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BENHA UNIVERSITY

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2022-2023

SOCIETAL ISSUES

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Chapter (3)

Population Issue





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Introduction:

Overpopulation is an urgent global problem appeared in the early twentieth century, and still going on until the present time, indicating an irregular and unplanned increase in the population. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) revealed irrational differences between the number of births and population rates in various regions of the world. These differences are accompanied by unfairness in the distribution of the world resources, where the most fortunate wealth, knowledge and ways of production are concentrated in the hands of a few number of peoples, while the other peoples are suffering from a large increase in population, accompanied by severe and abject poverty.

The population issue, as a concept, refers to the imbalance between the population on the one hand, and the volume of natural and capital resources and technical knowledge on the other hand. The population can be considered a productive force and a means of exploiting resources meanwhile can also be seen as a consuming force that represents a pressure on the available resources. So, the imbalance between the population and the volume of resources leads to the existence of this issue, with its repercussions, and its reciprocal relationship with a number of problems; such as poverty, unemployment, and the low level of services, as well as its negative effects on foreign trade, the state budget, and savings and investment rates.

Some of the repercussions of the population growth rate increase can be summarized in the following aspects:

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1- The impact of population increase on the electricity sector and the ability to develop it: The increasing population growth affects many sectors, including energy, especially electricity, which has witnessed continuous pressures over the past years to cover citizens' electricity needs.

2- Low family standard of living: The population increase leads to a deficit in public services of all kinds, including the impact on sanitation services in many neighborhoods, and the queues for bread and the struggle to earn basic living.

3- Widespread Unemployment: Increased population leads to a lack of employment opportunities or so-called high unemployment rates as a result of lack of opportunities for everyone.

4- Pressure on state resources to spend on education, health and public transportation: Population density in any country detracts from the individual's share and right to obtain various services; whether education or health. This also includes means of transportation and public utilities; for the citizen, instead of getting a place in a means of transportation, another one shared it with him, as evident in the scenes of traffic congestion.



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5- Decrease in wages ratio in the public and private sectors:

As a result of pressure on state resources, wage rates in the public and private sectors decrease and per capita income decreases.

6- Urban creep and erosion of the agricultural patch: The continuous increase in the population leads to the resort of using agricultural land as residential complexes in a random manner.

7- Increase in crime rates: Crime rates have elevated, as a result of overcrowding and population density, with limited resources compared to overpopulation, which created a state of conflict over those resources.

8- High levels of pollution: The larger the population, the greater the need for resources, which means that citizens resort to deforestation and dumping large areas of agricultural land, consequently, increasing the proportion of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere, and decreasing the percentage of oxygen. Environmental impact is also aided by migration from rural areas to industrial urban areas; increasing pollution, overcrowding, and noise.

9- Impact on the per capita share of water: In light of the growing deficit in water resources against the increase in population, the Egyptian state is striving to reduce the gap between water resources and the rising needs, through water recycling.

10- The effect on country's economy: The rate of population growth must be proportional to the rate of economic growth, and while the economic situation is low, the rates of population growth must decline.



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11- Reducing the capital: The per capita share of the individual in the state's capital reduces, leading to decrease in productivity and returns, resulting in a decrease in per capita income

12- Food shortage: The insufficient resource available to cover the abnormal population growth, reduces the productivity of individuals at work, forces the state to import from other countries and increases the economic burden.

13- Expense increase: Costs of raising children, decrease in individuals' savings rate, the deficiency of their income for their needs, the rising costs of the standard of living, low productivity, and poor development in the sectors of commerce, industry and agriculture, and all of this affecting the general economy.

14- Social Impact: The abnormal increase in population reduces the chances for a sound standard of living for the individuals, due to the increase in demand for products with a lack of supply. Rarity of raw materials and the lack of efficiency of labor and resources, leads to high prices, the inability to export and dependence on revenues, resulting in a low social level of individuals with an impact indirect to economy.

