

EXPANDING FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES THROUGH TASK SHARING

Task sharing in healthcare is an effective strategy that addresses the critical lack of providers by creating a more rational distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the existing cadres of health providers to improve access to care. Egypt's Ministry of Health and Population/ Family Planning (MOHP/FP) Sector in partnership with the USAID-funded Strengthening Egypt's Family Planning Program (SEFPP) expanded family planning services in eight governorates by introducing task sharing to reach more women. Previously only physicians at primary health care unit family clinics could give counseling and provide services. A continued physician shortage, however, further limited access to family planning services.

Approach

MOHP and SEFPP applied the task-sharing approach to address the physician shortage and boost access to family planning services. The overall objective was to train up nurses on family planning counseling and administration of two modern contraceptive methods, namely pills and injectables, both of which are the most used methods in Egypt after the intrauterine device.

Rolling Out Task Sharing

SEFPP and the MOHP/FP worked closely together to launch task sharing among nurses in 20 family planning clinics in each of the eight chosen governorates – Alexandria, Asyut, Beni-Suef, Fayoum, Giza, Minya, Qena, and Sohag. Specifically, they:

- **Prepared training curriculum and materials** based on the World Health Organization task-sharing curriculum.
- **Held task-sharing training** for selected nurses and district nurse supervisors following the selection of four districts in each governorate; selected five units in each district, followed by the selected five units in each district, and then selected two nurses from each health unit within the four selected districts with the highest population rate and shortage of family planning-trained physicians.
- **Conducted cross-sectional assessment** following a year of implementation from January to December 2021 to assess clients satisfaction with services they received through nurses trained in task sharing.
- **Updated and improved task-sharing training** to provide better support to the nurses who completed the training.

Results

The results from the cross-sectional assessment discernably showed clients' satisfaction with nurses' provision of family planning services. Nurses trained in family planning counseling and administration increased by 310 allowing women better access to family planning health services and care to 572,292 family planning users, out of which 85,381 are first time users as of June 30, 2023. The MOHP/FP Sector and SEFPP have worked to improve the quality of services provided by the trained nurses and will expand the task-sharing approach to more primary health care units in Egypt.



IMPACT

Almost 74% of clients reported being happy with nurses' delivery of family planning services.

As of June 30, 2023, 85,381 first-time family planning users have received counseling and family planning method from task sharing nurses.