

# ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

FOUNDED 1968

# Newsletter

Number 135 Winter 2002

## Innovation & Progress

In 1999 ANERA initiated a project to reduce poverty in Palestine by promoting the creation of jobs in information technology (IT). This unique and innovative project has grown by leaps and bounds in Palestine and has recently been expanded to Jordan. The project seeks to adapt the region's large pool of skilled human resources to the specialized needs of IT employers.

ANERA's vision is for a Middle East where people can live in peace with a secure livelihood. ANERA's Information Technology project offers access to education, training, and high quality jobs necessary to achieve this vision. Since the IT industry does not require major financial investment in expensive equipment and factories and is human resource intensive, the industry's needs are very compatible with the attributes of the

region. Moreover, it is perfect for Palestine where people are unable to move around, but can use the Internet to develop software and work on projects from home. In fact this type of "remote" employment is already happening between IT firms in the United States and employees in India and elsewhere.

Dr. Badie Sartawi, Director of ANERA's IT project, stated, "This is a dynamic project with changing needs and opportunities." Over the past two years, not only has the political situation in the Middle East shifted dramatically, but the IT industry worldwide has experienced a downturn. Despite these developments, the goals and objectives of

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## Emergency Medical Grant Received

ANERA in partnership with two other U.S. organizations is implementing a two-year, \$5 million USAID-funded Emergency Medical Assistance Project in the West Bank and Gaza.

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The continuing violence that began in 2000 is causing enormous strain on the Palestinian health care system.

## ANERA's Commitment

*By Peter Gubser, ANERA President*

Following the horrific events of September 11, many donors called ANERA to ask about the political orientation and operations of ANERA's partners in the field.

ANERA has a long-standing practice of carefully reviewing institutional applicants for need assistance and their projects. We insist that all applicants be registered with local authorities, have the

broad based support of their communities, and be non-political in nature. As part of our assessment, ANERA staff visits proposed project sites, check applicants' references and consult with a wide range of stakeholders. All applicants for assistance are required to submit a recent audit and list of board members that ANERA carefully re-

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ANERA's IT project remain valid, especially the need to create high quality jobs.

This project is currently focusing on the West Bank, Gaza, and Jordan where the need and opportunities are the greatest. Under the leadership of King Abdullah, Jordan has

*This project is currently focusing on the West Bank, Gaza, and Jordan where the need and opportunities are the greatest.*

taken IT very seriously. Today Jordan has a well-planned, well-thought out IT strategy. Palestine remains a place of undeveloped potential because of instability there. ANERA's IT work in Lebanon is planned for the future where related industries, like telecommunications, are making IT inroads.

ANERA's IT project has made important steps toward meeting its overall objectives.

**STEP 1.** Establish training centers to train trainers, develop curriculum and enhance IT facilities.

**Status:** Five professional IT training programs have been organized in Palestine and Jordan.

**STEP 2.** Create a revolving loan fund to help IT professionals pay for the courses necessary to acquire internationally recognized IT certification.

**Status:** In November 2001 a \$400,000 loan fund was established for Palestine. "IT is all about good minds, good brains," comments Dr. Sartawi who previously taught IT in the United States. The loan fund makes it possible for bright, but poor students to receive the training they require to land good jobs.

**STEP 3.** Create job placement centers to facilitate contacts between employers and trained graduates.

**Status:** Despite the current West Bank unemployment rate of 26%, all of the IT professionals who recently completed the training program at Al-Quds University are employed. Job placement centers will greatly facilitate future graduates' job search.

**STEP 4.** Create technology-oriented business incubators to support the growth of the IT sector in the Middle East.

**Status:** ANERA is talking with various donors about supporting this component of the program.



Al-Quds University is working with ANERA to create skilled professionals and to fill available jobs in information technology.

"ANERA has a project that is well designed and has all the elements to build the capacity of IT," stated Dr. Sartawi. "We've built a strong backbone, but we need to build the rest of the body. We are gaining momentum and our efforts are well received. And funding is very important to maintaining our services." ANERA's

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## Anne Cabot Ogilvy IT Loan Fund

**W**e at ANERA would like to express our heartfelt sorrow on the passing of our long-time supporter Anne Cabot Ogilvy, and our gratitude for her recent bequest continuing her support of ANERA's work.