15- Agricultural Impact: Increasing population growth supports the idea of converting agricultural lands in favor of logistics services, like hospitals, buildings and schools. Thus reducing the per capita share of the agricultural crop, increase unemployment in this sector, and decrease savings and investment based on the agricultural sector, which is one of the sectors affecting the economy.

16- Developmental Impact: According to economists' estimates, 2% -5% of the national income must be invested, if the population grows by 1% annually, which means that the abnormal population



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increase reduces the level of saving that the individual or even the state can provide. It also requires increased investments to cover the need of individuals, i.e., overpopulation makes the previous equation unequal and thus negatively affects the economy.

17- Lack of natural resources: The land is known to have limited productivity for food and water, and the large increase in the population increases the demand for these resources, as the increase in the level of human consumption turns the matter to import, for example, Egypt imports wheat from abroad. The lack of resources worldwide may lead to the creation of an environment for international wars and conflicts on natural resources; the most important of which is water, to cover the problem of water poverty, as an example of what is happening between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan.

Egypt and the demographic issue:



The demographic issue in Egypt is caused by the imbalance between the state's population and the available resources and services. This clearly appears in the form of population growth rates that continue to rise, and development rates that are not commensurate with them, and with the rate of decline in the



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standard of living. This increase in the population is not the issue; rather it is the proportional relationship between the population and the state's resources. There are many countries that have a dense population and do not suffer from any crises because they have achieved proportionality between their human and material resources.

Some causes of the population problem in Egypt are the increase in the average lifespan of the individual, due to the improvement of the health conditions, leading to an increase in the number of elderly people, and thus an increase in the dependency ratio. Another cause can be society's view of procreation, as the Egyptian society, especially in the socially humble educational and financial circles, has a firm belief related to the increase of offspring and the number of family members for the purpose of forming solitude, ignoring their social and material conditions. There are several reasons resulting from misconceptions, such as the large number of children to create the strong attachment of the husband to the family, the lack of divorce or second marriage, and the increase in children in order to help their families in agricultural work in the countryside, in addition to the wrong religious beliefs of some individuals. Besides, neglecting family planning methods that can help educating people about means of postponing and preventing childbearing, and raise their awareness about the rights of children and the responsibility of raising them.

The reasons for the population increase in Egypt can be summed up as follows:

- 1- Customs and traditions that support early marriage.
- 2- Female circumcision.
- 3- Preference for males.



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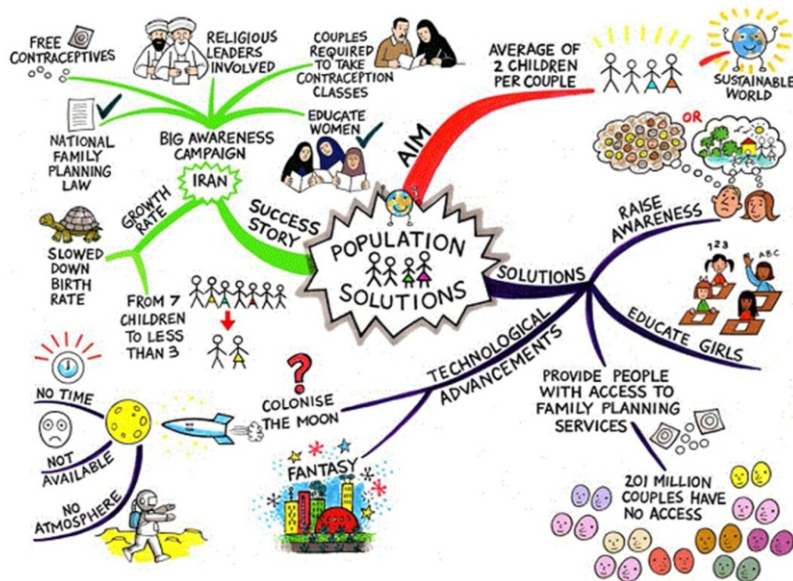
- 4- Not using family planning methods.
- 5- Two children are not enough.
- 6- The culture of procreation that was formed over a long period of time in Egyptian society, linked to bondage and support.

