

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Developing Integrated e-Health Platform to Increase Access to and Affordability of Priority Healthcare through the Private Sector among Low-Income Afghan Families

The USAID funded Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS) project for Afghanistan is seeking the services of a specialized firm to assess, design and implement an integrated e-health platform covering provider-to-provider (e-learning and emergency/complicated case consultations), provider-to-patient (vital signs, tele-consultation and prescription), and Electronic Medical Record (EMR) services with LHSS grantees and their network of private providers (community health workers, community midwives, general practitioners and family medicine experts) and partner/referral health facilities.

RFP Release: 09/11/2024

Questions on RFP Due: 09/16/2024 5:00 p.m. Kabul time

Responses Due: 09/24/2024 5:00 p.m. Kabul time

Send proposals electronically to: Anastasia Letaw (Anastasia.Letaw@abtglobal.com)

Projected start date for the services described in this RFP: On or around October 15, 2024, with a Period of Performance through June 28, 2025.

A. Abt Global and LHSS Overview

Abt Global is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Global has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in nearly 40 countries. Abt has long been at the vanguard of health systems strengthening and innovation. Since 1989, Abt has worked with USAID and private and public sector stakeholders to modernize approaches for sustainable health financing. Abt's technical expertise in strengthening health systems includes health resource tracking, human resources for health, health policy and strategy development, developing clinical guidelines, and working with private health providers. Additional information can be found at abtglobal.com

The Local Health System Sustainability Project (LHSS) Activity in Afghanistan is working with local stakeholders to strategically expand the scale, quality, availability, and affordability of health products and services through the private sector in the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) priority large urban provinces of Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Balkh, and Nangahar. Led by Abt Global, the three-year Afghanistan Activity uses a combination of financial and technical support to strengthen the capacity of local private sector actors, including for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, to increase access to critical health commodities and services, particularly among low-income population groups and women in vulnerable situations. In addition the Activity deploys promising provider aggregation models for the private health sector to offer priority health provisions at greater scale, more

affordably, and with improved quality. The interconnected network of provider organizations are able to sustainably scale up or adopt new, improved business models and practices. LHSS integrates gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) into all interventions, recognizing it as a cross-cutting priority to meet the needs of both men and women at all levels.

Specific objectives include:

- Provide financial and technical support to the Afghan Social Marketing Organization (ASMO) aimed at expanding its role and improving its organizational capabilities to deliver sustained health impact.
- Increase product coverage and support establishment of franchising and provider networking models to improve service provision, by partnering with additional social marketing/franchising organizations.

LHSS Afghanistan works with six private sector grantees with three different business models to increase availability of and access to high-quality, affordable health products and services in urban and peri-urban areas of the five priority provinces. The Activity expanded and strengthened each organization's respective model leading to increased coverage and access, client uptake and business revenues, with an emphasis on low-income populations and women. Over the past two years, LHSS developed a two-level provider network model designed by Greenstar Pakistan. Level 1 of the provider network model comprises strong grantee-specific independent networks. Level 2 will comprise a broad, low-touch umbrella network integrating the grantees' independent networks. The Activity selected ASMO as the network manager to support implementation of the network blueprint with technical assistance from Greenstar. To foster a collaborative approach for management of the two-tier network, ASMO coordinates the network through a secretariat consisting of advisory and technical committees and organizes regular and out-of-turn meetings of the committees as required. The advisory committee comprises the heads of the grantees responsible for making important strategic decisions for the long-term benefits of the network. The Advisory committee is supported by technical sub-committees dedicated to various critical components of the network including provider assessment, selection and onboarding; training, certification/accreditation and quality assurance; network branding and promotion, SBC and community mobilization; patient referrals, welfare and other value-added supportive services including ambulance, diagnostics, telemedicine, follow up care, and procurement; patient data recording and reporting; and government and donor relations handling, adherence to MOPH regulations. Currently the pilot includes all grantees with about 100 network providers spread across Kabul (85-90%) and Nangarhar (10-15%).

LHSS grantees with their respective intervention focus is outlined below.

Selected Grantee	Intervention
Afghan Family Guidance Association (AFGA)	With the overarching goal of achieving financial sustainability and health impact by transitioning to a social enterprise mode, LHSS supports introduction of user-paid diagnostic services in four static clinics in Kabul, Balkh, Nangarhar, and Herat and client mobilization for these services by ten community midwives in Kabul. In FY25, LHSS will scale up the user-paid diagnostic services to include five additional static

