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Funding and Staff Cuts in Palestine, but Steadfast as Ever

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USAID's abrupt decision to end all of its West Bank/Gaza programming by January 31, 2019 means that Anera's Palestinian Community Infrastructure Development (PCID) program will be ending 11 months earlier than scheduled. As a result, over 100,000 Palestinians could be deprived of promised access to safe water, health facilities, education and playgrounds. This decision also puts on hold a 40-plus-year partnership between Anera and USAID.

Anera's USAID-funded PCID program has six community infrastructure projects underway in the West Bank and Gaza and, with programming unexpectedly due to halt at the end of January, only one will likely reach full completion unless funding resumes. Anera had also planned, pending funding approval, additional projects in Gaza to meet emergency water needs.

The cuts also will force Anera to lay off two-thirds of its staff and close two of its offices in Palestine. Non-USAID programs will continue as planned, with funding from institutional and individual donors. Anera will still build schools, install water networks, provide medicines to charitable clinics, foster women's economic empowerment, and

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credits

The Anera newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (Anera), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to providing development, health, education and employment programs to Palestinian communities and impoverished families throughout the Middle East.

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Anera News Cover Photo:

Two friends hanging out in Um Salamuna Park in the West Bank. Project funded by USAID and built under Anera's PCID program.

PCID Photo | Anera

Steadfast as Ever *continued from page 1*

help small family farmers. However, the end of Anera's larger USAID-funded infrastructure projects in Palestine will cut off thousands of people living in vulnerable conditions from life-changing interventions. The USAID projects would provide more than 114,000 people with access to safe water, education, health services and a playground for Gaza's children.

"We don't want any of these projects stranded and incomplete," says Anera President Sean Carroll. "Who wants to be the one to go to the communities we have worked hard with to develop needed projects, and say to a family, 'sorry, you will not have access to safe water as we discussed.' Or to a group of young boys on the street in Gaza, excited about the prospect of a new park in their crowded neighborhood, 'sorry, but we're not building your park after all.' Or say to a young girl, 'sorry, you won't be able to go to high school now, because we don't have the funding anymore.'"

Anera is currently working with other donors to fund the completion of these projects, but it is hard to replace the larger-scale funding we received from USAID. The end of USAID's work in the West Bank and Gaza ends a productive relationship that stretches back to the 1970s. Anera and USAID have worked very successfully together to provide relief and sustainable, long-term health, education, and economic development in vulnerable Palestinian communities across the region and in the West Bank and Gaza. We hope to return to our longstanding partnership with USAID in the near future.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Our non-USAID programs in Palestine, Lebanon and (soon) Jordan are continuing as planned. Anera's dedicated individual donors indeed gave record levels of funding in 2018. 2019 is bringing new challenges and we all need to come together to confront them.

Please spread the word and support the communities you care so much about. It will take all of us, together, to confront the challenges ahead and help hope find its way.

anera.org/donate

Donate now to fund the quality programs Anera is delivering today.

anera.org/fundraise

Set up a fundraiser for a bike ride, an event, or a special time of year.

anera.org/legacy

Make a planned gift to ensure that Anera will be there tomorrow.

anera.org

Check out our website featuring stories, photos, stats, films and more.

anera.org/blog | *The Olive Press*

Read a wide variety of perspectives from our areas of work.

anera.org/events

Come to an event near you and learn about the programs we deliver.

Facebook | Twitter | Instagram | YouTube @aneraorg

Follow us on social media and share our great content with your friends.

THANKS TO YOUR GENEROSITY IN 2018

We were able to help...



106 families

in Gaza by providing greenhouses to generate food and income.



6,048 out-of-school youth

by providing vocational job training and trade skills in Lebanon.



10,650 children

by building safe spaces for playing and sports in Lebanon.



4,745 community members

by building new public spaces in the West Bank with access for all.

WHY I GIVE TO ANERA: GENE ZAID

I was born in Jalazone Refugee Camp in 1951 (north of Ramallah in the West Bank). My parents came from a village near Lod called Beit Nabala but became refugees along with my grandparents, uncles and aunts after the 1948 war. My family now lives in refugee camps throughout the West Bank and in Jordan.

When I was very young, my Dad was able to get a job with the Jordanian Department of Agriculture in a low level position and quickly move us out of the refugee camp. We lived in a small two room house in Jerusalem. From first grade all the way through high school, I went to public schools in Jerusalem. At 17, I traveled to Kansas in the United States to study chemistry.

Growing up, I had a deep connection to the refugee camps, especially in the West Bank because it wasn't very far from Jerusalem. For holidays, weddings and funerals we always went to the camps and saw family. My recollection is that when we would go see my grandparents, aunts and uncles, they wouldn't have enough food, so we would always have to stand in a line to get a bowl of soup. Life was not very pleasant. It was harsh.



I first heard about Anera when I received a flyer and started reading about the organization. I realized it's a serious relief and development organization dedicated to helping Palestinians throughout the Middle East. I remember it showed a young kid, maybe five or six years old and there was text that asked, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" followed by the young boy saying in quotes, "I want to drive a cement truck!" That flyer touched my heart in a big way.

Even a five-year-old can be thinking about construction and building. It's within us Palestinian people. We are hardworking, we look to the future, we want to build. So that is when I started paying attention and donating to Anera. It was quite a moving experience.

As I follow Anera's work, I can see there continues to be a lot of need in Palestine. That is why I think it's important to be involved with Anera.