As a result, the population of Egypt exceeded 100 million, as the first Arab country to reach the stage of population explosion, as a result of low death rates and the stability of high birth rates. The failure of population programs to deal with this issue was attributed to the following:

- 1- Lack of awareness of the population problem.
- 2- The spread of illiteracy.
- 3- Delayed entry of women into the field of work.
- 4- The decline in the rate of urbanization and industrialization.

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A roadmap to treat overpopulation in Egypt:



Undoubtedly, the population increase is one of the most prominent files that receive the attention of the political leadership. This interest has been translated in the form of decisions on the ground, through the development of the Population Strategy 2030 to deal with this issue. Following are the steps of the road map according to the strategy to solve the crisis:

1. Launching a community dialogue to build popular support for adopting the national population policy.
2. Drawing up a population media policy that governmental and non-governmental media institutions are committed to.
3. Reviewing the institutional framework of the Egyptian spatial program, and setting up a robust mechanism for follow-up and evaluation.



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4. Activating the role of governmental and non-governmental institutions in order to put the population problem at the center of attention
5. Allocating the necessary resources to effectively deal with population programs and activities in light of the savings that could be achieved by reducing fertility rates on all areas of services in Egypt.
6. Preparing quantitative targets for population variables, medium and short-term targets that are monitored periodically.
7. Taking into account the estimates of population growth and the number of births when planning the various facilities and services in the country.

The draft law on positive incentives for the Egyptian family, referred to the Social Solidarity Committee in the House of Representatives, defined the tasks that state institutions can carry out to raise awareness of the population increase, and stressed the need to pay attention to educating women, and organizing training and rehabilitation courses for those who are about to marry.

According to Article 8 of the draft law, the ministries and concerned authorities shall carry out the tasks entrusted to them to stimulate the model family as follows:

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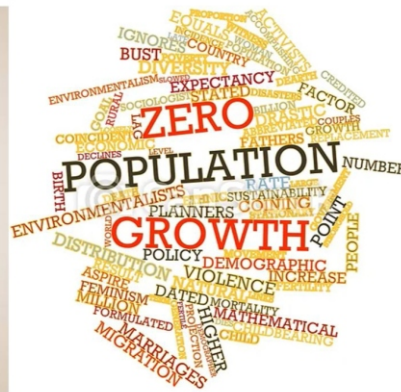
- 1- The Ministry of Health and Population has the task of educating women about the importance of their work, as well as the participation of those who are about to marry in special training courses for family planning before marriage, with the provision of contraceptive methods for free in health units and hospitals, and the implementation of control measures to prevent the leakage of these materials and their use for other purposes.
- 2- The Ministry of Education and Technical Education should effectively integrate educational materials related to population and maternal and child health care into the school curricula.
- 3- The Ministry of Higher Education should be integrating a course for university students on population and family planning.
- 4- The Ministry of Culture promotes and encourages family planning programs through cultural palaces spread across the Republic.
- 5- The Ministry of Youth and Sports is promoting and encouraging family planning programs and educating young people and raising their awareness of the seriousness of the population problem through youth centers spread throughout the Republic.



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- 6- The Supreme Council for Media Regulation is creating the appropriate atmosphere for the effective participation of media and art personnel with the aim of increasing citizens' awareness of population and family planning programs, as well as the production and broadcasting of direct and indirect programs by the National Media Authority to increase national awareness of population and health care for mothers and children.
- 7- Obligating the National Population Council and its Executive Council to hold periodic meetings to evaluate programs designed to reduce the population problem in accordance with the National Population and Development Strategy 2015/2030.

Among the proposals that may address the issue of population increase in Egypt are as follows:



- Improving family planning services for target women, and in order to achieve this, challenges need to be addressed in presenting these services in all governorates.
- Spreading awareness about the importance of regulating reproduction and the number of family members, especially among groups of uneducated women or those with a low cultural level.



