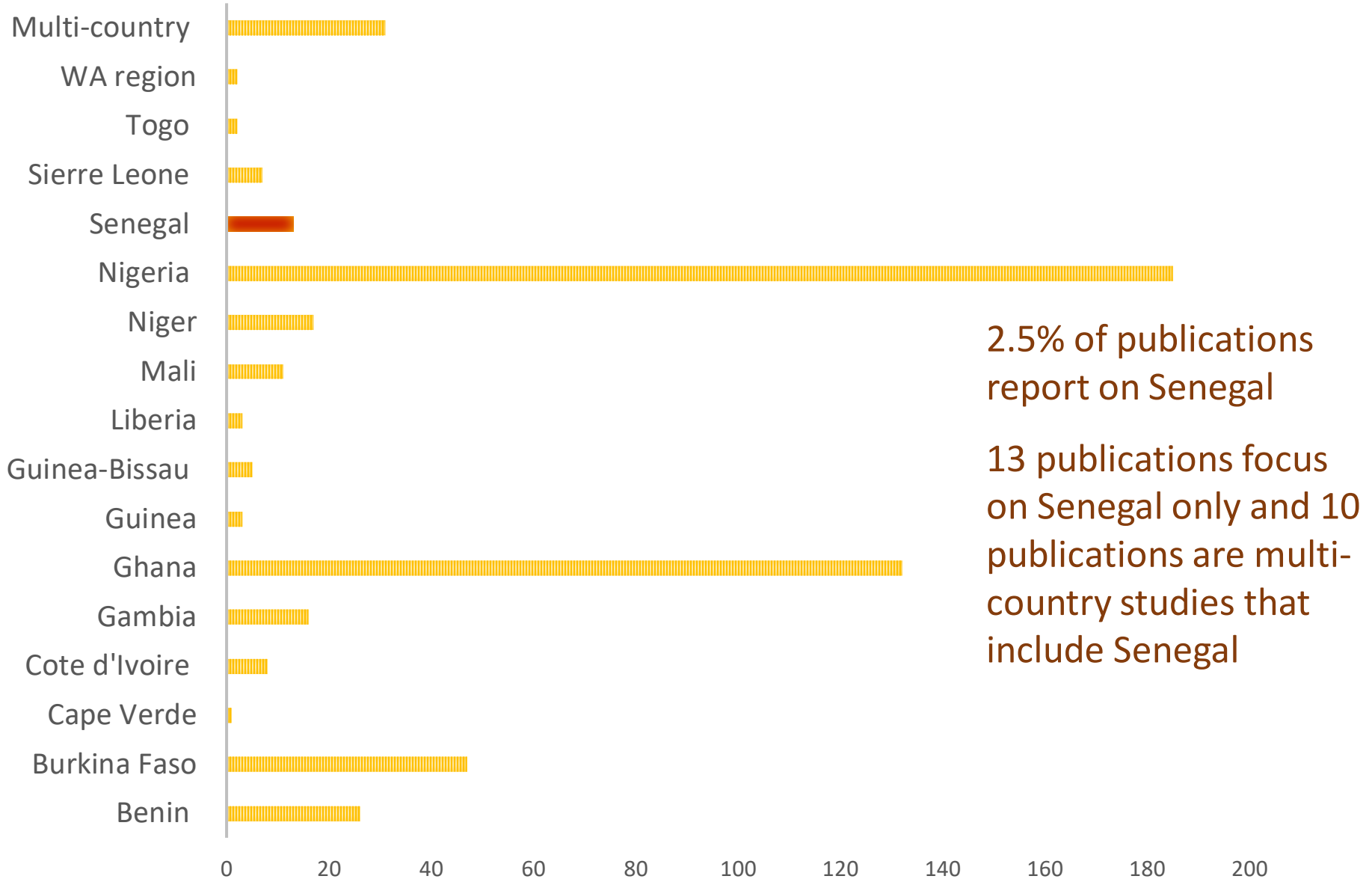
Results – Senegal



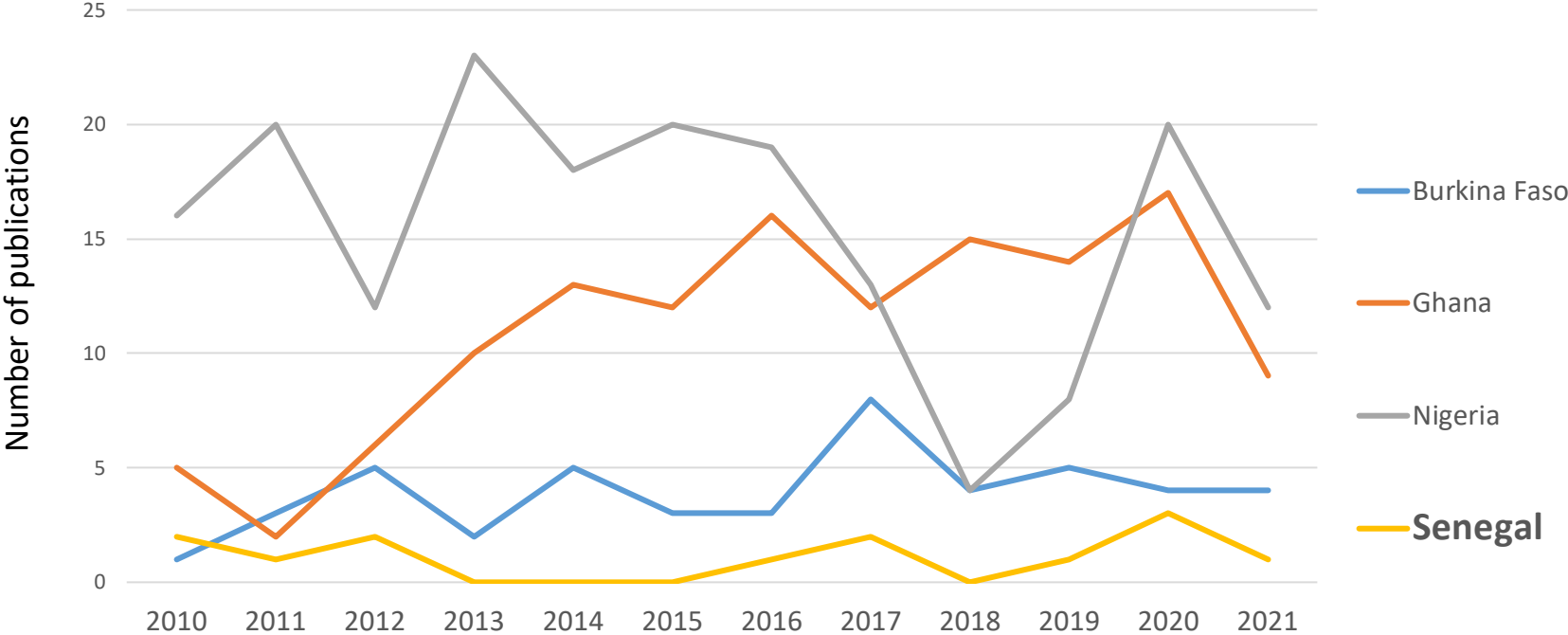
