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# **Postpartum Family Planning During Sociopolitical Transition: Findings from an Integrated Community-Based Program in Egypt**

Chelsea M. Cooper, Jhpiego

Elaine Charurat, Jhpiego

Issam El-Adawi, Save the Children, Cairo

Young-Mi Kim, Jhpiego

Mark R. Emerson, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Wael Zaki, Save the Children, Cairo

Anne Schuster, Jhpiego

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### **CONTEXT**

Limited information exists on postpartum family planning and implementation of integrated reproductive and maternal and child health programs in countries experiencing sociopolitical transition.

### **METHODS**

A quasi-experimental evaluation of an integrated reproductive and maternal and child health program implemented in selected sites in Upper and Lower Egypt was conducted between 2012 and 2014. Preintervention and postintervention household surveys were conducted among 12,454 women in intervention sites and nonintervention comparison sites who at survey had a child younger than 24 months. Bivariate and multivariate analyses estimated the intervention's effects on postpartum family planning–related outcomes, including contraceptive use, knowledge of optimal birthspacing, reproductive intentions and decision making about contraceptive use.

### **RESULTS**

In Upper Egypt, modern contraceptive use decreased over the study period in both intervention and comparison sites (by six and 15 percentage points, respectively), and in Lower Egypt, contraceptive use remained unchanged in intervention sites and decreased slightly (by three points) in comparison sites; in both regions, the intervention was positively associated with the difference in differences between groups (odds ratios, 1.5 for Upper Egypt and 1.3 for Lower Egypt). The intervention appears to have had a positive effect on knowledge of optimal birthspacing in Upper Egypt, on wanting to delay the next pregnancy in Lower Egypt, and on pregnancy risk and joint decision making in both regions.

## **DISCUSSION**

Study findings demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of an integrated reproductive and maternal and child health program implemented in a changing sociopolitical context. Revitalized efforts to bolster family planning within the country are needed to avert further losses and spark a return to positive trends.

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## **AUTHORS' AFFILIATIONS**

Chelsea M. Cooper is social and behavior change communication advisor, Elaine Charurat is project director for Accelerating Scale-Up of Implants, Young-Mi Kim is senior research and evaluation associate, and Anne Schuster is research advisor—all with Jhpiego, Baltimore, MD, USA. At the time this research was conducted, Issam El-Adawi was SMART program chief of party, and Wael Zaki was Sohag team leader—both with Save the Children, Cairo, Egypt. Mark R. Emerson is senior research associate, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD, USA.

Author contact: [chelsea.cooper@jhpiego.org](mailto:chelsea.cooper@jhpiego.org)