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- The necessity of regularizing family planning services, and intensifying them in many places in Upper Egypt, and presenting them in the many areas deprived of service, whose spatial dimension caused this deprivation, in addition to the doctors' reluctance to work in these remote areas.
- Increasing the demand for family planning services, by reaching out to the beneficiary woman and convincing her to use a safe method of contraception.
- It is necessary to increase the rate of use of family planning methods in all governorates of Egypt.
- Reaching, ultimately, areas deprived of family planning services, which are approximately 3,183 areas, with approximately 1,250 health units that do not have a doctor.
- Increasing the number of doctors (especially OBGYN) and working to increase the doses of their training and provision of their expertise, especially those assigned new graduates.
- Covering all geographical areas with all the various family planning services, means and tools, throughout the year, especially for remote and slum areas.
- Achieving human development, which means improving human capabilities to reduce the danger of this phenomenon and deal with it wisely, through developing the individuals' knowledge and improving their skills and abilities that contribute to improving the productive field.
- Utilizing the state's available resources in a wise manner that ensures maximum benefit from them; such as exploiting empty lands after reforming it for agriculture and production, desalinating salt water to address the problem of water scarcity, and other actions and effective development plans to keep pace with this increase.



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- Strengthening the role of sustainable development programs that aim to give a push to all aspects; health, economic, social, services, legal and other sectors in a manner that ensures the absorption of this increase to the maximum extent possible.
- Activating all means of follow-up, and motivating the targeted women, in a parallel line.
- Opening the door to entrepreneurship in order to avoid the social problems that accompany overpopulation and that result mainly from leisure time, the lack of aim for youth, and poverty.
- Strengthening the bonds of the relationship between the state, activating the partnership with the private sector, and putting the private sector in the picture more effectively.

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Reproductive health and family planning





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Reproductive health and family planning programs are considered among the basic programs to confront the population increase, which poses a great danger to the development efforts of the state, and contributing to reducing maternal and child mortality rates. Reproductive health and family planning in one of the national and global strategies to reduce poverty and improve the standard of living for families and the quality of life for citizens. These programs include various dimensions; family, social, health and cultural. It endeavors to provide vaccinations and primary care services, as well as follow-up medical examinations before and after marriage, beside taking the necessary measures in the context of improving population characteristics.

What is reproductive health?

Reproductive health is the ability of people to have a satisfying and safe sex life, to be able to have children and to be free to choose when and how to do so. It also raise awareness among men and women about safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning; implementing health education programs to ensure having a safe pregnancy and childbirth, providing couples with the best chance of having a healthy child.

Reproductive health includes healthy personal habits, physical and psychological integrity, as well as sexual activity. It is an essential part of public health, reflecting the health level of couples at childbearing age. It is also concerned with the pre-reproductive stage and adolescent health, and the post-reproductive age stage for women. Reproductive health should be viewed as a lifestyle approach because it affects both men and women from infancy to old age. Reproductive health, at any age, has a profound impact on the individual's health later on.



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This includes challenges that people face at different times in their lives; such as family planning, services that prevent sexually transmitted diseases, and early diagnosis and treatment of reproductive health problems. It is necessary to involve men and women in the reproductive decision of the family in order to achieve a better level of reproductive health. It is also important to presenting these concepts to both young men and women and promote them at an early age, as reproductive health is no longer a concern of married women at childbearing age only, and it is not synonymous with family planning only, but the concept of reproductive health is more comprehensive than that, and it is the responsibility of everyone at all ages.



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Therefore, reproductive health was defined in the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development as “the individual's physical, mental and social well-being in all matters related to the reproductive system, its functions and operations, and not merely safety from disease or disability.”

Categories targeted by reproductive health services:



- Men and women of childbearing age to raise their health level.
- Adolescents and youth education and awareness of harmful behaviors.
- Women after childbearing age to prevent diseases of the reproductive system.
- The child after birth to maintain his health, survival, protection and development.



