



in this issue

1-2

Building Beyond Blockade in Gaza

3

By the Numbers:
Ramadan Food Aid

3

Why I Support Anera
by Sara Roy

4-5

Pictures From 15 Years of Anera's
Work in Gaza

6

In Case You Missed It:
What's New on Anera's Website

Photo:

Two boys in their rooftop garden in Deir Al Balah, Gaza. Their family is growing strawberries - very successfully - in barrels that use little soil or water. Jamie Demarest, photographer

Building Beyond Blockade

In June 2007 Israel's air, land and sea blockade of Gaza started in the wake of Hamas' assumption of power. It is 15 years later and the siege is tighter than ever. A wall and the sea imprison Gaza's two million residents.

The blockade has created problems wherever you look in Gaza. The economy is closed off — import and export of goods are severely restricted. Unemployment rates in Gaza hover around 50 percent.

Hospitals suffer from a lack of specialized medical professionals as well as healthcare supplies and medicines. Essentials like water and electricity have long been in short supply. Young people rarely can leave Gaza to pursue educational dreams.

And most Palestinians from Gaza have never left the territory, even to visit their sisters and brothers in the rest of Palestine.

Anera's community of supporters has been there all along. The work we do is not a response. It's building beyond the present, beyond the bandaids we occasionally need to apply. The Anera family is investing in the future so that Gaza can thrive and get better over time. Anera helps families flourish despite the blockade.

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 & CEO

Editors: Liz Demarest and Dan Riley

Contributing Writers:

Liz Demarest, Dan Riley, Sara Roy

Contributing Photographers:

Nada Dajani, Jamie Demarest, Liz Demarest,
Rania Elhilou, Hisham Mustapha, David Snyder,
Marco Wramen, Ibrahim Zaanoun

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

Did you know...

The number of Palestinians traveling through the Beit Hanoun (Erez) crossing has dropped by 85% since the blockade began.

Building Beyond Blockade in Gaza *continued from p. 1*

Gaza holds so much promise and Anera’s deep-rooted staff see that in every community they serve. Our Gaza team — all of whom are Palestinians born and raised in Gaza — have lived through the blockade themselves. They have witnessed and experienced so much deterioration in the society around them, whether from the blockade itself or from the series of bombings that have happened since 2008.

As the reality on the ground shifts, the Gaza team evolves, adapts and pivots the projects they deliver to help their communities in the most impactful, relevant ways possible. They’re meeting needs while working to build sustainable change within the numerous constraints of living in Gaza.

Anera works with the resources that the Gaza people have available to them. Sun is in plentiful supply, so we have brought solar power to community centers, health facilities, water wells and schools. We’ve also built solar-powered irrigation systems on family farms.

There is space to grow food, whether in the ground or in planting systems that allow for the smart use of water. Our expert team of Palestinian agronomists is helping familes establish greenhouses in their yards and on their roofs. So they can grow their own food and make an income to support themselves.

Water is a treasured resource in Gaza. Anera’s reservoirs, wells, and water networks have helped hundreds of thousands of Gaza residents to gain access to water. Recently, we have been installing reverse osmosis systems in schools, clinics, hospitals and community centers. These systems take the municipal water, which is undrinkable, and purify it so that those served by the centers can drink clean water from the tap and they can use the clean water for delicate medical machines.

Baked into all of our programs in Gaza is livelihood generation. Our work fosters economic growth by engaging community members in in rehabilitation efforts that support their own communities. Anera's projects directly provide work for people across a variety of sectors. We partner with local institutions, with material and capacity-building support. We locally procure items for our programs. And we work with entrepreneurs to build up their small businesses.

Anera’s work in Gaza is an investment in the future of that beautiful place and the people who live there. And what says that better than the support we provide to Gaza preschools? From building stimulating learning spaces and training teachers to feeding preschoolers healthy meals and promoting positive parenting, our early childhood development is sowing the seeds for a hopeful future in Gaza. That’s what it’s all about!

By the Numbers: Ramadan Food Aid



3 countries

For the first time, Anera delivered Ramadan food aid in **Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan**.

14,491 vouchers

went to families in Palestine and Lebanon so they could choose their own food at **local grocery stores**.

9,200 parcels

filled with 100+ pounds of nutritious food, were distributed to families in Jordan and Lebanon

700 hot meals

made by members of a women's cooperative, were distributed to families throughout the month.

WHY I SUPPORT ANERA

by Sara Roy
Senior Research Scholar, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University

Gaza has endured occupation and dispossession for more years than Anera has existed. Gaza has been under varying forms of closure since 1991. The blockade — which is really an intensified military closure — is approaching its 16th year. It has destroyed normal trade relations upon which Gaza’s small economy largely depends. The resulting isolation of Gaza from the West Bank, Israel, the Middle East, and the world, has devastated the local economy, producing high levels of unemployment (approaching and at times exceeding 50 percent overall and well over 60 percent for those 15-29 years) and impoverishment.

For Gaza it is not a question of economic growth and development but of basic humanitarian requirements where around 80 percent of the population depends on some form of humanitarian assistance to meet their primary needs. Although there is enough food available in the local market, most people do not have the money to purchase it. Without donor aid from Anera and other international organizations, these tragic statistics would be even worse.

