



in this issue

1-2

A Humanitarian Crisis
Threatens Lebanon

3

By the Numbers:
Anera's Response to The Situation
in Lebanon

3

Why I Support Anera:
Charles Myssy

4-5

Anera's on-the-job training students
are making a positive difference in
Lebanon

6

In Case You Missed It:
The Latest from anera.org

A Humanitarian Crisis Threatens Lebanon

JANUARY 1, 2020 | BY SAMAR EL-YASSIR, ANERA'S LEBANON COUNTRY DIRECTOR



Lebanon rang in 2020 with fireworks and the clanging of spoons on pots, the sound of people protesting government corruption and mismanagement.

It has been a few months since the start of the protests — a revolution really. Since the initial protest on October 17th, the situation has escalated and the country is on the verge of a humanitarian emergency.

The financial crisis, which was a problem before the revolution, has become increasingly worse. The value of the Lebanese pound is plummeting and the IMF estimates that half the population is living under the poverty line. Hundreds of companies have already closed and many more are likely to do so. Those lucky to still have jobs have seen their salaries slashed.

Because people can no longer withdraw dollars from ATMs, many of us spend hours in line at banks to take out money. Demonstrations have remained mostly peaceful, but there have been violent clashes between protesters and establishment supporters and security forces, some of which have unfortunately proven deadly. Although the roads are now open, movement in and around Beirut, and throughout the country, has been haphazard and can change in a moment.

continued on page 2

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.

Material in this newsletter may be reproduced without prior permission, provided credit is given and a copy of the publication in which the item is used is sent to Anera. Subscriptions are free of charge. Any inquiries should be sent to the address below.

Anera’s Board Officers

Joe Saba, Chair
Grace Tompkins, Vice Chair
Larry Hamdan, Treasurer
Sanaa Abouzaid, Secretary
Sean Carroll, President

Editors: Liz Demarest and Dan Riley

Contributing Writers:

Serene Dardari, Liz Demarest, Steve Fake and Dan Riley

Contributing Photographers:

Serene Dardari, Rania Elhilou and Anas Shehab
Anera never rents or sells our list.

ISSN 1966-3584

Anera
1111 14th Street NW, #400
Washington, DC 20005
202.266.9700

anera@anera.org
anera.org

Anera News Cover Photo:

A flare shines light in a group of passionate Lebanese protesters in Beirut, Lebanon.

Jessica Wahab, photographer

A Humanitarian Crisis Threatens Lebanon continued from page 1

Anera’s staff and programs are greatly affected, yet we are still working as diligently as ever. I am very proud of our team here. They are, of course, concerned about the safety and well-being of themselves and their families. But they are also working extra hours, because they are committed to responding to the crisis. We have daily check-ins with staff, volunteers, and partners, including UNICEF and UNHCR.

Attendance is down for all of our formal and informal education courses. One of the hardest hit is our apprenticeship program. We had opportunities lined up for many apprentices and were working toward 30 percent placement in permanent jobs. All of that collapsed around us. There are no opportunities now. So we are adapting our work to the new circumstances.

In order to address immediate needs, our programs are now largely redirected toward humanitarian response. We’re paying our hospitality vocational education graduates to work in communal kitchens to make meals for hungry families. Our construction grads are prepping refugee shelters for winter. Sewing grads are making baby kits and warm clothes for those who need them. I’m proud to say that Anera is a leader in responding to what is happening in Lebanon.

Health Care in Crisis

As of this writing, the health care sector is experiencing a shortage of supplies and medicines. Our partner health clinics expect a medical catastrophe to follow if the situation in Lebanon continues to decay. With no political solution in sight, we must prepare now for the worst to come.

We have already identified a 20 percent increase in the gap between the supply of medicines available and the quantities needed. We estimate that within three months, the gap will increase by 50 percent. Prices for these items are soaring as inflation increases at alarming rates — for the month of October alone, inflation rose five percent.

This health care crisis is driven by the nation’s reliance on the U.S. dollar. Much of the country’s crucial business is conducted in dollars, rather than the Lebanese pound. Dollars pay for imports of food, medicines, and fuel. Lebanon brings in around 1.2 billion dollars worth of pharmaceutical items per year. Due to the cash controls imposed, imports have ground to a halt and the result are major, life-threatening shortages.

Unfortunately, in times of crisis, the already vulnerable are the first to be hit, and often the hardest. Our recipients are telling us that kidney dialysis and cancer patients have had to reduce their treatments due to shortages of their medications. We expect that with the deteriorating economic situation, more and more Lebanese and non-Lebanese families will fall under the poverty line and be dependent on the public health care system, which will further exacerbate the medical shortages.