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Reproductive health services:

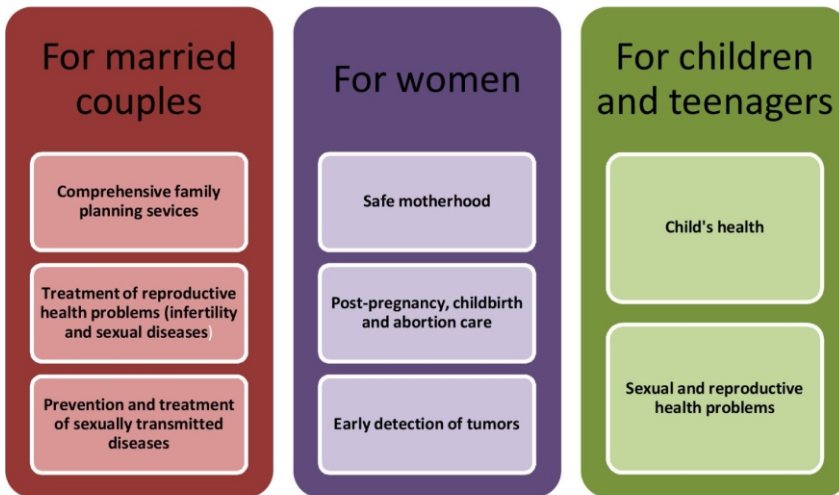


- Ensuring the right of men and women to know safe, effective, affordable and easy family planning methods.
- Providing high quality family planning services, including infertility treatment services.
- Accessing the right to appropriate health care services that enable women to safely pass the period of pregnancy and childbirth.
- Creating the best opportunities for the couple to have a healthy newborn.
- Eliminating the phenomenon of unsafe abortion.
- Combating sexually transmitted diseases.
- Promoting sexual health.

Periodic examination of children, interim examination at schools and examination before marriage

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- **Reproductive health service package**



The most important reproductive health messages

1. Premarital care.
2. Delaying the birth of the first child.
3. The role of men in family planning and reproductive health.
4. Birth spacing.
5. Preventing children's marriage.
6. The necessity of educating females,
7. Reducing inbreeding to avoid genetic diseases caused by it.



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1) Premarital Care:

Premarital care aims at health education for those wishing to marry, medical, psychological and social intervention to prepare them for marriage, to evaluate the potential risks that the spouses may be exposed to, and to discuss appropriate family planning methods to postpone the first pregnancy in the event the spouses wish to do so. Premarital counseling aims to reduce the transmission of infection between spouses while helping the couple to plan properly for pregnancy and to have healthy children, beside educating them about the importance of spacing between births. A medical history is taken and the necessary medical examinations and tests are conducted.

2) Delaying the birth of the first child:

Postponing pregnancy, before the birth of the first baby, allows the newlywed spouses to consolidate their relationship and enjoy married life without assuming any responsibilities, which enhances their feeling of stability. Delaying the first child helps the spouses adapt to their new life and the consequent changes in the responsibilities of marriage, home, children, and perhaps work as well, if the woman is working.

3) The role of men in family planning and reproductive health

The man has an important role in contributing to family planning and supporting the reproductive health of the woman:

1. Adopting the concept of the small family.
2. Sharing the responsibility of their decision of becoming pregnant or having children with the wife.
3. Encouraging the wife to decide their family planning.

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4. Using condoms as a method of family planning.
5. Paying attention to following up the mother's and family's health.
6. Changing attitudes towards family planning and changing reproductive behavior.
7. Being aware of the importance of the population problem and its impact on the economic situation of the family and society.

4) Birth spacing:

Spacing pregnancy preserves the mother's and her baby's lives, reduces miscarriages and unwanted pregnancies, and enhances the health of the mother and the newborn. It improves the health, nutrition and development of children, and allows the mother to recover physically and emotionally before being pregnant again and facing the demands of another pregnancy and subsequent birth, breastfeeding and caring for the newborn. Additionally, pregnancy spacing helps achieving justice between family members, and then society, as it allows parents to devote more time to take care of their children, which contributes to improving their school performance, and it also provides space for spouses to spend quality time together, to maintain their marital relationship and affection.





