

SALAM

Social, sustAinable and
inLusive heAlth care
systems in Med area



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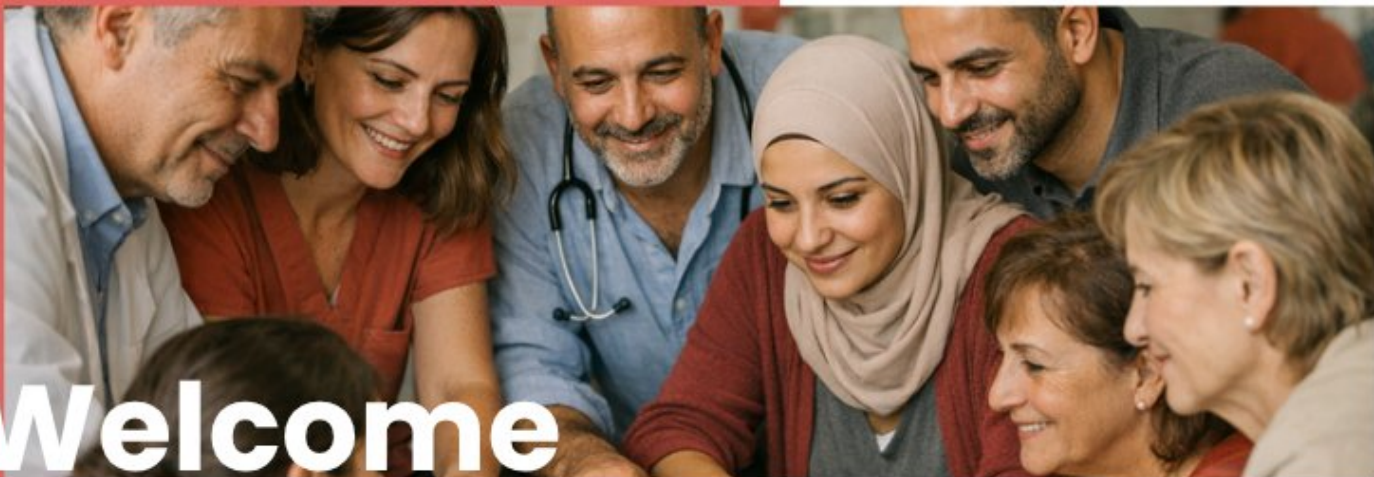


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NEXT MED

SALAM

n.1 – June 2026



Welcome

*It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the
first newsletter of SALAM Project!*

Somewhere between Bari and Beirut, between a hospital ward in Irbid and a research lab in Barcelona, SALAM was born. Not just as a project; but as a shared conviction: that where you live should not determine the quality of care you receive.

By bringing together experts and organisations from Italy, Spain, Lebanon, and Jordan, we aim to build a strong network that accelerates knowledge exchange, capacity building, and practical solutions for the challenges facing communities in fragile and crisis-affected contexts.

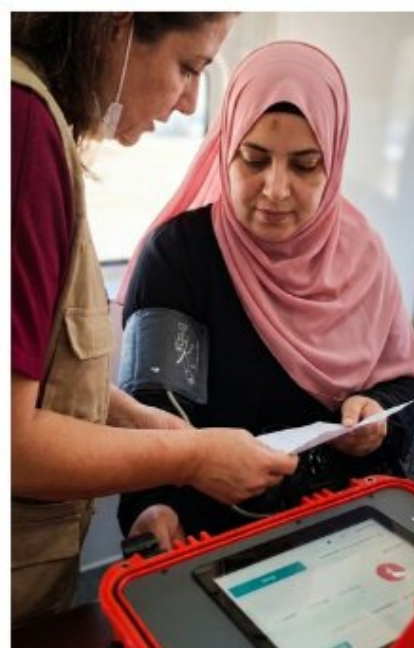
Through this newsletter, we will share key milestones, upcoming activities, and success stories, keeping you informed and engaged as the project progresses.

We look forward to your active participation in our activities and to building a vibrant community around inclusive and sustainable healthcare across the Mediterranean.

Welcome aboard.

SALAM Consortium

First Issue



01 | WELCOME TO SALAM

Closing the Distance to Cardiac Care Across the Mediterranean

SALAM connects hospitals, universities, and humanitarian organisations across **Italy, Spain, Lebanon, and Jordan** around one ambition: **bringing cardiac diagnosis closer to those who need it most.**

At the heart of the project is the **HELIS Infarct.NET** telecardiology platform (already operating across the Puglia region) now being extended to two new Hospital Hubs in Beirut and Irbid.

Alongside telemedicine, SALAM is developing **open-source biomedical device**

that can be built and maintained locally, and a **training programme** that blends clinical skills with narrative medicine, supporting healthcare workers in environments where resources are scarce and pressure is constant.

