Healthcare Governance Initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA): Five Case Studies from Egypt

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

HeGTA	Healthcare Governance and Transparency Association (Egypt)
HGU	Health Governance Unit (of the Medical Research Unit, Alexandria University)
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MRI	Medical Research Institute (of Alexandria University)
SCC	Social Contract Center (of the Egyptian Cabinet)
WBI	World Bank Institute
UHC	Universal Health Coverage
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MENA HPF	MENA Health Policy Forum
MOH	Ministry of Health
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHO-EMRO	World Health Organization Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean
MDG	Millennium Development Goal

1. Introduction

Many dedicated champions, proactive institutions, and devoted associations have carried out different types of initiatives to introduce governance to Egypt's healthcare sector, creating a bridge between a theoretical governance framework and its practical implementation. These initial building blocks are the starting point for stimulating further expansion of Health Sector Governance (HSG) to more effectively and efficiently serve the needs of the patients in Egypt.

The initiatives carried out have taken different shapes and forms. Some are projects with concrete deliverables and material outcomes, while others serve as platforms for future collaboration and sharing of success stories and lessons learned. The five cases studies presented in this section accentuate the role of different stakeholders in introducing HSG in Egypt. They were selected because they have created a constructive debate to further advance HSG over time and have inspired others by giving broader perspectives.

Documentation of different cases enlarges the community of different stakeholders who believe in the topic of HSG and are willing to take it further. Highlighting the diverse efforts of organizations like academic institutions, government, civil society, and quasi-governmental organizations demonstrates the practicality and wide applicability of HSG in the Egyptian context.

Although the five case studies presented here are specific to Egypt, their efforts and activities have great relevance for the entire MENA region. Leveraging the knowledge that was gathered in Egypt establishes a path for moving forward and avoids a duplication of efforts. Dissemination of these success stories and the activities carried out to achieve them will enable development of a road map for expansion and potential cooperation between different parties in the healthcare sector in all MENA region countries.

2. Methodology

This assessment focuses on Egypt, thereby shedding light on five case studies of different governance initiatives in healthcare, highlighting their diverse backgrounds, initiatives, and approaches in tackling HSG. The case studies accentuate the role of stakeholders in introducing HSG. Every case features a different stakeholder group, illustrating stakeholders' diverse roles in pushing the topic of governance further. Their diversity is reflected in the degree of stakeholder engagement, the nature of initiatives undertaken, their scope of work, and respective outcomes. Some projects have concrete deliverables and material outcomes, while others serve as platforms for future collaboration and sharing of success stories and lessons learned. The case studies focus only on programs, projects, and platforms tackling governance as a topic rather than governance tools and/or its assessment. To gather the relevant information, key respondents from local organizations with notable efforts in governance were contacted to share information pertaining to: organizational background; governance interventions and activities; lessons learned; and future outlook. Organizations were sent a unified template for key persons to fill out. The annex includes the template for data collection used.

3. Case Studies

3.1. Social Accountability and Participatory Planning in Healthcare

Social Contract Center (SCC)
Information and Decision Support Center
Egyptian Cabinet

3.1.1. Background and Profile

The Social Contract Center (SCC) is a joint project between the government (Information and Decision Support Center, Egyptian Cabinet) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The SCC has a semi-affiliation to the government, but has autonomy over its budget, plans, and activities.

The SCC's main mandate is to support, monitor, and evaluate equitable and integrated development policies and initiatives through effective community participation based on principles of equity, participation, and accountability. The SCC noticed that exerted efforts in development do not achieve their targeted goals if good governance, accountability, integrity, transparency, and equity are not in place. The absence of these conditions wastes resources, hinders access to efficient and equitable public services, and violates citizens' right to access basic goods and services in a decent, equitable manner. As such, their absence violates the social contract and the trust between citizens and government. Thus the SCC started working in governance issues from a rights-based approach, with a main focus on public service delivery, especially in the basic sectors of health, education, and water and sanitation.

The SSC began working in the healthcare sector in 2007 by initiating a taskforce to develop the health sector's performance and to promote and monitor the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to health.

