



TRACKING HEALTH  
EXPENDITURES FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DATA-DRIVEN  
HEALTH FINANCING





## Tracking Health Expenditures

With Abt's support, countries around the world use globally-accepted methodologies, such as the System of Health Accounts (SHA 2011), National AIDS Spending Assessments (NASA), and Public Expenditure Reviews (PER) to track their health spending. These methodologies have exposed the high level of out-of-pocket health spending, even among the poor, and the degree of donor dependence to finance health. Using standardized methods allows countries to compare spending patterns, which motivates policy makers to improve their health systems performance. Abt focuses on building country capacity and sustainability, so that accurate data are available to decision makers on a regular basis to inform planning and health financing policy. We also contribute regularly to global expert discussions on improving frameworks and tools for generating health expenditure data.

**Abt support has led to:**



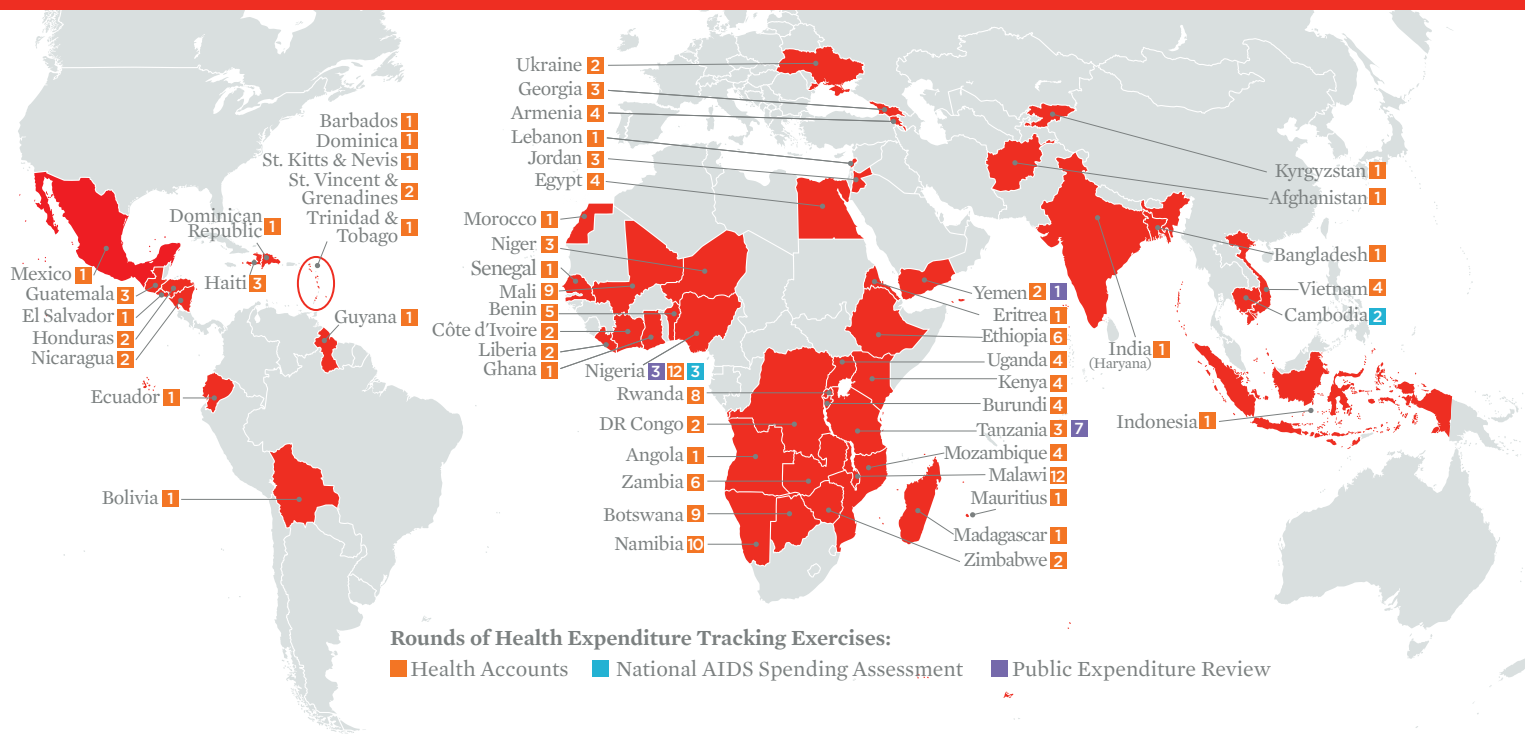
**\$69 billion** health expenditure tracked<sup>1</sup>



