

## Introduction

In 1994 in Cairo, Egypt, the First Conference on Population and Development was held with the participation of 179 countries, which became a roadmap for the formulation of a sustainable development plan based on individual choices and achievements in the field of reproductive health for all human beings.

Specifically, the Program of Action called on all people to have access to comprehensive reproductive health care, including voluntary family planning, safe pregnancy and delivery services, and the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

The ICPD Program of Action reflected a new consensus on responding to population growth.

It established the concept of individual rights and dignity, away from numerical population goals, as it is the best way for individuals to motivate them to make decisions about their reproductive lives.

From this perspective, the revolution of 30<sup>th</sup> June produced a new constitution that included, for the first time, an article stipulating that Egypt is committed to implementing a population program aimed at balancing population growth rates and available resources, maximizing investment in human energy and improving its characteristics in the context of achieving sustainable development (Article 41).

At the same time, it gives a reference to adopt the human rights approach in dealing with population issues, which reflects the interest of the political leadership in the population issue, and the associated developmental issues that affect the overall welfare and development of the Egyptian citizen

Egypt faces a range of population challenges that clearly affect the population issue, the most important of which are:

- High average childbearing rate from 3 children per woman to 3.5 children on average.
- Increasing the proportion of households below the poverty line, declining status of women in general and decreasing female employment rates.
- Continued levels of population growth at current levels will lead to reduced returns from development efforts and reduce per capita expenditure.
- Increasing environmental challenges facing Egypt as a result of population growth.
- Continued degree of disparity in population and development indicators between geographical areas.

In this context, the National Population Council developed the National Population Strategy 2015-2030, launched by the Egyptian Prime Minister in November 2015, under the auspices of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El Sisi.



The National Population Strategy aims to improve the quality of life of the Egyptian citizen by reducing population growth rates and restoring Egypt's regional leadership through improving the citizens' cognitive, skills and behavioral characteristics, as well as restoring the demographic map in Egypt by redistributing the population in a way that achieves national security.

It also takes into account the achievement of population goals for the national projects that are planned and aims to achieve social justice and social peace by reducing the differences in development indicators between geographical areas.

Addressing the increasing rates of population growth through improving family planning and reproductive health services, increasing the use of family planning methods, directing towards increasing the use of the most effective methods and special attention to family planning programs in rural areas and slums and restoring the role of the media in influencing the population issue.

Egypt can restore regional leadership by improving the characteristics of the Egyptian citizen by reducing female employment rates, reducing illiteracy, preventing school dropouts and reducing child labor rates.

As for the redrawing of the population map of Egypt, it is done through disrupting the high population densities and encouraging voluntary transfer to the new urban communities.

In terms of social justice and social peace, its realization comes through linking the development map with the poverty map, giving priority to the abundant governorates and regions in the distribution of infrastructure projects. Implementation of integrated human development programs in poor areas to raise the level of knowledge, skills, behavior and values of poor families.

**The National Population Strategy is divided into 5 themes: Family Planning and Reproductive Health, Youth and Adolescent Health, Education, Media and Social Communication, and Women's Empowerment.**

### **First: Family Planning and Reproductive Health:**

- Provide an adequate balance of effective family planning methods in accordance with the standard criteria to meet the needs of government and private sectors.
- Expand the availability of family planning and reproductive health services through mobile clinics (especially in poor areas), health insurance hospitals, educational and university hospitals, police and armed forces hospitals, NGOs and the private sector.
- Raise the capabilities and skills of service providers of the governmental sector to increase the ability to provide family planning services efficiently and activate the application of quality standards.
- Activating the role of (RRs) in spreading health awareness and monitoring interruptions in the use of family planning methods.
- Upgrading the referral system efficiency among all levels.

