

Defining SHARE's Impact



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This paper aims to define what is meant by 'impact' within the context of the SHARE consortium. Defining impact will enable SHARE to implement better monitoring, measurement and evaluation of its work.



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1. Introduction

The intended audience for this paper is members of the SHARE consortium, including SHARE partners and the Department for International Development (DFID). The paper may also be of interest to others working within research for development or monitoring and evaluation research projects which aim to influence policy.

Impact is a frequently used term within the international development sector and the subject of much discourse and debate between practitioners. A recent Overseas Development Institute (ODI) paper acknowledged the multi-dimensionality of impact, noting that the ways in which this term is used have substantial implications for how programmes are developed, managed, monitored and evaluated (Hearn and Buffardi, 2016). The different approaches used mean that there is no single agreed definition on what impact is. It is therefore important for SHARE to situate itself within these discussions and to define what is meant by SHARE's impact prior to developing a methodology for analysing or interpreting 'impact'.

This paper discusses the concept of 'impact' within international development and research. It applies ODI's six dimensions of impact as a theoretical tool to position SHARE before summarising some of the key challenges in measuring SHARE impact. The six dimensions of impact are then used to develop clear criteria for an impact methodology for SHARE. The paper considers several potential methodologies for measuring impact against these criteria (including SHARE's existing approach). It then proposes an approach for measuring SHARE's impact which will be tested by the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer in 2016.

Several factors led to the development of this paper including: an external review of SHARE in October 2015, discussions with DFID on impact, and a new M&E Officer joining SHARE. Without repeating content from the PwC external review, it is important to note that this review identified several challenges around SHARE's existing approach to impact (PwC, 2015). PwC recommended a more transparent and accessible approach to impact to meet the needs of key stakeholders within SHARE (including partners, DFID and the SHARE team). This paper aims to address this recommendation directly, by defining impact and proposing an appropriate approach.

2. SHARE's current approach

2.1 Framing documents and tools

SHARE's Theory of Change (ToC) - see Figure 1 - sets out our vision for how SHARE will influence change. SHARE seeks to influence change through three key strategies:

- Characterising problems so others can address them
- Identifying solutions so others can incorporate them
- Demonstrating benefits to ensure appropriate prioritisation

These strategies should influence key national, regional and global sector actors to change in different ways including planning differently, making investments, discussing new issues, coordinating, monitoring and implementing. According to the SHARE ToC, changes at the outcome level can contribute towards broader changes such as increased equitable access to sanitation, increased sustainable sanitation and more effective sanitation and hygiene.

SHARE's direct deliverables and targets are guided by the **programme logframe**. The logframe measures impact indicators, consolidates outcome level data from outcome mapping and measures planned outputs. SHARE's impact goal is to contribute towards accelerated progress towards universal sanitation and hygiene coverage in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

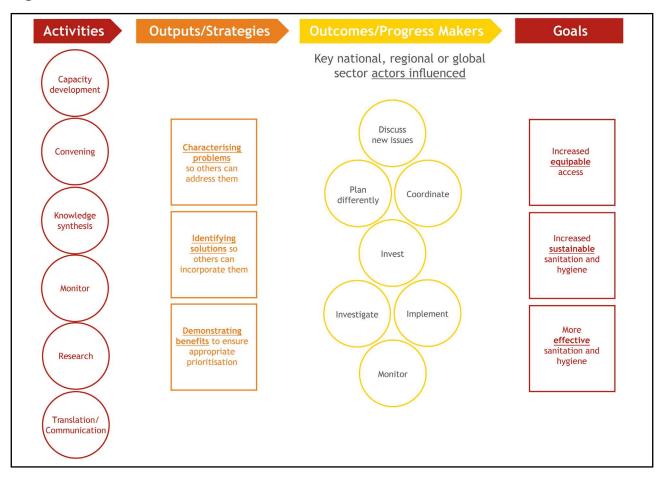


Figure 1: SHARE's ToC

It does this through: building new evidence and synthesising existing knowledge; disseminating and communicating research to encourage evidence-based policy and programming, developing the capacity of key stakeholders in the WASH and other relevant sectors and through efficient and effective management of the consortium. Through these activities, SHARE aims to influence national & global sector partners to change the way they plan, implement or monitor in order to increase equitable, sustainability and scalable sanitation and hygiene interventions.