Getting Ready for What’s Next

No one knows how or when this will end, but the situation will likely worsen before it improves. You, our valued donors and partners, can help families in Lebanon get ready for what comes next. Please make a donation at

anera.org/donate-lebanon

Thank you!

BY THE NUMBERS

Responding to the Situation in Lebanon, Anera donors have



provided 850 vulnerable people with basic winter clothes made by graduates of Anera’s sewing courses.



supported 110 refugee families with winter shelter items, including blankets and cushions.



provided 370 hungry people with three weeks of daily hot meals made by graduates of our catering program.



rehabilitated 300 dilapidated homes to prepare them for winter and improve their access to water and sanitation.

WHY I SUPPORT ANERA | HIKING LEBANON FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

By Charles Myssy

I love to hike and travel. I’ve done lots of hikes around the world and find it’s the best way to see a country. When I started thinking about where I wanted to go next, I realized it had to be Lebanon.

I was born in Australia but my parents came from Lebanon. The Lebanon Mountain Trail caught my eye as it was a chance to connect with my roots and see my cultural heritage. I had always wanted to see the cedar forests that Lebanon is famous for. I figured I might as well do it for charity — raise some money and promote my homeland.

The experience of refugees is something that speaks to me personally. My parents left their homeland during the Lebanese Civil War in the 1970s.

I arrived in Lebanon in early October with four other Australians and started hiking the mountain trail. It was an amazing experience. I didn’t get to complete the full trail due to illness, but we hiked about 125 miles in total. While hiking, we raised about \$5,600. I knew I wanted to direct the money toward helping refugees and was searching for the best way to do that.

When I went back to Beirut to recover after getting sick, the Lebanon revolution broke out. I joined some of the protests. It was at the protests where I met someone who referred me to Anera. It was amazing to experience the sense of solidarity and the feeling that the protesters are all one — all together.

Thank you to everyone who donates to help support refugees in Lebanon.

Read Charles’ full story on our blog: anera.org/hikinglebanon



Charles Myssy in Beirut, Lebanon during the protests, October 2019.

Anera's on-the-job training students are making a positive difference in their communities throughout Lebanon.

From improving refugee camp infrastructure to responding to the growing humanitarian crisis, these students have shown that they have the skills, knowledge and work ethic to build a better Lebanon. On-the-job training is an essential part of Anera's vocational education program in Lebanon — **supported by YOU**. With the growing economic crisis and rising unemployment, Anera donors are also supporting these students by employing them for their skills as part of the humanitarian crisis response.



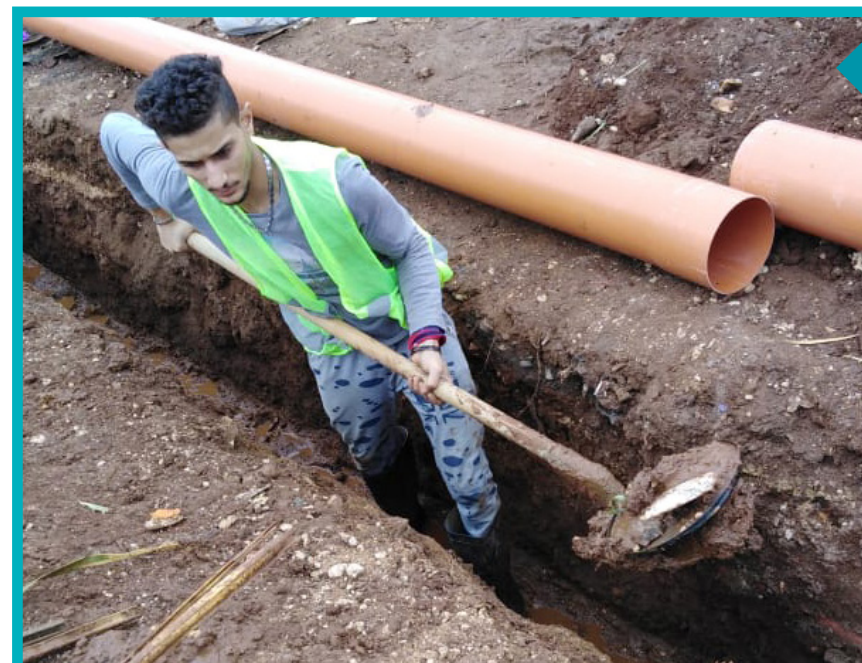
Anera construction and electrical maintenance course graduates recently completed work on a staircase in Burj El Barajneh Palestinian camp in Beirut. Anera paid them for this on-the-job training that put their skills to work right after the course finished.



