

WEBINAR BRIEF

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE WEBINAR: BRIDGING HEALTH SYSTEMS

Webinar 2: Using Health Technology Assessment to Inform Benefit Package Design

Egypt x Thailand

July 2025

Acknowledgements: We would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to the success of this session, jointly organized by the Egypt Impact Lab (EIL) at J-PAL MENA, the Universal Health Insurance Authority (UHIA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) in Egypt. We extend our sincere thanks to our guest speakers from the Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program (HITAP), Ms. Saudamini Vishwanath Dabak, Head of International Unit and Ms. Kinanti Khansa Chavarina, Associate in the international unit for their thoughtful presentation and rich insights into Thailand's approach to health benefit package design. Your efforts were instrumental in bringing this knowledge exchange to fulfillment.

OPENING REMARKS AND REFLECTIONS

This session marked the second installment in the [Knowledge Exchange Webinar Series – Bridging Health Systems](#), a government-to-government learning initiative co-organized by the [Egypt Impact Lab](#) (EIL), the [Universal Health Insurance Authority](#) (UHIA), the [World Health Organization \(WHO\) in Egypt](#), and J-PAL's Southeast Asia and Latin America & Caribbean offices. The series aims to foster cross-country learning and evidence-informed dialogue among policymakers and technical experts to support the implementation of Egypt's Universal Health Insurance System (UHIS).

In her opening remarks, [Dr. Reham Rizk](#), Director of the Egypt Impact Lab, emphasized the growing importance of strengthening the knowledge ecosystem surrounding health reform efforts in Egypt. She reflected on how this webinar series plays a strategic role in supporting UHIS implementation—not only by adapting global lessons but also by fostering collaborative thinking around context-specific solutions.

Dr. Reham highlighted the unique role of embedded government labs like Egypt Impact Lab (EIL) in accompanying the scale-up of large public programs. She also reiterated the value of evidence partnerships, both in designing meaningful impact evaluations and in hosting platforms such as this one to enrich policy conversations. The session set the stage for a deeper dive into the use of Health Technology Assessment (HTA) as a tool to inform benefit package design.

TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS – HTA AND BENEFIT PACKAGE DESIGN IN THAILAND

[Saudamini Dabak](#) and [Kinanti Khansa](#) from [Health Intervention and Technology Assessment Program](#) (HITAP) delivered a presentation titled “Health Technology Assessment for Universal Health Coverage”. They walked participants through Thailand's structured, stepwise process of using HTA to determine which services and technologies are included in the national benefit package.

Key highlights included:

- **Importance of HTA and Desirable Attributes in Benefit Design:** Health Technology Assessment (HTA) is a multidisciplinary process that systematically assesses the value of health technologies to inform decision-making, aiming to foster an equitable, efficient, and high-quality health system. Desirable attributes for benefit package design include ensuring **transparency** so that entitlements and obligations are clearly understood, promoting **equitable use** by harmonizing benefits across the population and addressing demand-side barriers, and focusing on **efficiency** by prioritizing cost-effective services and protecting patients from catastrophic expenditures.
- **Thailand's HTA-informed Benefit Package Design Process:** As an example of international best practice, Thailand's Universal Coverage Scheme (UCS) employs a systematic and participatory process, informed by Health Technology Assessment (HTA), for its benefit package design.
- **This process, involves key steps:**
 - **Topic Nomination:** Stakeholders propose topics based on identified needs and demand.
 - **Topic Selection:** Nominated topics are evaluated and prioritized using a scoring system (Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis).

- **Assessment:** Selected interventions undergo thorough evaluation through studies, including cost-effectiveness and budget impact analyses.
- **Decision Making:** Decisions are made at multiple levels, considering various criteria, with the final approval resting with the National Health Security Board, chaired by the Health Minister.
- **Price Negotiation:** Following approval, the NHSO (the payer) engages in negotiations with the healthcare industry to determine the prices of the approved interventions.
- **Application to Egypt:** The session highlighted how Egypt could build a similar framework for systematic, evidence-informed decision-making aligned with UHIA's mandate.

As part of the session follow-up, HITAP also shared a selection of open-access resources that offer further insight into Thailand's HTA journey:

- [Lessons in institutionalizing HTA](#)
- [Thailand's reflection on our HTA journey](#)
- [Feasibility of a Refractive Error Screening Program](#)

As discussant, Mr. [Ahmed Khalifa](#) provided valuable insights into Egypt's current approach to benefit package design, highlighting existing structures and processes within the Universal Health Insurance System (UHIS). He reflected on how lessons from Thailand's HTA journey could be adapted to the Egyptian context, while emphasizing the importance of institutional ownership, sustainable financing, and local capacity in shaping an effective and contextually appropriate benefit package.

LOOKING AHEAD

The third session of the webinar series will take place in **October 2025, and will focus on the inclusion of informal workers in national health insurance schemes**, drawing from Indonesia's experience with the Jaminan Kesehatan Nasional (JKN) program.

The Knowledge Exchange Webinar Series – Bridging Health Systems is convened by the Egypt Impact Lab (EIL) in partnership with the Universal Health Insurance Authority (UHIA), the World Health Organization (WHO) in Egypt, and J-PAL's Southeast Asia and Latin America & Caribbean offices. The series aims to bring policymakers, researchers, and development partners together to promote practical learning on Universal Health Coverage implementation.