Impact is captured in SHARE's existing logframe through two impact indicators which aim to monitor change at the national level in SHARE Phase I four focus countries (India, Bangladesh, Tanzania and Malawi). These indicators focus respectively on increasing access to improved sanitation and decreasing the child mortality rate, helping SHARE to monitor the bigger picture that its work is contributing towards and longer term progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). **Annex 1** of this document provides a detailed explanation of the current impact indicators and how these numbers are calculated.

2.2 M&E Methods and Tools

In Phase II, each SHARE partner uses **outcome mapping** to measure research uptake changes at the outcome level and SHARE will also be developing a global outcome map. Outcome mapping builds

upon the ToC to identify key stakeholders our partners will seek to influence with SHARE research. It specifies the change they would like to see in those stakeholders' behaviours or activities and the research uptake activities our partners will undertake to influence these changes. It also sets indicators (called progress markers) that will allow our partners to track progress and report regularly to the SHARE core team. Outcome mapping monitoring demonstrates progress at the project level towards the outcomes specified in the ToC. It can then be aggregated by the M&E Officer to present a picture of change at programme level.

SHARE also uses **quarterly reporting** to collect data relevant to the logframe. This collects a mixture of quantitative and qualitative information from partners as well as from the SHARE core team and Management Group.

In Phase I, SHARE's impact was assessed through a Value for Money (VfM) analysis which aimed to develop quantitative estimates of the future impact of SHARE research on health and economic outcomes in focus countries for particular population groups (i.e. children). This used complex calculations to make estimates of potential beneficiary reach if projects were scaled up (SHARE, 2015). PwC's 2015 evaluation of SHARE noted the constraints of this methodology, particularly that the complexity of the approach was challenging to understand and that it implied a rigour and certainty in the results that was misleading (PwC, 2015).

2.3 Gaps in SHARE M&E

At present, SHARE does not have an approach to measuring impact that goes beyond monitoring broader contextual change (captured by impact indicators in the logframe) to generate **richer and deeper information about unexpected changes and the complex policy related change expected as an outcome of SHARE**. This could provide important and useful information on what has happened, as well as delving into why and how it has happened. This type of information would inform SHARE as to whether its ToC reflects reality and may provide a better understanding of any enabling factors for policy and practice change This is necessarily qualitative and would bring a richness to SHARE's M&E that is currently lacking.

A priority for DFID is to understand the number of indirect beneficiaries reached through their portfolio of funded water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programmes. At present SHARE does not have a transparent approach to calculating this and, as noted earlier, there are challenges with the previously used VfM approach. SHARE therefore needs a clearly defined approach for making an estimate of indirect beneficiaries.

3. Positioning SHARE's impact

SHARE intersects academia, policy-making and international development practice. It produces peer-reviewed publications but also focuses on producing translational outputs that are targeted at different national and global policy makers, influencers and

practitioners. SHARE sits at the crossroads of several traditions and discourses around impact; this is a unique and interesting position, but also points towards the need for SHARE to better define its own impact.

A useful tool to do this is ODI's six dimensions of impact: programme application, scope, subject and level of change, degrees of separation from beneficiaries, immediacy, rate and durability of change and homogeneity of benefits (Hearn and Buffardi 2016). This paper applies each dimension as a lens to analyse SHARE and better define what impact means to us.

3.1 Application

Impact can be applied retrospectively or prospectively, looking at potential future effects or observed actual effects. SHARE seeks to influence policy and practice in order to create long-term change both within and beyond its focus countries. The impact indicators in the logframe set targets for change at the national level which are based on global WASH targets. The dynamic nature of SHARE and its potential to influence beyond the contexts in which it directly works means that it is more appropriate to review impact retrospectively looking at the actual effects from SHARE than it is to estimate the potential impact of SHARE's projects in the future.

3.2 Scope

Scope refers to whether programmatic impact can be pre-defined or is more unpredictable. SHARE's logframe captures programme activities and how these activities contribute to larger development goals such as the SDGs, however logframes are not designed to include unintended consequences or possible indirect beneficiaries. The potential of SHARE to influence beyond the contexts in which it directly works means that it is important to broaden the scope of SHARE's impact in order to reflect upon and capture broader results. It is also of specific interest to DFID that the scope of SHARE's M&E includes indirect beneficiaries and this is not currently captured through existing tools and approaches.

3.3 Subject and level of change

This refers to whether the programme aims to engender change at a micro (changes in individuals' lives), mezzo (changes within communities or small-scale institutions) or macro (changes in large scale institutions and systems) level.