Results



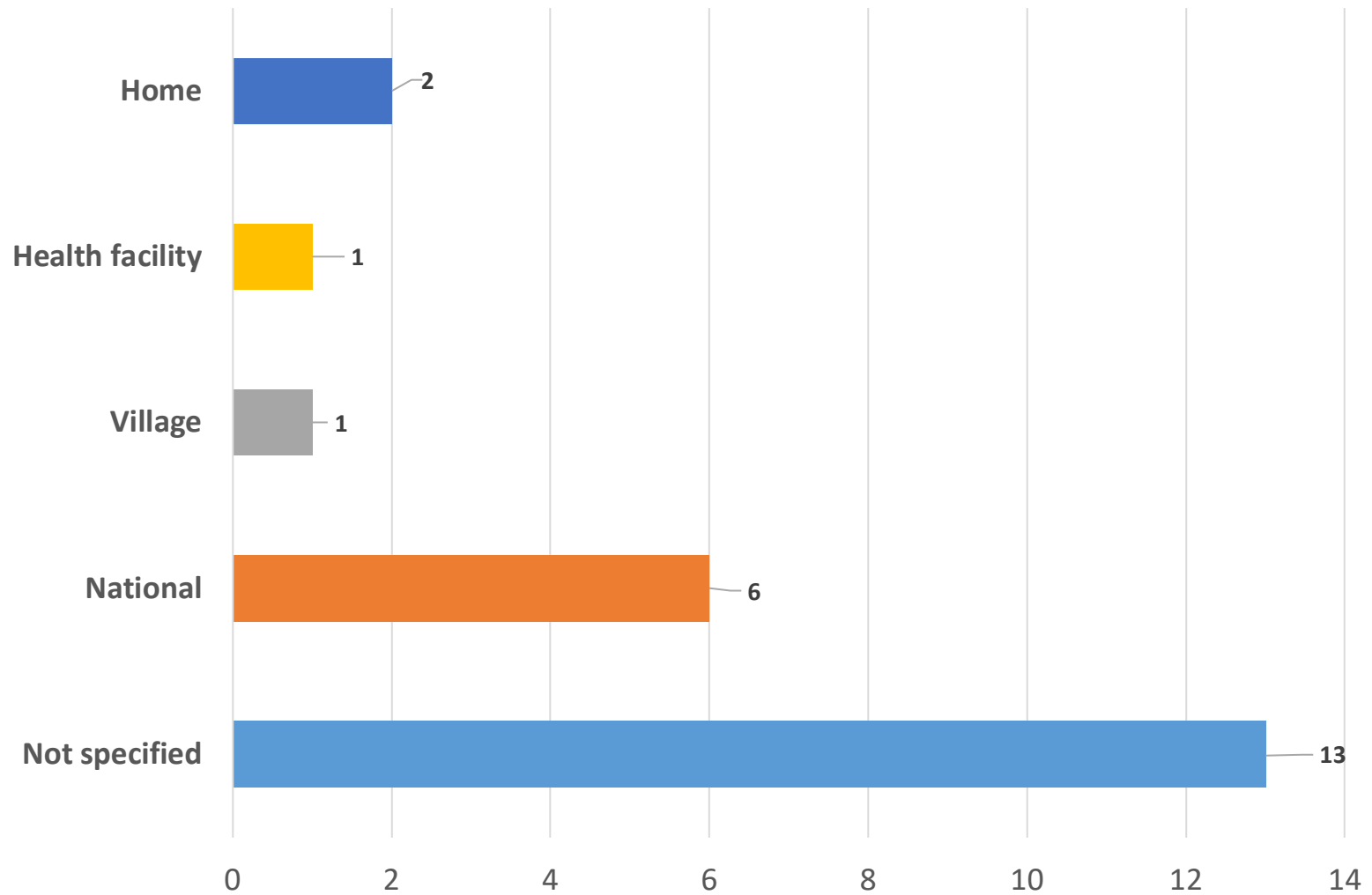
Number of publications by country



Publications per year