

ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

FOUNDED 1968

Newsletter

Number 128 Spring 2000

Annual Fund

Your continuing help this spring will enable us to meet and exceed our 2000 Annual Fund goal of \$1.1 million by May 31, the end of our fiscal year! Thanks to your support, we will reach more people through our health, education and job creation projects.

Meeting this goal means that ANERA can continue and expand projects in Lebanon, Gaza and the West Bank. For example, through ANERA's micro-loan program your help can provide more loans to men and women in need.

In Lebanon, ANERA provides small loans to Palestinian refugees through the Association For The Resurgence of Palestinian Camps: "I am a father of eight children, with my wife and father in a house of three rooms. I rented some land in the camp to plant crops. We live from its produce. I need money to rent more land, and buy seeds and equipment so that I can better provide for my family." - Abdallah A.

By giving to ANERA, you help provide opportunities for Abdallah, and many others, to feed and shelter their families. ■



ARPC

Abdallah, a recipient of a small loan funded by ANERA, hoes a section of his field.

Jericho: Zone of the Miraculous

Everyday busloads of tourists arrive in Jericho to visit the famous archaeological sites. Some people say Jericho is the oldest continually inhabited town on earth; it may well be that ancient. Jericho is also a town with a spirit of perseverance and the ability to prevail.

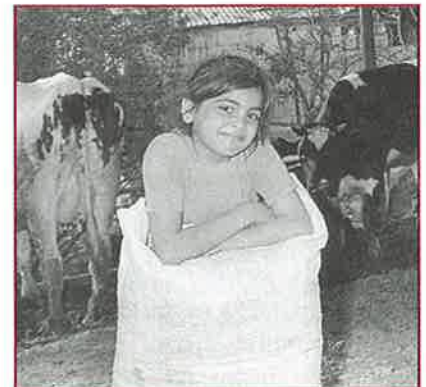
Located below sea level in the Jordan Valley, Jericho has a well-deserved reputation for searing summer heat. However, in winter Jericho is a paradise for Palestinians escaping the cold and dampness in West Bank cities like Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nablus, Bethlehem and Hebron.

Jericho is also home to Palestinian refugees who live on the outskirts of the town. Widespread unemployment and the susceptibility of agriculture to natural disasters make life here challenging. The development of the town of Jericho requires cooperation, understanding, and a willingness for each individual to contribute to the success of the entire community. Jericho residents possess great reserves of all of these attributes.

In Jericho: *Dreams, Ruins and Phantoms*, from which the excerpts in this article were taken, Robert Ruby tells of people's long-time fascination with Jericho. "A friend once found me a nineteenth-century biblical picture book: it was a handsome, rare volume that has as its centerfold a hand-colored drawing of the Jordan Valley. The panorama obeyed all the conventions. In that book Jericho was a metropolis of castles protected by crenellated walls sprouting towers and following a perfectly circular course - Jericho as Mont-Saint-Michel. To the east the Jordan River flowed as a thin blue line that was perfectly straight. To the north a small puddle of blue represented the Sea of Galilee. Jerusalem was a larger hill of fairy-castles, lying across a mountain range to the west. The Dead Sea spilled off the southern edge of the page, and the hills leading up to its shore were a rich, fertile green."

Even today, Jericho is surrounded by an aura. As you descend into the valley, it hits you like a wave. Although expected, the sensation is still a surprise.

In 1994, Jericho was the first Palestinian town in the West Bank to come under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian National Authority. Since that time the town has attracted new investment, most notably a casino for tourists, as well as customers from Israel and Arab countries. There are new houses



GARO

Children, like this girl, often help their parents care for animals which are essential to the economic viability of their family.

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Jericho, continued from page 1

being built, which is a further sign that Jericho is growing to fulfill the needs of all its people.

In the [Hebrew Bible], the Jordan is the last physical barrier separating the Israelites from the Promised Land. In the New Testament, the water is said to purify. The Jordan was held to separate the godly from the profane and to be a zone of the miraculous. To go beyond the Jordan, metaphorically, is to enter another existence. That is weighty symbolism to keep afloat in a river that in winter and spring is small and muddy and during the rainless summer and autumn is still muddy and smaller."

Water is a blessing and a curse. Year-round irrigation is necessary to preserve the fruit trees and to maintain crops during their growing season; yet floods also come to this desert place. Gaining intensity as it is naturally channeled through the narrow valleys, run off water can destroy trees cultivated for dozens of years, and wash away irrigation systems and greenhouses.

Jericho farmers try to tame the natural elements to raise their produce and bring it to market. Between patches of rocks and dust are agricultural fields. Jericho is regionally known for its delicious citrus; "Rihawi" oranges are famous for their sweetness and rich red color. Bananas, dates and other produce are also in abundance here, thriving in some of the longest growing seasons in the world.

