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**Photo:** Children at Ard El Tofula  
Preschool enjoying their breakfast  
from Anera's F2F program. Tuition  
is \$100 a year, but fewer than 20% of  
families can pay the fee. This nutritious  
meal is vital to the preschoolers' health  
and their ability to learn.

## The Importance of Interweaving Anera Programs in the Middle East

The humanitarian and development needs in the communities where Anera works are frequently all too visible, and often it is tempting to rush in with stopgap measures to address acute distress. While Anera does deliver emergency relief, our staff have worked tirelessly over the years to establish a network of connected programs that address all aspects of life. Our programs are aimed at treating the root causes of poverty, food insecurity, and lack of access to basic necessities like education and water, rather than just the symptoms of them.

As food insecurity continues to grow throughout the region amidst growing economic instability, the importance of Anera's integrated agricultural and economic security programs is more apparent than ever.

**Palestine** | In Gaza, Anera's Farms to Fosool (F2F) program connects Anera's greenhouse program, women's cooperatives and preschools in a holistic circle to meet the needs of each group through mutual support. Ard El Tofula Preschool located in Um Al Nasser, a marginalized Bedouin village in North Gaza governorate is a participant in the program. Like many children in Gaza, most of the students come from food-insecure families, making it a struggle to fully engage with school and their peers.

# credits

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## Did you know...

Anera's Farms to Fosool (F2F) program delivers freshly prepared and nutritional meals to 11 preschools across Gaza, reaching 1,170 children every morning. The food helps improve their mental and physical health and development.

# Interweaving Programs

*continued from p. 1*

Thanks to the F2F program, the children at Ard El Tofula are now excited every morning for breakfast at school. Women at local cooperatives make the meals from fresh produce grown at local farms. Parents note that they're incorporating more veggies at home at their children's request. Teachers also note that students are more engaged in class now that they're getting their nutritional needs met.

This year, Ard El Tofula Preschool also received solar-powered reverse osmosis systems as a part of the expanded F2F program. In the past, the school had to spend a large part of their budget purchasing drinking water. Now those funds are being used to provide the students with a better education.

**Jordan** | Anera restarted its programming in Jordan four years ago, focusing mostly on healthcare and informal education. But this year we're expanding into the agricultural sector by building greenhouses on family rooftops. Not only do the gardens provide food and a source of income, but they also create a real connection to the land that boosts mental health and overall wellbeing.

Our rooftop gardens in Jordan (and Lebanon!) are based on water-smart growing systems we piloted in Palestine and will primarily benefit women heads of households. The families selected for rooftop greenhouse installations learn about pesticide use, water-saving practices, crop rotation and everything related to good farming.

One participant already has plans for how she will use the produce she harvests to build a livelihood for herself and her children. Diabetes is a growing concern throughout the region. Ghada sees her greenhouse as an opportunity to provide nutritious sweets without added sugars to help fill a need in the market. She plans on making jams from the strawberries she's growing to sell in her community. These greenhouses aren't only a source of income to these families, but a source of hope and pride.

**Lebanon** | For years, one calamity has piled upon the next. While each individual crisis has created immediate need, the effect of Lebanon's overlapping crises has shifted circumstances for all vulnerable populations in the country for the foreseeable future.

Youth from our vocational training programs in Lebanon are at the heart of what we do. We provide intensive job training in marketable skills like cooking, sewing, plumbing, construction, farming and nursing. Anera also includes courses in life skills and social work.

Our projects put the young people from our vocational education programs to work right away, using their new knowledge to help their communities while getting practical on-the-job training and earning an income. By empowering the next generation in Lebanon, Anera is taking a step to shift agency to local populations who can best utilize and allocate their resources to meet challenges.

# By the Numbers: *Water Challenges in the Middle East*



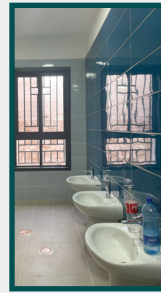
**GAZA** | **97% of the population** rely on informal and unregulated private water tankers due to contaminated ground water.



**WEST BANK** | **80% of available water** is from groundwater due to restrictions on access to the Jordan River and other above-ground water sources.



**LEBANON** | **Over 70% of the population** currently faces critical water shortages due to the ongoing economic and environmental crises.