	<p>clinics, each clinic with the support of community midwives for patient mobilization. The Activity with the help of ASMO and Greenstar will support AFGA to integrate its network providers into the provider network. Additionally, the Activity awarded an additional grant to support operationalizing a Comprehensive Reproductive Health Centre (CRHC) in Kabul with co-funding from the Norwegian agency for development cooperation. The Center aims to serve as a high quality, affordably priced, specialized referral center for reproductive and maternal child health cases from the primary-level static clinics and community midwives and other private and public health providers and facilities, primarily serving the low-income population of peri-urban Kabul. The Center's mandate includes expanding AFGA's social enterprise model.</p>
French Medical Institute for Mothers and Children (FMIC)	<p>LHSS assists FMIC to strengthen critical care capacity (trauma, neonatal intensive care) and quality assurance/quality improvement to reduce mortality. The Activity also supported the grantee to strengthen clinical capacity of other grantees through continuing medical education providing trauma care training with an emphasis on targeting and serving low-income populations including women, girls, and children through free/subsidized tertiary care. LHSS continues to support the institute in expanding the ongoing initiatives and to integrate its network providers into the provider network.</p>
Be Team International (BTI)	<p>LHSS supports BTI to leverage its network of family physicians and midwives and roll out health fairs and mobile clinics in low-income areas to increase equitable access to preventive and primary care services and increase patient referrals to the hospital for tertiary care at an affordable cost. LHSS helps BTI scale up across all five provinces, and urban areas therein, in FY25. In addition, LHSS in collaboration with ASMO and Greenstar will support BTI in inducting its existing network providers into the umbrella network.</p>
Amiri Medical Complex (AMC)	<p>LHSS supports a community outreach and patient referral model to increase access to quality, comprehensive services in Kabul and surrounding catchment areas that cover an estimated population of 300,000. The beneficiaries receive free preventive and primary care services at quality-compliant health posts, and referrals to tertiary care. The initiative was implemented through 13 urban health posts. The Activity supports implementation of the model at full scale by scaling up the number of health posts to 35 to expand reach among the indigent population in the catchment area. In addition, LHSS in collaboration with ASMO and Greenstar will support AMC to integrate its network providers into the umbrella network.</p>
Hassanzai Curative Hospital (HCH)	<p>LHSS supports HCH to implement a community outreach and referral model to increase access to quality maternal, newborn, and child health services by generating demand and mobilizing communities through</p>

	trained social mobilizers in nine urban districts of Nangarhar. In addition, LHSS in collaboration with ASMO and Greenstar will support HCH to successfully integrate its network providers into the umbrella network.
Afghan Social Marketing Organization (ASMO)	LHSS supports ASMO, Afghanistan's leading SMO, in nationwide product social marketing activities through pharmacies. The support specifically includes supplying health products to a network of over 400 midwifery clinics, small private hospitals, solo practicing general physicians, obstetricians and gynecologists and pediatricians, and pharmacies located in the urban slums to serve low-income population with a priority on reaching women. LHSS also supports ASMO to strengthen the network, select and onboard 10-15 high performing providers to be inducted into the umbrella network and strengthen their capacity to provide improved quality health services. In addition, ASMO will also manage the umbrella network aggregating five other standalone networks with technical assistance from Greenstar.

B. Scope of Work

LHSS Afghanistan is seeking the services of a specialized firm to assess, design and implement an integrated e-health platform. The platform will cater to LHSS grantees and their network of private providers (community health workers, community midwives, general practitioners and family medicine experts). LHSS will subcontract to a competent organization with skills and experience of designing, piloting through at least 3-5 grantees with about 5-20 network providers per grantee, totaling to about 50-100 network providers, finetuning and scaling up the initiative. LHSS and Greenstar will support ASMO to coordinate with the subcontractor to complete the initiative. Once completed and ready to scale up, LHSS will hand over the management of the e-Health to ASMO and provide the services in partnership with the developer organization.

LHSS aims to integrate the provider-to-provider and provider-to-patient telemedicine activities of the LHSS grantees with those of the private provider network partners, creating a unified, efficient eHealth platform. The integrated platform would have three distinct features:

- 1) **Provider-to-Provider** (e-learning and emergency/complicated case consultations): Include provider to provider case consultations for second opinion or emergency or complicated case handling, e-training of providers for refreshers and new health topics, telemedicine operations and best practices.
- 2) **Provider-to-Patient** (vital signs, tele-consultation and prescription): Provide telemedicine consultations between patients and doctors of LHSS grantees facilitated through the grantees' standalone network providers operating in the communities. Facilitate patient registration, management of patient records with all prenatal, delivery, and postnatal consultation notes including referrals to grantees' doctors or health facilities.

- 3) **Electronic Medical Record (EMR) services:** Implement a comprehensive patient data capturing and recording system that allows access to and management of patients' historical records, ensuring quality of care and patient safety.

All applications including e-learning and platforms requires to be in English, Dari and Pashto.

Suggested Methodology

Step 1: Needs Assessment

Conduct an in-depth needs assessment with the selected LHSS grantees and the standalone network providers, focusing on their current e-health capabilities, constraints, and requirements including local regulations on data privacy, safeguarding and sharing across providers. This review will examine their existing staffing, operational procedures, medical recordkeeping, and any existing e-Health platforms, with an aim to identify gaps in functionality, infrastructure, and training.

Deliverable: A comprehensive assessment report outlining strategic roadmap for the platform.