in four focal countries

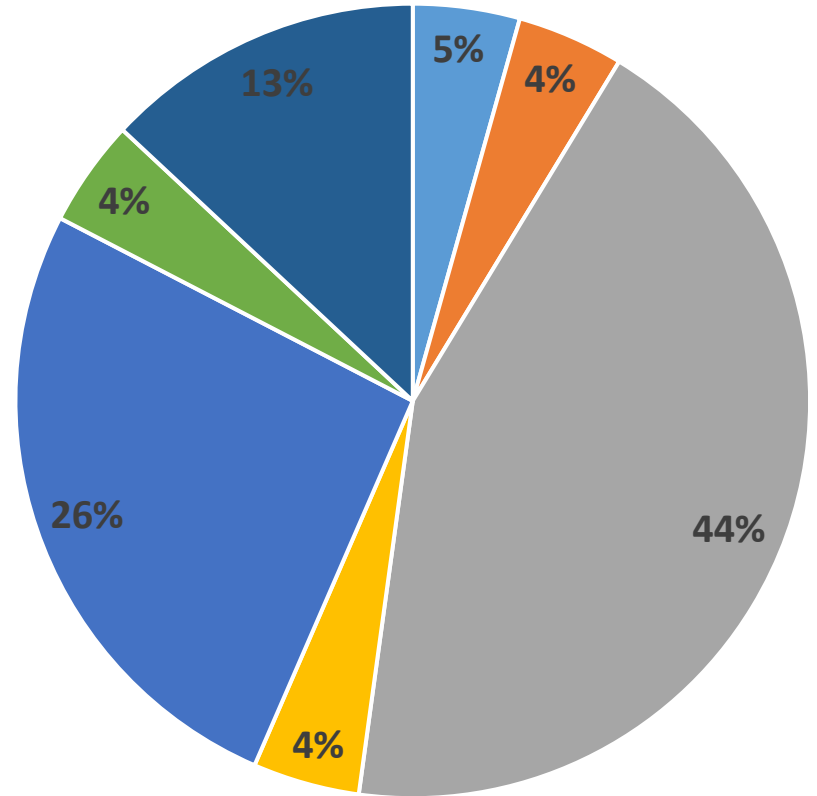
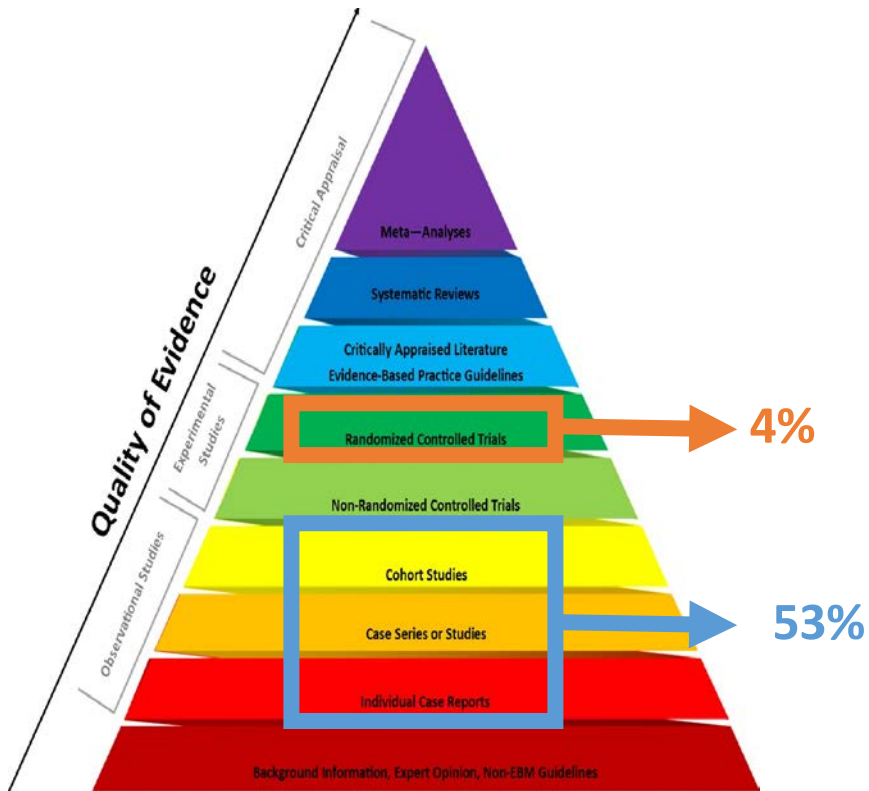