**JORDAN** | **Only 77% of existing sanitation systems** are safely managed and only **a third of schools have basic sanitation services.**

**YOU** can support families in the Middle East this summer when you give at [anera.org/donate](https://anera.org/donate)

## OBSERVATIONS FROM OUR VISIT TO ANERA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS | by Bruce Blaisdell & Emily Shamieh

*Bruce Blaisdell has been the executive director of nonprofit agencies providing early childhood development (ECD) programs in greater Boston and has been a long-term board member of the largest ECD provider in Massachusetts. Emily Shamieh was the principal of two elementary schools, serving low-income students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5.*



Bruce and Emily (at left) on their recent trip to the West Bank.

Back on December 5, 2022, we had the honor of visiting two early childhood development programs and one elementary school in the West Bank, funded in part by Anera under the direction of Sulieman Mleahat.

We were particularly interested in visiting these programs because of our background in preschool and elementary education. **Based on our experience, we made the following observations from our visits:**

- » The ECD programs were located in attractive, new, well-maintained buildings. The classrooms were very well-equipped with age-appropriate materials. The teachers appeared to be well-trained and were engaging the children effectively.
- » The lead teachers in each of the early education sites were knowledgeable and passionate about their programs.
- » Anera agricultural programs are being interwoven with the school and others like it. All introduced by Naser Qadous, the agriculture programs manager at Anera.
- » Finally, we were impressed with Sulieman's vision and passion for the existing programs and creation of new ones.

# Building Resilient Communities

## The Nexus of Development and Relief

by Samar El-Yassir, Lebanon Country Director



Anera agronomist Naser Qadous inspects a rooftop garden in Lebanon.

In today's world, the nexus of development and relief has become a critical area of focus. In recognizing that humanitarian response and long-term development efforts are interconnected, it becomes apparent that a coordinated approach is necessary to effectively address the needs of vulnerable populations. Our partner, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), has been at the forefront of promoting the nexus of development and relief, and recently started a dialogue on this topic in Lebanon.

**At Anera, we are working towards building resilient communities and enhancing local capacities in low-income countries.** One of our initiatives includes the use of **rooftop gardens** using modified hydroponic methods to promote food security. The gardens not only provide a source of fresh produce but also create economic opportunities for communities. **This is an excellent example of the nexus of development and relief, as the gardens provide immediate relief and also promote long-term development.**

However, implementing programs that address the nexus of development and relief is not without challenges. **A shift in mindset is required, and there is a need for collaboration and partnership among different organizations.** Additionally, there must be a willingness to take a long-term view and invest in building local capacity and resilience.

Many organizations have recognized the importance of intertwining development and relief and are working towards incorporating this understanding into their program work. UNOCHA has been promoting this approach through coordination and collaboration among different humanitarian actors. The World Food Programme is also using a nexus approach to address food insecurity in low-income countries. Through their cash-based transfer program, they provide cash assistance to vulnerable communities, which not only addresses immediate food needs but also strengthens local economies.

As we work towards building resilient communities, it is essential to remember that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. **Communities have unique needs and require tailored solutions.** The nexus of development and relief approach recognizes this, and by working collaboratively, we can ensure that our responses are effective, efficient, and sustainable.

In sum, the nexus of development and relief is a critical approach that promotes sustainable outcomes. **By building resilient communities, addressing underlying vulnerabilities, and promoting sustainable development, we can create a better future for all.** I invite readers to share their perspectives on this approach and how it can be implemented in different contexts. **Let's work together to build a more effective and sustainable humanitarian system.**

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Sawsan is a mother of five living in El Buss camp. She has an Anera's rooftop garden and says it gives "them a feeling of freedom. Through Anera we are living a dream and feel a connection to the land."



Hospitals and medical centers across Lebanon face regular power outages, putting the lives of patients at risk. Anera is installing solar panels at medical facilities by hiring trainees from our solar job skills course.



This family in Tyre, Lebanon is now able to grow and enjoy fresh vegetables and fruits from their rooftop greenhouse. Before they were food insecure. They also now earn extra income from the sale of surplus produce.

# In Case You Missed It

THE LATEST FROM ANERA.ORG



## Vital Cancer Medicines for Gaza

Anera has long supported Gaza's health community and now, thanks to a donation from International Health Partners, **Anera has shipped a much-needed supply of bortezomib medicine to the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital** in Gaza to help maintain a steady provision of medicines and treatment services for blood cancer patients there. Before the shipment arrived, the hospital had experienced a two-month gap in chemotherapy pharmacy supplies.

