



**Best Practices in Egypt:
An Integrated Approach
to Corporate Social Responsibility**



The CATALYST Consortium is a global reproductive health and family planning activity initiated in September 2000 by the Office of Population and Reproductive Health, Bureau for Global Health of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The Consortium is a partnership of five organizations: Academy for Educational Development (AED), Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA), Meridian Group International, Inc., Pathfinder International and PROFAMILIA/Colombia. CATALYST works in reproductive health and family planning through synergistic partnerships and state-of-the-art technical leadership. Its overall strategic objective is to increase the use of sustainable, quality reproductive health and family planning services and healthy practices through clinical and nonclinical programs.

Mission

CATALYST's mission is to improve the quality and availability of sustainable reproductive health and family planning services.

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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THE NEED

Egypt's ambitious national population goal is to reach a replacement level fertility of 2.1 by the year 2017. This represents a marked decrease from the current rate of 3.2 and will require an increase in support for reproductive health/family planning (RH/FP) products and services. However, USAID, which has supported FP in Egypt for 30 years, will begin to phase-out contraceptive funding in 2006. Currently there is a strong reliance on the public sector as a source of RH/FP products and services, particularly among the middle and upper-middle income groups. To reach its population goals, the government of Egypt must reach underserved pockets of clients in hard-to-reach areas, and it must scale-up proven best practices throughout the country, all within a context of increasing decentralization. Sustainability and contraceptive security are vital issues today in Egypt

Within the world of business, the main “responsibility” of corporations has historically been to make money and increase shareholder value. In other words, corporate financial responsibility has been the sole driving force of corporate decision making. Over the last decade, corporate social responsibility (CSR) developed into an international movement to encourage broader corporate responsibility toward communities and humanitarian needs. Today, corporations understand this engagement creates a positive public image, and consequently improves investment opportunities, market share, and shareholders commitment. As this awareness matures, companies recognize that partnerships with NGOs and governments can provide significant opportunities to engage in CSR. This is as true in international healthcare industries, as it is in other industries. As the healthcare sector increases its international commitments to CSR, governments are presented with the unique opportunity to expand, enhance, and sustain these efforts through mutually beneficial partnerships.

In Egypt, the government has two major tasks if it is to build on recent health and family planning successes: it must reach underserved pockets of clients in hard-to-reach areas, and it must scale up proven best practices throughout the country, all within a context of increasing decentralization. The government has the will to undertake these challenges, but not necessarily the resources. Resources do exist within Egypt that might be mobilized in support of national or local development efforts but these resources have not been tapped. Business entities, for example, have considerable resources—products, funds, in-kind assistance, distribution channels, and even expertise. And many have a keen sense of corporate social responsibility. This is true of the largest multinational corporation and of the “smallest” local farmer.

THE TAHSEEN SOLUTION

In 2004, TAHSEEN¹ developed a project in Upper Egypt to link public and private sector resources for RH/FP to improve the quality of care, mobilize the community, and ensure long-term sustainability. An important part of the project was to help the Government of Egypt's Ministry of Health and Population (MOHP) adopt a "business mentality" in partnering with the private sector, and understand the concept of "win-win" partnerships, in which both partners experience mutually-beneficial outcomes. TAHSEEN's strategy was to take advantage of trends in CSR to mobilize company involvement in RH/FP at the national, governorate, and local level. TAHSEEN knew that the commercial sector welcomes an efficient, accountable mechanism through which to channel assistance to ensure that contributions are maximized, so TAHSEEN served as the "broker" for the partnerships.

TAHSEEN's approach was to conduct extensive market research to identify prospective partners and then design a formal, customized presentation highlighting the benefit each partner would receive. Following a period of negotiation, TAHSEEN collaborated with companies and organizations on mutually-beneficial partnerships. At the *national level*, TAHSEEN and the MOHP approached multinational and national corporations that produce medicines and other health/hygiene products and large business organizations. At the *governorate level*, TAHSEEN and the local government approached a business association to mobilize material support for clinics. At the *local level*, TAHSEEN conducted orientations in CSR for clinic boards. TAHSEEN and the MOHP found willing partners at all levels, as can be seen below. An added advantage of public-private partnerships is that clinics can learn to operate more cost effectively and with more transparency through interactions with the commercial sector, which gives priority to good governance and accountability.

