

Article 54: Human Development and the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) & Social Enterprises

Social enterprises and related service systems have applied the **Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM)** to connect multidimensional evaluations with individualized planning, workforce preparation, wraparound assistance, and housing support. The matrix enables these initiatives to recognize barriers extending beyond employment and align their activities with participants' health, stability, education, and economic needs. These applications promote human development by transforming identified challenges into coordinated pathways towards self-sufficiency, improved well-being, and sustained participation in community life (Exponent Case Management, 2022; Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, 2024; New York State Department of Labor, 2025; Transition to Success, 2022; Women's Bean Project, 2024).

Uses and Impact of the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) in Social Enterprises

The Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix (ASSM) has supported social enterprise initiatives by helping service providers identify participant needs and connect individualized planning with employment-centered development opportunities. For instance, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) implemented this measurement instrument alongside social enterprise initiatives through its Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T) program. The agency included the matrix among the tools that employment and training providers could use to examine participants' skills, education, work histories, employability, and barriers to securing jobs. Furthermore, providers conducted an initial appraisal during orientation and could repeat this process after enrollment or whenever participant needs warranted further review. MDHHS required the resulting information to be recorded in the One-Stop Management Information System as part of an Individual Service Strategy containing career goals and an action plan for addressing identified obstacles. This recurring application enabled providers to monitor participants' circumstances and use information captured with the matrix and other instruments to assign suitable activities focused on broader human development needs. In a separate component of the same workforce system, the agency supported subsidized work-based learning through social enterprises operated by St. Luke New Life Center in Michigan. Following five employment-preparation classes, eligible individuals could obtain paid positions lasting 60–90 days and receive occupation-specific instruction in sewing, landscaping, groundskeeping, or related work. MDHHS also outlined training in budgeting, resume development, workplace expectations, personal accountability, and other skills intended to prepare individuals for long-term employment. Supervisors evaluated performance, staff monitored continued progress after program completion, and case managers developed individualized training plans based on future career pathways. The agency projected 192 annual participants collectively among the providers delivering this work-based learning component. Together, the matrix-centered evaluation process and social enterprise opportunities created a coordinated route for recognizing individual barriers, building practical capabilities, and fostering the economic stability necessary for sustained human development (Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, 2024).

Similarly, Transition to Success (TTS) combined an ASSM-derived measurement instrument with a collective-impact social enterprise model intended to address poverty and the social determinants of health. The initiative characterized this approach as an evidence-based standard of care that coordinated protocols and analytics among healthcare, human service, government, education, and

faith-based entities. Following that lead, TTS employed a 20-domain tool based on the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix to evaluate social determinant exposures affecting health and economic self-sufficiency. The program paired this multidimensional assessment with defined treatment protocols, allowing direct-care staff to teach clients how to prioritize their needs, locate available assistance, and secure access to community resources. The matrix-based process therefore contributed to a broader human development strategy that considered health, education, and financial well-being rather than treating poverty solely as an individual shortcoming. TTS further supplemented Coordinating All Resources Effectively management with peer mentoring, financial literacy, volunteerism, and personalized CARE Plans to promote success among clients and their families. The initiative delivered these elements through a generative social enterprise structure that mobilized organizations at the practice, institutional, and community levels. The trained CARE Network linked previously siloed systems, expanded access to existing programs, and maintained uniform standards for care, measurement, and evaluation under a continuous quality improvement model. TTS operated in Michigan, Wisconsin, Tennessee, California, Hawaii, and Wyoming, with program materials available in ten languages. The initiative also underwent six independent evaluations, gained recognition as a Clinton Global Initiative, and became an Ascend at the Aspen Institute partner. TTS ultimately helped advance human development by combining data-informed responses to individual conditions with coordinated resources that could improve health, educational achievement, economic self-sufficiency, and family well-being (Transition to Success, 2022).