Although faced with natural and man-made hardships, the people of Jericho remain committed to the future of their community, a place where roses grow among rocks. The love of their home and their communities in this "zone of the miraculous" brings them joy and the will to persevere. ■

Excerpts from the book *Jericho: Dreams, Ruins Phantoms* by Robert Ruby, copyright 1995 by Robert Ruby. Reprinted by arrangement with Henry Holt and Company, LLC.

ANERA in the Jordan Valley

ANERA has a long-standing connection to the 25,000 people of Jericho and the surrounding villages and refugee camps in the Jordan Valley. Since 1976, ANERA has worked with the Jericho Agricultural Engineers Cooperative and Jericho Agricultural Marketing Cooperative to establish income generating projects to benefit their members. These projects have included: land reclamation and irrigation, crop diversification, agricultural credit and marketing, job training, and livestock improvement.

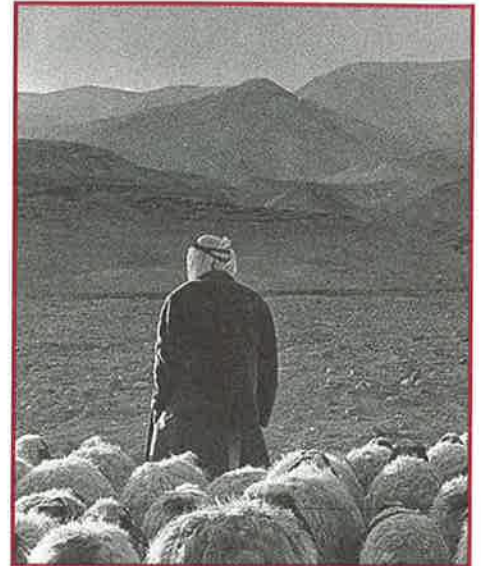
Current initiatives are aimed at improving primary health care and community services.

► In remote villages without adequate basic health care, ANERA will work with local groups to upgrade existing clinics and establish a mobile health unit.

► In two refugee camps in Jericho, ANERA will help build community centers where residents can hold a variety of gatherings.

► In a valley west of Jericho, ANERA is constructing a flood mitigation dam to protect homes and fields from winter rainwater runoff.

► ANERA is implementing a major water conservation project to upgrade the Ain Sultan spring that is adjacent to the ruins of Biblical Jericho. Area residents rely heavily on



UNRWA

In the Jordan Valley, Bedouin shepherds often follow the seasonal river beds in wadis (valleys) when moving their flocks.

ancient subterranean wells and springs such as the Ain Sultan spring for drinking and irrigation water. The project will replace exposed and leaking irrigation canals with pipes. Farmers will then be able to minimize water loss from seepage and evaporation, and improve crop irrigation.

The lives of the many people of the Jordan Valley are intertwined. They share water, a common history, an economy and one future. ANERA looks forward to continuing to find ways to help people in Jericho reduce poverty and relieve suffering. ■

Stocks Appreciated!

Thanks to the many friends who have made gifts of appreciated stock to ANERA in recent months. These gifts are crucial for our work and have major tax advantages for you. For details, please contact Nina Dodge or Cyril Bindah at (202) 347-2558. ■

In Honor of...

Anna Asper ■ Dr. Samuel Asper ■ Sir James Cobban ■ John Davis ■ Vito Depinto ■ Mr. & Mrs. Simon Esfan ■ Katrina, Sabina and Ellen Halaby ■ My father, Aref Jabr ■ Carol Kinghorn ■ Victoria Kozinets ■ Mr. & Mrs. John Nelson ■ Grace Osborn ■ In loving memory of Clarice Bailey Robinson ■ Dr. Wadi Sawabini ■ Ellie Schnitzer ■ Mr. & Mrs. John A. Wojdowski ■ Kyle S. Wilson

Staff Transitions

To meet the growing needs of Palestinians, ANERA has expanded its staff in Jerusalem and Gaza.

Dr. Rand Salman (Health Program Officer) received her medical degree from the Jordan University of Science and Technology in 1991. She worked in Jordan as a general practitioner, researcher and public health advocate. Rand is coordinating the implementation of ANERA's health projects.

Youssef Hassan (Warehouse Officer) is a U.S.-certified pharmacist who previously worked for Pharmaciens Sans Frontières (Pharmacists Without Borders). He and his family live in Beitin, West Bank, close to ANERA's Medical Supply Warehouse. Youssef inventories and tracks all of ANERA's in-kind medical donations.

In cooperation with the Presbyterian Church USA, **Ashley Souther** (Intern) joined ANERA in Gaza. Ashley is a graduate of Kansas State University where he received a degree in political science and international studies. His work includes reporting on ANERA projects throughout Gaza and assisting in the distribution of medical donations.

Samar Abdul Hadi (Planning & Evaluation Coordinator) provides

Fund Reaches \$1 Million

Several months ago, Sabah Kilaani, a single mother, found herself without enough income to care for her family. With a loan from the Gaza Women's Loan Fund (GWLF), Sabah started selling used stoves, refrigerators, and small appliances to residents in Maghazi. Today her business is making a profit and fully supporting her family.

