



METRICS FOR MANAGEMENT

## CASE STUDY: Improving Patient Subsidy Targeting and Donor Impact

**Location:** Afghanistan | **Funding:** U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

### THE CHALLENGE

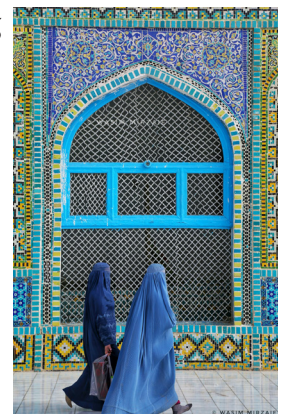
While the private health sector in Afghanistan could improve access to affordable healthcare for urban populations, high user fees and medical costs are significant barriers to care. In response, the Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS) project team, led by Abt Global, set out to support a transition to sustainable, self-financed health systems, assisting low- and middle-income countries and local stakeholders reduce financial barriers to care and treatment and ensure equitable access to essential services.

Since 2016, Abt had been working to increase private sector capacity to support healthcare in Afghanistan, and LHSS was developed out of the USAID-funded Sustaining Health Outcomes through the Private Sector (SHOPS) Plus private-sector health work, also led by Abt. Without reliable, consistent, objective methods for assessing wealth status, equitable access could not be determined. It was also not clear whether

financial assistance was being effectively targeted to those with the greatest need.

### THE SOLUTION

In 2021, Metrics for Management's (M4M) EquityTool, an easy-to-use tool that allows users to measure relative wealth, was instituted. Analysis showed that 94% of subsidy decisions were granted and 6% denied, with more patients from the bottom three wealth quintiles being denied than their wealthier counterparts. LHSS has since developed a plan to scale EquityTool analysis across all projects and make it mandatory for all new work. LHSS will next be assessing health impacts for those in lower wealth quintiles now receiving subsidies.



*Photo credits (top to bottom): Army Amber, Afghanistan farm, pixabay; Wasim Mirzaie, Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan, Pexels*

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