

## Americares and X-GEN Improve Health in West Bank

When a group of three Idhna villagers entered Dr. Jibreel's humble office at the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, they exchanged salaams and chatted like old friends. With a population of about 20,000, Idhna lies in the governorate of Hebron in the southern West Bank. Its residents usually know their neighbors—and the challenges they face as a community—well.

In this town, residents lack regular access to clean water. Water flows to Idhna only once a month, forcing its residents to store water and regulate its usage. Waste dumped by nearby settlers often contaminates the little water Idhna gets. Together with summer heat and humidity, the contaminated water inevitably leads to a high rate of skin infections. "Because of the weather and the water situation in Idhna, we see about seven to 10 cases of different types of skin infections in the summer," Dr. Jibreel said.

A vital donation from X-GEN Pharmaceuticals, however, has brought the people of Idhna the medicine they need. Americares and its in-country partner American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA) recently delivered a shipment of nystatin, a topical powder used to treat skin infections. X-GEN's donation has been crucial in combating dermatological conditions caused by Idhna's unsanitary water.



Photos courtesy of: ANERA  
*Ibtisam, a beneficiary of X-GEN's donation.*

Ibtisam\*, a 60-year-old mother of three, has used the donated nystatin to treat a skin infection, and her sons use it to treat their athlete's foot—a constant risk in their construction jobs. Without access to crucial treatments like nystatin, many fathers would be unable to provide for their loved ones. "They could not come here because they couldn't miss work. So I am here to speak for them," she said. "My sons have degrees from universities. One studied anesthesiology, the other accounting, and the third languages and translation, but they could not find jobs in their fields and ended up in construction."

"It is difficult here. If we don't treat our skin infections then it will affect our livelihood," said Abed\*, another patient. Most men work in construction because of the few employment opportunities in Idhna. Many workers suffer from athlete's foot, which can cause significant pain and discomfort if not treated. But Idhna's residents cannot afford to miss a day's worth of wages.

"This is why this medicine is very important to us workers," said Fareed\*, Abed's relative and also a construction worker. "Our job requires us to stand on our feet most of the time. If we can't do our jobs and sustain a living, then we'll have a financial crisis in our families."



*The nystatin has been effective in treating skin conditions caused by Idhna's polluted water.*

*\* names changed*

"I am not exaggerating when I say that we are a struggling community, which is why we are very thankful to ANERA and the donors," he added. "It's also a very effective medicine. You should know that we are grateful for everything you do."

Americares joins the people of Idhna in thanking X-GEN for its generous donation and support of under-resourced Palestinians. Together, we are saving lives and improving health for people affected by poverty or disaster so they can reach their full potential.