For the last five years, the GWLF has provided over 500 women, like Sabah, with loans to develop and expand their small businesses. Typically, loans support grocery and clothing stores, beauty salons and food processing. With the income generated, women are able to pay for their families' basic necessities – health care, education and food. As Dr. Peter Gubser, President of ANERA, points out, "The money goes very directly to improving the lives of the women and their families." Business success and on-time loan repayments are now customary, confirming that giving credit to Palestinian women can be both financially profitable and sustainable for the lending institution. Now capitalized at \$1 million, the GWLF is well known in the local community. With a cadre of professional loan officers and portfolio manager, all of whom are female, to oversee lending, the GWLF is now developing the capacity to sustain itself. In the years to come, many more Palestinian women will be able to enjoy the same opportunity as Sabah. ■



Helen Grant

Sabah with some of her children

support for all ANERA projects through the Community Services Grant. She holds dual Bachelor Degrees in mathematics and economics from Simmons College in Boston; and a Masters Degree in development studies from London School of Economics.

Ala'a Shaheen (Construction Projects Coordinator/Gaza) has a

degree in construction engineering from The American University in Cairo. **Jubran Said** (Construction Projects Coordinator/Jerusalem) holds a civil engineering degree from Washington State University. Among other projects, Ala'a and Jubran will oversee the construction of roads, classrooms, and clinics in Gaza and the West Bank. ■



YES, I want to help the people of the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon!

I want to give:

- \$200 for
- \$175
- \$100
- \$75
- \$50
- \$35
- Other
- General Programs
- Gaza/West Bank Fund
- Lebanon Relief
- A scholarship (\$175 each) for a child:
 - at the school with the Greatest Need
 - in Lebanon
 - in West Bank/Jerusalem
 - in Gaza
- I have remembered ANERA in my will.

I want to support ANERA's work by being a:

- Founder: \$10,000 or above
- Builder: \$5,000 to \$9,999
- Benefactor: \$2,500 to \$4,999
- Sponsor: \$1,000 to \$2,499
- Sustainer: \$500 to \$999
- Creator: \$250 to \$499

Donors giving \$250 or more to this year's Annual Fund will be recognized by category in ANERA's 2000 Annual Report.

Scholarship Donors receive a student's photo and letters from their school.

Please charge to my credit card: Visa Mastercard

Account Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Making Peace...Every Month

Through our monthly giving program, ANERA's *Peace Plan*, you can be part of the solution to the troubled peace efforts in the Middle East. Consider making a modest monthly donation through our automatic giving program. In the past 30 years we have learned that ANERA's programs cannot run in a stop-and-go fashion. These programs require dependable resources over a sustained period of time. By joining ANERA's *Peace Plan*, you play a significant role in our work to bolster Palestinian and Lebanese long-term economic and community development, education and health programs.

➤ Decide how much you would like to give, send us the coupon below with your check for the first monthly gift, and we will take care of the rest!

➤ Each month your bank will automatically deduct the amount from your account and deposit it into ANERA's account. Donations will be clearly listed on your bank statement. You can change or stop your donation at any time.

➤ Not only does this make donating to ANERA quick and easy, it also helps to lower our administrative costs. ■

Your personal commitment makes a difference in the lives of others!

Yes, I want to join ANERA's Peace Plan.

Here is my monthly gift of: \$54 \$36 \$27 \$14 \$10 Other \$ _____

I authorize my bank to transfer the amount above from my account each month. A record of each contribution will appear on my bank statement and serve as my receipt. I understand that I may stop my contribution at any time, by contacting ANERA at 1522 K. St., NW, Suite 202, Washington, DC 20005-1270, (202) 347-2558, or my bank.

Signature _____

Date _____

I have enclosed a check for my first monthly contribution, made payable to ANERA.



In Memory of Dr. Samuel P. Asper

We are deeply saddened by the death of Dr. Samuel P. Asper, a close friend and wonderful supporter of ANERA's health program for many years.

Dr. Asper served on ANERA's Medical Committee from 1979 until 1998, lending the committee his great medical expertise and knowledge of the Middle East. In the course of his distinguished career, Dr. Asper served as dean and chief of staff of the American University of Beirut hospital at the height of Lebanon's civil war. He will be remembered for his tremendous service and leadership in the Middle East, and for helping humanitarian institutions navigate a steady course in times of war and great conflict. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife Ann and his family.

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The ANERA Newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to reducing poverty and relieving suffering in the Middle East.

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ANERA

1522 K Street NW, Suite 202

Washington, DC 20005-1270

Tel: (202) 347-2558 ■ Fax: (202) 682-1637

anera@anera.org ■ www.anera.org

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WASHINGTON, DC 20005-1270

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