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5) Preventing Child Marriage:

Child marriage is a marriage in which one or both parties are under the age of 18 or have not reached the age of maturity specified in the state. Early marriage is one of the types of forced marriage, as one or both parties do not have complete freedom of consent, or does not appear express consent to that marriage, since neither one or both of them have the ability to determine the right partner. Early marriage generates several social effects, such as early divorce resulting from the discovery of the spouses' unwillingness to build a successful family; due to their young age and lack of sufficient awareness of the mechanism of building a family. Among the social effects of early marriage are the following:

- The prevalence of domestic violence.
- Poverty spread.
- Low level of education.



Besides, early marriage leads to many negative health outcomes; such as anemia and high blood pressure in the mother. Young mothers between the ages of 10 and 19 face a higher rate of preeclampsia, postpartum endometritis, and infections in the reproductive system. The teenage mother is twice more likely to suffer from postpartum depression than the older mother, and may have symptoms of mood swings, anxiety, sadness, and difficulty concentrating, eating and sleeping for one to two weeks.

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6) The necessity of educating females:

Women's education is reflected on their children's behavior; when they are educated and equal to men in society and have the freedom to manage the family. Unlike women who are deprived of education, who may abuse their children and lead to a fragile upbringing. The education of girls completely changes the perception and attitudes of women, transmitting that to her children, her family and the surrounding community, which helps in the advancement of society as a whole.



7) Reducing inbreeding to avoid genetic diseases resulting from it

Genetic diseases constitute a heavy burden on all societies. Numerous studies have proven the relationship between inbreeding, fetal death, and birth defects in newborns. In an Egyptian study, it was found that the incidence of birth defects represents 2-3% of all newborns, and the size of birth defects in Egypt is not definitely specified, but it is responsible for a large portion of infant and child deaths, as 15% of all child deaths were due to congenital defects at birth in 2008. In another Egyptian study conducted in 2012, it was found that 4.3% of children from birth to 18 years had genetic defects: 31.4% have neurological diseases, 18.5% have disorders in red blood cells and hemoglobin, and 11.5% have genetic chromosomal defects. The percentage of genetic diseases in Egypt



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is 3% of children and it reaches between 4% and 6% among children of inbreeding marriage of first-degree, who have a hereditary disease history.

Family planning services and methods:

Family planning

It is a conscious, organized, and free act or effort undertaken by spouses to regulate or control fertility by delaying, spacing, or limiting the number of births. It is carried out through a structured work program to provide family planning information and services with the aim of reducing fertility and improving public health.



Importance of family planning:

Family planning offers women and the family alternatives and options for a better lifestyle, as it allows:

- 1) The ability to determine the number of children and to space births freely and responsibly.
- 2) Protection against unplanned pregnancy.
- 3) The possibility for women to have better opportunities to continue education or work.

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- Family planning services are defined as "educational, comprehensive medical or social activities which enable individuals, including minors, to determine freely the number and spacing of their children and to select the means by which this may be achieved".



4) Family planning saves mothers' lives by:

- * Reducing the number of births.
- * Spacing of pregnancies.
- * Reducing pregnancies at a very young age or in the late reproductive stages.

Women's unmet needs:

More than 100 million women in less developed countries want to avoid pregnancy, but do not use any form of family planning for a variety of reasons, and this situation is described as unmet need for family planning.





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The most common causes of unmet needs:

- 1) Low quality of health care services.
- 2) Concerns about the side effects of contraceptives.
- 3) Lack of information about contraceptive methods or where to obtain them.
- 4) Difficulty obtaining modern contraceptive methods due to the remoteness of the places of service provision, the high cost, or the irregularity of visits to mobile clinics.
- 5) Opposition from spouses, families and communities.