It is important to understand SHARE's focus on policy change as a 'means to achieving an ultimate goal', which in SHARE's case is contributing towards improved sanitation and reduced child mortality in its focus countries (Young et al 2014). This ambition is reflected in SHARE's impact level indicators in the logframe. At the outcome level, SHARE focuses on high-level macro change in policy and organisations. While SHARE's research projects may work directly with communities or individuals, SHARE seeks to use research evidence to influence key stakeholders in the WASH sector, to highlight new issues, to inform new research, to contribute to global discourse and to scale-up effective interventions. Without change taking place at the macro level, it will be impossible to contribute meaningfully to universal access targets. It is therefore proposed that understanding macro-level change will better enable SHARE to estimate its impact at the other levels.

3.4 Degrees of separation

Degrees of separation refers to the chain of causality in a programme's logframe or ToC. While some of SHARE's research projects may have a direct benefit to research participants (i.e. through behaviour change), in the longer term SHARE intends to influence beyond the scope of the research project. There are therefore several degrees of separation between SHARE's interventions and its intended global impact.

We know that SHARE is unlikely to be a singular influence on change within the context of WASH policy and practice given the need for collaboration with other actors and complex nature of policy development. It is therefore more appropriate and relevant to consider contribution to change rather than attribution. This approach acknowledges that impact 'confronts and converges with other factors' rather than working through a chain of direct causality (Hearn and Buffardi 2016).

3.5 Immediacy, rate and durability of change

This considers how long it may take for change to manifest and whether there are different types of change expected in the short, medium and long term. SHARE seeks to review impact over time, recognising that most changes in policy and practice will take place in the longer term. Disseminating publications and translational outputs from research projects creates an important opportunity to share evidence with policy makers and practitioners that may impact their decision making. SHARE partners will also seek to influence change through ongoing engagement with key national and global decision makers and stakeholders. Reviewing impact from different phases of SHARE at different points in time is essential in order to understand the short, medium and long-term effects of the programme as well as whether SHARE is contributing to national and global change.

3.6 Homogeneity of benefits

This refers to whether impact is distributed differently across heterogeneous groups within a population and whether it is possible to measure this. Given the complex nature of SHARE, it will often not be possible to disaggregate SHARE's reach across different population groups within a national context. SHARE has included gender and diversity in its approach from Phase I, with a strong focus on the WASH needs of girls, women and people with disabilities. This approach should ensure that diverse groups are considered throughout project implementation including those with specific vulnerabilities. SHARE also seeks to focus on equity and sustainability and to contribute towards the SDGs. At the end of Phase II when we have significant outcome mapping reporting data, SHARE could analyse the extent of its influence and impact across different types of stakeholders whose behaviours we seek to influence; for instance groups such as academia, governments and practitioners. Ongoing outcome mapping reporting will enable SHARE to review and analyse engagement of different national and international stakeholders.

Table 1 summarises the six dimensions analysis to set criteria which SHARE's impact methodology should meet in order to be fit for purpose:

Table 1: Recommended criterion for measuring SHARE's impact

Dimension	Recommendation for SHARE		
Application	Apply a retrospective approach to look at actual change		
Scope	Use a broad scope to include unintended or unanticipated effects		
Subject and level of change	Focus on macro-level change in institutions, donors, governments or other significant sector stakeholders (and use this to make informed assumptions about change at micro-level)		
Degrees of separation	ration Recognise that SHARE is a contributor to change within complex settings and that change cannot be attributed to SHARE		
Immediacy, Rate and Durability of Change	Focus particularly on longer term change as this is assumed to be the area and timeframe of greatest impact) as short and medium term change is captured through existing M&E systems (outcome mapping and quarterly reporting).		
Homogeneity of Benefits	Consider the potentially differing impacts on different groups of stakeholder and beneficiaries (where possible and applicable).		

4. Challenges in measuring impact

This section aims to briefly summarise the main challenges around impact in relation to SHARE, some of which have been touched upon in the previous analysis. Many of these may also be applicable to other policy research programmes.