3.1.2. Activities

The SCC has adopted the general definition of governance produced by international organizations such as the United Nations and the World Bank: "Good governance is the good management of all state's institutions, which reflects in policies and practices based on principles of efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness, equity, transparency, participation, accountability, rule of law and combating corruption.[1] The SCC focuses on HSG from a service delivery approach; i.e., citizens' perspective of good governance principles as they acquire health services, the relationship between service providers and service taker, and the extent to which they rely on good governance principles.

The SCC has adopted three interventions in the field of good governance and basic service delivery (including health services): participatory planning, governance assessment, and social accountability. Each is discussed in turn next.

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[1] El-Gammal, M. (2014). Towards Good Governance in Primary Health Care Services (Case Study : Fayoum Governorate). *Social Contract Center*.

3.1.2.1. Participatory Planning:2

The Ministry of Planning (MOP) asked the SCC to cooperate in institutionalizing social justice in the 2013/2014 Economic and Social National Plan, using a participatory approach by conducting a series of workshops engaging representative stakeholders from government, civil society, and academia to discuss how the investment plan of 2013/2014 could better reflect social justice in healthcare.

Impact: It is hard to measure the impact at this early stage due to the long-term nature of the achievements. Many of the workshop's suggested outputs were adopted in the 2014/2015 Economic and Social National Plan, however, and it is notable that the participatory model was later adopted by the MOH in its future planning (2015-2018).

3.1.2.2. Governance Assessment:3

The SCC conducted a governance assessment of primary health care services in Fayoum Governorate (among other basic services such as education and water and sanitation) to measure the extent to which primary health care services are delivered according to good governance principles.

Impact: Since the SCC started working in the issues of good governance 2008, and with the collective efforts of other stakeholders working in this field, good governance issues are now top on the agenda of decision makers (especially in the MOH).

3.1.2.3. Social Accountability:

The SCC implemented a model of social accountability that enables local communities to assess the public services they are getting, and establishes accountability for service providers. The model was implemented in many governorates (Fayoum, Sharkia, Menia, and Qena) at the village level.

Impact: Awareness was raised among youth and NGOs at the local level concerning the social accountability tools and techniques. This contributed to respective capacity building in this field., leading to 12 community evaluation teams in the poorest villages now being trained and capable of conducting social accountability assessments.

3.1.3. Success Factors and Challenges

Overall success factors:

- The SCC is a "good governance" project in itself, as it applies the standards of good governance in its work which builds its credibility and contributes to the SCC being one of the key actors in the field of governance (especially in the health sector).

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[2] <http://www.socialcontract.gov.eg/front/ar/scnew/details.aspx?sc_id=1850>
[3] To download the whole report of "Governance Assessment in the Primary Health Care in Fayoum Governorate," kindly visit: http://www.socialcontract.gov.eg/front/ar/scnew/details.aspx?sc_id=2137

- The SCC has raised awareness and advocated for the principles of good governance, at both national and local levels.
- The SCC is committed to the social contract concept, which implies rebuilding trust between citizens and the government and other stakeholders, explaining its success in networking and collaborating with government, the private sector, and NGOs.
- The SCC has succeeded in maintaining the consistency of its work by linking its activities together and approaching them as cross cutting issues
- The SCC has succeeded in balancing policies and practices and in simplifying key concepts (like governance, accountability, transparency).

Overall hurdles and challenges:

- Sustaining these initial pilots and models, which now need to be institutionalized, generalized, and conducted regularly.
- Raising the political will and overcoming resistance of decision makers to adopt these models in the long run.
- Defining the scope of the initiatives to avoid high expectations and to keep people focused and on track (for example, identifying the areas and levels of assessment or intervention).
- Following up on the impacts of interventions and activities.
- Encouraging real participation and commitment to the long run process of HSG reform.
- Ensuring inclusive representation by bringing together representatives from government, NGOs, media, and academia with a targeted purpose and without losing focus, while harmonizing the discussion and decreasing tension between government and civil society.
- Articulating the outcomes and impacts of initiatives; quick "wins" are crucial because if stakeholders do not see results from these efforts (participation, accountability, and assessment), they will lose interest and will refrain from taking part in any further activities.

3.1.4. Moving Forward

The SCC is a funded project affiliated with the IDSC of the Egyptian Cabinet, so its continuity will be under IDSC's umbrella, with the flexibility to network with other national and international organizations.