Family planning as one of the most important determinant of overpopulation:

The role of family planning services in shaping the population structure:

The change in fertility rates is due to four direct factors: family planning, induced abortion, marriage, and breastfeeding. In view of these determinants, family planning is the most important one ever among the others, as about 64% of the change in the fertility rates in

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Egypt is due to it, compared to 14% for breastfeeding, 12% for induced abortion, and 10% for the age of marriage. Accordingly, it can be claimed that family planning is the most important determinant of the population increase in Egypt. According to 2019 data, Egypt avoids annually about 4 million unplanned pregnancies, and about 1.6 unsafe abortions, thanks to the use of family planning methods.

The main goal of family planning:

The use of the term family planning may find resistance and rejection as a result of a misunderstanding. The refusal may be religious, social, or inherited cultures, but family planning in its comprehensive sense is arrangement, coordination, and management.



In 2006 the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) issued a recommendation to encourage men and women to plan their reproductive lives to help them avoid unintended pregnancies with the aim of improving women's health and reducing complications from pregnancy or abortion. Raising a child requires an enormous amount of resources: social, physical and environmental, in addition to time. Planning can help ensure that these resources are available when pregnancy is desired, as the goal of family planning is to ensure that both spouses have sufficient resources to complete their goal of having a child.



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Family planning and maternal health:

According to the World Health Organization, maternal health refers to the safety of women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period. About 99% of maternal deaths in developing countries occur as a result of early or late pregnancies. Adolescent girls face the risk of complications and death as a result of pregnancy, so it is preferable to wait until they reach the age of eighteen before attempting to have children, and in case of miscarriage or abortion, the wait should be at least 6 months.



Likewise, women should be aware when planning to start a family that the risks of childbearing increase as the woman ages, as the odds of having children with autism or Down syndrome raise. Besides, multiple births and late pregnancies cause the possibility of diabetes, and the number of caesarean sections boosts, as older mothers are exposed to greater risks after prolonged labor periods, which endanger the fetus's life. Among the advantages of spacing children is reducing the number of infant and maternal deaths, and a reduction in rates of stunting, obesity, anemia and autism, beside not exhausting women physically and psychologically.

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Family planning and financial resources:

Family planning is among the most effective health interventions in terms of cost savings on the state, so it is important to review the prevailing idea considering spending on it, in spite of its necessity, as a pressure on state resources which can be used for other purposes with more profitable economic return. The economic impact of the population increase and its repercussions on the quality of human capital in Egypt makes family planning, in fact, an economic investment with positive returns that affects current and future generations, just as spending on export subsidies. Hence, the costs of providing government services to them, namely education, health, food support, housing, and social facilities will be avoided. This reflects the great importance of family planning in Egypt and that investing in family planning has clear economic benefits.

The infographic is divided into two main sections: 'Family Planning' and 'Purposes'. Each section contains a list of bullet points. To the right of the text in each section is a small illustration of a family consisting of a man, a woman, and a child. The background is a light orange color.

Family Planning

- Family planning is the planning of:
 - When to have children
 - The use of birth control
 - Other techniques to implement such plans
- Other techniques commonly used include
 - Sexuality education
 - Prevention and
 - Management of sexually transmitted infections
 - Pre-conception counseling and management
 - Infertility management

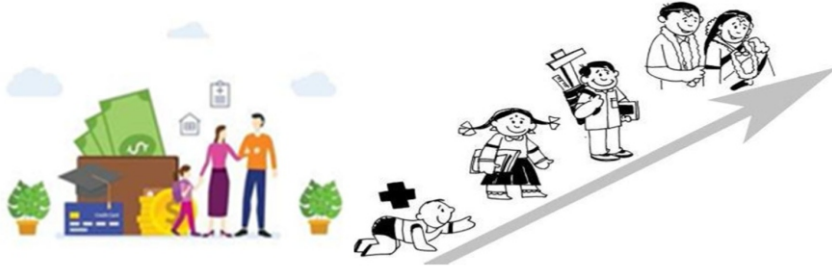
Purposes

- Raising a child requires significant amounts of resources:
 - Time
 - Social
 - Financial
 - Environmental
- Planning can help assure that resources are available.
- The purpose of family planning is to make sure that any couple, man, or woman who has the desire to have a child has the resources that are needed in order to complete this goal.