Sewing course students made blankets, clothing and towels for refugee families living in Palestinian and Syrian camps. These items are also provided to disadvantaged Lebanese families. With the economy in crisis, many families cannot afford basic necessities.



Our cooking and hospitality vocational course students prepare packaged meals for vulnerable families amid the ongoing protests throughout Lebanon.



Students from Anera's vocational training courses in plumbing installed a network of pipes to collect sewage and run-off in Rihanye camp for Syrian refugees. The infrastructure improves the camp's sanitation and reduces flooding —



In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



Asmaa is Dressing Her West Bank Town of Beit Fourik

When Asmaa was 15 years old, she began sewing as a hobby. Now it is her source of income. As her reputation as a great dressmaker grew, so did her workload. The problem was, she sewed everything by hand. The work was time-consuming and inefficient. With funding from IRUSA, Anera provides entrepreneurial women with start-up capital for equipment, including a new sewing machine for Asmaa, as well as business training to help her make better use of her time and finances. Asmaa has seen a huge uptick in her income. Orders often come from her neighbors, but she also advertises on Facebook. Word is spreading about the quality of her work. “I want to grow and include more relatives who have craft and embroidery talents. I’d like to have a family business,” she says.

READ MORE
anera.org/asmaa



Water for 20,000 Palestinians in Jabalia Refugee Camp, Gaza

Living close to a fully functioning water well is a lifeline in Gaza. Unfortunately, this was not the case for the residents of Jabalia refugee camp. The Jabalia water well was established in 1970 as the main water access point in the refugee camp. The well was outdated and in very poor condition, making it vulnerable to flooding. The building around the well was also on the verge of collapse. In the winter months, it was inoperational for 6 to 12 hours every day. In 2019 Jabalia’s water situation improved when Anera, with funding from Islamic Relief USA, carried out a major rehabilitation project to improve the performance and capacity of Jabalia’s well. The new water pump, which serves over 20,000 residents, is fully operational 24 hours per day. It also more than triples water output and requires less fuel.

WATCH VIDEO
anera.org/gazawater



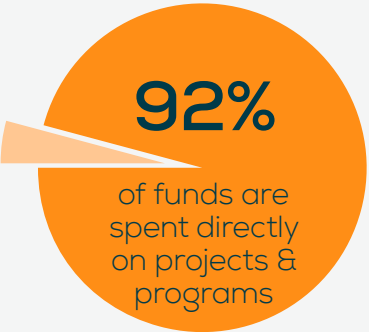
Anera Nursing Graduates Serve Refugee Seniors in Lebanon

Recent graduates of Anera’s introductory nursing course had a choice to make. Where should they do their on-the-job training? The students live in Burj El Barajneh Palestinian Refugee Camp in Beirut. As a group, they discussed how best to gain experience and serve their community. Several suggested that they visit the camp’s elderly residents, as there are many aging seniors unable to leave their homes in the camp for routine health checkups. And so the Mobile Senior Health Care Unit was born. Nour, a 21-year-old Palestinian, says, “People love to see us arriving at their homes. We have our tools, we have the skills and we are ready to serve. Our elderly neighbors are so glad, they asked us to never stop visiting them! We are also keeping them company, making them smile — that’s also important for their health.”

READ MORE
anera.org/nursinggrads

JOIN THE ANERA VISIONARIES!

The Visionary program is a community of dedicated individuals who envision a brighter future for Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan. Increase your impact in 2020 by becoming a monthly donor today. Anera Visionaries sustain core programs and help Anera respond in times of crisis. Become a Visionary today, and



- \$15/month** can help cover the cost of **30 blood tests a month** to screen donated blood.
- \$30/month** can help provide **2 at-risk youth each month** with school kits to help bridge the gap in their education.
- \$100/month** can help train and mentor **one farmer a month** on new water-saving irrigation techniques.



anera.org/donate-monthly

Already a Visionary? To increase your donation or make a one-time gift, visit our donor portal at anera.org/donorportal or contact Maha Akkeh (202-266-9726 or makkeh@anera.org).



1111 14th Street NW, #400
Washington, DC 20005

A Humanitarian Crisis Threatens Lebanon

ANERA NEWS, ISSUE 207 | **WINTER 2020**



*A young Palestinian girl
bites into a ripe tomato
picked from her family's
Anera-built greenhouse
in Beit Lahia, Gaza.*