- Developing the monitoring & evaluation system for service delivery outlets of the governmental sector.
- Prioritize the development of reproductive health policies and family planning services based on knowledge-based evidence.
- Partnership with agencies working in the field of service delivery and population such as the National Population Council and various ministries, companies and other bodies

### **Second: Youth and Adolescent Health:**

- Strengthen commitment and support reproductive health and rights and the needs of adolescents / youth.
- Promote youth participation in governance and in identifying and developing programs that relate to them.
- Skip the culture of silence and penetrate it to spread a culture of reproductive and sexual science with correct scientific information for young men and women.
- Access to a wide range of youth-friendly services.
- Changing the supportive environment for practices affecting the reproductive health and rights of young women.

### **Third: Education:**

- Comprehensive assimilation of children in education.
- Eliminate dropout.
- Raising students awareness of the dimensions of the population issue in Egypt.

### **Fourth: Media and Social Media:**

- Developing media messages on the population issue and stimulating family planning.
- Establishing specialized media cadres in the population issue and developing their skills.
- Providing financial and technical capabilities and coordination between the different bodies working in the field of population information.
- Using non-traditional methods in population media.
- Using social media channels to raise awareness of the population issue and encourage the organization of childbearing.

### **Fifth: Empowerment of Women:**

- Reduce unemployment among women.
- Supporting the empowerment of women and promoting the principles of gender equality.

**In 2030, Egypt hopes to reach zero preventable maternal mortality, unmet need for family planning and gender-based violence.**

### **First: Maternal Mortality**

Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population make big efforts to reduce the rate of preventable maternal mortality and has achieved a 73% decrease compared between 1992 & 2017 (a decline from 174/100 thousand live births to 43.6 / 100,000 live births in 2017), which qualifies Egypt To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, achieving by 2020 which is 43/100 thousand live births. This reduction is a remarkable



achievement and a well-deserved result of Egypt's efforts to improve the quality of maternal and child care and obstetric services and to provide and increase access to family planning, health education and behavioral change for women.

### **Second: Unmet Need:**

The use of modern family planning methods increased from 47.9% in 1995 to 58.6% in 2014 after a noticeable increase in 2008 which has reached 60% and the quality of family planning services has improved significantly. However, many women still do not use modern contraception to prevent unwanted pregnancy.

The Ministry of Health, represented in the Population and Family Planning Sector, has implemented the National Population Strategy through annual plans based on several axes, the most important of which are as follows:

**Axis 1: Access to family planning and reproductive health services:** through basic care units (5400 units) and mobile clinics (583 clinics) in remote and disadvantaged areas to meet the needs of the poor, marginalized and neediest groups, through:

- Application of the non-traditional approach in the provision of family planning services through campaigns and service convoys and awareness in poor & disadvantaged areas.
- Opening new clinics to provide family planning in university hospitals and NGOs and providing them with family planning methods.
- Providing family planning and post-natal reproductive health services in public hospitals, educational institutes, health insurance, army and police hospitals.

**Axis II: Improving the quality of family planning and reproductive health services in the governmental and private sectors** to increase the rate of use of family planning methods and increase the demand for service:

- Updating and revising training curricula for service providers and updating checklists according to the latest international standards and through WHO manuals.
- On-the-job training for the medical team on counseling and insertion of family planning methods.
- "Al-Wisam" program for monitoring & evaluation of all family planning clinics.

**Axis III: Secure the availability of family planning methods:**

- Providing family planning methods in accordance with international standards in suitable quantities, especially long-term means to meet the needs of society.

**Axis IV: Social Marketing of Family Planning Services**

- Awareness campaigns for different groups of society
- Activate the role of community health workers (RRs) in the community to increase community health awareness and follow-up interruptions.

