



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MALAWI

SUCCESS STORY

A Partnership for a Better Hospital

Community, staff marvel as health center named one of Malawi's cleanest



Photo: Management Sciences/Rudi Theford

Community members and hospital staff celebrate Salima District Hospital's excellence in infection prevention, turning it from one of Malawi's worst to one of its cleanest.

Salima District health officer Florence Bwanali recalled that during the first months of implementation, the staff felt unsupported. "Now the staff are willing to work because I make sure that the team is motivated," she said. "Now all of us are very happy and this award is going to keep our morale high."

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

The corridor floors of Salima District Hospital glisten in the afternoon sun and fresh air blows through sparkling clean windows, proving the hospital's ranking as one of the cleanest in Malawi. Local newspaper clippings hang on message boards praising the hospital's new standards of cleanliness. One headline reads, "Salima District Hospital, Clean at Last!"

Today's accolades are a reminder of the hospital's progress. In the past, staff recalled seeing trash, sugar cane peels, dirt, and grime throughout the halls and walls of the hospital, once reputed as one of Malawi's worst. While the concept of infection prevention is simple, changing attitudes and awareness is a significant challenge.

A USAID-supported infection prevention initiative has begun in hospitals nationwide. The Ministry of Health along with implementing partners are helping selected hospitals throughout Malawi meet the ministry's new infection prevention standards.

The Salima District Hospital assessed its obstacles to infection prevention and identified many challenges. For example, hospital staff did not have proper equipment or training to sanitize medical supplies; important protocols, such as proper waste disposal and equipment disinfection, were not in place; and patients and their guardians contributed to unsanitary conditions with behavior such as littering.

USAID assistance helped the Salima management team work with its staff and nearby communities to implement new protocols for infection prevention. Education sessions helped the community understand its role in keeping the hospital clean; and training programs helped staff incorporate activities that would support the hospital's goal of becoming an infection-free facility into their daily routines.

The hard work is paying off. Salima recently received one of the highest scores for cleanliness and infection prevention in all of Malawi, and the staff is committed to continuing this progress.