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**Photo:**

*Before Anera upgraded the water system in Sabra, Gaza, little Nadia often didn't even have enough water to wash her hands. This project was funded by IRUSA.*

## A Time for Community

For a second year, Muslims around the world are now celebrating the holy month of Ramadan under the unusual restrictions created by the pandemic. This is a month when the observant fast from dawn to dusk, as a reminder that the material world is temporary and to focus on the spiritual. The usual gatherings in mosques and public spaces and with loved ones are impossible for many families this year. COVID-19 cases have surged to new heights in Palestine, Lebanon and Jordan in recent months, even as people in many wealthier nations are feeling more hopeful as mass vaccination campaigns ramp up.

Worse, the restrictions necessitated by the coronavirus have led to new economic hardships for many who can least afford it. Poverty in the West Bank likely doubled last year. In Gaza, 64% of people are now impoverished. At the same time, many governments are continuing to decrease international aid.

As longtime Anera supporters know, every year during Ramadan we assemble food parcels with an array of pantry essentials for hungry families. In Gaza, we're doing things a little differently this year. Instead of parcels, we will be providing food assistance vouchers to 1,000

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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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Did you know...

that the combined value of in-kind donations that Americares has given to Anera in our 30-year partnership makes that organization the largest single donor to Anera?

Thank you for your ongoing support, Americares!

A Time for Community

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As part of our Ramadan response in Lebanon, families are coming to our cooking site in Tripoli to pick up falafel sandwiches, funded by Falafel Inc. They bring their own containers, to minimize waste.

vulnerable families. With support from IRUSA, we will serve a total of 5,400 people. The vouchers are redeemable at local shops, giving families the freedom to buy the food items that are the most appropriate for their needs. One food voucher for a family in Gaza costs \$70, allowing them to purchase groceries to prepare nutritious iftar meals — when Muslims break their fast at sunset — throughout the month.

According to the UN, the unemployment rate in Gaza is the highest in the world. These vouchers will help keep local markets in business, which means access to quality foods at reasonable prices and jobs for those who live in the community.

In Lebanon, soaring inflation has become an additional burden to families struggling to make ends meet. Since Ramadan last year, the cost of a typical iftar meal has tripled. Fights break out over a bottle of milk or a loaf of bread. Samar El Yassir, Anera’s country director in Lebanon, says “We’ve been through years of civil war, and yet I still haven’t seen it this bad.”

All of this makes distributing food parcels extra important this Ramadan. The unstable currency makes vouchers unviable in Lebanon. Instead, Anera is providing a food parcel and hygiene kit to 1,050 vulnerable families. \$80 allows us to deliver a food parcel to a vulnerable family living in a refugee camp in Beirut or Bekaa. We fill the food parcels with foods that appeal to local palates and ensure nutritional diversity, such as rice, beans, dates, tuna, cooking oil, vegetables and spices like za’atar. In addition to the food package that will feed families for one month, Anera will also distribute a household disinfection and hygiene kit to each family so that they have the necessary supplies to stay safe during the pandemic.

Too many need no reminder of what it feels like to go hungry this Ramadan. Breaking the fast to enjoy a healthy, filling meal means so much to families in need. **We are grateful that Anera’s generous community of supporters will help struggling families have a more festive and joyful Ramadan.**

Here's how you can help this Ramadan



\$15 = 1 COVID-19 vaccine for a refugee in Lebanon



\$38 = 20 blood bags for Gaza's blood bank



\$70 = 1 food voucher for a family in Gaza



\$80 = 1 food parcel + hygiene kit for a family in Lebanon

Donate at [anera.org/give4ramadan](https://anera.org/give4ramadan)

WHY I SUPPORT ANERA | CONNECTING TO MY GRANDPARENTS' LEGACY

By Ruth MacFarlane Hunter

In the early 1900s, both of my maternal grandparents emigrated from Lebanon to the United States. They met and married in Massachusetts, where my mother and I were later born. My support for Anera connects me to their legacy in ways that are very special. I first became aware of Anera’s work more than 30 years ago when I was working as an engineer for the federal government and saw Anera on the list of charities participating in the Combined Federal Campaign. What caught my attention was Anera’s youth vocational training programs in Lebanon, since my Sitto (grandmother) was a lifelong supporter of education.

Now retired, I primarily **make my donations to Anera through a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from my individual retirement account (IRA).** Donating this way allows me to give larger donations than I would otherwise be able to, because of the tax benefits it offers and my IRA’s positive stock market performance. This has allowed me to qualify for the Anera Leadership Circle at the Karam Circle level (\$5,000-\$9,999).

Being a member of the Anera Leadership Circle has deepened my connection with and understanding of Anera’s work. **I love being able to see the impact of my support for Anera through special webinars and update calls with Anera’s program staff and participants.** Giving at the Karam Circle level is particularly meaningful to me because my grandfather’s name was Karam!