Ibrahim Sobh, a pharmacist in the hospital's chemotherapy preparation pharmacy, says the pharmacy is one of **"the most important pillars of the only hospital that serves cancer patients in Gaza."**

FULL ARTICLE  
[anera.org/gaza-cancer](https://anera.org/gaza-cancer)



## Training the Next Generation of Beekeepers in Lebanon

Lebanon's varied terrain and distinct flora provide an ideal habitat for bees, making the country a major supplier of honey and other bee products. Although this is true, Lebanon's beekeeping industry faces significant challenges, including a lack of modern equipment and procedures, climate change and pesticide use.

Despite these obstacles, **Anera, with the support of UNICEF, is successfully promoting sustainable practices and training beekeepers to adapt to changing conditions.** We are providing young beekeepers with the support they need to flourish. Seventeen students took part in the UNICEF supported course in North Governorate.

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



## A New Preschool in As Sammu, Palestine

In May 2023, **Anera and Palestine's Ministry of Education inaugurated a new preschool in the West Bank Palestinian village of As Sammu, located near Hebron.**

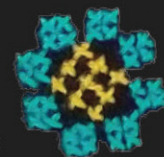
Before the new school was built, the children of As Sammu had to use run-down and rented rooms as classrooms. Now they have a safe and stimulating learning environment to grow their talents for the future. Anera also provided the school with child-sized furniture and educational materials for learning.

Generous funding from long-time Anera donors made this school-building project possible.

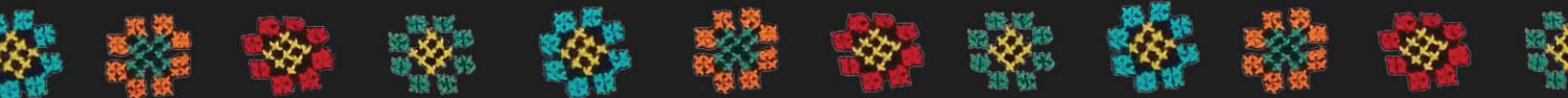
WATCH VIDEO  
[anera.org/as-sammu](https://anera.org/as-sammu)



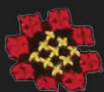
# Anera's Annual Gala



Stitch by Stitch: Interwoven Solutions



Mark your calendar! You don't want to miss the evening we are planning.



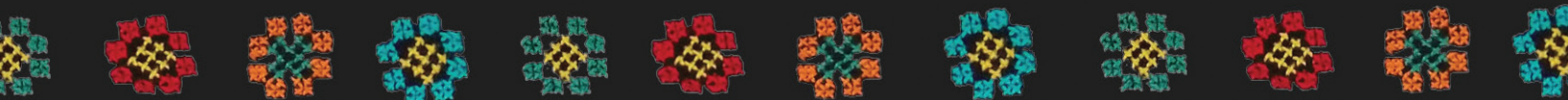
It's at the Ritz-Carlton in Washington, DC.  
On Friday, October 13 at 6:30 ET.



Each stitch represents a deliberate action, a choice made in pursuit of a larger purpose. We make decisions, gather resources, and take small steps that gradually shape our creation. Like an embroiderer selecting colors, textures, and patterns, we choose our tools and strategies to bring our creation to life. Tangled threads don't get in our way! Building something worthwhile demands dedication, effort, and investment of time and energy.


**Anera's humanitarian and development projects are woven together – to build livelihoods, foster civic engagement, and create long-term change.** Education projects train young people in skills they can put to work right away to help their communities. They earn money, help their neighbors and gain professional experience all at once. Our medical aid program delivers vital medicines across the region, while community workers run health awareness sessions. Our food security projects not only deliver aid in the form of vouchers and food parcels, they also build greenhouses and train families in farming best practices.

**Anera's 2023 Annual Gala is raising funds for our intertwined program work in the Middle East. REGISTER NOW or BECOME A SPONSOR at [anera.org/gala](https://anera.org/gala)**



## INTERWEAVING ANERA'S PROGRAMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

ANERA NEWS, ISSUE 221 | **SUMMER 2023**



*At the Kids' Land Preschool in Gaza, we installed a greenhouse that contains water-smart wicking bed barrels. Here, students can learn about agriculture and stay nourished throughout the school day with the produce they grow.*