Over **180 rounds** of health expenditure tracking exercises in **55 countries**

<sup>1</sup>In the last 10 years

## COUNTRIES WHERE ABT HAS SUPPORTED HEALTH EXPENDITURE TRACKING



# Strengthening Country Capacity to Produce and Use Health Expenditure Data

Abt Associates builds country and regional capacity to track health care expenditures by developing the expertise of colleagues in government ministries, universities, public health institutes, and other institutions.

Abt's in-country capacity building focuses on:

- Planning and management of expenditure tracking exercises
- Data collection, management, and analysis
- Report writing, dissemination and stakeholder engagement
- Institutionalization of health expenditure tracking

Capacity in all these dimensions is enhanced through a variety of approaches: technical workshops and trainings, coaching and mentoring, pairing of country teams, participation in global and regional training workshops, and others.

Abt has built regional capacity in the Caribbean by training experts from the University of West Indies as well as in India, at the Public Health Foundation of India and the Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Haryana. With the Kenya School of Public Health and University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, we developed curricula and materials for health expenditure tracking. In 2016, in partnership with the World Health Organization, Abt led the first global peer-learning workshop meeting for Health Accounts experts from over 47 countries.



**1200** experts  
trained in health  
expenditure  
tracking by Abt in  
the last decade





**16.7+ million**

*currently covered by*

**CBHI in more than  
25% of Ethiopia's  
districts**

*"Before (Health Accounts expenditure tracking) we had no data at all on health expenditures...now we are in a better position to defend against arbitrary budget cuts to our Ministry's budget"*

**-Mr. Gill, Head of Planning,  
Ministry of Health, Barbados**



## Using Expenditure Data to Inform Health Financing Policy and Reform

Abt Associates helps countries apply health expenditure data to evidence-based decision-making. Robust data, presented clearly in written materials and dissemination events, has helped stakeholders in countries across the globe to discuss and decide on policy changes and financial reforms.

In Ethiopia, Health Accounts data showing prohibitively high household out-of-pocket spending on health helped convince the government to promote community-based health insurance (CBHI). Abt, through successive USAID-funded projects, supported the government's pilot and scale up of CBHI to over 400 districts. Low levels of public spending on primary care led the government to introduce a revenue retention policy that allows health facilities to keep the user fees they collect to invest in higher-quality services. Between 2008 and 2014, government spending for health as a proportion of its total spending increased from 5% to 6.6%.

In the Caribbean, health expenditure tracking in Barbados and Dominica revealed limited spending on preventive care and for non-communicable diseases, which accounts for over 75% of morbidity. Using evidence generated from health expenditure tracking, both islands have introduced a tax on sugary drinks, to pay for increased government spending for prevention and help address the rising rates of chronic diseases.