The goal: not just to deliver care across borders, but to make the systems that deliver it stronger, more adaptable, and more human.

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Who benefits?

- Healthcare workers gain new digital tools and training to operate in high-pressure settings.
- Hospitals and humanitarian organisations build a shared protocol, replicable across the Mediterranean.
- Patients in Lebanon and Jordan access faster cardiac diagnosis, often for the first time.
- Communities in fragile contexts gain a model that can outlast the project itself.



Polyclinic of Bari

The Hub That Never Sleeps.

800 ECGs processed every single day. That is the rhythm of the Polyclinic of Bari's Cardiology and Telecardiology unit, the same operational backbone that now powers SALAM. As **Lead Partner**, the Polyclinic coordinates the deployment of the HELIS Infarct.NET platform across the Mediterranean, bringing to Beirut and Irbid the same infrastructure that has already transformed cardiac care across the Puglia region.



Paolo Colonna, Scientific Director of Polyclinic of Bari



Antonio Boccaccio, Associate Professor of Polytechnic of Bari

Polytechnic of Bari



Engineering for the Real World.

What does it take to build a medical device that works when the power cuts out, the supply chain breaks, and the nearest specialist is hundreds of kilometres away? The Polytechnic of Bari's engineers are answering that question with open-source biomedical tools designed to be built, repaired, and adapted locally, starting with the communities in Lebanon and Jordan that SALAM serves.

University of Barcellona

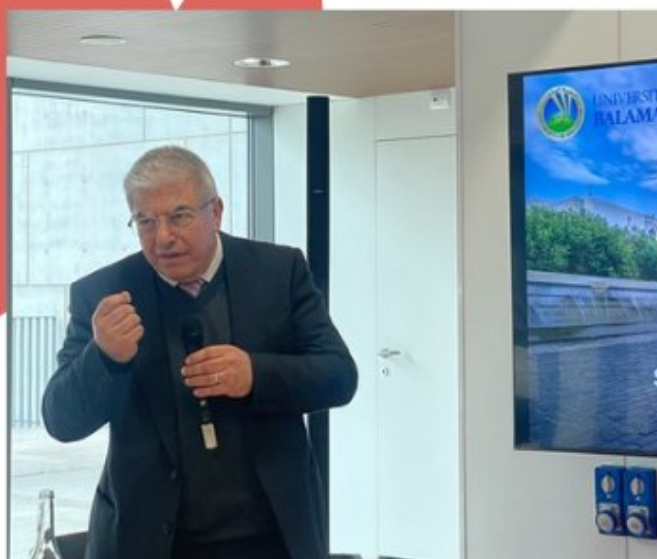


Science at the Frontier

From the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Barcelona brings a long track record of research where biology meets engineering. In SALAM, this means applying biomedical knowledge to contexts where conventional solutions simply won't work and finding ones that will.

Jorge Otero, Unit of Biophysics and Bioengineering, University of Barcelona





Elie Karam, Dean of the Issam Fares Faculty of Technology of University of Balamand



Jordan University of Science and Technology

Care Beyond the Clinic

Managing a heart condition is not just about diagnosis: it's about medication, follow-up, and the patient's ability to navigate a system under strain.

JUST's Department of Clinical Pharmacy brings this perspective to SALAM, adapting the project's solutions to the specific healthcare landscape of Jordan, where refugee populations and limited specialist access create a distinct set of challenges.

University of Balamand

Rooted in Lebanon, Reaching Outward

With campuses across a country navigating one of the most complex humanitarian crises in the region, Balamand has built something rare: a university deeply integrated into its local communities.

Within SALAM, it bridges academic expertise and real-world need, connecting the project's activities to the health facilities and people it ultimately serves.



Samah Alshatnawi, Associate professor at the Department of Clinical Pharmacy in JUST



Caritas Lebanon

Care Without Borders, On the Ground

In South Lebanon, Caritas isn't waiting for patients to come to the clinic. Its health teams go to them, into communities cut off by conflict, poverty, or distance.

Within SALAM, Caritas Lebanon coordinates outreach and community engagement, ensuring that the telecardiology services developed in the project actually reach those who have no other option.



Cindy Hakme, Head of the Health Department of Caritas Lebanon



Caritas
Lebanon



Sofia Naffa, Project manager at Caritas Jordan

Caritas Jordan



Earned Trust, Real Impact

You don't reach vulnerable communities through technology alone. You reach them through relationships built over years. Caritas Jordan works with refugees and marginalised families across the country, people who have learned to be cautious about who offers help.

Within SALAM, Caritas Jordan's proximity work ensures the project's services arrive not just as tools, but as trust.