- Complexity: SHARE is complex in terms of time, geography and actors. The complexity of policy change as a process means that results cannot be anticipated in advance. Phase II works in four countries with five partners conducting research on very different WASH themes. An additional layer of complexity is added by the fact that as well as working at the national level, SHARE also seeks to engage key global institutions and influencers. Although SHARE's projects take place in specific contexts, influence or impact could take place in completely different settings (for example UNICEF Pakistan requested guidance from SHARE on WASH and polio despite no SHARE funded work taking place in Pakistan). This level of complexity means that change pathways are non-linear and cannot always be pre-defined.
- **Time frames:** Policy change is a lengthy, complex and uncertain

process including activities such as conducting research, analysing results, generating written research outputs and engaging with key stakeholders to disseminate findings through informal and formal channels. Whilst policy influence can happen during the research phase, peer-reviewed research outputs (usually produced after research has finished) are important because they contain 'evidence' and hold greater legitimacy within the academic community. These can be used to produce evidence-based translational outputs such as policy briefs or research summaries, tailored to the needs of key stakeholders. Influencing policy change is a long-term endeavour that frequently bears fruit several years after the research project has taken place, or even long after the programme has ended.

 Attribution/Causality: The long term nature of research and the complexity of policy environments make it challenging to attribute change to SHARE's work. A more realistic approach is to look at SHARE's contribution and how this has influenced change in collaboration with other actors and in relation to wider contextual shifts (such as political, economic or social change). This approach aligns with an increased focus within the M&E profession on contribution towards change. This also presents challenges around quantifying our impact due to several degrees of separation (and time) between SHARE activities and indirect 'beneficiaries'. It is therefore important to be transparent about any assumptions used to quantify our contribution and to use rigorous data sources.

6. Potential Methodologies for Measuring Impact

This section reviews and summarises potential methods and approaches to measure impact. It considers their ability to meet the criteria set out in Table 1 as well as SHARE's reporting requirements.

6.1 SHARE VfM Approach

As noted earlier, in Phase I of SHARE, SHARE's impact was assessed through a VfM analysis which used complex calculations to develop quantitative estimates of the future impact of SHARE research on health and economic outcomes. The challenges have been noted earlier and are also reflected in Table 2 which applies the criteria against this approach. For these reasons, the approach will not be used for Phase II of SHARE.

6.2 Potential Community Reach Measurement (PCRC)

This approach was developed by PwC as part of the SHARE Review in 2015 to create a simple tool which could be used to estimate potential future impact of SHARE projects if scaled up (PwC 2015). This method has been tested but does not meet all of the criteria set. Due to the complex nature of SHARE, it is preferable to use an approach that measures impact retrospectively rather than speculatively.

6.3 Contribution to Change

This methodology was designed for emergency contexts and aims to calculate how an organisation has contributed to changes in people's lives as they recover from an emergency (Few et al 2013). While assessing contribution is relevant to SHARE, the methodology is closely tied to an emergency response and recovery context and it would be challenging to adapt it to suit SHARE's purposes.

6.4 Contribution Analysis

This method is used to understand what contribution a programme has made to a particular change (Better Evaluation 2016). It links closely to a programme's ToC and aims to test these assumptions and adapt the ToC if needed. This method has been tested by the SHARE M&E Officer as it meets all of the criteria. However, limited M&E data from Phase I mean that it is not feasible to use contribution analysis to measure SHARE's impact. It may be possible to use this approach for any major change as a result of Phase II since stronger M&E systems are now in place. Principles from this approach may also be used in SHARE's ongoing work.

6.5 Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

QCA is a relatively new M&E approach imported from the social sciences which uses contextual knowledge and data analysis software to identify 'patterns' or 'recipes' across cases (Scholz, Kirbyshire and Simister 2016). It enables the user to identify combinations that lead to a specific positive outcome. This approach has recently been used to look at research uptake by the Climate and Development Knowledge Network. QCA requires significant time/human resource and technical expertise with software (fsQCA) as well as detailed data. QCA is an interesting and innovative new approach with relevance to SHARE's work. SHARE will investigate whether it is possible to collect data to the required level of detail during Phase II in case this approach can be used in future.

6.6 Stories of Change

This approach investigates how an intervention contributed to specific outcomes, looking at the pathways of expected or unexpected change. This process is usually precipitated by a success - or a failure - gathered through M&E data. Follow on steps include gathering evidence and then writing a narrative story about the change (Young et al 2014). The M&E Officer has begun testing this approach using SHARE's excellent resource of pre-existing success stories to establish Stories of Change¹.

6.7 Other Approaches

SHARE also considered methods such as **Participatory Impact Pathways Analysis** but felt that this approach would duplicate some of the work done in outcome mapping around stakeholder engagement. **Most Significant Change** (MSC) was also considered but it was felt that it would be challenging due to time and

¹ Including failures will also be an important consideration.

geographical constraints as well as an already heavy focus on other methods such as outcome mapping (Davies and Dart 2005). However it is likely MSC's use of a qualitative storytelling approach to identify unexpected changes may well influence some of SHARE's work or data collection methods. Existing resources on MSC - particularly in relation to bias, adaptation and challenges may contain learnings that are transferrable and relevant to other qualitative approaches.

