



ANERA News

Why I Support ANERA

by Sara Roy, Senior Research Scholar at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Harvard University; ANERA Advisory Council Member

Gaza has endured occupation for more years than ANERA has existed. It has been under closure since 1991. In the past six years, the closure has intensified, further isolating the area from the West Bank, Israel, the Middle East and the world.

A few stark facts about Gaza's reality today: 30 percent of Gaza's labor force is out of work while those aged 15-29 years have an unemployment rate exceeding 46 percent (compared to just under 30 percent for the West Bank). Four out of ten Gazans live in poverty. One third of Gaza's arable land is out of production, destroyed during Israel's military operation four years ago. The fishing industry has all but collapsed due to restricted fishing areas that are 15 percent of what was promised in the Oslo accords and to broken treatment facilities that allow raw sewage to pour into the sea daily, polluting fish breeding grounds.

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ANERA
Improving Lives in the Middle East

Since 1968

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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 providing development, health, education and employment programs to Palestinian communities and impoverished families throughout the Middle East.

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COVER PHOTO: Mena, a four-year-old living in northern Gaza, sits in her bomb-damaged home. Rania Elhilou | ANERA

by the Numbers ANERA in Gaza

Number of people who now have access to improved sanitation facilities thanks to sewage systems ANERA built and repaired with USAID funds: **272,789**

Number of homes in Beit Hanoon receiving new water tanks from ANERA, after the November bombing shattered the ones that had been on their roofs: **120**

Value of the donated medicines and medical supplies that ANERA distributed in Gaza in 2012: **\$8.2 million**

Number of families who have home gardens provided by ANERA since the program started in 2011: **85**

Number of people in Khan Younis who have access to clean, potable water after ANERA installed a USAID-funded reservoir: **70,000**

Number of preschoolers ANERA's *Right Start!* reading project will reach: **10,000**

Leaving a Legacy of Education

ANERA received a generous donation to our Early Childhood Development (ECD) program *Right Start!*. The donation was made to honor the legacy of a Palestinian-American educator who passed away recently.

His wife chose the *Right Start!* program because it provides a strong educational foundation for young children at the beginning of their schooling. ANERA's *Right Start!* program conducts teacher training, upgrades preschools, and is developing a national ECD strategy and framework.

The family is "really impressed and encouraged by ANERA's emphasis on early education. It is so vital and not encouraged enough as a way of easing the Palestinians' plight."

There are few things that change a person's life more than an education. Giving young people the chance to realize their potential leaves a legacy that spans generations.



■ ■ ■ ■ Learn more about leaving a legacy on page 7.

In Remembrance: Two Former Board Members



Dr. M. Hadi Salem

Dr. Salem was one of the founders of ANERA in 1968 and, along with a few others, provided critical financial support to launch ANERA. He went on to serve on ANERA's board and the medical committee, and was an emeritus member until his death.

Dr. Salem was a neurologist in southern California, where he is survived by his loving family.



Senator George McGovern

Senator McGovern from South Dakota served in the U.S. Senate for three years and ran for president in 1972. After his political career concluded, he was involved in a number of international humanitarian causes and had a special interest in peace and justice in the Middle East.

ANERA was grateful for his active participation as a board member in the 1990s.

Why I Support ANERA (continued from page 1)

Any semblance of normal trade has all but disappeared, which has been ruinous for Gaza's tiny economy. The rate of exports from Gaza is less than three percent of its pre-2007 levels. During the first five months of 2007, Gaza exported about 4,800 truckloads of goods and produce. During the same period in 2012, only 130 truckloads left Gaza.

For Gaza it is no longer a question of economic growth and development but basic humanitarian needs, where 60 percent of the population is either food insecure (meaning they do not have access to enough food to meet their dietary needs) or vulnerable to food insecurity. The cost of living continues to rise and purchasing power remains weak for most. Without donor aid from ANERA and other international organizations, these sad statistics would be far worse.

Though the damage from the November bombings was less than in 2009, the destruction was just as

personal and profound to innocents caught up in the conflict.

Parents and children huddled together in their homes - as far from windows as possible - darkened by power cuts that have plagued the area for months on end. Sounds of explosions kept families awake for eight days and nights and made children afraid to be alone, even in their own homes. Air strikes destroyed public buildings and damaged nearby homes and schools. The injured got treatment at medical facilities that had to make due with limited stocks of medicines and surgical supplies.

I have been a supporter of ANERA for over 25 years. ANERA has long played a vital role in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, responding to both immediate and longer-term needs - from supplying medicines to spearheading early childhood development programs aimed at giving Gaza's youngsters the possibility of a better life. ANERA's impact is real. Of that there is no doubt.

Restocking Supplies at Clinics & Hospitals



As hospitals and clinics responded to life-and-death emergencies in the wake of the November bombings, their stocks ran low. In the weeks after the bombing stopped, ANERA staff (left) have delivered two containers full of critically-needed donated medicines and supplies to health care facilities like the Physically Handicapped Society (below).



In the past few years, ANERA has renovated nearly 50 preschools across Gaza. Some, like the School for the Visually Impaired (below) sustained damage in the November bombings. ANERA is making repairs, such as providing heavy plastic covering (left) for broken windows to be replaced with a more permanent solution later.



