

25 years of service ANERA Newsletter

American Near East Refugee Aid

Number 103 Fall 1993

This fall the world witnessed an historic event when Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat signed the Israeli-PLO Accords. These two leaders should be commended along with the many people both in and out of the government who have been working for peace between the Arabs and Israelis. But while these accords are a major first step—a singular breakthrough, if you will—there is much more to do.

On the Palestinian-Israeli front, the accords have to be translated into tangible projects which bring change on the ground. Eventually, the final status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip must be negotiated. Regionally, the world now wants to see peaceful relations between Israel and the balance of the Arab states: Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. It should be remembered that Egypt courageously made peace with Israel in 1979.



SEPTEMBER 13, 1993

A Momentous Beginning

NOW COMES THE HARD PART

In the midst of this, there is much work for ANERA. Thanks to our long-time friends and supporters, ANERA, through its offices in Jerusalem and Gaza, has been supporting successful, grassroots development projects in the Middle East for 25 years. We stand ready with personnel, technical expertise and a track record of imple-

menting successful projects on the ground to help in any expanded capacity that may be needed.

But successful translation of the accords into true peace will depend on many factors. The World Bank has estimated that redeveloping the Territories will need up to \$3 billion dollars in loans and investment. This money, when and if it comes, must be spent wisely in order to benefit the greatest number of people

and create true economic development in a democratic, civil society. ANERA encourages all of the people now engaged in nation-building: the PLO, local institutions, donors, investors and the people of Palestine to look to the Palestinian NGO (non-governmental organization) community for successful models in how to

(Con't. on page 4)

ANERA Extends Scholarship Program to New School in Gaza

In August of 1993, ANERA began a new scholarship-partnership project with the Atfaluna Center for Deaf Children, located in the heart of Gaza City, in the impoverished Gaza Strip. Appropriately, Atfaluna was accepted into the scholarship program just prior to the historic signing of the PLO-Israeli Peace Accord.

In the spirit of peace and economic development inspired by the "Gaza-Jericho first" plan, ANERA is proud to be working with yet another Gazan institution which improves lives and provides opportunities for the poorest people in the new Palestinian state.

As long-time ANERA supporters know, and as is now acknowledged worldwide, the social, economic and basic physical conditions in Gaza are horrible. Although the immediate reaction to the accords was celebration, Atfaluna's teachers and staff

report that many people in Gaza are only "cautiously optimistic." Reconciliation and reconstruction here may be the most problematic in all of Palestine.

With over 5,000 inhabitants per kilometer, the Gaza Strip is the most densely populated area in the world. The physical infrastructure of the city—the availability of paved roads, sewers and clean water—has deteriorated drastically since Israel occupied the region in 1967. Over 50% of the work force is unemployed in a

(Con't. on page 3)

Community Child Development Society
for the Physically Handicapped

ATFALUNA CENTER FOR DEAF CHILDREN

الجمعية الاعلوية لتنمية الطفل
المعاق جسدياً
صوكيز اطفالنا



Very Dear Friends of ANERA,

I've wondered a lot just how to start my first letter to you. Please forgive me if it's a bit long. You see, I want so very much that you understand. So, perhaps the best way is to take it straight from the heart, because, after all, that's really what Atfaluna Center for Deaf Children is all about ... It's about caring and helping, and lots of hearts big enough to find a place for a child in need—a disabled and poor child who desperately needs someone in his corner to fight for him and his rights so that he, too, may have his chance in life.

Atfaluna Center joyfully opened its doors in May, 1992, as the first and only school for deaf children in the Gaza Strip, population: 800,000. The people of Gaza owe a great debt of gratitude to ANERA who had the vision and who funded and provided technical assistance to train the first-ever workforce of deaf education teachers in the Gaza Strip. Getting things going, quite frankly, was tough and sometimes teary. With \$7,000 donated from a Japanese friend, and a great deal of determination, our newly formed women's society set up school in a small rented house with tables and chairs borrowed from the local YMCA and a staff of seven volunteer teachers. We tried our best to make it look like a school. It kept looking like a house.