If my grandmother knew about all of the ways that my donations to Anera supported vulnerable communities in her home country, I know she would be as proud to contribute to Anera as I am.

Learn more about donating from your IRA at [anera.org/anera-qcd](https://anera.org/anera-qcd)



Ruth MacFarlane Hunter



# Are you on social media? Do you follow Anera?

If you are, great. Please share our content with friends and comment on our posts. If you aren't, you're missing out! We post regularly on all the major channels, sharing news items, success stories, and just plain fun stuff. On these pages, we feature some of our most popular posts from the last quarter.

**Anera**  
Published by Dan Riley · January 14 ·

Niveen, 19, lives in Gaza. After graduating from Anera PLUS, she now works as a freelance front-end software developer and user-experience and user-interface developer.

"Unemployment is rife in Palestine. Women, in particular, go through extra challenges. So programs like PLUS motivate people and give them skills to set them up for a better future. The PLUS program helped me a lot to get a job."

Read the story to hear more from Anera PLUS graduates like Niveen in their own words.

#education #AneraPLUS #Palestine #Gaza #SoftwareEngineering #coding #CareerAccelerator



ANERA.ORG  
Meet The Palestinian Coders and Developers Building the Future from Gaza - Anera

**aneraorg** · Following  
AUBMC - American University of Beirut Medic...

**aneraorg** "I have breast cancer and have been receiving chemotherapy in the hospital for 45 days. I come in once every two weeks."

"I thank God because my condition has stabilized and I am now feeling better. I am a mother so I have to be able to take care of my children. Everyday I go for a walk for an hour and a half."

"I have a supportive and loving family who provide me with the psychological support I need to go on and win this."

— Thuraya (pictured), 27, is a chemotherapy patient and cancer fighter at the American University of Beirut.

Liked by naser\_s\_qadous and others  
MARCH 23

Add a comment... Post



**aneraorg** · Following

**aneraorg** ❤️ Something special for your Valentine ❤️

Happy Valentine's Day! Send screenshot, or save these images from your friends at Anera to share with someone special in your life!

To download the original files click the link in our bio!

8w

lizzdemarest This is so adorable! ❤️  
8w 1 like Reply

cloud090909 Awwwww ❤️

Liked by linda\_wafi and others  
FEBRUARY 14

Add a comment... Post



**Top Tweet** earned 7,660 impressions

*Press release:* Anera will provide funding needed to purchase 40,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, sufficient to vaccinate 20,000 Palestinian refugees residing in Palestinian camps across Lebanon.

1/4

3 12 35

**Anera**  
3,216 followers  
2mo ·

In North Gaza, Anera has begun employing **16 women** from the Cooperative Society for Saving and Lending women's center, our local partner, to prepare food for **65 families** who are in isolation due to the pandemic. Delivery of meals not only helps vulnerable families financially, it also encourages them to stay home and limit exposure to other members of their communities.

This program also benefits **20 local farmers**, who earn much-needed extra income, providing fresh produce each day.

The meals the women at CSSL prepare are nutritious and familiar, consisting of meat, rice, bread, fruit, and traditional side dishes. As each family's quarantine lifts after 14-21 days and another isolates, Anera will keep the supplies of healthy meals coming. The program will run for six months and serve approximately **5,400 individuals** with daily meals during isolation.

#Gaza #Palestine #food #health #nutrition #healthyteating #stayhome #COVID19



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Reactions

Like Comment Share Send

**Anera**  
Published by Dan Riley · April 3 at 10:00 AM ·

Our agricultural students in Bourkayel, Akkar, Lebanon harvested, packaged and distributed produce to 28 vulnerable families in the area. Each family received a kilo of tomatoes, two kilos of cucumbers and packages of cabbage and peppers.

Anera is growing its agricultural programs in Lebanon to combat the ongoing economic and growing food insecurity crises facing the country — all made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

#Lebanon #Akkar #Lebanese #agriculture #farming #farmer #gardens #GardensofAnera #photooftheday #potd



**Top Tweet** earned 7,172 impressions

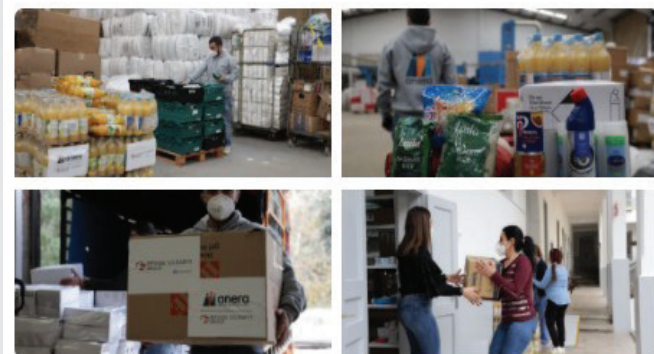
When you dress too warm to enjoy the date palms in Deir Al Balah, **#Gaza**.  
[pic.twitter.com/efDFtpQGo](https://pic.twitter.com/efDFtpQGo)