Ms. Ogilvy's bequest and the subsequent donations from the Cabot family and friends to honor her memory, have established a student loan fund for ANERA's Information Technology training program in Palestine. Their generous contributions in turn generated a match from other private donors, quickly raising the loan fund to the level of \$200,000. The bank sponsoring the loan fund matched that amount, making available approximately

\$400,000 for loans. To honor our long-time supporter and friend and the inspiration she has provided, ANERA has named the loan fund the Anne Cabot Ogilvy IT Loan Fund.

The loan fund will offer low-interest loans to make it possible for thousands of Palestinian graduates, students and professionals to enroll in internationally certified computer programming courses offered through ANERA's IT training project. The loans will help cover the cost of tuition, exams and course materials.

We are honored deeply by Ms. Ogilvy's generous act of faith in helping ANERA's IT program and her unwavering commitment to helping the people of the Middle East.

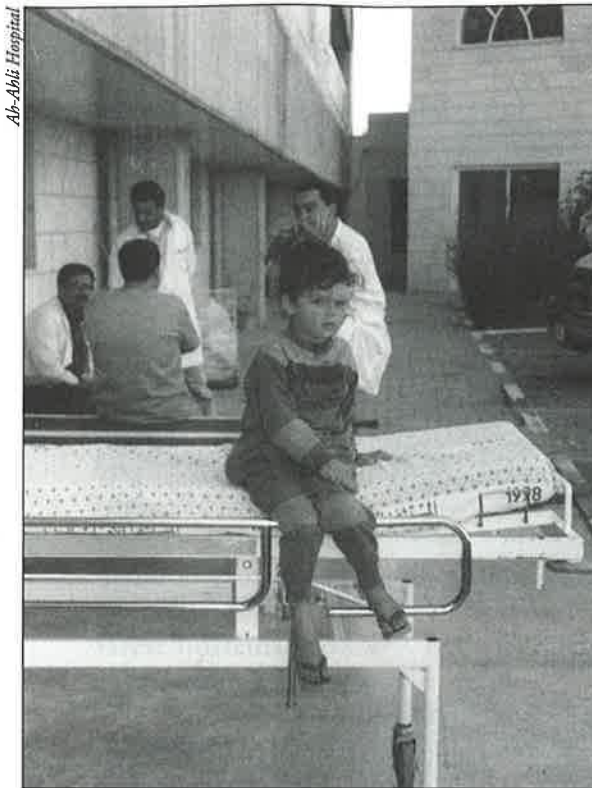


The health system in the West Bank and Gaza is facing a crisis due to the demands resulting from conflict-related injuries, and declining health and nutritional standards caused by border closures and the demise of the Palestinian economy. The Palestinian Ministry of Health reports sharp increases in infant mortality rates, high-risk pregnancies and incidence of home deliveries attributed to road closures and increasing poverty.

*The number of patients has doubled in some health care facilities providing emergency services*

The health system has become the primary caregiver for all community and emergency health problems. The number of patients has doubled in some health care facilities providing emergency services, and medical personnel, ambulances and the facilities themselves have come under direct attack.

The Emergency Medical Assistance Project will support indigenous Palestinian institutions and organizations meeting emergency medical needs associated with violent confrontations between Israe-



After being injured then treated at the Al-Ahli Hospital in Hebron, a young girl waits to go home.

lis and Palestinians. The project will address the harmful health effects of the sieges on Palestinian towns and villages, mobility restrictions and the rapid rise in unemployment. The project will:

- ▶ Identify, procure, transport and install priority equipment and supplies for ambulances and health facilities.

- ▶ Upgrade emergency management and first aid skills of health professionals.
- ▶ Improve emergency health facilities' and referral centers' management and practices.
- ▶ Advise communities of current health concerns and preventive measures that can be taken.
- ▶ Design and implement a system to monitor priority health concerns such as infant and child growth, communicable diseases, and the availability of basic foodstuffs.