Read Gene Zaid's full story in his own words: anera.org/zaid

The Cornerstone of Palestinian Society: **Family**



//

This piece of land was empty. Now we have a way to make income by working our own land because of this project. This greenhouse will provide our family with healthy food to eat and sell. The money we make buys other necessities."

Sabah
is a mother and recipient of an Anera greenhouse in Gaza.

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This center is an important part of our support system. We're grateful it's relieving some of our financial burdens."

Yousra
(left) is a mother and patient at the Hebron Charitable Medical Center in the West Bank. Anera supplies the medical center with 70% of its medicines free-of-charge.



Families have always been the cornerstone of Palestinian society, and serve as the first place where children can learn respect, self-esteem, responsibility, community and, most importantly, love. These values, when amplified in society at-large, shape a nation. That is why Anera strives to deliver projects and programs that directly benefit Palestinian families in Palestine and Lebanon and help them thrive. Below are some Palestinian families who have benefited from various projects and programs.



One day it was quiet and then suddenly there was a park. It was like the whole village was sleeping and then suddenly woke up. I now see more people spending time with their children and neighbors."

Suleiman

father and Mukhtar (tribal chief) of Um Salamuna, Palestine referring to the new public park Anera built.



We're very happy and thankful to receive these packages and hope next year you can do this again and maybe more!"

Ahmad

is a father who lives in the Shatila refugee camp in Lebanon. His family received an Anera food parcel.



In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



Stairway to Progress in Ein El Hilweh Refugee Camp

In the Ein El Hilweh Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon, there is a small community that lives on a hill, known locally as Jabal Al Halib (Milk Mountain). For people living there, the path that Jabal Al-Halib's community must take to reach the rest of the camp is rugged, unforgiving and steep.

To solve this problem, a group of recent youth graduates from Anera's construction and plastering vocational course, who live in Ein El Hilweh, decided to take it upon themselves to build a staircase.

"These kids are learning from our mistakes and know that their strength is in their unity. Hand in hand, today they built a staircase. Tomorrow, they will build our future! Because of their determination to better their community, many children and old people will be a lot safer now." – Abou-Samer, 58-year-old Ein El Hilweh resident

[READ MORE](#)
anera.org/stairway



Why Grafting is the Future of Agriculture in Gaza

In grafting, the upper part of one plant grows on the root system of another. The technique provides resistance to diseases and increases yield. It is environmentally friendly and economical, as farmers don't need to resort to using as many harmful pesticides and expensive fertilizers.

When Anera installs a greenhouse on a farming family's property in Gaza, we also provide starter seedlings and, when possible, we buy grafted plants.

One farmer, Awad, inherited a patch of land from his father, where he grew eggplants, beans and tomatoes. Fungal infections ultimately destroyed many of his crops. Anera provided him with 400 grafted seedlings and the infections disappeared. Now his Anera greenhouse produces 2½ tons of tomatoes annually – enough for the family to consume what they need themselves and sell the rest for extra income.

[READ MORE](#)
anera.org/grafting



A New Park in the West Bank Builds Community Spirit

Um Salamuna is home to 1,100 Palestinians and, like many communities in the West Bank, it struggles with unemployment and poverty. Among the village's many needs was a park for families and children that would allow for quality social and play time in a safe environment. The nearest park was more than 10 kilometers away.

With USAID funds, Anera built the first ever public park in the village, complete with a panoramic view of the surrounding hills, a playground, fitness equipment, a multipurpose room, an amphitheater, handicap-accessible bathrooms, and much more.

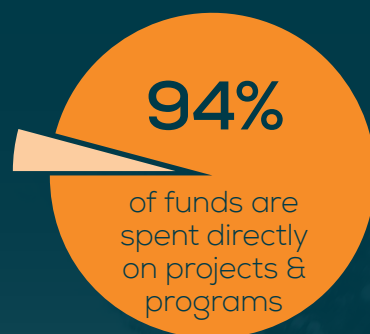
Ahlam and Ruwaidah (pictured), who live on opposite sides of the village, met in the park and became fast friends this past summer. "I knew of Ahlam before, but we weren't really friends until... we started playing together." Not only has Ruwaidah made a new friend, but her mother has as well, becoming friends with Ahlam's mother.

[READ MORE](#)
anera.org/salamuna

JOIN THE ANERA VISIONARIES!

The Visionary program is a community of dedicated individuals who envision a brighter future for Palestine and Lebanon. Increase your impact in 2019 by becoming a monthly donor today.

Anera Visionaries help sustain core programs and help Anera respond in times of crisis. Become a Visionary today, and your monthly gift of...



- \$15** can help cover the cost of 30 blood tests to screen donated blood.
- \$30** can help provide two at-risk youth with school kits to help bridge the gap in their education.
- \$100** can help train and mentor one farmer on new water-saving irrigation techniques.

Need a reminder to become a Visionary at a later time? Tear this out!

Already a monthly donor?

Contact Maha Akkeh to increase your donation or make a one-time gift at (202) 266-9726 or makkeh@anera.org



REMINDER:
Sign up to become an
Anera Visionary soon!

anera.org/monthly

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Funding & Staff Cuts in Palestine, but Steadfast as Ever

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These children in Burj Al Shamali refugee camp in Lebanon are participating in an environmentalism and hygiene promotion program, funded by UNICEF and implemented by Anera.