Step 2: Co-design the e-Health Platform

- Create prototypes to propose, test, and refine the updated user interface and user experience elements, ensuring that the platform is intuitive and user friendly, while appropriately managing the user access and privacy conditions necessary to work across institutions.
- Customize the platform to be resilient and adaptable to varying levels of internet connectivity and power supply conditions to ensure reliable and consistent performance.
- Adapt and integrate e-learning modules into the existing platform, providing pertinent and user-friendly educational content, tailored to the specific needs of the grantees and keep them updated since e learning module content changes.
- Customize teleconsultation and prescription services to better meet the needs of the grantees and their patients to ensure patients access to medical advice and treatment remotely, thereby enhancing healthcare accessibility.
- Crafting of a site-specific integration plan for each of the grantees, ensuring that patient data remains encrypted both at rest and during transmission.
- Adopt a structure ensuring long-term sustainability and maintainability, with open-source software and lower cost cloud solutions used whenever practicable, meeting the immediate and future growth and adaptation needs of each grantee.

Deliverables:

- A detailed architecture and requirements of the e-Health platform, including B2B, B2C, and EMR components, accompanied by standard operating procedures, revenue generation options and payment mechanisms, and infrastructural requirements for effective implementation.

- The education modules for the grantees' doctors and network providers to be able to manage their telemedicine consultations, network referrals and integrate them into their current operating procedures.

Step 3: Sustainability and Revenue Generation

- Identify and propose suitable payment models potentially ranging from fee-for-service to subscription-based models, along with appropriate payment collection mechanisms.
- Create a provision for the patient referral and potential payment flow across the LHSS grantees and their associated referral networks.
- Develop and test revenue generation strategies integrated into the e-Health platform to ensure the financial sustainability of the platform.

Deliverable: A comprehensive Sustainability and Revenue Generation Plan, outlining the payment model, detailed revenue generation strategy.

Step 4: Testing and Refinement

- Test the platform with at least 3-5 grantees and their network providers for identifying and addressing potential issues, improvement areas.
- Provide telemedicine services ensuring service for patients and the providers to enhance the capabilities in delivering telemedicine services.
- Based on feedback and observations, refine the platform and its effectiveness until the platform is deemed fully functional and test the patient record system with the grantees' medical recordkeeping systems to ensure seamless data exchange and transition.
- Provide training and troubleshooting support to the grantees and their providers, for effective use of the platform and maximize its benefits.
- Establish monitoring systems with dashboarding capabilities to track key metrics.
- Evaluate the impact of the e-Health platform to determine its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments to improve its impact.

Deliverable: Bi-weekly Progress Reports.

C. Partner Selection Criteria

LHSS Afghanistan will award the bidder using a combination of technical and cost/price factors, and with emphasis on the short time schedule of the Afghanistan Activity and maximum leverage of the USAID's investment in digital health.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Points</u>
1. Technical Approach and work elements	30
2. Personnel	15
3. Management Plan	10
4. Organization's Background and Experience	20
5. Cost	25
Total	100

D. Pricing Details

Please provide a detailed budget for the proposed assignment. Budgets are to be done in US Dollars. We prefer the most cost-effective solution, and bidders are encouraged to offer the best price to complete the work. Pricing may be proposed in a manner best suited (i.e., fixed price and/or time and materials) however it is Abt Global's intent to award a fixed price contract. Provide complete backup supporting development of your price so that the reasonableness of the budget can be assessed. All proposals will be considered and weighed based on their merits and proposed solution to the requirements described above. Abt Global may award a contract based on initial proposals, so you should propose your best pricing in your initial offer.

E. Proposal Requirements

Please include the following in your proposal response:

- Overview of your company and corporate statement of qualification (SOQ)
- A detailed description of your company's technical approach that describes how our objectives as described in Section B. Scope of Work will be achieved
- Proposed project timeline from kick off to completion
- Details about your team: This includes CVs (qualifications and years of experience) and short job descriptions of staff that would be used to complete the assessment, and names and roles of senior management (up to 3 key staff) leading the tender for the organization
- Three references
- Any key differentiators about your company
- Detailed budget and budget narrative

F. RFP & Project Timeline Details

Event	Date and Time
RFP posted	09/11/2024
Proposals Due	09/24/2024 5:00 pm Kabul
Finalists Selected & Contacted	09/26/2024
Winner Selected & Contacted	10/01/2024
Contract Award	On or around 10/15/2024
Project Kick-off	10/16/2024

G. General Conditions

- 1) Abt Global reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions of them, to waive irregularities, informalities, and technicalities, to re-issue or to proceed to obtain the service(s) desired otherwise, at any time or in any manner considered in Abt Global best interests.
- 2) Abt Global may, at its sole discretion, modify or amend any provision of this RFP.
- 3) Issuance of this RFP in no way obligates Abt Global to make an award. Bidders will not be reimbursed for any costs associated with the preparation of their proposal.
- 4) All sales, supporting materials, and other documentation submitted with the proposal will become the property of Abt unless otherwise requested by the bidder

in writing at the time of submission.

- 5) All offers shall remain valid for ninety (90) calendar days after the required submittal date stated above and must be submitted with a signed letter of transmittal. The letter must be signed by a person authorized to contractually bind the solicitant to the scope, terms and conditions, specifications, and pricing contained in their proposal.

Thank you for your interest in the organizational capacity assessment solicitation. We look forward to receiving your proposal. If you have any questions, please contact Anastasia Letaw (Anastasia.Letaw@abtglobal.com)