



## in this issue

1-2

War in Gaza

3

The Situation in Gaza

*as of October 27, 2023*

3

Thank You, Anera Community

4-5

Anera's Staff in Gaza Are Heroic

6

Bracing for What's Coming in  
Lebanon: A Nation on the Edge

*by Samar El Yassir*

**Photo:** Children walk past the ruins of a building bombed by Israeli planes, October 10, 2023. Photo by Ibrahim Zaanoun.

## War in Gaza

On October 7, 2023, armed groups from Gaza entered Israeli towns, farming communities, and military facilities near the Gaza Strip, killing and capturing Israeli forces and civilians. Israel declared war on Hamas as a result and began a campaign of barraging Gaza with airstrikes and forcing people to evacuate their homes in the north.

The massacres of October 7 are a continuation of the bloodshed we have seen for decades in the absence of a political solution. All the deaths before and since form one terrible sum of civilian suffering. It is a grim tally that will continue growing without action from the international community.

In Gaza, there is a humanitarian catastrophe unfolding before the world's eyes. Forced evacuations and attacks have displaced at least 60% of Gaza's residents. There is no electricity: Israel immediately cut off their supply (representing 80%) and, four days later, the Gaza power plant ran out of the fuel it needed to keep operating. Most generators are not working as fuel supplies rapidly decrease.

Without electricity or back-up generators to supply power, water cannot be pumped or cleaned. Hospitals cannot run life-saving equipment. In the meantime, health facilities have been bombed and many have ceased their operations. As of this writing, nearly half of all residential units in Gaza have been entirely destroyed or damaged.

*continued on page 2*

# credits

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## **Did you know...**

The most immediate way you can help our response in Gaza is by donating at:

[anera.org/gaza-emergency](http://anera.org/gaza-emergency)

# War in Gaza

*continued from p. 1*

As of this writing, only a trickle of aid has come through the Rafah border with Egypt. Israel declared a full closure of Gaza from October 8th to 21st, during which no goods at all came into the beleaguered territory. From the 21st, only about 20 trucks daily were allowed in – less than 5% of the normal flow. The outside aid doesn't fill even 0.1% of the need.

## **What Anera is Doing**

Anera is a humanitarian organization and, as such, we concern ourselves with delivering relief to civilians – regular people who are suffering and caught up in a conflict beyond their control or blame. And our remarkable Gaza team has been doing just that every day since the war began.

Despite the closure, and because of our Gaza staff's deep roots in their communities, the team has been able to regularly deliver humanitarian aid to their neighbors. They called on existing relationships with trusted vendors throughout Gaza to locally purchase food, hygiene items, medical supplies and gas (see pages 4-5). They mobilized their networks within the UN and healthcare facilities to transport and deliver aid to people most in need. They make miracles happen every day.

## **Anera's Development Work Continues Helping People in Gaza**

Anera implements development programs first and foremost, and delivers relief when it is needed. And, it is in part because of the development work that our Gaza team has done in their neighborhoods for many years that families have been able to get some relief during a time of unimaginable need.

Schools that Anera built in southern Gaza have been used to shelter displaced families. Our solar-powered agricultural pumps and reverse osmosis systems have provided daily water in Rafah. And fresh produce from farms that Anera rehabilitated have provided healthy meals to displaced people.

## **What Comes Next**

It is hard to fathom what Gaza will look like in the aftermath of this war. The damage and needs will be immense. Our team on the ground there, who will no doubt be traumatized and exhausted, will assess the situation and coordinate with other organizations to work on a recovery plan.

It will be a very long road to physical, emotional and societal recovery in Gaza. Though daunting, it's incumbent upon everyone who cares about Palestine and the people of Gaza to help rebuild a future with hope.

# The Situation in Gaza (as of October 27, 2023)

## ~60% of Gaza's population is **DISPLACED**

1.4 million people forced from their homes, with 590,000 sheltering in 150 UN schools. Israel issued orders that 1.1+ million residents of northern Gaza move to the south.

## No electricity and almost no fuel

The electrical grid closed down almost immediately after the war started. Generators used as back-ups are stopping because no fuel is coming into Gaza.