Table 2: Suitability	of methodologies	against SHARE's
criteria ^{2,3,4}		

	This method looks at impact retrospectively considering actual changes	This method can include unplanned effects	This method looks at change on a macro level	This method recognises contribution to change over attribution	This method focuses on long term changes	This method can consider differing impacts on heterogeneous groups
VfM Approach from Phase 1	No	No	Yes	Partially ⁴	Yes	Yes
Potential Community Reach Measurement	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Contribution to change	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Contribution Analysis	Yes	Partially ⁵	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Qualitative Comparative Analysis	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partially ⁶
Stories of Change	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

7. Methodology for Measuring SHARE's Impact

7.1 Stories of Change

SHARE will adapt the Stories of Change methodology to report on impact level change. This method will address the gap in SHARE's M&E on collecting rich qualitative information about unexpected change and build a better understanding of any enabling factors for policy and practice change. This will include an additional quantitative element to estimate the number of indirect beneficiaries reached by each change. The focus will be on capturing evidence of change in policy or practice influenced by SHARE activities, outputs or events.

SHARE's ToC will be used as an over-arching framework to understand whether changes can be understood through our proposed pathways of change . This process will also draw strongly on data from current M&E tools such as outcome mapping as well as quarterly M&E reporting. This evidence will input into a qualitative story describing that change. This will use existing success stories as

2 This method does look at SHARE's contribution but methods for calculating this are not sufficiently transparent.

³ This can include unplanned effects as long as they roughly corre late to the ToC.

⁴ This is not a focus for the method but could be captured in the data.

a basis for testing the methodology. Stories of Change will not cover all changes that have taken place through SHARE's work but will be representative of significant changes influenced through SHARE's work. They will be included in the 2017 annual report and future annual reporting.

It is likely that there will initially be stronger stories from Phase I given the time needed for longer-term impact on policy and practice. The focus will be on significant positive impacts from SHARE research - as well as any failures which generate learning and can inform future work. Stories of Change can be thematic, research project related, workstream related, country related or stakeholder related. It is likely that a thematic approach will be tested first.

7.2 Indirect Beneficiaries

This is a particularly challenging area for programmes that do not deliver direct services but work in less tangible spheres such as policy, research uptake and advocacy. The International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) notes that it is possible to give examples about how policy changes are filtering down to beneficiaries but caution that 'these cases remain illustrations, and it is rarely possible to perform any sensible degree of aggregation at beneficiary level' (Simister 2016). A recent review of DFID's WASH portfolio notes the conservative assumptions used for beneficiary calculations due to data availability/quality and the risk of double counting (ICAI 2016).

SHARE will take on board this learning and ensure that we are explicit about any assumptions behind beneficiary counting. As noted earlier, SHARE will attach a quantitative estimate of indirect beneficiaries to its Stories of Change. These figures will not cover all aspects of SHARE's Phase I and Phase II work, they will instead serve as examples or case studies of SHARE's reach.

Key principles will inform SHARE's indirect beneficiary counting:

- These figures will be based on robust data available from credible sources.
- Figures will specify how any calculations have been made so the same conclusion can be reached by anyone reading the SoC.
- Figures will use a conservative estimate where several options are available.
- Assumptions will be clearly set out and defined with links to relevant sources included.
- Figures will seek to avoid duplication or 'double counting' across Stories of Change and will flag any potential issues.

SHARE will continue to collect data relating to its impact indicators every two years (this will give an indication of broader national change). These indicators cover the number of people accessing improved sanitation and the number of child deaths in SHARE's four focus countries.

7.3 VfM

VfM is an increasingly important component of accountability and effectiveness within the international development sector. Bond highlights though that

'Value for money is a much used but frequently misunderstood term because of its association with complex econometric calculations and tools. While these can be useful in some contexts, at its core value for money is actually a much broader and simpler idea: before investing time, resources and energy into an activity or programme, weigh up the costs (what is being put in) and benefits (what is being achieved) of different options and make the case for why the chosen approach is the best use of resources and delivers the most value for poor and marginalised people' (Bond 2012: 8)

Value for money is therefore an ongoing consideration in all of SHARE's work and relates to planning, management and implementation as well as monitoring, evaluation and learning. SHARE will continue to report on VfM annually to DFID through the relevant sections in the annual report; this will capture and review our ongoing work in this area across the entire programme.