Student selection was an agonizing affair. Only 28 children were to be accepted, but scores of pleading mothers confronted us with school-uniform-clad youngsters in tow all ready to start school. I think it was those brand new school bags that really got to me! We were blamed, shouted at, bribed with live chickens and oranges, and even threatened when the majority of parents were told that their children would have to be put on the waiting list. But we understood the anger and the injustice of it all. After all, had we not understood, Atfaluna would never have come into being. We also knew that after those first few days that there was no going back.

The first month was chaotic, especially when dealing with the 3-to-5 year-olds. Nothing we had planned was working. The children were uncontrollable and cried almost all of the time. Except for Hikmet whose father is deaf, the children had no concept of language at all, or even "home" signs. There was hardly any way to communicate. Our attempts to hug and soothe were met with limp or stiff little bodies refusing to be picked up or cuddled.

And then one day, quite magically, the children stopped crying. Perhaps it was when they began to understand that they were not alone in that world of almost absolute silence; someone was going to help them understand. From then on, it was uphill all the way. Traces of smiles began to appear ... life was starting to look pretty good after all. All those lines and scribbles on paper were taking on some meaning and every new day held the promise of exciting discoveries as teachers struggled to communicate and give meaning to language. Language-wise, the 12-year-old ranked with hearing 3-year-olds. No single child had ever been to school before! Learning about colors was particularly exciting — and messy — as the children cut out countless red and green objects from magazines and pasted them on paper. My red blouse caused quite a stir as I made my way through the classrooms, little hands hastening to sign "woman blouse red." Communication was picking up at home, too, as the children themselves taught siblings and parents to sign.

As Palestinian flags now fly freely for the first time in the Gaza Strip, our hearts are full of hope for the promise of peace and the end to so much suffering. A visitor once said that Atfaluna was a "light of hope" amongst all the turmoil and suffering in the Gaza Strip. With your help, that light of hope can shine a lot brighter.

Our children thank you and send you this message:

Very truly yours,
Geraldine Shawwa, President
Community Child Development Society - Atfaluna Center



(Ask a deaf friend)

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

(continued from page 1)

population of over 800,000.

But amidst all of the impoverishment and despair, there are thousands of successful and inspirational examples of people succeeding in the face of this overwhelming adversity. The Atfaluna Center for Deaf Children is one such success story.

Founded in 1991 by Gerry Shawwa, Atfaluna is the first school totally devoted to the special educational needs of deaf children in Gaza. In the past, these children would receive no special education at all, being left to live in silence and isolation. Today, Atfaluna, with its staff of 19 (14 of whom are teachers trained in an ANERA-funded training course), serves 70 profoundly deaf children. For the estimated 10,000 hearing-impaired children in Gaza, Atfaluna is perhaps their only chance at realizing a normal and productive future.

Due to overwhelming needs in Gaza, and the school's exceptional track-record and community-based approach to providing social services, ANERA proudly welcomed Atfaluna into its scholarship family in August 1993. Now, in addition to supporting students at the Sun Day Care Center also located in Gaza, Rawdat

El-Zuhur and Dar El-Tifl schools in East Jerusalem, and Al-Kafaat in Beirut, ANERA donors will also provide scholarships for needy deaf children at Atfaluna. This support will make a genuine difference in the lives of these children.

In a recent letter, Atfaluna's founder Gerry Shawwa expressed her thanks to ANERA donors for making the center possible. (See page 2).

For more information about Atfaluna, or other scholarship schools in East Jerusalem, Gaza or Beirut, Lebanon, contact: Traci Little, ANERA Scholarship Director, 202-347-2558.



Thank you, ANERA Donors

Atfaluna is an Arabic word which means "our children." To quote my Oxford, "our" is defined as "belonging to us." So, as you can see, we had you very much in mind when naming our school.

Well, things have changed a lot over this past year-and-a-half. Atfaluna now serves 60 profoundly deaf children and has a salaried staff of 19. The children now have little buddies and first grade crushes and little hands now fluently relate all sorts of events and school gossip. We have moved to a bigger facility which can accommodate up to 100 children. But we desperately need finances before we can increase our enrollment. Some 300 children fill our waiting list. We are helping many community-based rehabilitation centers to open classrooms for the deaf in various quarters in Gaza City and in outlying villages and refugee camps. This should help a lot.