Publications reporting on Senegal by study setting



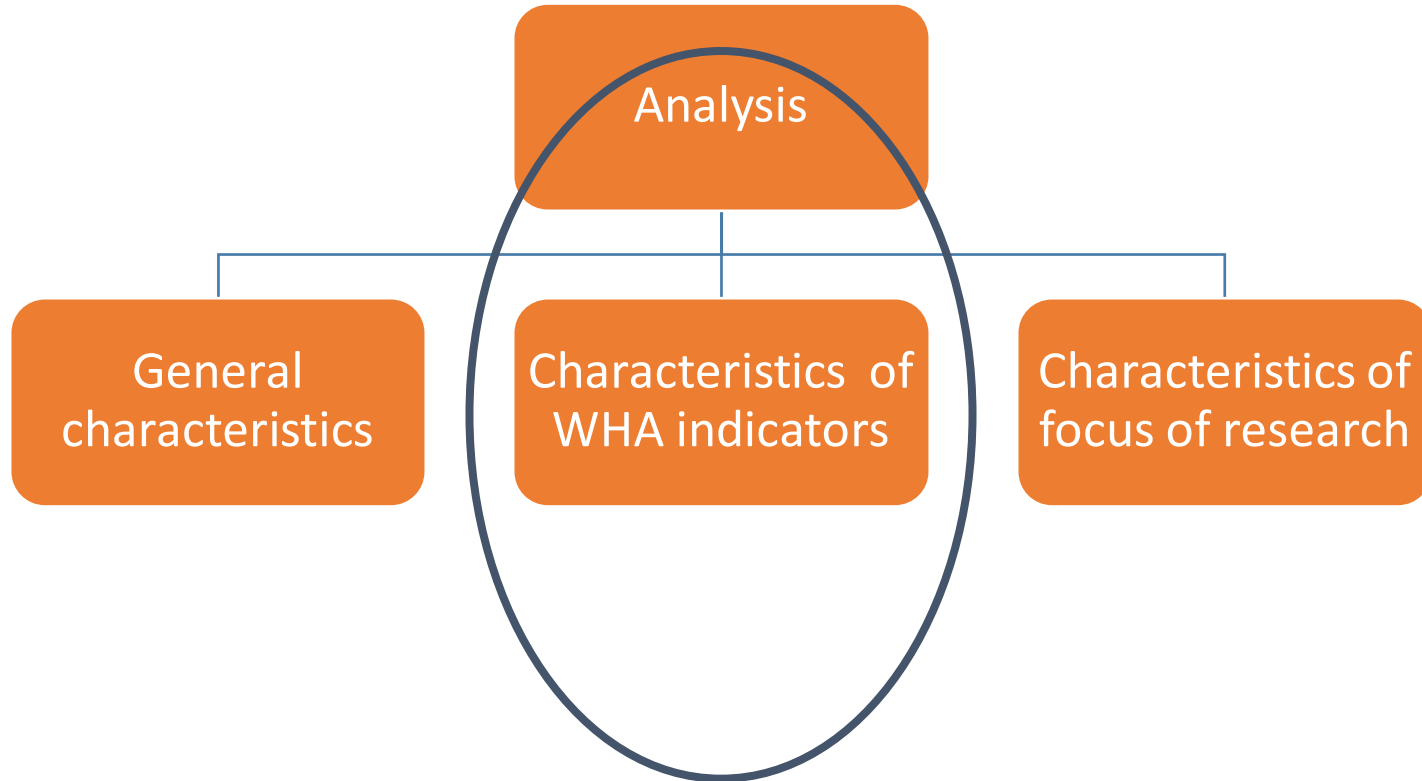
Publications reporting on Senegal by study design