Yet, it is also critical to understand that Gaza cannot be understood solely through the lens of suffering and conflict. Gaza is also home to rebuilding and innovation. The constraining factor in Gaza has never been insufficient talent.

I have been a supporter of Anera for over 35 years. Anera has long played a vital role in Gaza, responding to both immediate and longer-term needs — from supplying medicines to spearheading early childhood development programs. Anera’s impact is real and no one should ever doubt that.

Read Sara's full piece at anera.org/why-i-give-gaza





Building Beyond Blockade

Photos come from annual reports going back to 2008.

Some Images from 15 Years of Anera's Work in Gaza

1. Delivered fortified milk and biscuits to thousands of preschoolers, 2009. **2.** Renovated the Mosadar sports club, inside and out, 2016. **3.** Installed solar panels to power water pumping systems for agricultural water wells in northern Gaza, 2021. **4.** Laid a new agricultural road in Khan Younis, 2012. **5.** Renovated scores of preschools, 2014. **6.** Extended the water network in a village in Deir Al Balah so all the homes had running water., 2008. **7.** Installed a new play space for autistic children at the Right to Live Society in Shejayia, 2011. **8.** Added new classrooms to the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children, 2013. **9.** Delivered chickens to families throughout Gaza, to provide food and generate income, 2010. **10.** Built greenhouses and provided seedlings and training for hundreds of families, 2019. **11.** Graduated dozens of new software engineers from our coding boot camp, 2020. **12.** Hosted summer camps for hundreds of children, 2013. **13.** Distributed hot meals to thousands of families displaced by the May bombings of 2021.



In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



Advancing Education and Women's Leadership Through Infrastructure in Palestine

Anera with support from USAID, is building an additional floor at the Rosary Sisters School in Gaza City. The floor will provide five new classrooms which will each accommodate 25 students. The project also includes new administration rooms. All told, the additional space will provide learning opportunities to 125 girls and boys per year.

Waheba, a teacher at the school, says her students will greatly benefit from the new space. “We do Model UN each year but struggle because of the lack of space. Now, with the expanded building, I have the space to develop my ideas.”

FULL ARTICLE
anera.org/rosary-school



Delivering Chronic Disease Medicines to Jordan

Jordan’s efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 have led to economic hardship, putting pressure on healthcare providers that are now struggling financially. This is especially the case for vulnerable Jordanian populations and refugees, many of whom cannot afford on-going treatment.

Thanks to a generous medical donation from International Health Partners, thousands of patients in Jordan are now receiving treatments that they otherwise could not afford.

Anera recently completed distribution of this shipment of medicines to a diverse group of healthcare partners that serve in-camp and out-of-camp refugees as well as women survivors of gender-based violence.

FULL ARTICLE
anera.org/jordan-medicine



Lighting the Way through Lebanon’s Electricity Crisis

Lebanon’s failing national electricity company has accumulated \$40 billion of debt and produces less than 20% of the energy required to power the country. Years without investment have caused aging and inefficient state-run power plants to fall into disrepair, significantly reducing the sector’s capacity to absorb the shock of the economic crisis. Now, residents can only rely upon the national electrical grid for one to three hours of power each day.

By investing in solar panels, training students for jobs in the clean energy sector, and distributing solar-powered lights to families, Anera is ensuring that, though Lebanon’s most vulnerable are without energy, they are not without power.

FULL ARTICLE
anera.org/lebanon-electric



Join Anera's Leadership Circle.

When you join the Anera Leadership Circle, you invest in communities. Your support helps vulnerable refugees, families and communities overcome conflict, poverty and displacement. The Leadership Circle recognizes the generosity of Anera’s most dedicated donors. Various levels of membership are available and each comes with special benefits.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

(Each benefit adds to the list before.)

\$2,500-\$4,999

Rawad | Pioneer Circle

- Quarterly webinars with program staff
- Special recognition in Anera’s annual report and at Anera’s annual gala
- Special annual gift from the Middle East
- Invitation to regional members-only receptions

\$5,000-\$9,999

Karam | Generosity Circle

- Quarterly program update calls with CEO and country directors

\$10,000-\$24,999

Amal | Hope Circle

- Exclusive access to annual sample of Anera’s photo archives

\$25,000-\$49,999

Hayat | Life Circle

- Invitation to VIP reception at Anera’s annual gala

\$50,000+

Sumud | Steadfastness Circle

- Exclusive opportunity for personal meeting with Anera CEO
- See your support in action, visit Anera’s programs in the Middle East

Questions? Contact Skylar Lawrence at slawrence@anera.org or (202) 266-9729.



2022 Gala Save the date!

We're having our Annual Gala **IN PERSON** this year. It's going to be at the Mayflower Hotel in **Washington, DC on Friday, September 30.**

You don't want to miss this great evening of entertainment and visiting with old and new friends. **We'll see you there.**



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

Building Beyond Blockade in Gaza

ANERA NEWS, ISSUE 216 | **SPRING 2022**

With funding from Humanity First UK, Anera installed reverse osmosis water purifying systems at the Al-Huda Health Center and the Patient's Friends Benevolent Society in Gaza. Both have clean tap water available for the 11,000+ patients they serve each month. Projects like this are vital to access safe drinking water as well as water self-sufficiency behind the Gaza blockade.