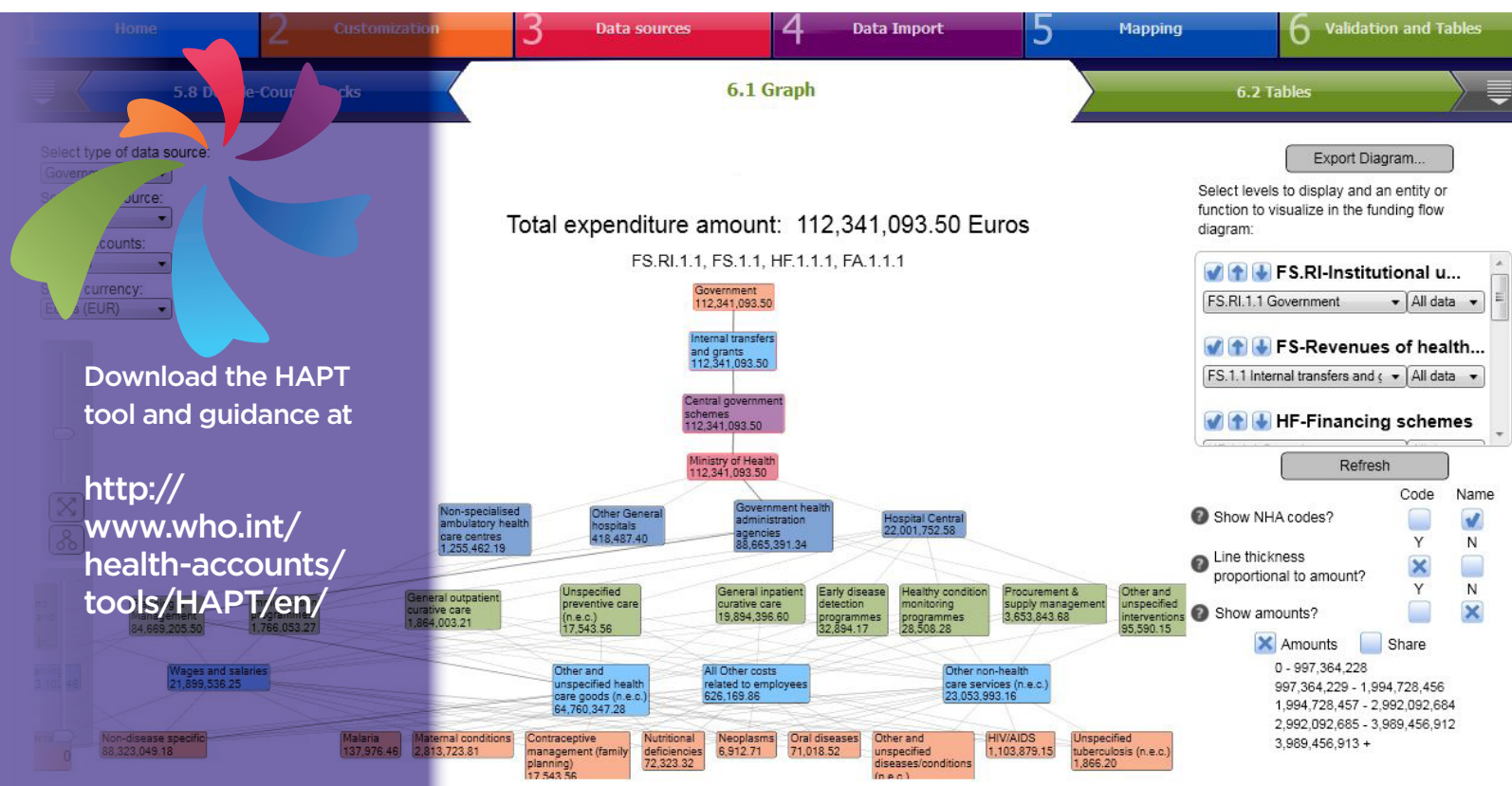
Namibia's Health Accounts findings were used to advocate for increased government resources for maternal and child health. Between 2009 and 2013, spending on this priority area increased by 450%, with most of the increase coming from government.

# Simplifying the Production of Health Expenditure Data

Abt Associates provides governments with technical support and tools to simplify the process of tracking health expenditures and generate data quickly and cost-effectively.

Abt experts, in collaboration with agencies such as the WHO and USAID, have developed and introduced tools and processes to simplify the production of health expenditure data. This allows countries to generate health expenditure data at lower cost, and encourages “institutionalization” – regular production of health expenditure data by an experienced team – so that decision makers have timely data when they need it.

Abt contributed to the development of the user-friendly, and widely used, Health Accounts Production Tool (HAPT) and its accompanying user guidance materials, which guides users through the process of producing health accounts. Abt also developed a Demographic and Health Survey addendum module to measure out-of-pocket expenditure. Abt works to design crosswalks between different expenditure tracking methodologies, which allows governments to minimize overlapping data collection efforts.



# Health Expenditure Tracking at Abt Associates

For over two decades, Abt Associates has been a global thought leader in tracking health expenditures. Abt experts work closely with the World Health Organization, USAID, the Gates Foundation and other partners to develop standardized methodologies, tools, and guidelines, and to train experts in tracking health expenditures to inform health policy.

## About Abt Associates

Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research, evaluation, 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 Associates is regularly ranked as one of the top 10 global research firms and one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in more than 60 countries.

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### Selected Clients

- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
  - U.K. Department for International Development (DFID)
  - Australia Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)
  - Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
  - AstraZeneca
  - Medtronic Foundation
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### Learn More

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