Hierarchy of evidence

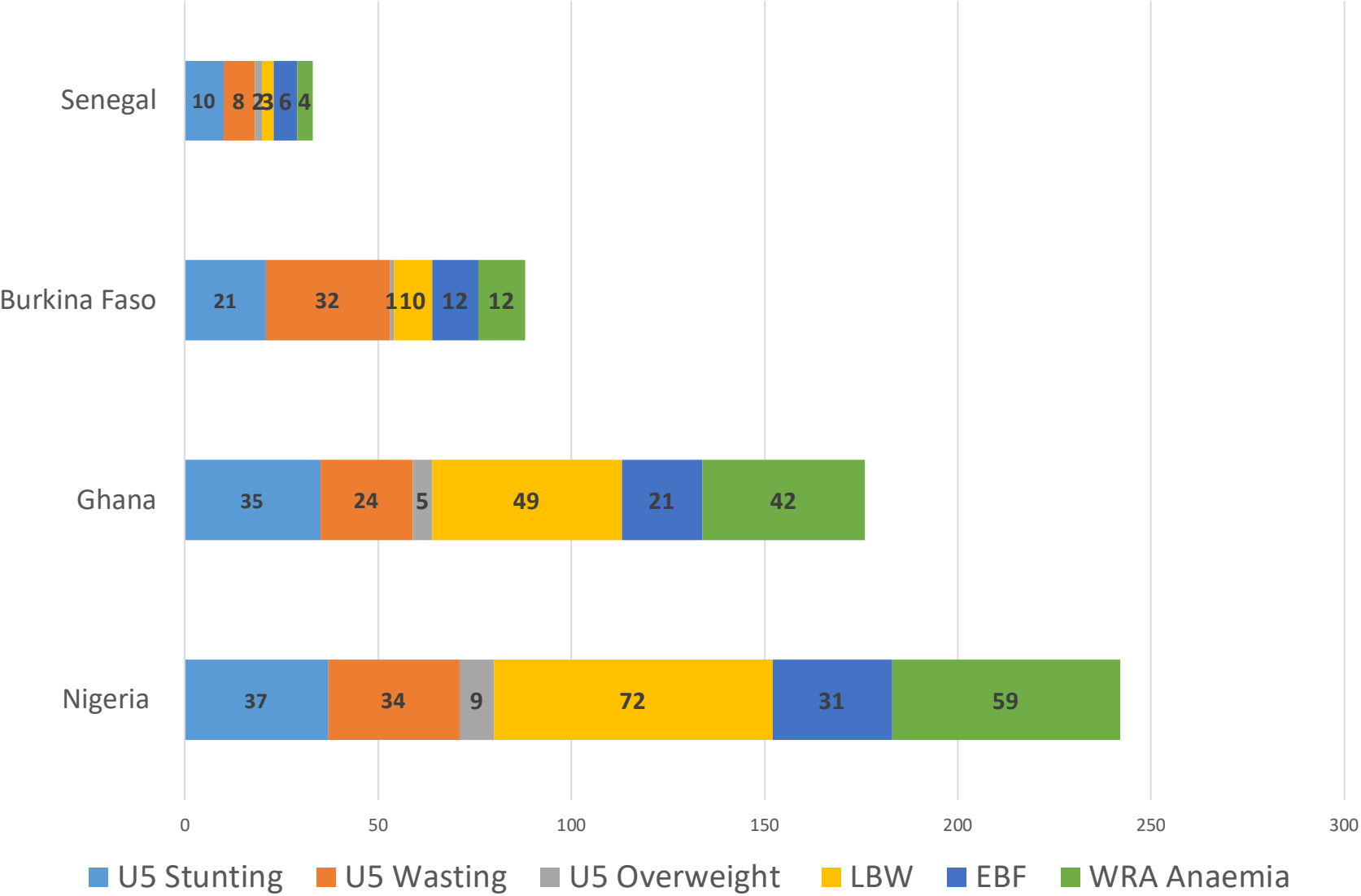


- Case study
- Cross-sectional
- Not specified
- Other
- Case-control
- Mixed methods
- RCT

