



# Strengthening Family Planning Outcomes through the Private Sector

Worldwide, more than 222 million women have unmet need for family planning services, despite increasing contraceptive prevalence. The result is 80 million unintended pregnancies and 104,000 maternal deaths from unintended pregnancies (Guttmacher Institute, 2012). The private sector is an important source of family planning for millions of women in the developing world. In sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, close to 40 percent of women rely on the private sector as their source for family planning. Increasing the number of private providers offering a wide range of family planning methods can significantly improve overall access to and use of family planning.

## SHOPS Technical Approach

The goal of the SHOPS family planning program is to increase the role of the private sector in the provision of quality family planning products and services. This includes working with a diverse range of for-profit and nonprofit entities. The SHOPS approach is to examine the role of the private sector within the entire health system, mapping out the actors that influence family planning outcomes. By examining public and private sector roles and motivations, analyzing policies and regulations, and paying close attention to the economic, political, and cultural context, the SHOPS team identifies where and how the private sector can best contribute. The SHOPS team implements a variety of strategies to expand and strengthen the role of the private sector in family planning. The aim is to strike a balance between the achievement of short-term impact and the need to build capacity that will sustain these gains over the long term.

SHOPS increases the role of the private sector in family planning by:

- Conducting assessments to better understand the role of the private health sector and provide recommendations for maximizing utilization in family planning.
- Brokering partnerships with manufacturers and distributors to improve access to family planning products.
- Improving the quality, scale, and viability of private family planning providers by offering clinical, counseling, and business skills training along with access to financing.



A.S.A. Masud

## SHOPS Engages Diverse Private Sector Entities

clinics and hospitals  
corporations  
distributors  
doctors  
financial institutions  
pharmacists

insurance providers  
midwives  
manufacturers  
nurses  
shopkeepers  
informal providers

- Facilitating the organization of the private sector into networks and franchises.
- Reducing financial barriers to the private provision of family planning services through vouchers, contracting, savings clubs, and insurance.
- Employing mobile technologies for data collection, provider training, and consumer outreach.
- Strengthening the capacity of family planning organizations to be financially independent and build organizational and technical competencies.
- Using behavior change communication to increase demand for family planning services and products.
- Helping eliminate regulatory barriers to private sector provision of family planning products and services.

## NGO Sustainability

Globally, SHOPS is using the ProCapacity Index, a tool developed by the project team, to assess and strengthen family planning and reproductive health NGOs. ProCap is a metrics-driven tool that provides rapid assessments of clinical health NGOs. Using a balanced scorecard approach, the ProCap tool looks at 27 qualitative and quantitative indicators focusing on three areas of sustainability: financial strength, programmatic performance, and organizational development. Uniquely, ProCap collects data across indexed organizations, allowing an organization to compare its score with other health organizations in developing countries.



Jessica Scranton

## Increasing Access to LARCs

In Nigeria, SHOPS is building the capacity of private clinic-based doctors, nurses, and midwives in family planning counseling and clinical skills for provision of long-acting reversible contraceptives. Sixty percent of Nigerian women obtain their family planning services from the private sector, however 92 percent of these women use resupply methods. This, in addition to a 15 percent unmet need for spacing pregnancies and a 5 percent unmet need for limiting them present an opportunity to expand women's access to a wider range of methods. SHOPS has trained 420 private providers across six states in LARC clinical skills.



Adebola Hassan

## Integrating Family Planning

In Bangladesh, SHOPS is improving the ability of private hospitals with large maternity wards in Dhaka and Chittagong to integrate family planning methods into their antenatal and postnatal care services. From 2001 to 2010, the private sector in Bangladesh saw a four-fold increase in deliveries, which are key opportunities for the provision of family planning, especially long-acting and permanent methods. Previously, the private facilities providing the greatest number of deliveries—including those with which SHOPS is working—had no provision of these methods. After only six months of project implementation, participating private sector facilities are now providing nearly the same number of LA/PMs as public sector facilities of the same size, on average per facility.



A.S.A. Masud

## Expanding the Method Mix

In India, SHOPS is expanding access to DMPA, a contraceptive not available in the public sector, through a network of private health care providers. The network includes nearly 1,600 private sector clinics and aims to widen the contraceptive choices available to women. A multimedia demand generation campaign and outreach and in-clinic client education materials aim to improve knowledge of DMPA as a contraception option. SHOPS set up a helpline to provide method-specific counseling and answer queries related to DMPA. To support the provider network in addressing the key issue of continuation, the project established a phone reminder service. This improved the method continuation rate from 32 percent among women who received no reminder calls to 96 percent among women who received three reminder calls between their first and second shot.



Stephen Rahaim

## Reaching the Underserved

In Jordan, SHOPS implements a comprehensive community outreach strategy designed to address the most difficult attitudinal challenges in family planning among women with the highest unmet need. The program works at the grassroots level and is conducted in partnership with two nongovernmental organizations. After recruitment and training, community health workers visit the homes of women to provide them with important health information including the benefits of modern family planning methods, antenatal/postnatal care, and cervical cancer detection. They typically work in their own communities where they are already accepted and known. The community health workers also provide referrals for family planning and vouchers so that women can access a private female provider of their choice. This is important as female doctors are often not available in public sector clinics. SHOPS has made more than 230,000 outreach visits in the last year.



Al-Nashar Technical Services Est.

## SHOPS Resources

Below is a selection of SHOPS publications that focus on family planning.

- Bangladesh Family Planning Private Health Sector Assessment Brief
- Direct Sales Agent Models in Health
- Nigeria Private Health Sector Assessment Brief
- Paraguay Private Health Sector Assessment Brief
- Research Insights: Private Provider Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Related to Long-Acting and Permanent Contraceptive Methods in Bangladesh
- Understanding the Association between Wealth, Long-Acting Contraception, and the Commercial Sector

### For more information about the SHOPS family planning program, contact:

Susan Mitchell, Director  
SHOPS Project  
susan\_mitchell@abtassoc.com

Marguerite Farrell, AOTR  
Global Health/Population and Reproductive Health/  
Service Delivery Improvement  
United States Agency for International Development  
mfarrell@usaid.gov

The Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) project is a five-year cooperative agreement (No. GPO-A-00-09-00007-00) funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The project focuses on increasing availability, improving quality, and expanding coverage of essential health products and services in family planning and reproductive health, maternal and child health, HIV and AIDS, and other health areas through the private sector. SHOPS is led by Abt Associates, in collaboration with Banyan Global, Jhpiego, Marie Stopes International, Monitor Group, and O'Hanlon Health Consulting. The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States government.

For more information about the SHOPS project, visit: [www.shopsproject.org](http://www.shopsproject.org)



Abt Associates Inc.  
4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 800 North  
Bethesda, MD 20814 USA  
Telephone: 301.347.5000 • Fax: 301.913.6019  
[www.abtassociates.com](http://www.abtassociates.com)