The SCC is open for cooperation and is already networking with many organizations working in the field of HSG (e.g., the MOH in Egypt, WHO Egypt, WHO-EMRO, the World Bank, and other international and national actors).

3.2. Clinical Governance as a Framework for Good Governance

Health Governance Unit
Medical Research Institute
Alexandria University

3.2.1. Background and Profile

The Health Governance Unit (HGU) is an integral part of the Medical Research Institute (MRI) at Alexandria University. Established in 2010 with funding from the SWAP (Italian-Egyptian Debt Swap Program), the HGU initiated its activities in partnership with National Health Institute of Italy. It comprises permanent members from the MRI of both academic and non-academic background and of various specialties. However, the HGU's activities are multidisciplinary and multi-institutional and involve staff members from other organizations and disciplines. The HGU aims at promoting a culture of good governance in Egypt's health sector. Indeed, governance is envisaged as a framework for effectiveness and efficiency. The HGU also aims at presenting models for implementing good governance in healthcare based on best evidence, taking into account local values and local expertise. Being located within an academic research institute, education and research are a natural dimension of its governance activities. In pursuing its goals, the HGU is committed to propagating and consolidating principles of good governance such as participation, equity, transparency, and accountability. Positioned within an academic institution that has both educational and health service obligations, the HGU is in a unique position to introduce governance in both the healthcare and education sectors. Its location within a research institute creates a responsibility for the unit and its members to enhance and apply research principles to further understand the opportunities and challenges facing governance at local and regional levels.

3.2.2. Activities

3.2.2.1. Championing governance through academia

In fulfilling its role, the HGU envisages a multilevel approach to governance. At the micro level, the HGU is keen to present clinical governance as a framework for good governance that ensures clinical effectiveness and efficiency with appropriate patient and public engagement. At the mezzo level, the HGU sees board governance as essential for the effective and efficient functioning of healthcare organizations. At the macro level, the HGU sees health planning and policy making as effective and efficient pathways for good governance of healthcare systems.

3.2.2.2. Stakeholder analysis

In 2012, as an initial step in its activity the HGU conducted an Alexandria-wide stakeholder analysis related to HSG. The survey included many leaders in the healthcare service industry. Its results showed receptiveness for governance concepts in the health sector but clearly indicated a lack of knowledge and skills related to governance. Institution-wide confusion between the concepts of governance and management was present, further exacerbated by a lack of organizational structures to separate governance from management.

3.2.2.3. Health governance course

A problem-based course on health governance was initiated in 2010 in collaboration with the National Institute of Health of Italy. Participants were exposed to critical HSG issues through analysis and situational problem solving. The problems were arranged around the health services planning cycle and have a local context. The six-month course was successfully delivered for two years for healthcare providers and specialists. Participants contribute to and come from various healthcare sectors. A three-month course, compatible with participants' demands, is organized.

3.2.2.4. Clinical governance competency program

Initiated in 2014, this competency-based program aims to equip medical and health management staff with the fundamentals of clinical governance: clinical effectiveness, clinical audit, clinical risk and management, patient and public involvement, team work, and data analysis. A cycle of seven workshops is followed by self-assessment and development of improvement plans. The workshops are rich in group work, problem solving, and role playing, and discuss the benefits of several methodological tools adapted and tailored to respond to the local context. The program will run annually.

3.2.2.5. Evidence-based policy making

The MRI staff's research skills were used to develop skills necessary for evidence-based policy making, guided by the WHO's SURE model. Clinical staff were trained on evidence-based practices and the principles of evidence-based policy making. Pilot work related to human resource management is ongoing.

3.2.2.6. Research priority setting

Stakeholder participation in the definition of agendas is a very important feature of good governance and is an area that could be more strategic than research. In June 2014, a "Priority Setting for Research in Breast Cancer" event was organized by the MRI jointly with the Alexandria Women's Center. The workshop represents a good model for aligning institutional research priorities with national healthcare priorities. Breast cancer specialists ranging from oncologists to surgeons came together with patients to identify Alexandria Governorate-wide breast cancer research priorities. The meeting was unique in that it included breast cancer survivors who expressed their views and research preferences.