Results

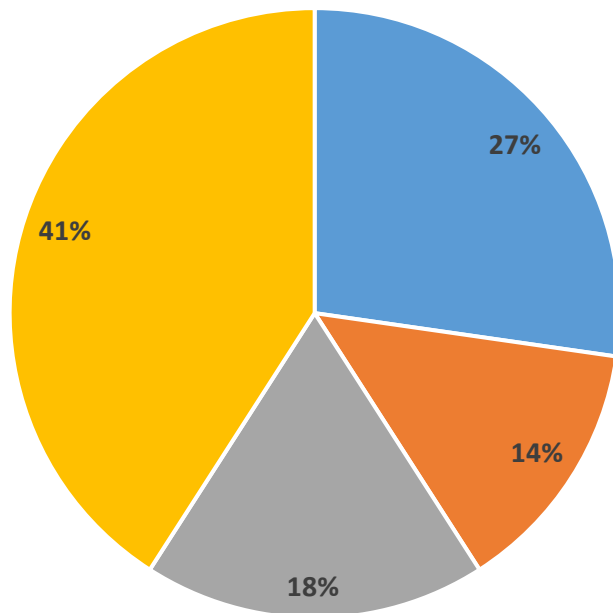


Publications per indicator category grouping for four focal countries



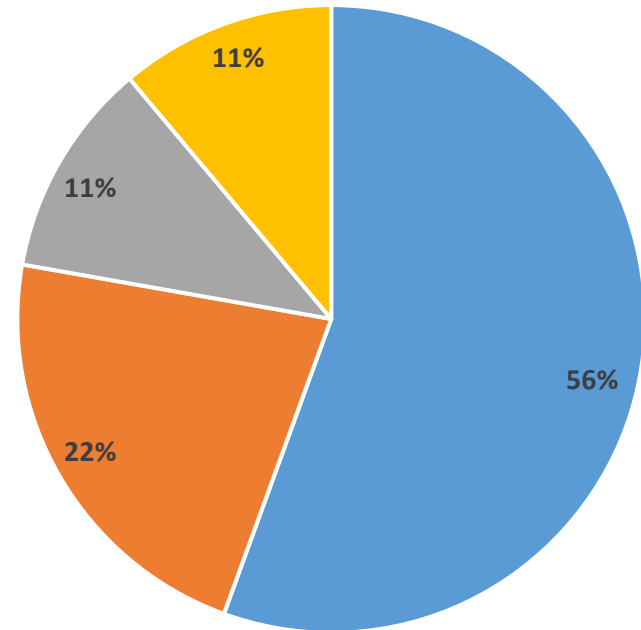
Publications reporting on Senegal per indicator category

Percent of publications per indicator category (n=23)



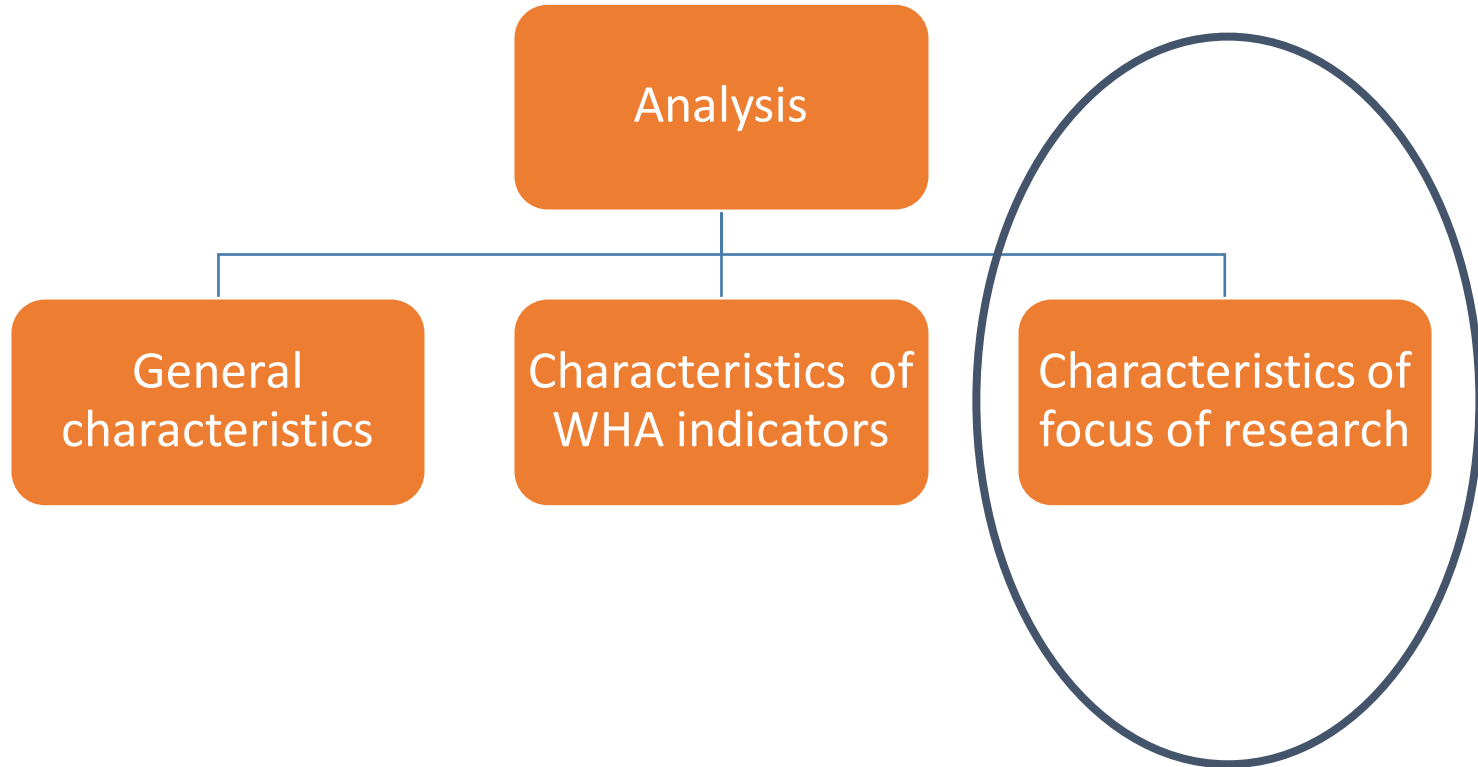
■ More than 1 indicator ■ WRA Anaemia
■ EBF ■ U5NS