Building upon these applications, the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) used Workforce Synergy Forum #13 to show how ASSM-informed wraparound assistance could complement workforce initiatives involving social enterprise organizations. The agency brought together representatives from Soulful Synergy and the Social Enterprise and Training (SEAT) Center to advise 16 Local Workforce Development Boards participating in the Renewable Energy Training Initiative (RETI). In this context, NYSDOL presented the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix as a comprehensive tool for identifying legal concerns, housing instability, childcare limitations, transportation difficulties, and physical or mental health conditions that could hinder occupational progress. Forum contributors also argued that the matrix could help trainees recognize these challenges and address them while moving from skills preparation into long-term employment. This application reflected a human development perspective because it considered the personal and material conditions shaping whether individuals could benefit from career opportunities over time. Forum contributors further emphasized supportive environments tailored to the needs of underserved populations during and after instruction. The SEAT Center complemented this approach by providing wraparound assistance for one year following training, with the possibility of continued guidance beyond the formal follow-up period. Moreover, the organization maintained an enduring relationship with graduates by treating them as permanent members of the SEAT community. Soulful Synergy offered career guidance, networking opportunities, and referrals addressing housing, food insecurity, and mental health concerns. The New York State Department of Labor further reinforced these practices through RETI, which allocated \$4 million to workforce boards for clean-energy instruction and related aid, including childcare, transportation, housing, food, and behavioral health resources. Ultimately, the initiative established a goal of serving at least 35%–40% of trainees from disadvantaged communities. This sustained attention to individual circumstances advanced human development by broadening access to clean-energy careers while helping underserved populations overcome obstacles that could otherwise undermine economic security and long-term well-being (New York State Department of Labor, 2025).

On that same note, the Denver-based Women's Bean Project established a direct connection between the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix and employment social enterprise programming for women experiencing significant obstacles to work. The organization operated a food-manufacturing business that created paid transitional positions in a safe environment where women could develop job readiness, life skills, and greater confidence. Women's Bean Project administered the 18-domain ASSM at intake, scoring each area on a five-point scale ranging from "in crisis" to "empowered" in order to determine which needs required attention during case management. Additionally, the program used this information to identify six conditions closely associated with successful completion: transportation, physical health, housing, mental health, unresolved legal matters, and sobriety. Women who entered at the two lowest levels in these areas were unlikely to graduate unless staff addressed the concerns promptly. Therefore, the matrix informed a human development strategy that connected employment preparation with the stability and well-being necessary to remain in the workforce. Women's Bean Project included health and wellness activities, trauma-response instruction, sobriety resources, mental health partnerships, and workshops addressing healthy relationships and communication. Nearly all women initially exhibited symptoms consistent with post-traumatic stress disorder, yet every individual recorded improvement after the trauma-skills workshop series. The organization also found that more than 95% of graduates remained employed after 12 months, although the proportion declined to approximately 70% at the 24-month follow-up, primarily because of caregiving responsibilities or health conditions. Under the 2024–2027 strategy, Women's Bean Project plans to continue monitoring progress with the ASSM and complementary instruments while strengthening follow-up at six-month intervals. The social enterprise also seeks a completion rate of at least 70%, job placement for every graduate, and annual hiring of 75 women in a food business projected to generate \$2 million by 2027. Human development in this model extended beyond securing employment to cultivating the health, stability, skills, and economic mobility women needed to transform their lives and positively influence their families and communities (Women's Bean Project, 2024).

Lastly, San Francisco-based Exponent Partners implemented the Arizona Self-Sufficiency Matrix in nonprofit service delivery using Exponent Case Management (ECM), a Salesforce application developed by the social enterprise itself. The organization configured the platform for rapid re-housing programs intended to help individuals and families obtain affordable homes, increase self-sufficiency, and preserve residential stability. Exponent Partners embedded the matrix in intake and enrollment procedures so case managers could evaluate needs alongside required Homeless Management Information System data. The platform then supported service planning focused on low-scoring matrix domains, enabling staff to prioritize goals and record the individual or group assistance provided to clients. This use of the ASSM supported human development by connecting multidimensional needs with concrete steps towards housing, financial security, employment, family care, and health management. Exponent Partners also equipped the module to coordinate referrals, assign beds and housing units, document overnight stays, complete exit evaluations, and collect follow-up information. The organization structured these functions around housing identification, financial assistance, and case management during both pre-housing and post-housing stages. Before placement, case managers could examine financial resources and locate residences based on safety, affordability, access to work or school, and proximity to other necessities. After families moved, staff could monitor housing maintenance, establish resources for continued stability, address landlord concerns, and assist clients with obtaining or improving employment. Exponent Partners further incorporated program navigation

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that guided personnel between milestones while reducing paperwork and tracking whether clients received appropriate attention. The organization also provided quality-assurance reports, standardized data collection, and export functions to facilitate monitoring among homelessness programs. As a result, this social enterprise applied the matrix within a digital case-management structure that promoted human development by helping service providers transform identified vulnerabilities into coordinated goals supporting safe housing and greater self-sufficiency (Exponent Case Management, 2022).

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