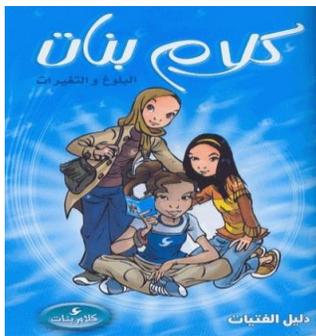
RESULTS

TAHSEEN has played a large role in negotiating memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the commercial sector. When possible, it has also ensured that these are long-term partnerships. TAHSEEN's mediating role has convinced corporate partners that contributions would be managed properly and transparently. The results of TAHSEEN's CSR work can be seen both through the increased involvement of business partners and, perhaps more importantly, through fundamental changes in both the government and the commercial sector. Over \$948,800 was leveraged by companies and business organizations through partnerships with TAHSEEN to support RH/FP initiatives in Egypt. Contributions range from the large-scale contributions of a multinational corporation to the more modest, but no less valued, contributions of local pharmaceutical distributors. Examples include:

Procter & Gamble (P&G). TAHSEEN negotiated a 10-year agreement with the multinational P&G to incorporate RH/FP messages in their promotion of a feminine hygiene product (sanitary

¹ *Tahseen Sihatna Bi Tanzeem Usritna* (TAHSEEN) a USAID/Egypt funded seven-year country reproductive health and family planning (RH/FP) project which CATALYST is currently assisting to implement.

pads) to women and girls throughout Egypt. P&G collaborated with TAHSEEN on two booklets for Egyptian girls about feminine hygiene and women’s reproductive cycles—one for girls aged 12-14 and one for girls aged 16-18. The booklets include TAHSEEN messages about optimal birth spacing and delayed age at marriage. P&G will work with schools in 20 governorates to distribute these booklets and provide free samples to 300,000 girls aged 12-14 and 250,000 girls aged 16-18. To support this effort, P&G is training teachers on RH/FP messages and the hygiene advantages of sanitary pads. The company is also initiating a door-to-door campaign focused on adult women estimated to reach 1.6 million low-income households with sanitary pad samples and a leaflet on RH/FP issues. In a separate effort, P&G has also donated televisions and VCRs to each of TAHSEEN’s renovated clinics to show educational videos in clinic waiting rooms. P&G is also the first of TAHSEEN corporate partners to have adopted a local health clinic. With a contribution of over \$13,103.4, P&G is supporting the renovation and equipping of a clinic in a poor urban area of Cairo.



As part of TAHSEEN/CATALYST CSR activities with Proctor and Gamble included Project messages in their ‘Girl Talk’ booklets aimed at adolescent girls

Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS). In February 2005, TAHSEEN/CATALYST signed a Memorandum of Understanding for BMS to conduct lectures twice a month on health topics to private physicians and pharmacists. These lectures cover generic health topics and do not discuss specific BMS products, but BMS may provide free samples to participants. BMS will also make in-kind or cash contributions each month to clinics renovated under the Project for:

- Injectable antibiotics valued at **\$5172.4**
- Buffered aspirin valued at **\$5172.4**
- Monthly lectures for Ask/Consult members (private physicians and pharmacists) valued at **\$20,689**

The total value of the MOU is \$31,034

Futurepharma. This Egyptian pharmaceutical company has donated vitamins for pregnant women, cough medicine, and other health products to TAHSEEN-renovated clinics, valued at \$51,724

Multipharma. Through an agreement brokered by TAHSEEN, this Egyptian pharmaceutical company is providing condoms to Freedom, an urban NGO working on HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention among substance abusers. Multipharma also plans to work directly with agricultural extension agents to help them disseminate RH/FP information to farmers. Multipharma donated condoms on a regular basis to be used as FP tools & protection of STDs

with the objective of increasing the awareness of condoms. Marketing alliance is developed in which TAHSEEN mainstreamed their message in all Multipharma's promotional tools (articles in magazine, promotional ads & posters). This agreement is worth of **\$81,897**