Breakdown of publications within U5NS (n=9)

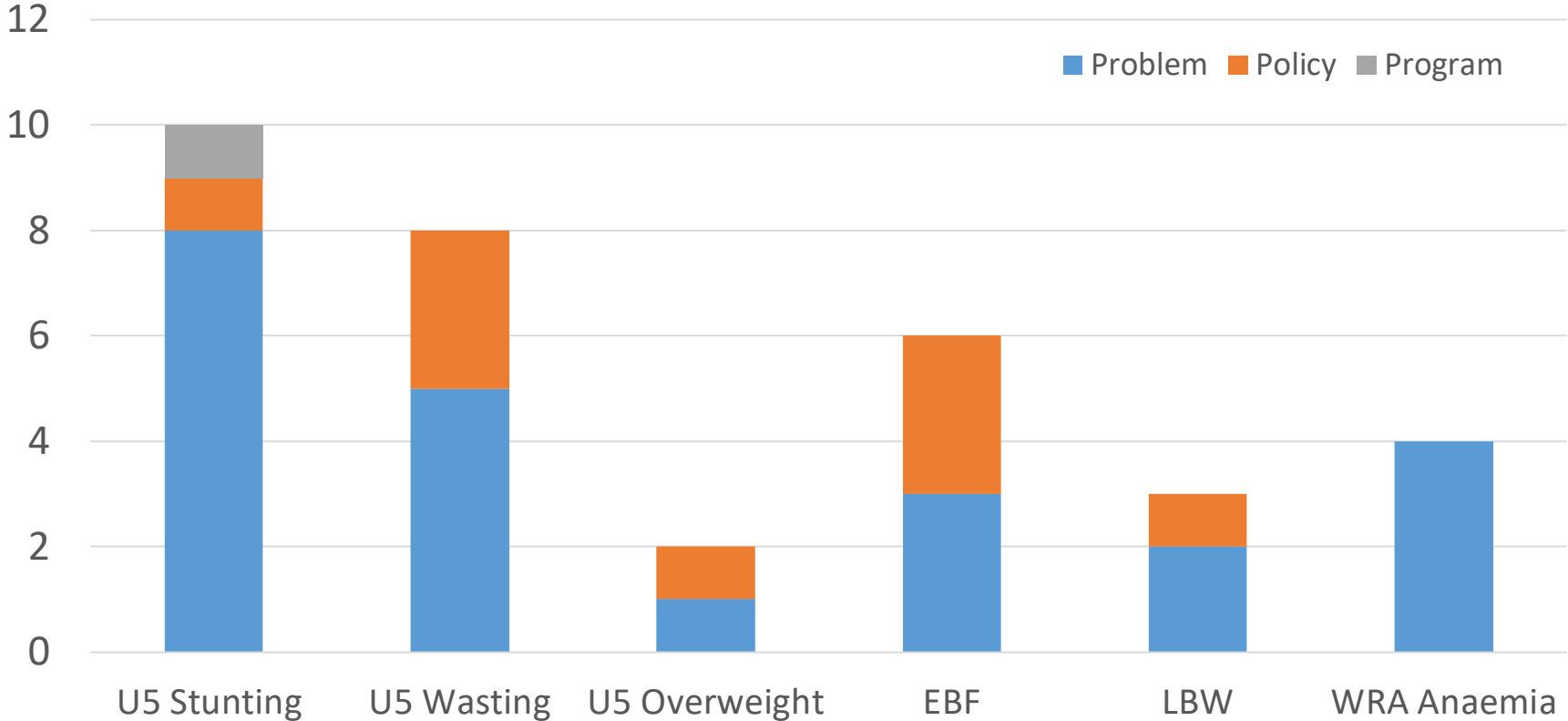


■ Stunting ■ Wasting ■ LBW ■ Overweight

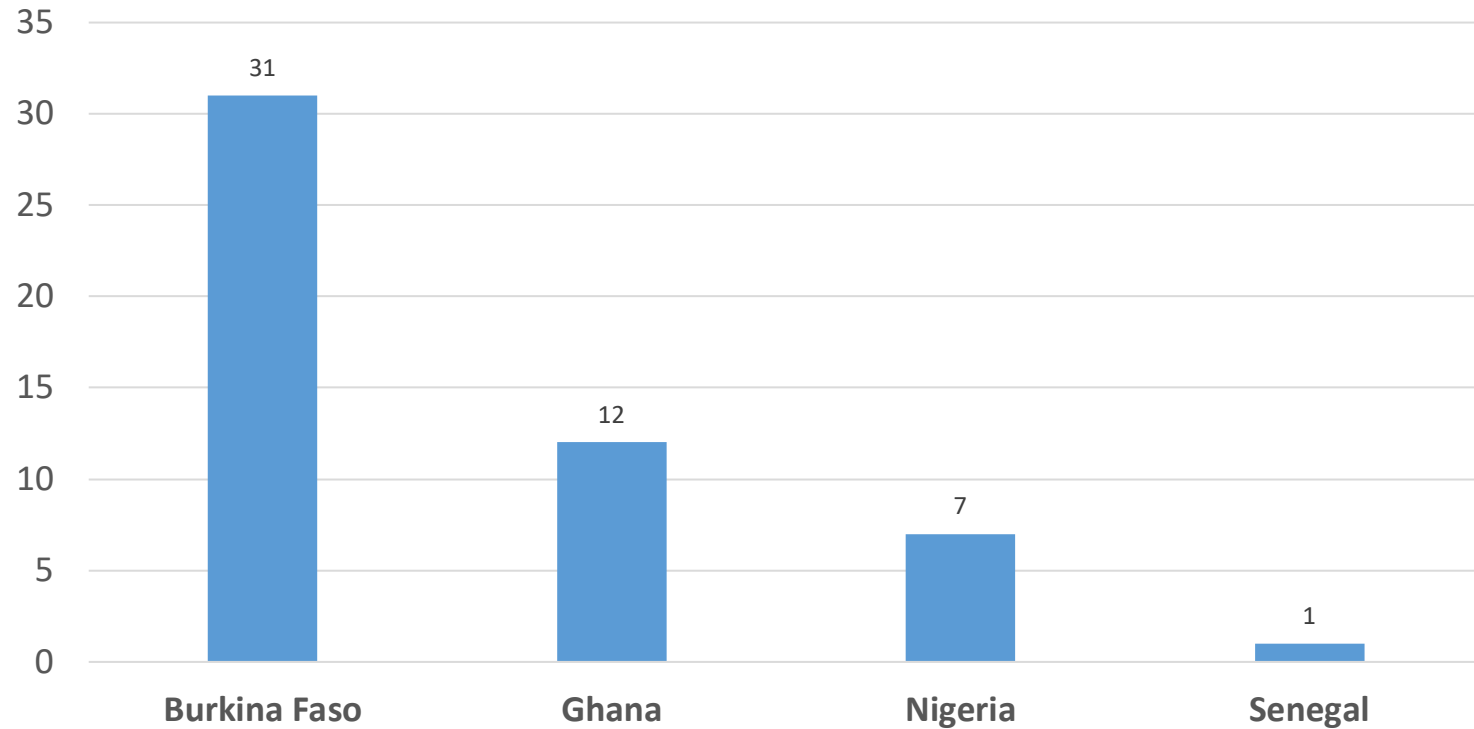
Results



Publications per WHA indicator and research focus in Senegal



Program studies by intervention type and outcome



Senegal's program

| | |
|---|------------|
| Intervention description | U5NS (n=1) |
| malaria intermittent preventive treatment | 1 |

Key Messages

Senegal represents 2.5% of publications in the West Africa region

The majority of publications report on the prevalence and drivers of World Health Assembly indicators

There is only 1 randomized controlled trial program in Senegal. This trial is a malaria prevention intervention which reports on under 5 stunting