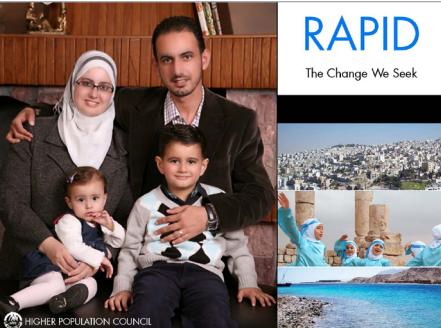




# HEALTH POLICY PROJECT / JORDAN

Building capacity for improved health policy,  
advocacy, governance, and finance

## Overview



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Jordan has one of the fastest growing populations in the world, with approximately 60 percent of its population below 25 years of age. Despite efforts to increase access to modern contraception, there remains a large unmet need, and the total fertility rate remains high at 3.5.<sup>1</sup> If this trend persists, the number of people calling this small Middle Eastern country “home” will double in less than 30 years, straining resources available for education, health, energy, and water.

From 2010–2013, the USAID-funded Health Policy Project (HPP) partnered with Jordan’s Higher Population Council (HPC), Ministry of Health (MOH), and other key stakeholders to create an enabling environment for family planning/reproductive health (FP/RH) services through improved multisectoral engagement and coordination, data use, and policy reform.

## Evidence-Based Tools Boost Advocacy

Through the use of several tools, HPP strengthened the capacity of the Higher Population Council and stakeholders to advocate increased financial support and political commitment for FP/RH.

- Applied the RAPID model,<sup>2</sup> a powerful advocacy tool that demonstrates the impact of population growth on development. HPP collaborated with HPC to develop two new RAPID models on land use and energy and to finalize seven other previously developed RAPID models on water, education, and health at the national and governorate levels. HPC used the results of these applications to mobilize resources and support for population issues among stakeholders, including governorates, defense, universities, and the senate.
- With the HPC, conducted research and designed an educational booklet on the health benefits of birth spacing and presented it in media advocacy workshops and task force meetings with providers. This tool enables HPC to advance the national initiative for healthy birth spacing to improve maternal and child outcomes in a culturally relevant and appropriate manner. Other USAID-funded projects, such as SHOPS (Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector) also use this tool in their advocacy and communication efforts.
- Assisted the HPC with completing an advocacy strategy and advocacy action plan, and trained staff members from HPC and national partners in conducting population and development-related advocacy for a varied audience, including teachers, religious leaders, and the private sector. As a result, national partners have coordinated their advocacy efforts through developing strategies and corresponding activities.



Photo by Health Policy Project

Key political and national stakeholders attend a communications and advocacy workshop held by HPP in conjunction with the Higher Population Council (HPC) in June, 2013

HPP collaborated with HPC from 2010– 2013 to generate evidence, create communications tools, and advocate the creation of Jordan's first national FP/RH strategy. In May 2013, the HPC approved the final strategy, which seeks to contribute to economic growth and the broader national agenda of improving the welfare of the people of Jordan.

"I commend the efforts of local and international partners that have supported the Higher Population Council's work, particularly the Health Policy Project, for the technical support in developing this document," said former HPC Secretary General Professor, Dr. Raeda Al Qutob.

## Strategic Planning Improves Policy Implementation

HPP improved the policy environment for increased service coverage, use, and quality by supporting the operationalization of Jordan's first-ever national FP/RH strategy and the establishment of task-sharing policies for expanded access to long-term methods.

- With the HPC, developed an implementation plan and schedule for follow-on work under the National Reproductive Health/Family Planning Strategy (2013–2017). The plan will ensure sustained progress toward increasing FP/RH uptake and achieving the demographic dividend.<sup>3</sup>
- Provided technical analysis to support a task-sharing policy allowing midwives, in addition to physicians, to insert intrauterine devices (IUDs). The MOH signed a decree authorizing this change and successfully revised and implemented related government policies. As a result, eligible midwives are inserting IUDs and receiving refresher trainings, and male physicians are being trained in the supervision of IUD insertion.

## The Way Forward

The launch of Jordan's first-ever national FP/RH strategy is a major milestone for Jordan. To build on the impetus created by the new strategy, the HPC needs to implement it fully and focus on addressing the three main challenges to the FP program: (1) policy, (2) access, and (3) beliefs and behaviors. For *policy*, the HPC needs to strengthen its capacity and the capacity of national stakeholders to undertake advocacy, FP/RH policy analysis, and monitoring and evaluation. For *access*, the MOH needs to focus on improving service quality through higher quality control and supportive supervision measures, among other things. For *beliefs and behaviors*, the HPC, MOH, and stakeholders need to improve the quality, coverage, and comprehensiveness of health-related communication to address sociocultural stigma and misconceptions about FP/RH.

## Selected Publications

- Jordan National Reproductive Health/Family Planning Strategy: At a Glance
- Jordan RAPID: Population Growth & Its Impact on Land Use
- Jordan RAPID: Population Growth & Its Impact on Energy

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Jordan Department of Statistics and ICF International. 2013. Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2012. Calverton, Maryland, USA: Department of Statistics and ICF International.

<sup>2</sup> The RAPID model projects the social and economic consequences of high fertility and rapid population growth for such sectors as labor, education, health, urbanization, and agriculture. Learn more about the model on HPP's website at [www.healthpolicyproject.com/index.cfm?id=software&get=Spectrum](http://www.healthpolicyproject.com/index.cfm?id=software&get=Spectrum).

<sup>3</sup> The demographic dividend is an opportunity for economic growth, development, and improved well-being that arises as a result of changes in population age structure.

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