3.2.2.7. Governance assessment tools

Since 2013, several assessment tools related to clinical and institutional governance practices have been produced by the HGU based on the Egyptian Healthcare Standards. The tools were piloted in the MRI and will hopefully be further evaluated in 2015.

3.2.2.8. Costing of adverse events

Patient safety is a problem that lacks quantification, but several international studies have pointed to the high incidence of events that could be prevented (up to 50 percent of cases). Costing of health care procedures and events is not yet used widely in Egypt. The MRI

through the HGU is developing its experience in the costing of adverse events with a research project in "Pressure ulcers in hospitalized patients."

3.2.3. Lessons Learned

Governance by itself is articulated in several sectors, but still has a long way to go in healthcare. Egypt's HSG landscape is complex, with multiple stakeholders, limited resources, and all the challenges of a country redesigning itself to ensure that the population at large has access to health care. Hospitals remain at the core of health service provision, but knowledge and skills related to governance are lacking at all levels. Confusion about the distinction between governance and management exists, especially at the institutional level. Healthcare team members are keen to learn about principles and skills of governance. They are also eager to practice governance. However, leadership commitment needs further strengthening with establishment of regulations that support governance implementation. Appropriate methods and opportunities for leadership governance education and training have to be found. Patient and public engagement are limited, and are still an afterthought for healthcare providers. This area is sensitive, as it challenges the position and roles of the healthcare team and the ownership of the healthcare system and organizations vis-à-vis the community. While health care personnel and individuals are quick to acquire a governance perspective and are ready to bring change to their work environment, implementation lags behind and is hindered by chronic problems, including style and management culture.

3.2.4. Moving Forward

As an integral part of Alexandria University's MRI, the HGU offers an opportunity for long-term commitment and academic involvement in governance. This is further strengthened by its research background and the associated relevant contribution. A strong collaboration is therefore necessary between the Ministry of Higher Education and the MOH. It is in this spirit that the HGU will strongly engage in networking with all interested partners, at the local, national, and international level. In doing so, a common vision or framework should be developed so the various stakeholders can contribute to its the promotion of HSG depending on their interests and capacity.

3.3. Bringing Institutional Governance to the Healthcare Sector
Healthcare Governance and Transparency Association (HeGTA)

In alignment with the belief that lack of governance and transparency are root causes of the hurdles faced by the healthcare sector, Healthcare Governance and Transparency Association (HeGTA) proposes a corporate governance approach towards healthcare in Egypt. It attempts to materialize concepts of justice, accountability, sustainability, and affordability to better serve humanity. It endeavors to create a bridge between theory and practice in Egyptian hospitals. Based on a structural notion of reform, the work undertaken by HeGTA articulates working at the roots of problems and offering more than conventional quick fixes. It proposes an institutional structural approach towards health reform. It is the starting point for stimulating ambition in expanding the notion of governance in the entire healthcare sector, aiming to more effectively and efficiently serve patients' needs in Egypt.

3.3.1. Profile and Background

HeGTA's mission is "the creation and dissemination of the know-how necessary for supporting the adoption of governance and transparency within healthcare systems to achieve accountability, equality, fairness, efficiency and quality." Its vision is that "Promoting governance and transparency will have substantial positive impact on enabling healthcare reform and creating investment opportunities in the healthcare sector."

HeGTA is a vision-driven association exclusively dedicated to the topics of governance and transparency in healthcare. HeGTA's inception was intended to bring together experts, professionals, and pioneers interested in HSG and motivated enough to carry on with the topic. It is an independent, nongovernmental, not-for-profit organization founded in 2012 and registered under number 4267 in the Ministry of Social Solidarity. It is solely dedicated to governance and transparency in the healthcare sector to enable healthcare reform and to create investment opportunities. HeGTA aims to contribute to a healthcare system based on accountability, equality, fairness, efficiency, and quality by the creation, pooling, and dissemination of knowledge in the realm of healthcare governance and transparency. Having a unique caliber of experts in these realms as (founding) members, HeGTA is an active player in Egypt's governance arena and is involved in many different initiatives.

