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## Honoring Earth

EARTH DAY | APRIL 22, 2019

With climate change and population growth, the resources of this precious planet we share grow scarcer and the health of the environment becomes more precarious.

In the dry climate of Palestine, water is a scarce resource, a problem that is exasperated by occupation. The health of both humans and the environment suffer from water shortages, climate change and pollution. Farm fields lay fallow. And families have to save up the little water they can access to survive.

Urban areas, like those in Gaza and Lebanon's refugee camps, grow more polluted as their populations increase. Trash is a big problem in Lebanon, especially in the restricted spaces of refugee camps. Cramped conditions and a dearth of services push residents to dispose of their garbage in burn pits and on streets and beaches, putting people and the environment at risk.

In Gaza, fuel is perpetually in short supply, due to the blockade, which translates into electricity outages. Palestinians in Gaza often lack the power to purify water and power hospitals, clinics, schools and farming equipment.

On this Earth Day, we are reflecting on how Anera honors our planet by incorporating green practices into projects, from managing garbage and recyclables to reusing wastewater to installing solar panels and green spaces.

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credits

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**Anera News Cover Photo:**  
At the center of this beautiful scene near Ramallah is a stream flowing from a wastewater treatment plant. Anera’s project will collect and pipe some of this water for reuse in irrigation, fire-fighting and public works.  
The collection reservoir is pictured on this page to the right.  
Rania Elhilou, photographer

Solid Waste Management

The ongoing Lebanon trash crisis has instigated a youth-led response in several communities where Anera works, from the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr El Bared in the north to the Bekaa Valley in the southeast, where Syrian refugees live in tents. Anera volunteers are promoting a culture of recycling and proper waste collection through environmental awareness sessions, distributing waste and recycling bins, planting trees and cleaning up littered beaches and roadways. Anera’s sorting and composting facilities prepare the waste for recycling.



*Afaf, resident of the Bekaa Valley, now sorts her trash and is happy to do it!*

Solar Panel Installation

In resource-strapped Gaza and the West Bank, sunlight is one thing in ample supply. Anera is harnessing the sun’s rays to power buildings across Palestine. We have installed solar panels on dozens of schools and community centers. In Gaza, the availability of electricity is hard to predict. This can have life or death implications in hospitals and health clinics, which is why Anera is prioritizing solar panel installations at these locations.



*Anera workers installed solar panels on the roof of the Wounded Child Clinic, which serves 6,000 Gaza residents.*

Wastewater Reuse

Water is precious and scarce in the arid West Bank, but Palestinian municipalities discard wastewater every day, often paying a fee to Israel to do so. Anera has found a way to save and reuse wastewater. In Jenin, Anera helped farmers and the environment by building a wastewater irrigation system that nourishes fodder crops and fruit trees with treated wastewater. We are currently building a wastewater reuse system for the city of Ramallah for use in fire-fighting and irrigating city parks.



*This tank collects the cleaned wastewater. Distribution pipes are being attached.*

BY THE NUMBERS

With your support



**80% of waste**  
was eliminated in the town of Mashha, Lebanon, thanks to a new recycling and composting facility.



**21,000 patients**  
now benefit from the solar panels Anera installed on two Gaza clinics they rely on for medical services.



**63,000,000 gallons**  
of treated wastewater will be available annually in Ramallah for construction, firefighting, and irrigating parks.



**100s of Gaza farmers**  
are using wise and sustainable irrigation techniques that improve production while caring for the earth.

FROM THE TITANIC, TO ICE CREAM CONES, TO ANERA

*by David George, CEO of Joy Cone*

My Lebanese great-grandmother, Shawneenee George, survived the sinking of the Titanic. She was returning from Lebanon to the U.S., where she’d moved some years earlier. She got on a rescue boat – which turned out to be the penultimate one – and made it safely back. Eventually, Shawneenee brought her son, Albert, to the U.S.

Albert George, my grandfather, started the George & Thomas Cone Company, which later became known as Joy Cone Company, back in 1918. Like a lot of immigrants to the U.S., he wasn’t very educated and he didn’t know how to read or write English. He just wanted to make a better life. Albert was a hard-working, enterprising young man and started a few small ventures, like a mini-grocery store and bowling alley. But then another Lebanese immigrant approached him with an unusual offer. He said he had a used hand-operated ice cream cone making oven and proposed that he would make the cones if Albert ran the business. That’s how it all started.