**Axis V: Partnership with other bodies working in the field of population:**

- Cooperating with the Ministry of Social Solidarity to open new clinics in NGOs and disbursement of free family planning for (Takafol and Karama Beneficiaries)

- Cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf through a cooperation protocol to train religious leaders on the benefits of family planning and the dimensions of the population problem and the role of religious discourse.
- The International Islamic Center has prepared many manuals discussing reproductive and sexual health in order to raise awareness and correct the misconceptions used in training courses for different levels of participants.
- Participation of the Ministry of Education in the implementation of education programs in the National Population Strategy, the National Strategy for Reproductive Health and the National Strategy for the Reduction of Early Marriage (Population Education Programs).
- Cooperating with the Adult Education Authority to open literacy classes and eliminate this problem through women's clubs and the participation of community health workers.
- Cooperation with the National Council for Women through the Equal Opportunities Unit.
- Partnering with the National Population Council by addressing violence against women, such as circumcision and early marriage, by designing and printing posters on the dangers and anti-FGM, clarifying the risks of FGM through the medical team and clarifying the laws that criminalize the process.

### **III. Gender-Based Violence**

Egypt's vision for sustainable development emphasizes the importance of youth as the cornerstone of society. Girls and boys in the 15-19 years age group are an important segment of the future of Egypt, where girls make up about 5% of the population. Egypt, faces many challenges of early marriage and early childbearing, unequal participation in personal and family decision-making and lack of access to health information. The vision includes two policies to protect and improve the lives and future of girls - one to prevent early marriage and the other to ensure education. Data from the 2014 Egypt Population Health Survey show that among women aged 24-49, 25% were married at the age of 18, This is a decrease as 30% of women in the same age group married at the age of 18 in the Egypt Population Survey 2005.

Population surveys (DHS) in Egypt indicate a slow but steady increase in teenage birth rates over the past decade. The proportion of girls who are pregnant or have already given birth has risen from 9% in 2005 to 10% in 2008, and finally to 11% in 2014. Early pregnancy includes a risk to children According to the 2014 Egypt Population Health Survey, children born to mothers Under 20 years of age Children born to older mothers are more likely to die before the age of five. The Child Law Amendment Act No. 126 of 2008 established the legal age of marriage in Egypt as 18 years. The law prohibits but does not criminalize child marriage

In 2014 a national strategy to eliminate child marriage was developed. The strategy called for a rights-based approach to the protection of girls, as well as a collaborative effort between the Government, civil society and the private sector to eradicate early



marriage. But government laws and policies must be strengthened through efforts to change behavior and social habits among families, religious leaders, and girls themselves.

On the one hand, genital mutilation has taken extensive measures to put an end to these practices by increasing health awareness, enforcing laws and tightening the deterrent penalties for the medical team and parents, which has led to a decrease in the percentage of younger girls who have undergone these practices. According to the 2014 Population Health Survey, 74% in 2008, to 61% in 2014 which is a decrease of 13%.

Article 11 of Egypt's 2014 Constitution stipulates the state's obligation to protect women against all forms of violence, abuse, Sexual yields ...

**100 Million Wellness, The Presidential Initiative for detection of Non-Communicable diseases: in 27 governorates, governorates are divided into 3phases**

- **Nutrition Background in Egypt:**

- In Egypt, 15.5% of Egyptians have raised fasting blood glucose levels.
- 29.5% have raised blood pressure measurements.
- About two thirds of the population is overweight, half of them are obese.
- In Egypt, 84% of total deaths caused by the four main non communicable diseases

(Source: Egypt Country profile, WHO 2014 - Egypt Stepwise Survey, 2017)

- **Campaign achievements:**

- Total no. of screened citizens= 49,786,170
- Screened for Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension & Obesity
- Overall target achievement=82%
- Percentage of Random Blood Glucose Level  $>200$  mg/dl among screened population = 6%
- Percentage of High Blood Pressure  $>140/90$  mmHg among screened population =22%
- Percentage of Obesity BMI $>30$  among citizens =39%

- **The Early Detection Campaign for malnutrition screening & treatment among school students(6-12 years):**

- Target achievements=90%
- Prevalence of Underweight among school students = 3.8%
- Prevalence of Anemia among school students = 41.6%
- Prevalence of Stunting among school students = 3.7%
- Prevalence of Obesity among school students = 13%