3.3.2. Activities

In alignment with its mission and vision, HeGTA's activities and efforts are strategically linked to the following lines: knowledge creation and publications, raising awareness and stakeholder engagement, building capacity for better governance and transparency in healthcare, and rolling out hospital governance program.

3.3.2.1. Knowledge Creation and Publications

Given the complex and multifaceted nature of the healthcare sector, treating it like other sectors would not yield effective results. While demand is growing for better governance and transparency, limited knowledge is disseminated to effectively raise the importance of

these concepts and their benefits to healthcare. Therefore, accumulating and disseminating knowledge in this realm is one of HeGTA's strategic lines.

HeGTA's first milestone was publication of the white paper "*Governance and Transparency to Empower the Healthcare Industry: The Case of Egypt*" in 2012. The paper gave an overview of the current state within Egypt by analyzing and comparing relevant indicators as well as the challenges and difficulties arising from them. It explained the concepts of governance and transparency within the healthcare sector and presented recommendations for the basic principles for creating governing structures for Egypt's healthcare sector. This publication demonstrated the need for guidelines and principles addressing governance in Egypt's healthcare sector, but a literature search did not find much. Therefore, the need for a point of reference for governance, particularly in healthcare, became clearer.

Given HeGTA's firm belief in starting with institutional reform to restore healthcare organizations, the process to develop such guidelines started at the hospital level. Supported by the Center for Private Enterprise (CIPE), HeGTA introduced a structural notion aimed at increasing the sector's efficiency and productivity and at institutionalizing different processes within hospitals. To achieve this structural transformation on a sector level, the "*Principles and Guidelines for Governance in Hospitals, Egypt 2014*" (the Guide) addressed the introduction of governance and disclosure in hospitals as an initial step towards transforming the healthcare sector as a whole.

The Guide is intended to help individual hospitals improve their governance and transparency practices. It aims to help hospital leaders achieve increased levels of sustainable and responsible growth, expansion, and institutionalization. If successful, this would lead to thriving organizations that operate for the benefit of involved patients and other stakeholders. The Guide is also intended to help policy makers establish national frameworks for hospital governance, and to help CSOs and communities evaluate hospitals from a governance point of view. The Guide was published in March 2014 in both English and Arabic. Printed versions are distributed for free and the Guide is available for download free of charge from HeGTA's website.[4]

3.3.2.2. Raising awareness and stakeholder engagement

On one hand, raising awareness of different stakeholders and mobilizing a critical mass capable of pushing governance forward is one of HeGTA's strategic lines; the creation of champions to carry out future efforts is a fundamental building block in HeGTA's vision. On the other hand, multistakeholder inclusion and participatory approaches for stakeholder engagement are the guiding principles for all activities undertaken by HeGTA. It acts as a multistakeholder hub and platform, which enables it to work with all parties and organizations working on the same topic in the healthcare sector, both nationally and internationally.

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[4] To download the full Guide "Principles and Guidelines for Governance in Hospitals, Egypt 2014" in Arabic and English, see: http://hegta.org/Publications.aspx

In this context, HeGTA's involvement and presence in different events is based on a strategic vision for raising awareness and stakeholder engagement. It employs different participatory approaches to maximize its outreach and awareness activities, distinguishing between: events highlighting governance where HeGTA brings the healthcare perspective; events focusing on healthcare where HeGTA brings the governance perspective; and events for governance in healthcare where HeGTA presents its approach. HeGTA also holds events on its own.

3.3.2.3. Building capacity for better governance and transparency in healthcare

In 2014, HeGTA in cooperation with the Alexandria Regional Center for Women's Health and Development (ARC) executed the first training program on the Guide. The five-day training program covered the fundamentals of the five principles and offered further support to understand and implement the guidelines. A diverse group of healthcare experts and stakeholders in leading positions attended the program. This first training program resulted in the formation of a hospital governance hub in Alexandria that has the potential to promote significant change in its members' respective institutions.

Through the intensive stakeholder engagement and participatory approaches led by HeGTA, a number of champions have emerged. Those champions have carried out further activities to push HSG forward in different academic institutions. They referenced the Guide and included it in introductory courses and curricula for healthcare diplomas and hospital management programs in their respective academic institutions.