Through the generous help of ANERA we are training audiometrists and hearing-aid repair technicians and will be setting up a basic audiology unit and hearing-aid repair workshop this year. These most vital services have never before been available in the Gaza Strip.

Geraldine Shawwa —Gerry Shawwa



YES, I want to join ANERA's 25th Anniversary Campaign

- ___ \$10,000 and above: Builders
- ___ \$2,500 to \$9,999: Benefactors
- ___ \$1,000 to \$2,499: Sponsors
- ___ \$500 to \$999: Sustainers
- ___ \$250 to \$499: Creators
- ___ Please send me more information about the 25th Anniversary Campaign

Contributions of \$250 or more will be recognized by category in ANERA's Annual Report (FY94) and listed in an album of contributors to be placed in Jerusalem and Gaza and at the conclusion of the 25th Anniversary Campaign. In addition, all contributors of \$500 and above will receive a 25th Anniversary plate of traditional Jerusalem pottery.

YES, I want to help ANERA's projects in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Lebanon

___ \$200 ___ \$100 ___ \$75 ___ \$50 ___ \$35 ___ \$25 Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Scholarship:

I would like to provide a 1-year scholarship (\$100 per child) for a:

- Palestinian child
- Lebanese child
- Wherever the need is greatest

Sponsors receive a photo of the child and a letter from the school during the year.

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A MOMENTOUS BEGINNING

(continued from page 1)

to design and implement effective, accountable development projects (more about this in our next newsletter.)

25 YEARS OF SERVICE—UNFORTUNATELY

The West Bank and Gaza Strip enjoy a rich mosaic of private organizations which has been created over the years to provide

essential services for their society: popular committees, women's unions, farmer's cooperatives, local charities, the list is extensive. Development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, while hindered, crippled and oppressed for the past 25 years, is not starting from scratch. Dedicated people and organizations do exist to carry out this vision. ANERA wishes them well, and stands ready to help, on the long road ahead.

ANERA has received gifts...

In Honor of:

Merle Thorpe, President, Foundation for Middle East Peace ■ Arij Waleed Bitar ■ Jesus Christ ■ Thomas D. Collier ■ Dr. Louis Hamada ■ Ms. Elinor B. Jacobs ■ Phillip McCracken ■ new baby Sherif ■ Eileen Trofa ■ Ms. Rev. Georgia Villegas ■ The Peace Process

In Memory of

Domenica Defano ■ Alfred Ellis ■ J.R. Enloe ■ Mr. & Mrs. Simon Estfan ■

Russell Ricker ■ Sadie Shiner ■ Dorothy Whalen ■ my son, Gene Yatlee

A profound thanks from ANERA for their help this year to:

Tom Benjamin ■ Special thanks to William Carter for generously donating his time, skills and photographs taken during his travels in the West Bank and Gaza Strip ■ Ulla Morris-Carter ■ Saied Elatab/Middle East Photo ■ Mike Kiernan ■ Madge Pendleton ■ Nicholas Steedman

Give the Gift of Knowledge

This holiday season give a truly meaningful gift to a special friend or loved one—a scholarship for a hopeful child. If you make a \$100 scholarship donation to ANERA as a gift before December 10, 1993, we will send the recipient a holiday card announcing your gift and describing our program. They will also receive exciting and informative letters from the school and a photo of a child being helped.

Give a gift that lasts forever—the gift of knowledge.



AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

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A Momentous Beginning

ANERA

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At ANERA we are concerned about the proliferation of junk mail. However, mail is a very economical way to reach new people. For this reason we occasionally trade our mailing list with similar humanitarian organizations, although we never rent or sell our names. If you wish to have your name removed from this list, please let us know in writing.

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AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

25 Years of Service in the Middle East

PROJECT ACTIVITY 1993

In fiscal year 1993 (extending from June 1, 1992 through May 31, 1993), ANERA and its AMER Medical Division gave development assistance and relief aid totalling \$4,466,814 to local institutions providing economic and community development, education and health services, assistance for the poor and indigent, and related technical assistance and training to the Palestinians, Lebanese, and other civilians in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Israel.



SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT
—PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROJECTS—
IS AN INVESTMENT IN PEACE.

PROJECT LIST 1993

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Women's Service Organizations

Mother/child health care, food for the needy, literacy programs, vocational training for women and job creation. Arab Women's Union (Tulkarem, West Bank), Bir Zeit Women's Charitable Society (Bir Zeit, WB), Jericho Women's Charitable Society (Jericho, WB), Women's Cooperative for Sewing and Handicrafts (Gaza City, Gaza), YWCA (Jericho, WB). **\$82,000**

Urban Economic Projects

Construction of slaughterhouse, wholesale and retail fruit and vegetable markets, and light industrial complexes as well as creating the management capability to construct a sewage system. The projects are with the municipalities of Anabta, Bethlehem, Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Salfit, and Tulkarem in the West Bank and Gaza City, Khan Younis, and Jabalia in the Gaza Strip. **\$1,256,710**

Revolving Loan Funds

Revolving loan funds to assist Palestinian and Lebanese farmers, artisans, and shopkeepers to generate employment. Beit Lahia Agricultural Cooperative (Beit Lahia, Gaza), Hebron Marketing Cooperative (Hebron, West Bank), Jenin Agricultural Cooperative (Jenin, WB), Khan Younis Agricultural Cooperative (Khan Younis, Gaza), Qalqilia Agricultural Cooperative (Qalqilia, WB), Ramallah Agricultural Cooperative (Ramallah, WB), Tulkarem Agricultural Cooperative (Tulkarem, WB) **\$418,000**

Land Improvement, Irrigation and Mechanization for Agriculture

Partial funding to establish mechanized units and irrigation systems to cultivate or reclaim land. Projects are located in Al-Auja, Beit Illu, Der Ghassaneh, Kufr Neimeh, Majd al-Ba'a, Marj Najeh, Al-Najah, Ramallah and Salam in the West Bank and Beit Hanoun and Rafah in the Gaza Strip. **\$93,400**

Grassroots Community Organizations

Libraries, clinics, literacy programs, vocational and leadership training, assistance to handicapped and orphans, relief for the poor and employment generation. Anata Health Cooperative (Anata, West Bank), Artas Charitable Society (Artas, WB), Bir Zeit University (Bir Zeit, WB), Community Child Development Society (Gaza City, Gaza), Crippled Children Center (Jerusalem), Dar Shyoukh (Beit Jala, WB), Dheisheh Refugee Camp Committee (Bethlehem, WB), Galilee Society for Health Research and Services (Rama, Galilee), Gaza Literacy Group, Gaza Union of Citrus Producers (Gaza City, Gaza), Hamlet al-Tib (Bethlehem, WB), In'Ash al-Qarya (Abu Dis, WB), Islamic Benevolent Society (Beit Sahour, WB), Jenin Charitable Society (Jenin, WB), Palestine Counseling Center (Jerusalem), Rafah Rehabilitation Center (Rafah, Gaza), Sheltered Workshop for the Blind (Jerusalem), Tawfiq Fishing Cooperative (Gaza City, Gaza), Toubas Charitable Society for the Handicapped (Toubas, West Bank), Yamoun Charitable Societies (Yamoun, WB), YMCA (Gaza). **\$231,000**

Agricultural Produce Processing, Marketing and Services

Partial funding to assist cooperatives to improve their ability to process foodstuff and market produce as well as the establishment of mobile veterinary clinics. Beit Lahia Agricultural Marketing Cooperative (Beit Lahia, Gaza), Deir Sharaf Olive Press Cooperative (Deir Sharaf, West Bank), Gaza Livestock Cooperative (Gaza City, Gaza), Hebron Livestock Cooperative (Hebron, WB), Jalazone Cooperative Bakery (Jalazone, WB), Jericho Agricultural Cooperative (Jericho, WB), Nablus Agricultural Cooperative (Nablus, WB), Nahda Livestock Cooperative (Nahda, WB), Palestinian-European Chamber of Commerce (Jerusalem), Tulkarem Agricultural Cooperative (Tulkarem, WB), Tulkarem Livestock Cooperative (Tulkarem, WB). **\$676,304**

**TOTAL COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

\$2,757,414

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision of training and consultants in agriculture, job creation, credit, health and education.

TOTAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE **\$262,783**

EDUCATION

Child Scholarships

Scholarships for orphaned, destitute and handicapped children. Dar El Tifl (Jerusalem), Al-Kafa'at Rehabilitation Institute (Beirut, Lebanon), Rawdat El-Zuhur (Jerusalem), Society for the Care of the Handicapped Children (Gaza City, Gaza). **\$139,387**

Youth Programs, Schools and Universities

Equipment, expertise, and scholarships for educational development. Arab Women's Society (Jerusalem), Bethlehem University (Bethlehem, West Bank), Bir Zeit University (Bir Zeit, WB), Center for Applied Research in Education (Jerusalem), Hebron Union of University Graduates, Hebron University, Hebron Young Women's Society (Hebron, WB), Islamic Industrial Orphanage (Abu-Dis, WB), Israeli-Palestinian Center for Research and Information (Jerusalem), Jeel al-Amal (Bethany, WB), Union of Charitable Societies (Hebron, WB), Women's Studies Center (Jerusalem). **\$310,500**

TOTAL EDUCATION **\$449,887**

HEALTH SERVICES

Clinics and Health Training

Partial assistance for upgrading clinics' ability to deliver basic health services. Anata Health Cooperative (Anata, West Bank), Arab Colleges of Medical Professions (El-Bireh, WB), Arab Health Center (Jerusalem), Beit Sahour Health Insurance Cooperative (Beit Sahour, WB), Bethlehem Handicrafts Workshop (Bethlehem, WB), Blood Bank Society (Gaza City, Gaza), Egyptian Red Crescent (via American Red Cross), Jenin Patient's Friends Society (Jenin, WB), Nablus Patient's Friends Society (Nablus, WB), National Society for Mental Health (Ramallah, WB), Qalqilia Zakat Committee (Qalqilia, WB), Red Crescent Society (Nablus, WB), St. Luke's Hospital (West Bank), Silwan Benevolent Society (Silwan, WB), Singel Clinic (Singel, WB), Sour Bahar Clinic (Sour Bahar, WB). **\$577,987**

Hospitals

Hospital services for Palestinians. Ahli Arabi Hospital (Gaza City, Gaza), Patient's Friends Society (Hebron, West Bank).

\$87,625

TOTAL HEALTH SERVICES **\$665,612**

IN-KIND MATERIALS: PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS

Medicine and health material for hospitals and clinics. Ahli Arabi Hospital (Gaza City, Gaza), American University Hospital (Beirut, Lebanon), Lebanese Red Cross. **\$301,618**

Shipping Costs **\$29,500**

TOTAL IN-KIND **\$331,118**

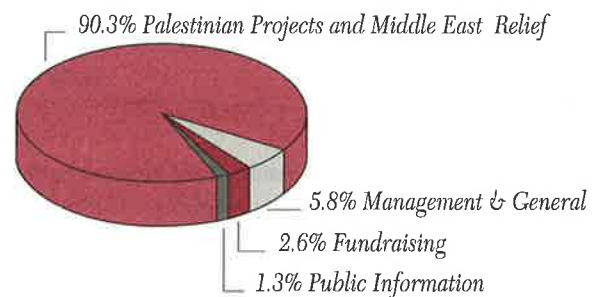
TOTAL **\$4,466,814**

FINANCIAL REVIEW 1993

ANERA is grateful for the generous donations received this year from individuals, organizations, corporations, foundations and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The chart at right represents ANERA's expenditures in fiscal year 1993, which total \$5,951,792. A copy of ANERA's FY 1993 annual report and audit may be obtained by contacting the ANERA office.

ANERA is proud that less than 10% of its income was needed for fundraising and management. This is an excellent record among charitable organizations and is made possible by the generosity of ANERA donors and the efficiency of the ANERA staff.



Total Expenditures for FY93: \$5,951,792

ANERA

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