According to the United Nations Population Fund, for every dollar invested in contraceptives, the cost of work-related care is reduced by \$1,047. The provision of contraceptives is ranked in the Copenhagen Consensus Project, launched by several Nobel laureates in cooperation with the United Nations, as the third highest policy initiative in social, economic and environmental benefits per dollar spent.



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It was also stated that the provision of sexual and reproductive health services globally will eliminate the unmet need for contraceptives which will decrease the number of newborn deaths by 640,000 cases worldwide, and lower the number of maternal deaths during pregnancy by 150,000 throughout the world. Similarly, the number of children losing their mothers has decreased by 900,000. In general, spending on population activities, including family planning, sexual and reproductive health, data analysis, and population and humanitarian policies, is an important indicator of the country's progress in implementing the ICPD Program of Action and achieving sustainable development indicators.

Family planning and human rights:

Access to safe and voluntary family planning is a human right and a key component of gender equality, women's empowerment, and poverty reduction. There was global consensus that family planning is a human right, and this was documented at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, which was held in Cairo. According to the eighth item of the Program of Action, "All couples and individuals have the fundamental right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and they also have the right to get information, education, and means to do so."

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In Egypt, the state has taken an interest in promoting human rights, and it has recently launched the first national strategy for human rights, which aims to promote social, economic, political and cultural rights in the country. The human rights strategy is considered the first integrated and long-term self-strategy in the field of human rights in Egypt, as it includes the development of state policies and directions in dealing with a number of files related to human rights.

Family planning options:

Family planning options include:



- ***Condoms*** are examples of such methods as the male and female condom, as well as the diaphragm, the cervical cap and the contraceptive sponge.
- ***Short-acting hormonal methods***, which include family planning pills, in addition to the vaginal ring, skin patch, and contraceptive injections (Depo-Provera). These methods are short-acting; because it must be remembered to use it on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.
- ***Long-acting hormonal methods***, including the copper IUD, the hormonal IUD, and subcutaneous capsules. These



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are long-acting methods; because it lasts for a period ranging from three to ten years, depending on its type, or until the woman decides to remove the device.

- ***Sterilization*** which is a permanent method of contraception, such as tubal ligation for women and vasectomy for men.
- ***Fertility Awareness Methods*** that focus on knowing the days of the month in which pregnancy can occur, and are often based on the basal body temperature and cervical mucus.
- ***Emergency contraception***, like morning pills after intercourse.

Various contraceptives

How do different contraceptives work?

Contraceptives work in a variety of ways, including:

- Preventing sperm from reaching the egg.
- Disrupting or damaging sperm.
- Preventing the egg from being released every month.
- Changing the lining of the uterus so that a fertilized egg does not attach to it.
- Increasing the thickness of cervical mucus so that sperm cannot easily pass through it.

How effective are the means?

In order for any method of contraception to be effective, it must be used consistently and correctly. Some contraceptives may require minimal effort from the users, such as the coil and subcutaneous capsules implanted, as well as sterilization, which are placed by the health service provider, and they achieve high protection rates and lower pregnancy rates. In contrast, methods that require periodic



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fertility monitoring or abstinence and achieve lower prevention rates and higher pregnancy rates.

Do contraceptives offer other benefits?

In addition to preventing pregnancy, some contraceptives offer other benefits such as reducing the amount of blood during menstrual period, a lower risk of sexually transmitted infections, and a reduced risk of certain cancers.

In general, the best method of family planning for any woman is the safe method that suits her and that the doctor recommends and she can use regularly in a correct manner. The best method may change for the same woman throughout her life as it is affected by many factors, including age and health history, the number of children she wants, the appropriate date for pregnancy, as well as differences of family planning methods, such as how effective they are at preventing pregnancy, their side effects, their cost, and whether they prevent sexually transmitted infections.



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