3 11 42

**Top media Tweet** earned 4,777 impressions

Thanks to **@refugee\_group** for generously donating food & **#hygiene #aid** to those who need it most! Anera distributed it to vulnerable families in **#Beirut, #Lebanon** LB. 🙏 Thank you to everyone who donated to Refugee Solidarity Group's campaign to make this happen! **@ann\_obyrne**  
[pic.twitter.com/jEfS8kSICn](https://pic.twitter.com/jEfS8kSICn)



17 22



# In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



## Sewing Students in Lebanon Find Hope – and an Income

*"Thank God I found this course. It saved us. I was able to pay back my debts and now I can afford food and shelter for me and my family. I also learned a new and useful profession."*

— Hassan (pictured)

Like Hassan, many Syrian refugee youth are out of school and need the skills to find decent jobs. With the pandemic and the economic collapse in Lebanon, they are trying to survive through a financial drought. Thanks to the support of UNICEF, youth participating in Anera's sewing courses are learning new skills and earning a wage while making much-needed face masks.

Anera remains committed to helping youth in Lebanon continue to learn, produce and thrive. Our staff are all committed to reviving hope in these youngsters' hearts, because we truly believe that we are not well, unless we are all well.

FULL ARTICLE  
[anera.org/sewing-lebanon](https://anera.org/sewing-lebanon)



## Wafaa Finds Hope and Cheer in Raising Sheep

Wafaa and her family are from Silwad, a town located northeast of Ramallah, in Palestine. *"I am a housewife with five kids,"* she says. *"My family is poor."* Her husband, 56, is unemployed and struggles with mental health issues.

Recently, Wafaa began a sheep-raising project through Anera's Women Can program. With the sheep's milk, Wafaa can make cheese for sale. One kilo of cheese sells for \$8 to \$10 in the West Bank. Because of COVID-19 and the current harsh economic situation, she says this project has come at just the right time. *"We badly need to have a source of income – even a small one."*

Anera's Women Can program supports income-generating activities for women who are the primary breadwinners in their families. Wafaa completed Anera's initial training course which provides small-business entrepreneurs the skills they need to manage their businesses.

FULL ARTICLE  
[anera.org/wafaa-sheep](https://anera.org/wafaa-sheep)



## New Water Connections Make Niveen's Life Much Healthier

*"It was a big change in our lives when our water connection was fixed. Now that we can rely on a water supply at home, with good water pressure too, we can keep the children and the house clean. And we can wash our produce. A lot of times I had to spend a good deal of money on water."*

— Niveen, pictured at left with her daughter, lives in the Sabra neighborhood in Gaza City and is the breadwinner for a family of nine.

With support from Islamic Relief USA, Anera upgraded and repaired the water network in Sabra, replacing decayed, undersized steel pipes with new PVC pipes. Niveen's family and 471 others in Sabra now have a reliable, strong connection to water supplies. As part of Anera's water and sanitation work in Gaza, public health educators conduct awareness sessions about water-borne disease and proven good practices for avoiding them.

WATCH  
[anera.org/sabra-water](https://anera.org/sabra-water)

# Join the Anera Leadership Circle

Rawad | Pioneer Circle  
Karam | Generosity Circle  
Amal | Hope Circle  
Hayat | Life Circle  
Sumud | Steadfastness Circle

[anera.org/leadership-circle](https://anera.org/leadership-circle)

## The Leadership Circle recognizes the generosity of Anera's most dedicated donors.

Various levels of membership are available and each comes with a variety of special privileges.

When you join the Anera Leadership Circle, you invest in communities. Your support helps vulnerable refugees, families, and communities overcome conflict, poverty and displacement.

»» Have questions about the Leadership Circle or want to learn more about how you can get involved? Contact Christina Andeweg at [candeweg@anera.org](mailto:candeweg@anera.org) or (202) 266-9718.



»» **DID YOU KNOW** if you're 70.5 or older, you can create a tax-advantaged gift from your IRA? These gifts reduce your future tax burden, and make an immediate impact on the health and well-being of refugees making a better life for themselves.

Visit [anera.org/anera-qcd](https://anera.org/anera-qcd) to get started.





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## A Time for Community

ANERA NEWS, ISSUE 212 | **SPRING 2021**

*Anera donors are providing the funding needed to purchase 40,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine, sufficient to vaccinate 20,000 Palestinian refugees residing in Palestinian camps across Lebanon.*