3.3.2.4. Rolling out a Hospital Governance Program

Leveraging the knowledge and principles addressed in the Guide, HeGTA has started to build human and institutional capacity for HSG. Through a Hospital Governance Program based on the Guide, an introductory phase will start in cooperation with Cairo University's School of Medicine in a number of its teaching hospitals.

3.3.3. Success Factors and Challenges

Bringing institutional governance to healthcare policy makers' agendas is one of HeGTA's greatest successes, but the interventions undertaken by HeGTA since 2012 are just the first step in a long-term transformational process. HeGTA's long-term vision is one of well-governed hospitals capable of making independent decisions and competent enough to operate in a rapidly changing sector, while positively interacting with the complex stakeholder environment in which they work.

HeGTA's participatory approach in developing the Guide was greatly successful. Its outreach across all of Egypt enabled conclusions to be drawn on a national level. Creation of consensus around the topic's importance and the level of buy-in from different stakeholders proves that stakeholder management can bring positive results when executed scientifically. And as a result of HeGTA's activities, a number of champions advocating for governance in hospitals have emerged in different governorates across Egypt.

Despite the great potential, HeGTA still faces a number of challenges. With the publication of the Guide, a growing recognition of the need for reform and change has been created in the sector that overpowers HeGTA's capacity. Given its small size and limited financial and human capital, it is very challenging for HeGTA to satisfy this demand.

As one of the first organizations calling for institutional governance in the healthcare sector, HeGTA faces "first mover" challenges that are mainly associated with shaping the mindset of policy makers and decision takers. HeGTA's role as an advocacy CSO is still poorly defined in the Egyptian context.

3.4. A Platform to Unleash Opportunities and Overcome Challenges
Multistakeholder Partnership for Governance and Social Accountability

Stimulated by the symposium held in Tunisia in 2012 by the MENA Health Policy Forum (MENA HPF), a number of Egyptian participants felt the need for a platform dedicated solely to governance and social accountability. Inspired by their passion and belief in the topic, participants with an academic background and civil society engagement voluntarily led the initial phase of the platform's formation. Their intent in building a multistakeholder platform is to engage multiple stakeholders to tackle governance in the healthcare sector knowing that sustainable development requires a process of constructive dialogue and consensus building of all stakeholders as partners. Together they can define problems, design possible solutions, collaborate to implement them, and monitor and evaluate the outcomes. Through these activities, stakeholders can build relationships, trust, and knowledge, enabling them to develop sustainable solutions to new and evolving challenges.

3.4.1. Profile and Background

The initiative aims to create the Multistakeholder Partnership for Governance and Social Accountability for Egypt's healthcare sector, strategically engaging state and non-state actors. Crystalizing such a partnership and building its capacity and "know-how" to collectively champion a change process that leads to better governance, transparency, and social accountability will require time and continuous support from development partners.

In setting up the Multistakeholder Partnership, the World Bank Institute (WBI) took steps to support this initiative for better dialogue and sustainable development. In alignment with the Partnership's vision and approach, the WBI's Capacity Development Program offers support to local initiatives to foster an enabling environment for collaborative engagement to strengthen governance, transparency, and social accountability in healthcare services delivery based on multistakeholder processes. The program aims to enhance the capacity of state and non-state actors to be better equipped to work collaboratively in strengthening transparency, accountability, and participation (TAP) in healthcare services delivery.

To materialize those notions, the activities from meetings, retreats, and knowledge exchange events are mainly directed at partnership building and knowledge exchange. Knowledge exchange and experience sharing took place through teleconferencing and networking. To date, a number of knowledge exchange events have taken place, bringing state and non-state actors together with the intent to enhance governance, transparency, and social accountability. In this context, the Partnership seeks to collaboratively champion a sustainable change process that leads to better governance through exchange of knowledge and experiences regionally and internationally.

3.4.2. Activities

3.4.2.1. "Egypt Technical Expert Retreat" - May 2013 5

In an attempt to set the pace and crystalize certain ideas for the formation of the Multistakeholder Partnership, the first retreat took place in May 2013. Its purpose was to explore the formation of a national multistakeholder coalition on governance and social accountability in healthcare service delivery in Egypt. Its main objectives were to:

- Understand key priorities for improving governance and accountability in healthcare service delivery in Egypt;
- Reach consensus on a common vision and key objective(s) to improve governance and accountability in healthcare service delivery in Egypt;
- Explore the formation of a coalition to meet agreed priorities and objectives; and
- Decide what actions to take to achieve agreed priorities and objectives.