ANERA RESPONDS IN GAZA



Eight days of bombing provoked widespread fear and depression, most noticeably among Gaza's children. ANERA is working with teachers and children at 30 preschools in areas that were badly affected, like Al-Ansaar Preschool (left), to help children work through their fears and regain a sense of stability through play and artistic expression.



The air strikes mostly destroyed public buildings, but there was also collateral damage. In some villages water tanks on top of family homes were shattered (above). ANERA is installing new tanks on 120 homes, like the Amshas' in Beit Hanoon (right).



Creating Healing Environments at Preschools

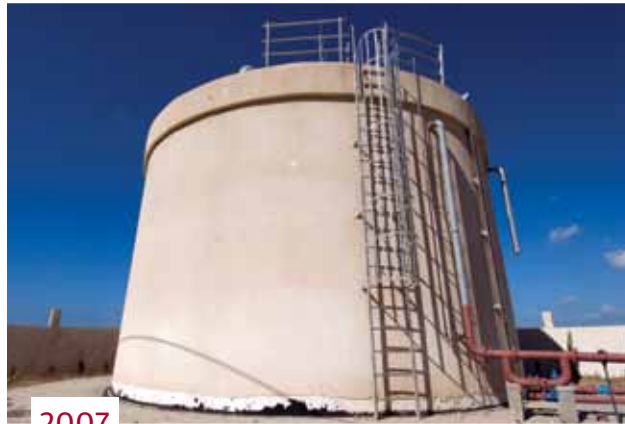
Replacing Water Tanks on Family Homes



1995



2002



2007



2012

Salah Retires in Gaza



In December, ANERA bid farewell to Salah Sakka upon his retirement from the ANERA office in Gaza.

Salah joined the team in 1995 as director and worked in that capacity for most of his tenure. More recently he took on the role of deputy chief of party for EWAS II, a \$64.8 million USAID-funded water, sanitation and other infrastructure program that ANERA is implementing.

Salah started in ANERA's office in Gaza when there were only three staff members with a few activities to oversee. In 17 years, the staff has grown significantly as has the scope and number of ANERA's projects. Under his leadership, throughout Gaza, ANERA has connected communities to clean water supplies, built reservoirs and sewage systems, delivered donated medicines and health care supplies, renovated preschools, trained teachers and doctors, and helped families to become self-sufficient.

"Salah is well-known and respected all over Gaza. Through his large network of individual and organizational contacts, he has gained a deep understanding of the problems local communities face and has successfully directed ANERA's response. He did all of this with patience and perseverance in a very challenging environment," said Bill Corcoran, ANERA's president.

PHOTOS: A Few Highlights from Salah's Tenure

1995 - The Gaza Women's Loan Fund begins providing small loans to help low-income women start or expand their own businesses. The program thrives to this day.

2002 - ANERA delivers food and medicines to help struggling Gazan families during the second *intifada*. In every crisis before and since, ANERA has responded with humanitarian relief.

2007 - A reservoir is built to provide water for Al Mosadar village - just one of hundreds of water and sanitation projects ANERA has built over the years in Gaza with USAID funds.

2012 - The Early Childhood Development program renovates preschools, trains teachers, involves parents, and creates child-centered classrooms across Gaza.

■ ■ ■ ■ Thank you, Salah. We'll miss you.



Leave a legacy.

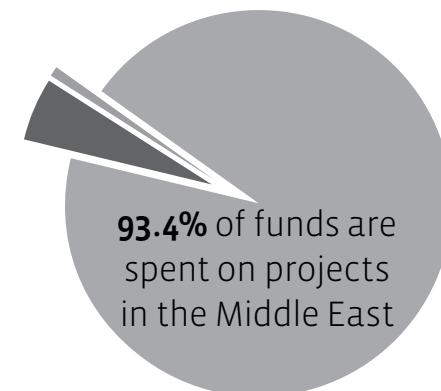
Include ANERA in your will.

Through bequest gifts, you can demonstrate your commitment to ANERA's work and set an example for others. These gifts mean ANERA will be there tomorrow, so people throughout the Middle East may live with the dignity we all deserve.

For more information about making a gift from your estate, please contact either of the following staff members:

Nancy Nye
nnye@anera.org or 202-266-9720

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ANERA is among the 1% of charities to receive 10 consecutive 4-star ratings from Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator.

ANERA also meets every standard of the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance.

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Dr. Sara Roy: Why I Support ANERA



from the desk of
Bill Corcoran, President

Dear Friend of ANERA:

This newsletter is devoted to Gaza. In November, once again, the area suffered a terrible barrage of bombings and it was in the news every day for over a week. When the bombs stopped, media attention turned away, but the problems people confront there linger on and on.

We are proud to feature an article by Sara Roy, an esteemed Harvard academic who has written extensively about Gaza and has supported ANERA's work for 25 years. We also include a report about ANERA's response in Gaza after the bombings and a farewell tribute to Salah Sakka, who just retired from the Gaza office after 17 years.

I want to thank ANERA's community of donors who responded generously in the face of this latest crisis in Gaza.

Let us hope this new year will be a peaceful, happier one for our friends in Gaza and across the Middle East.

Gratefully,

Bill Corcoran