Now, Joy Cone is the largest ice cream cone company in the world, with our products sold throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico. It’s fair to say we’re in virtually every grocery store in the U.S. We are an independent, 100% employee-owned business and we just celebrated our centennial anniversary last year.

Once the company was doing well – and there were some years when it wasn’t – my father, Joe George, looked for ways to give back. While our family is committed to several local charities, we also focus on a couple that are national or global, and Anera is one of them. I credit my father for introducing me to Anera. I am proud of my Lebanese heritage and glad we’re supporting the important work Anera does in the Middle East.

My father, Joe George, has visited Lebanon, but I haven’t yet. When I do, I hope to visit an Anera project or two.



*The first cone production plant*



# Spring has sprung!

## Youths are playing soccer



Urda, Lebanon

*On the 25 sports fields Anera has built across Lebanon, like this one in the Akkar region, young people are enjoying soccer and team spirit.*

## Farmers are planting crops



Khan Younis, Gaza

*Palestinian farmers, in the hundreds of fields and greenhouses Anera has supported, from Jenin to Rafah, are planting and picking crops.*

## Families are gathering in parks



Zeita, West Bank

*Children and their parents are gathering to spend time together and play in the 12 parks Anera built in Palestine over the past seven years.*

## Students are finishing school



Hatta, West Bank

*Children at the 54 schools Anera has renovated or built in the past few years, from preschool through secondary, are starting to get spring fever.*



*Poppies appear everywhere across the West Bank in April. These are in Jenin.*

# In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



## Anera is Building 6 New Preschools in Palestine

As part of Anera’s early childhood development work, we are currently building six new preschools in the northern West Bank. These schools, like the others Anera has built or renovated, are located in rural and economically disadvantaged communities, where access and availability are particularly limited.

To date, Anera has renovated or built 10 percent of Palestine’s preschools. In each location, Anera mobilizes the surrounding community by employing local construction and craft workers and using locally available materials whenever possible. After the school is built, the Palestinian Ministry of Education assumes responsibility for its operating costs and teachers’ salaries, ensuring sustainability of the project and cementing the community’s right to a quality education.

READ MORE  
[anera.org/6schools](https://anera.org/6schools)



## Women Can: Economic Empowerment in the West Bank

Women-headed families in the West Bank are especially vulnerable to economic deprivation and social marginalization. Only 18 percent of women in Palestine participate in the workforce, among the lowest in the region. With financial support from IRUSA, Anera has begun a project to empower Palestinian women who are the heads of their households to increase their economic autonomy and the financial resources of themselves and their families.

The program, called Women Can, will enable 100 Palestinian women in the West Bank to start or develop small enterprises and will support them through training, seed funding, mentorship, and other capacity-building activities. The project targets poor communities in the Nablus and Qalqilia areas, with a focus on women-headed families with orphan children.

READ MORE  
[anera.org/womencan](https://anera.org/womencan)



## Graduates Work Together to Secure Their Future in Lebanon

After completing a number of Anera’s job skills training courses in Tripoli, Lebanon on subjects like children’s animation, event planning, literacy, math skills, graphic design and illustration, a group of inspiring youth decided to work collaboratively rather than competing for job opportunities.

After graduating, the team of 15 students launched a small catering business. The animation graduates create decorative items, while the hospitality and cooking graduates bake customized cakes and delicious finger foods.

They price their events according to the work hours involved and the materials required. Their fees are generally much lower than the going rate, so they can cater to a clientele that would otherwise not hire event services for special occasions.

READ MORE  
[anera.org/catering](https://anera.org/catering)



### What’s your vision?

Become an Anera Visionary and join a group of committed individuals who envision a brighter future for Palestine and Lebanon through a monthly donation of \$10 or more.

**Anera Visionaries transform lives.**

[anera.org/visionaries](https://anera.org/visionaries)

# Save the date!

## Anera Annual Dinner

Friday, October 11, 2019

Mayflower Hotel | Washington, DC

Reservations for the event can be made at [anera.org/dinner](https://anera.org/dinner) after July 1, 2019.



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## Honoring Earth

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*Anera worked with Ahmad in Gaza to make his fallow fields fertile with sweet potatoes by wisely using water resources.*