## All systems are shutting down

### Without a source of power....

many **hospitals have closed** their doors or turned off life-saving equipment,

**water supplies are down** to 2-3 liters per person a day because it cannot be pumped or cleaned,

**sewage treatment facilities cannot operate** and are dumping waste into the sea,

Gaza's power plant can't provide electricity,

and desperately needed **humanitarian relief can't get to displaced families.**



## THANK YOU, ANERA COMMUNITY

The miraculous work Anera's team in Gaza is carrying out every day is fueled by the tremendous outpouring of solidarity and backing by our community. You came out for Gaza in big numbers with financial support and a commitment to helping hope find a way.

Our loyal community of supporters and your trust in our ability to make an impact meant that Anera had funds ready to immediately mobilize in Gaza after the war started on October 7th. And, that trust and support has multiplied. In the 19 days since the war began, Anera has welcomed **21,000 first-time donors.**

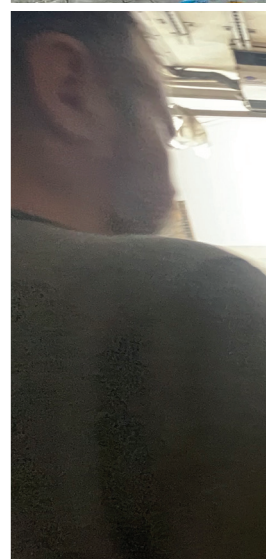
Advocates for Gaza and the work we do there have spread the word on social media. Our Instagram following, a vital source of information in this war, **has doubled.**

Amazing institutional funders have backed and bolstered our work in Gaza. World Central Kitchen is funding much of our food delivery work. Our long-time donors IRUSA and MAUSA have funded critically needed medicines, food parcels, and hygiene kits. Funding from Anera's existing partners Americares, Humanity First UK, and Direct Relief will be used alongside funds from first-time grantors AstraZeneca, the Malala Fund, Global Empowerment Mission, and the Brother's Brother Foundation to provide health-related support in the form of fresh water, hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene management, medications, and medical supplies.

**Your encouragement, in its many forms, keeps us going. For this, we say THANK YOU. Thank you for your trust and thank you for your solidarity with the people of Gaza.**







# ANERA'S STAFF IN GAZA ARE HEROIC

*/// By the time you receive this newsletter we hope that the war will be over and there is unimpeded access to humanitarian aid for all civilians and humanitarian aid workers in Gaza. ///*

All of our Gaza staff and their families are among the displaced. They, like everyone in Gaza, are facing violence, stresses and scenarios that are unimaginable to most of us. They are also true heroes!

The team in Gaza, right from the start of the war, began delivering urgently needed aid to communities all over Gaza. As the humanitarian situation rapidly deteriorated and the forced displacement of Palestinians grew, our staff worked to keep procuring food and hygiene kits, and distributed them daily despite a lack of fuel and trucks, to displaced families.

As of this writing, all members of the Gaza team are all physically unharmed, but still in danger as they go out to deliver aid and Israeli attacks continue. Just this week, a staff member collecting vegetables at a farm for distribution narrowly escaped being bombed. Despite the threat to his life, he went out the next day to keep helping his people.

Many of our Gaza team work when they can. And some can't. They know that they must take every reasonable measure to keep themselves and their families safe. We have made it clear, as an organization, that our staff must take all the reasonable measures they can to keep themselves and their families safe. That includes not working or delivering aid until it is safe to do so.

## THE HEROIC WORK OF OUR GAZA STAFF >>>

*(All numbers and information as of 10/27/2023. Note that pictures are downloaded from WhatsApp.)*

