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IRAQ

**PRIMARY HEALTH
CARE PROJECT**

SUCCESS STORY

Hay Babil Model Clinic IMCI Program Improves Child Health Care

PHCPI helps Iraqi doctors at the PHCC to provide standardized modern health care



Dr. Muhamed, IMCI Officer at Hey Babil Model PHCC, examines Iraq Riyadh following IMCI guidelines.

The USAID Primary Health Care Project in Iraq (PHCPI) partners with the Iraqi Ministry of Health (MoH) to strengthen the delivery of primary health care services throughout the country. The project focuses on improving maternal and child health services and supporting the Government of Iraq to improve the standards and quality of 36 “model clinics” to serve as a prototype for future replication and investment in primary health care throughout Iraq.

Iraq Riyadh, a nine year old living in Alrusafa, has been suffering from asthma for several years. As there is no appropriate medical care near the family, his mother must take him to a private doctor in Al-Jadeda, Baghdad each time he has an attack. “Every time I had to do this trip, it is difficult, time consuming and costly, I could not afford for a regular treatment every time and he had to miss the school in these days,” she said.

Fortunately for Iraq’s family, the Hay Babil clinic in AlRusafa is one of the model clinics supported by USAID’s Primary Health Care Project in Iraq (PHCPI). The clinic has received training and modern equipment along with the implementation of a Local Health Committee (LHC). LHCs are an aspect of PHCPI that involves the formation and training of a local committee made up of members of the community and the health center medical staff. LHCs hold meetings on a regular basis and maintain a link between the medical professionals and the community. Once Iraq’s mother met a member of the Hay Babil LHC, things changed. “I was told that the clinic is providing special care for the children, and major advances have been implemented to the center. Now I don’t have to go to a distant health care provider and we can come here immediately after school.”

The special care nine-year old Iraq experienced is the Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI), which has been strongly supported by the PHCPI. The creation of IMCI guidelines along with capacity development in the areas of asthma, diabetes, early detection of breast and cervical cancer, and others, provide modern standardized health care. “These cases have to be followed up regularly, and this is what we do here with the IMCI. For a kid who has a respiratory tract infection, you can hear wheezes and rhonchi (rough breathing) when you examine them, but to be sure regarding the diagnosis of asthma, another assessment is required when the infection improves,” said Dr. Muhamed, the IMCI officer of the Hay Babil PHCC. Thanks to the activities of USAID/PHCPI, including the model clinics initiative, establishment of LHCs, and training on IMCI, children like Iraq will have access to proper care and treatment right in their communities. Many, including Iraq and his mother, will no longer have to travel long distances, sacrificing time, education, and money, to receive proper health care.