The Rotary Club. TAHSEEN has brokered agreements between Rotary Clubs and the MOHP or NGOs in five rural TAHSEEN-intervention communities and between Rotary Clubs and the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood in several poor urban areas of Cairo. In these communities Rotary funds micro-credit projects (e.g., sewing), and literacy classes managed by an NGO, are held at public clinics. Heliopolis Cairo Rotary Club has contributed over 52,950LE to a local clinic in Dowekia, a TAHSEEN target community in urban poor Cairo and funded seven literacy classes with a donation of 13,000LE. The same club donated 110 sewing machines for women who participated in the literacy program. Rotary Club Mokkatum contributed to an amount of 25,000LE for the furnishing of the literacy classes & the sewing classes. **The total value of both agreements is \$13,439.**

Egyptian Financial Executive Foundation (EFEF). TAHSEEN signed an MOU with the EFEF, an organization of chief financial officers of major multinational companies operating in Egypt. TAHSEEN presented its activities to the members of the foundation, which spurred the creation of a task force to develop and coordinate future collaborative activities. Through the EFEF, TAHSEEN has begun individual discussions with several companies including Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, Bechtel, and Glaxo Smith Kline

Minia Business Association. This association of local businesses in Minia Governorate has mobilized a variety of contributions from 12 of its member businesses, including consumable supplies for renovated clinics such as infection prevention and cleaning supplies and "tickets" for services for low-income clients. **The value of these contributions is \$1,155.00.**

Local Level Results. TAHSEEN is employing a number of community mobilization strategies, including the strategy "CSR" to appeal to companies to demonstrate social responsibility, contribute to employee health and enter into partnerships with local clinics. In rural areas, following TAHSEEN orientations on CSR, individuals and small businesses have stepped forward with unprecedented collaboration in social responsibility. In another community, local businesses have agreed to continue funding TAHSEEN's continuing-education program for clinic medical staff after TAHSEEN leaves the community. Following the CSR training, clinic boards have also adopted a business mentality, looking at other ways to meet a community need, generate income for the clinics, and acquaint large numbers of people with the renovated clinic facility. Currently one board is looking into setting up tents for special events on clinic grounds and another is considering allowing a company to sell health and hygiene products within the clinic, in return for a share of the profits. **The total amount of donation from the local level is \$94,355.00**

LESSONS LEARNED

Health and nonhealth-related companies and organizations at the national, governorate, and local levels can be motivated to participate in health-related CSR activities. Presenting an effective “win-win” proposal to a prospective CSR partner is essential for the company or association to understand that the partnership is mutually advantageous. Developing an effective “win-win” proposal requires a full understanding of the potential partner’s objectives and resources.

As the partnership gets underway, each partner should be fully satisfied and committed. If confusion or misgivings remain unresolved, a fruitful partnership is unlikely

The impact of TAHSEEN’s CSR activities was enhanced by its relevance to the various components of the TAHSEEN model, which provided a mutually-reinforcing structure for CSR at the community, governorate, and national level.

TAHSEEN’s broader success at the national and governorate level assured CSR partners that TAHSEEN was reliable, efficient, and results oriented.

CONCLUSION

TAHSEEN has “brokered” win-win partnerships in RH/FP in Egypt. In these partnerships, each stakeholder reaps benefits. For example, in the case of the Rotary Club project noted above, NGOs benefit because they now have fully equipped spaces in which to conduct classes; clinics benefit because potential clients visit the clinic in order to attend classes (and because economically empowered, literate women are more likely to adopt healthier behaviors and take advantage of health services); rotary members benefit because they are able to work with existing institutions and programs to achieve their own objectives; and, of course, communities, families, and individual women benefit because a greater number of women will, as a result, be literate and income producing.

The mechanism now exists with which to channel and appropriately use private resources for RH/FP activities in Egypt. Most importantly, results have led to radical shifts in thinking by both the MOHP and the commercial sector about the roles each can and should play in fostering such partnerships. In February 2005, for example, the Minister of Health and Population sent a directive to the population sector instructing it to begin partnering with the commercial sector. The significance of this is impossible to overstate: a year ago, no one involved could have imagined that such a paradigm shift could occur.