This project complements ANERA's existing health program and expands ANERA's efforts to help vulnerable populations adversely affected by the current violence. ❁

*Innovations, continued from page 2*

IT initiative is entirely supported by prominent personalities and organizations in the Middle East and the United States who are motivated by the potential of IT. In the same vein, ANERA President Peter Gubser observes, "We are very pleased with all we have achieved in such a short time and are optimistic about doing even more in the future." ❁

## Staff Transitions

Rob Mosrie joined ANERA's Jerusalem staff in October as our Community Development Specialist. A graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, he also received a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida State University. As a Peace Corps vol-

unteer, Rob worked with an American NGO providing micro-credit services to residents of southern Jordan. Rob looks forward to "being overwhelmed with challenging, but rewarding projects that will contribute to improving the lives of Palestinians for years to come." ❁

## 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.

views. As a recipient of USAID funding, ANERA is required to certify that its funds go to organizations free of terrorist associations.

ANERA has full confidence that our assistance is going to people in the greatest need and people committed to promoting peace in the Middle East by improving the lives of families and communities.

Having worked in the region for over 30 years, ANERA's staff is highly experienced and knowledgeable about our local partner organizations. We put our exper-



*Peter Gubser, ANERA President*

*ANERA has full confidence that our assistance is going to people in the greatest need and people committed to promoting peace in the Middle East*

tise to work everyday to further our mission. This is our commitment to both our donors and our beneficiaries. ❁

## Field Update

*by Geraldine Shawa, President, Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children*

**I**n Gaza today people are discouraged. Work is scarce. Gazans are weary of living in an overcrowded prison-of-sorts, unable to travel freely or to drive across the border to visit friends or relatives.

We know that better days will come. The children, we believe, are our future – the future of Palestine.

At Atfaluna there are eye-catching floor-to-ceiling murals with electric blues, hot pinks, bright oranges and yellows. A huge and happy sun shines

down on the seaside. Tall mosques, ancient churches, busy shops, and unique TV antenna-laden houses fill the city. Wash blows in the sunny breeze. Orange and lemon trees overflow with fruit. The pottery makers are too busy to look up. A shiny little yellow Atfaluna school bus makes its way down the beach road. It's a town that any child would love to live in, to dream about, to work towards.

We all continue to work for that day. ❁

## Donations Double

Many companies today have donation programs that match their employees' contributions dollar for dollar. The process is easy. Most employers simply ask you to fill out and submit a form to ANERA along with your donation. Suddenly your donation doubles — sometimes triples — your support for needy communities through education, health and economic development.

If you have any questions concerning matching gift programs, please call Paula McNicholas, Director of Donor Development, at (202) 347-2558.

### In Honor of...

Dr. Najib Abu Haydar • Barakat • Sally Blaker and Sybel Morris • Timothy Childs • The Courage of the Palestinian People • Mr. & Mrs. Simon Estfan • Frances D. Fabrick • Father • Lucy P. Guilbeau • Tai Y. Kilby • Paul Lapp • Norma Brenwell Lorshbough • Mr. & Mrs. Tom and Sally Mallison • Elenor Mansour • Deebe Mohammed • Tom Neu • Mary Owen • Palestine • Nancy Page • Edward Said • George N. Saffouri • Bruce Schien • Greg Smith • Those Killed in New York City

*Our thanks to everyone for sharing their remembrance of loved ones and special occasions with people in need through supporting ANERA's work.*



# Minor Damage to ANERA's Projects

by Peter Gubser, ANERA President

Over the years, and of course these days as well, many ANERA supporters have asked me if ANERA's projects have suffered damage from the actions of the Israeli military. For the most part my answer was, "No, only a couple of projects experienced minor problems." Unfortunately, the answer, today is, "Yes!"