Kick-Off Meeting

29–30 January 2026
Bari | Puglia | Italy

On **29 and 30 January 2026**, seven partner organisations sat down together for the first time, not just to plan, but to **build the trust that makes plans work**. From hospital directors to humanitarian workers, from biomedical engineers to community health specialists, the conversation in **Bari** set something in motion that data alone cannot capture.

The first meeting of SALAM brought together doctors, researchers, universities, and civil society organisations from Italy, Spain, Lebanon, and Jordan to begin a shared journey built around a simple belief: **healthcare should be closer, fairer, and more human, wherever people live**.

» [LEARN MORE](#)



What Partners Said and What They Decided

Partners aligned on project goals, defined roles and responsibilities, and **set the road** for the work ahead: from the creation of Hospital Hubs in Beirut and Irbid, to telecardiology services and Mobile Medical Units designed to reach communities that too often remain distant from care.

The two days ended with a **roadmap**, a **set of shared responsibilities**, and the kind of **commitment** that comes from sitting across a table from the people you'll be working with for the next three years.



06 | KICK-OFF MEETING



The Project is Moving: First Activities and New Research

Since January, SALAM has moved from plans to action. In Lebanon, **Caritas Lebanon** has launched the procurement process for the Mobile Medical Unit and identified the site for the future Hospital Hub in Beirut. In Jordan, **Caritas Jordan** is working with the *Ministry of Health* to obtain the licensing required for telemedicine services: the key step before the Hospital Hub in Irbid can go live.

But logistics are only part of the story. At the **University of Barcelona**, researchers have built a *mechanical ventilator from standard automotive components*, powered by a 12-volt car battery, fully **open-source** and replicable anywhere in the world. It was *designed for the moments when health systems are overwhelmed and conventional equipment cannot reach*. It is exactly the kind of thinking SALAM was built to support.

In Bari, the Polytechnic's SymbiosLab is taking a different angle: turning discarded mussel shells into the raw material for next-generation medical implants: **sustainable, low-cost**, and designed to be **accessible across income levels**.

This is what SALAM looks like in practice: not one innovation, but many; each one built for the place where it is needed most.

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The heart doesn't wait and neither can healthcare



Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death worldwide, responsible for 32% of all global deaths. In time-dependent conditions such as heart attacks, every 30 minutes of delay in treatment significantly reduces survival rates making fast, remote diagnosis a life-saving tool.

Source: WHO, World Heart Report

**Did you
know?**



Fast diagnosis isn't a luxury

Telecardiology has already shown it can close that gap: in regions where specialist access is limited, remote ECG transmission has reduced diagnostic delays by up to 50%, with documented improvements in outcomes across rural Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East.

Source: European Society of Cardiology



One in five people lives in a fragile context



Yet 1.8 billion people (roughly one in five) currently live in fragile or conflict-affected settings where basic healthcare, including cardiac care, remains out of reach. Not because the knowledge doesn't exist. Because the systems to deliver it haven't yet arrived. That is the gap SALAM is designed to close.

Source: OECD States of Fragility Report



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"The SALAM project reflects our commitment to advancing community wellbeing through cross-institution dialogue and shared learning, strengthening both academic and practical approaches to accessible, inclusive healthcare."

Elie Karam, University of Balamand Lebanon

"Sometimes, the people who need healthcare the most are the ones who have the hardest time reaching it. With SALAM, we are not waiting for patients to come to us, we are going to them. Every early diagnosis can change a life. And I believe we will reach many more than one."

Yara Sunna', Caritas Jordan

"What if the shells of mussels, often discarded as waste, could become the building blocks of the next generation of medical implants? With SALAM at PoliBa's SymbiosLab, we are turning this idea into reality: developing sustainable, low-cost biodevices that make advanced medical treatments accessible to all."

Antonio Boccaccio, Polytechnic of Bari

"We are the only lifeline left for isolated communities across South Lebanon. With SALAM, every telemedicine device we add is another life we can reach. This is care without borders and we refuse to let them down."

Cindy Hakme, Caritas Lebanon

"A medical device should not be a privilege. Through open-source, low-cost solutions (already in use in Zambia and Mozambique) SALAM is our chance to prove that innovation doesn't need to be expensive to save lives"

Jorge Otero, University of Barcellona

Through our work at JUST, we are helping build sustainable solutions that combine telecardiology, translational research, and capacity building to improve healthcare access for vulnerable communities, creating an opportunity to transform collaboration into tangible impact for patients across the Mediterranean region.

Samah F. Al-Shatnawi, JUST

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Total Duration	36 months
Start	03/12/2025
End	03/11/2027
Total Budget	€2.999.000
EU contribution	€2.489.170 (83%)

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