3.4.2.2. Egypt National Workshop on "Better Governance in Healthcare Services Delivery: A Road to Universal Health Coverage"- February 2014

In February 2014, a national workshop on "Better Governance in Healthcare Service Delivery: a Road to UHC," took place. This workshop was the first offering of a phased capacity development program aimed at strengthening in-country capacity to effectively address the "how to" of reforms through better governance in healthcare systems and increased transparency, accountability, and participation in healthcare service delivery. Thirty-eight individuals from several government institutions (Ministries of Health and Population, Finance, Social Solidarity, Planning, and State for Administrative Development), CSOs, academia, and WHO participated, along with 14 multidisciplinary staff from the World Bank.

The workshop provided a learning and knowledge-sharing platform for state and non-state stakeholders on the concepts and roles of governance, in particular transparency and accountability, in healthcare service delivery along the path to achieving UHC. The workshop exposed participants to related operational processes and tools, including successful international experiences. Small group discussions enabled participants to contribute their own knowledge and experiences, providing an opportunity to inspire collaborative action between state and non-state actors and build commitment for improving transparency and accountability in health systems and health service delivery.

3.4.3. Success Factors and Challenges

The inception of the Multistakeholder Partnership is a positive step towards a better healthcare sector. Bringing different parties together under one umbrella to enhance the governance environment in Egypt is a step towards realizing its vision.

One of the Partnership's important contributions was its impact on the construct of the MOHP's Taskforce for Governance. Inspired by the Partnership, the Taskforce's inception

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[5] To download the full video on expert opinions on governance in the healthcare sector, see http://vimeo.com/67830316

was based on a multistakeholder approach that brought together a number of the Partnership members. Thus the Partnership has had a positive impact in terms of being put in a position to influence policies and bring the topic of HSG to policy makers' priority list. The network around the Partnership and the knowledge disseminated from its meetings and knowledge exchange events have created a dynamic movement.

Despite the Partnership's great potential and successful steps, it still faces a number of challenges. Roles and responsibilities are still not well defined within the Partnership itself, which puts pressure on the sustainability and continuity of its members' participation. Limited private sector interest in contributing to HSG efforts also affects the Partnership, and the Partnership's approach does not appeal to the private sector. This creates a deficiency in the Partnership's stakeholder representation.

3.5 Pushing Governance Forward: A Government-Led Initiative
Taskforce for Governance and Social Accountability
Ministry of Health

In an attempt to increase the involvement of diverse stakeholders in healthcare reform, the Egyptian Ministry of Health (MOH) adopted a multistakeholder approach in the inception of the first Taskforce for Governance in Egypt. The representation of different stakeholder groups in a government-led initiative is a positive step to materialize the inclusion of different parties in the decision-making process. The inclusion of different stakeholders is fundamentally important to health reform, as it enables them to contribute to the national plan for governance and social accountability.

3.5.1. Profile and Background

In Egypt, the first expert group was created through Ministerial Decree Number 97 in 2014, officially announced by the Egyptian MOHP. The Taskforce for Governance was initiated based on multistakeholder representation. It comprises 17 members who contribute to healthcare reform and policies, ranging from academic scholars to experts in the field of governance and healthcare reform to government officials and civil society. The Taskforce is working on a national plan for governance and social accountability in the healthcare sector. Its objective is to direct the efforts, experiences, and visions of various parties in the national plan aiming to improve the health of citizens through good governance practices, a more transparent health system, and greater accountability.