The financial element of VfM will be considered at the end of SHARE Phase II and will look to analyse whether SHARE was able to achieve its objectives while maintaining quality and sustainability at the lowest possible cost. This methodology will be further defined over time in order to ensure that best practice is followed and that any new developments or approaches in the sector are incorporated.

8. Conclusions

Whilst this paper does highlight some of the challenges around measuring change in complex settings, it also presents new and exciting opportunities for SHARE to explore. SHARE will use these processes and changes to strive towards continuous improvement, to try new things, to reflect on what works and what doesn't work, to learn from others and to share our learning with others.

The SHARE M&E Officer will continue to work closely with partners, DFID, the core team and the Management Group to ensure that all M&E is accessible, relevant, adaptable and able to meet stakeholder needs. Additionally the SHARE M&E Officer will engage with broader debates and discussions in international development and research; this will ensure that any emerging innovative or good practice approaches are considered.

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Annex 1: Impact-level data in SHARE Phase II

This annex clarifies the methodology and source behind impact indicator figures used in the SHARE logframe and the SHARE synthesis report.

Impact Indicator 1: The annual number of people gaining access to improved sanitation in all SHARE focus countries

This represents the annual number of people gaining access to improved sanitation in each SHARE focus country according to data from UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP). This information has been collected for each country and also as a total annual number for all four focus countries.

Targets for this indicator are based on global targets captured at WASHWatch in order to align with the SDGs. While these are aspirational, it is important for SHARE to align with the SDGs and to reflect global targets. These targets represent the number of people who would need to have gained access between Year 1 (2016) and Year 3 (2018) in order for each country to be on track to meet the SDGs.

Table 2: Baseline and targets for Impact Indicator 1

Where Year 1 is 2016, Year 2 is 2017 and Year 3 is 2018.

Baseline (2014-2015)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Total: 10.9 million			Total: 75.8 million
India: 7.58 million			India: 64 million
Bangladesh: 2.6 million			Bangladesh: 5.8 million
Malawi: 271,601			Malawi: 1.2 million
Tanzania: 501,990			Tanzania: 4.8 million

Impact Indicator 2: Child (<5) mortality rate in all SHARE countries (# deaths/year)*

The under-five mortality rate is the probability per 1,000 that a newborn baby will die before reaching age five. It is represented as a rate (i.e. 37.6) but this can be used to calculate actual number of child deaths avoided. This data comes from http://data.unicef.org.

Table 3: Baseline and targets for Impact Indicator 2

Where Year 1 is 2016, Year 2 is 2017 and Year 3 is 2018.

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
		Bangladesh: 36
		India: 46.1
		Malawi: 60.4
		Tanzania: 46.7
	Year 1	Year 1 Year 2

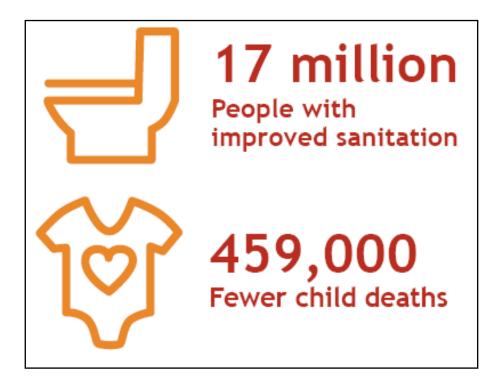
Data in the SHARE Synthesis Report

The figure of 17 million represents the total average annual number of people reached with improved sanitation in all four SHARE countries between 2010 and 2015 (Source: JMP). This figure was based on JMP data available at the time - although updated JMP data suggests the annual average is closer to 19 million .

The total actual number of people gaining access to improved sanitation in SHARE's four focus countries between 2010 and 2015 was 95.9 million (Source: JMP).

The figure of 459,000 represents the total number of child deaths averted in the four focus countries between 2010 and 2015 (Source: UNICEF).

Figure 6: Statistics used in the synthesis report



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The Sanitation and Hygiene Applied Research for Equity (SHARE) consortium seeks to contribute to achieving universal access to effective, sustainable and equitable sanitation and hygiene by generating, synthesising and translating evidence to improve policy and practice worldwide. Working with partners in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, two regions with historically low levels of sanitation, SHARE conducts high-quality and rigorous research and places great emphasis on capacity development and research uptake.

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