



SUCCESS STORY

Supervisors Boost Support to Clinics

Access to training and revamped vision of supervisory roles prompts positive changes in primary health care



Image: Chemonics

Supervisor of Epidemiology Hanan Salous vaccinates a patient at the Nablus Health Directorate.

“I used to focus on the negative and berate staff on what they were doing wrong,” said Hanan. “Now we are building trust between the ministry, clinics, and communities—sharing new skills and communicating.”

Hanan Salous gently reminds the nurse to place gloves on her hand as she administers a shot. As the epidemiological supervisor for the Nablus Directorate of Health—Hanan has worked for 14 years managing vaccination services for 41 primary health care centers in the most populous governorate in the West Bank. As a participant in USAID’s infection and prevention control workshop and a supportive supervision partner, Hanan’s enthusiasm is spilling over to colleagues.

Hanan is one of six Nablus supervisors USAID is encouraging by offering workshops while facilitating weekly meetings to enhance dialogue in their supportive supervision of primary health care clinics. “Between seeing 100 patients daily at the directorate and needing to manage five clinics daily, I felt burnt out, as if I were cycling furiously on a stationary bike with no appreciation,” Hanan explained. “The USAID workshop was the first refresher course on infection prevention I received in ten years, reminding me of the professional standards we should deliver which I am now sharing with my staff.”

Through the USAID’s Palestinian Health Sector Reform and Development Project (the Flagship Project), health professionals like Hanan are becoming partners in an integrated approach, linking the Ministry of Health and Nablus communities to promote improved health service delivery. Hanan is now more effectively supervising her clinics, finding solutions and elevating the system as a whole to influence positive change.

“I used to focus on the negative and berate staff on what they were doing wrong,” said Hanan. “Now we are building trust between the ministry, clinics, and communities—sharing new skills and communicating.”

Infection prevention enhanced by supportive supervision serves as the back bone of all standards and services from better child and maternal healthcare to prevention of non communicable diseases. Strengthening the capacity of supervisors to guide and support staff empowers the Ministry to meet the international standards they aspire to serve the Palestinian people. This translates into on the ground action and teamwork, said Hanan, who is now learning from the very people she once viewed as a burden.

“While visiting a small clinic on the outskirts of Nablus, I was inspired by their initiative having built a small emergency/ dressing room. I went back to my directorate and installed one there,” she said. “We can learn a lot from each other.”