The Taskforce works on the following pillars:

- Determining the general principles of governance in the healthcare sector
- Describing the current system through a governance perspective
- Developing a roadmap for governance in the healthcare sector through the National Strategic Plan
- Raising community awareness and advocacy of governance to gain support
- Outreaching to all relevant parties

The Taskforce's guiding principles in putting together the national plan revolve around:

- Promoting governance as a tool for structural reform and for organizing the roles, responsibilities, and relationships between different stakeholder groups
- Abiding by the Constitutional articles relating to health
- Addressing the relevant legal, legislative, and regulatory frameworks
- Highlighting the importance of the participation of all relevant stakeholders

3.5.2. Activities

The Taskforce is focused mainly on developing the national strategic plan for healthcare governance in Egypt. So far, it has taken progressive steps to formulate the plan. The Taskforce has formulated the plan's vision and mission and identified the key principles outlining the scope of work. Members reached agreement on the principles and guidelines of good governance for the healthcare sector for both the institutional framework and the

health system. Taskforce members agreed on the broad outlines for a well-governed healthcare system. Pertaining to social accountability frameworks, members agreed on key areas of improvement, along with a one-year implementation plan to enhance social accountability and community engagement.

3.5.2.1. Establishment of Core Values

At a macro level, the Taskforce established the core values for a well-governed healthcare sector in Egypt: justice, transparency, accountability, and responsibility. As such, the healthcare system shall be characterized by: availability, quality, efficiency, affordability, sustainability and continuity, and a citizen-oriented approach. Its guiding principles are: integration, coordination and facilitation, cooperation and participation, and control and supervision.

3.5.2.1. Establishment of Principles for the Institutional Framework

At a micro level, the Taskforce established the principles for the institutional framework for healthcare service units:

- Ensuring an institutional structure that separates ownership from the board of directors/trustees and the executive management and distributes roles and responsibilities accordingly;
- Ensuring an independent professional team capable of offering proper guidance that oversees the work of the institution;
- Ensuring an audit, control, and risk management framework capable of preventing and detecting unwanted results in a timely manner;
- Supporting information systems and enhancing disclosure practices to guarantee transparent institutions;
- Protecting the rights of owners and other stakeholders; and
- Promoting principles of institutional sustainability, responsibility, and participation.

3.5.3. Moving Forward

The outlook for the Taskforce is crystalized in the formulation of an action plan for governance and social accountability for 2015. Two main strategic objectives lay the foundation for the action plan: (i) to support the development of an effective Multistakeholder Platform to coordinate the formulation of strategies and promote social accountability; and (ii) to promote social accountability in healthcare service delivery through citizen engagement and participation.

Annex

Governance Initiatives in Healthcare: *The Case of Egypt*

Template for Data Collection

The MENA Health Policy Forum attempts to document and consolidate those different governance initiatives and efforts taking place in Egypt. The objective is to consolidate case studies with different governance initiatives led by individual champions, civil society, private sector, government authorities in Egypt. The outcomes will be compiled in a report entailing various case studies and a set of recommendations for further coordination and activities.

In light of your organization's efforts for governance in healthcare, kindly have the following questions answered:

Organizational Background
- Identify the organization type (governmental, NGO, research institute etc.)?
- What is the mandate/vision of the organization?
- What are the main determinants making the organization work for governance in healthcare? When did the organization take the step to work on governance in healthcare?

Governance Interventions and Activities

The notion of governance has different definitions and schools of thought.
- What is the school of thought and approach adopted by the organization underpinning its efforts for governance? (i.e. institutional governance, clinical governance, social accountability etc.)
- Do you refer to specific standards and guidelines for governance (e.g. OECD principles, WHO, ..etc)

List all the activities and initiatives undertaken by the organization for improving governance in the healthcare sector. Each intervention shall be described based on the following points. Please report on each intervention separately:
- Nature of the intervention (i.e. publication, research, training, stakeholder engagement etc.)
- Scope of activities undertaken
- Strategic objectives
- Outcome and deliverables of the intervention
- Impact of the intervention

Lessons Learned

Conducting different governance interventions in healthcare, makes organizations exposed to a number of hurdles and success factors. List the most important success factors and challenging factors that faced the organization.

- Overall Success factors
- Overall hurdles and challenges

Future Outlook

The initiatives/ projects done by the organization paves the way for future activities and notions give it practical and hands-on experience to improve the healthcare environment in Egypt.

- What is the futuristic outlook for the organization?
- Is there any potential for cooperation with other players in Egypt?
- What are the ways to transfer the knowledge and experience to other countries in the region?
- What is the role the MHPF can play over the coming years to advance governance in healthcare in the region?