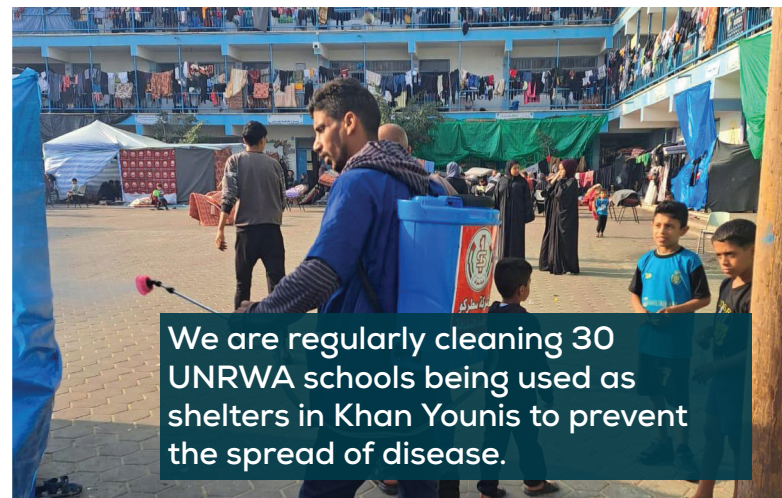




Fresh fruits and vegetables are among the food items the team delivers daily to displaced families.



With funding from World Central Kitchen, our Gaza staff have been able to deliver hot meals.



We are regularly cleaning 30 UNRWA schools being used as shelters in Khan Younis to prevent the spread of disease.



Our Gaza team distributed 15,850 hygiene kits to displaced families to maintain personal hygiene in shelters.



Our team locally procured and delivered 268,020+ treatments of medicines and medical supplies to healthcare facilities.



Anera's Gaza team has delivered 1,339,240 meals to displaced families through food parcels, vegetable baskets and hot dishes.



# Bracing for What's Coming in Lebanon: A Nation on the Edge

BY SAMAR EL YASSIR  
COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR LEBANON

The war in Gaza has cast a heavy shadow over our hearts here in Lebanon. We find ourselves torn between the profound sorrow and anger we feel for our brothers and sisters in Palestine and the growing concern for Lebanon, a nation seemingly poised on the brink of war as well. It's as if we're standing on the edge of war, anxiously awaiting its start.

**There are now approximately 20,000 internally displaced people in Lebanon and a growing exodus of people out of the country entirely.** The reality of displacement is harsh and unforgiving. The displaced are moving in with relatives or scraping together rent they can scarcely afford (the demand for housing has surged, driving up prices to impossible heights). Families all over the country are also anxiously stocking supplies in their homes, a telling sign of the times.



I reached out yesterday to Rakan, a former colleague who resides in a southern border village significantly affected by the ongoing hostilities with Israel. I expected to hear that he, like many others, had chosen safety and relocated. Yet, his response surprised me. While he had sent his pregnant wife and young child to the relative safety of Beirut, he had chosen to stay behind.

His reasons for staying? “How can I abandon my house and belongings? It’s all I have. I can’t just leave and go.” This statement speaks volumes about the deep-rooted connection between the people of Lebanon and their land, which goes beyond mere possessions. It is about identity, belonging, and a sense of place.

His wife and child, like so many others, have moved in with extended family further north. **Space is cramped, privacy is scarce, and the uncertainty of how long this arrangement will last hangs heavy in the air.** But, it is a testament to the strength of Lebanon’s people that they find ways to support one another through these trying times.

My conversation with Rakan naturally drifted to our work, highlighting the sense of responsibility that guides our actions. As individuals working in the humanitarian field, we find ourselves caught between the duty to serve and the instinct to seek safety. “We need to take care of our safety, for sure,” he said, “but we cannot turn our back on people in need.”

We at Anera are not military experts and we don’t know what’s coming. But **we have the singular focus to help vulnerable people and communities in Lebanon with their needs during crisis.** We are determined to stand strong, together, and face whatever lies in store.

But let’s not forget that Lebanon is depleted, after four years of economic collapse. Any breach of security or further displacement would be catastrophic for the civilians caught up in a situation beyond their control. As in every war, it’s the regular people who bear the burden of conflict, as families are displaced, homes lost, and lives disrupted. It is a stark reminder that **in war, there are no victors, only victims.**





We will never leave the people we serve. **We are here to stay.**

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





## THE GAZA WAR

ANERA NEWS, ISSUE 222 | **FALL 2023**



*Organized and packaged food items  
in Gaza to be distributed to displaced  
Palestinian families on 10/20/23.*