*The next day the main line from the pump was also cut, causing a twenty-meter fountain to gush into the air, depriving all the villages of water.*

In the Jenin region in the northern West Bank, we helped build a potable water system for twelve villages. The project was very successful, functioning and sustainable. In late October 2001, Israeli trenching equipment cut the village water de-

livery lines to five communities. The next day the main line from the pump was also cut, causing a twenty-meter fountain to gush into the air, depriving all the villages of water. We were very concerned that the villagers did not have potable water in their homes. Sustained high-level conflict has a heavy price. The community rallied and the water users' association, which was organized by ANERA, repaired the damage at its own expense and restored the delivery of potable water to the villagers' homes.

In late October during the occupation of Jericho and its fields, a major irrigation pipe was damaged when an Israeli tank slipped off the road and tore up to sixty meters of underground pipe. Now the pipe needs repair so the system will be whole, once again a price of sustained conflict. Aside from the above, I am pleased to report that the project, from a construction standpoint, is complete.

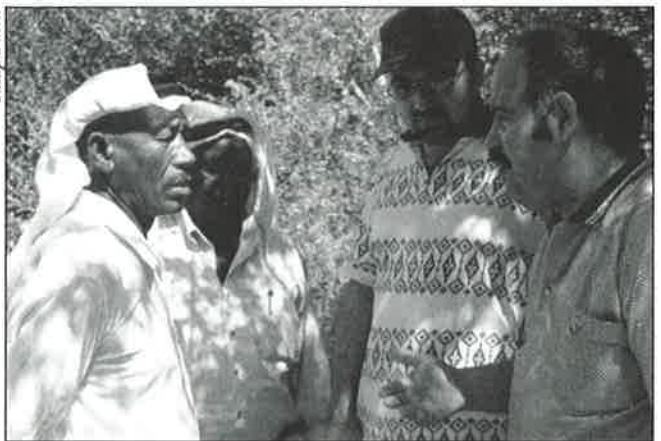
Political violence in the West Bank and Gaza, or any region in which we work, jeopardizes ANERA's projects and hinders our ability to deliver programs and initiate new projects. However, we remain staunchly dedicated to our mission to reduce poverty and re-

Gero Nabanikian



*Improving the health and viability of communities, ANERA continues to implement projects that provide clean, drinkable water to poor families.*

Philip Davies



*Farmers in the Jericho valley (left) and ANERA project managers (right) discuss the latest irrigation project progress.*

## ANERA Legacy Society

Through a bequest in your will or trust, you can extend your support for Palestinians, Lebanese and Jordanians in need, and the worthy institutions that help them, beyond your lifetime. We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Please use ANERA's full name "American Near East Refugee Aid" in your bequest documents, followed by our address. For information on the ANERA Legacy Society or bequests to ANERA, contact Nina Dodge at (202) 347-2558.

*Political violence in the West Bank and Gaza, or any region in which we work, jeopardizes ANERA's projects and hinders our ability to deliver programs and initiate new projects.*

lieve suffering. It is during times like these that ANERA's services provide both resources and hope, which are in great demand. ❁

# ANERA's Peace Plan Enters Its 4<sup>th</sup> Year

We wish to thank all the participants in ANERA's Peace Plan. Our members provide ANERA with year-round income, ensuring programs can be planned and implemented to meet long-term challenges in a region facing severe conflict and economic hardship. ANERA's Peace Plan is a monthly giving program that helps us reduce administrative cost, thus enabling more resources to reach our essential programs.

If you are interested in joining ANERA's Peace Plan, there are two ways to join. One is to fill out the

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form (below), write a check for the amount you wish to give monthly and mail it to ANERA. Each month an electronic bank transfer will enable your gift to reach ANERA. Also, you may join by using your credit card via our website. Simply indicate how much you would like to give and indicate 'monthly' where the site asks for the frequency of donations. ANERA will send a confirmation letter and form to confirm your monthly credit card gift.

Thank you for your commitment towards relieving suffering and improving the lives of people in the Middle East. 🌸

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

Here is my monthly gift of:

\$100    \$50    \$25    \$10

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.*

# ANERA

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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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1522 K STREET NW, SUITE 202  
WASHINGTON, DC 20005-1270

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3200 16th St NW Apt 412  
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