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AFGHANISTAN

From Despair to Recovery: A Family's Fight Against TB



Rahman*, in his house after recovery from TB, Kandahar province

"Our entire family fell severely ill, and we had to rely on neighbors for help with household chores."

■ **Rahman**

Photo: USAID/AFIAT

Rahman, a 22-year-old farmer in Kandahar Province, lived a normal life until he began experiencing frequent chest pains, fever, exhaustion, and persistent coughing. The symptoms disrupted his daily activities and, over time, spread to all seven members of his family. Despite multiple attempts to seek treatment, Rahman and his family found no relief and grew increasingly desperate.

"Our entire family fell severely ill, and we had to rely on neighbors for help with household chores," Rahman recalled. "I used to buy medicine from local pharmacies, but that didn't help." Finally, Rahman visited the Sen Zarai Comprehensive Health Center, where he was diagnosed with TB.

The health center has received support from the USAID Assistance for Families and Indigent Afghans to Thrive (AFIAT) activity, and a lab technician at the clinic, trained by AFIAT on TB detection and case management, recognized the gravity of Rahman's condition and conducted a contact screening for his family. All seven symptomatic family members were referred to the clinic and tested positive for TB through microscopic tests. Their sputum samples were sent to the provincial GeneXpert site for drug resistance TB testing using a USAID-funded GeneXpert machine.

Rahman and his family members began the six-month TB treatment course. "Each of my family members took medicine until we returned to a normal life," Rahman explained.

In 2024, AFIAT provided health mentorship to 543 health workers on TB thematic areas in 277 health facilities and trained 30 laboratory technicians from 14 AFIAT-supported health facilities on the GeneXpert machines across 14 provinces of Afghanistan.