

# ANERA *Newsletter*

American Near East Refugee Aid

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## Unique Contributions to Palestinian Development

Dear Friend of ANERA:

Development during military occupation. Progress during the *intifada*. As ANERA's supporters know, we have long been committed to Palestinian social and economic development in the West Bank and Gaza. Despite the inherent difficulties there, the tumultuousness resulting from political struggle, ANERA is proud of its unique contributions. On a recent trip to the territories, I reviewed a list of these with our Middle East Representative, Lance Matteson. And we thought you, our supporters, would appreciate sharing in these accomplishments with us.

First large, modern cold storage facility for agricultural produce. This project, that has been long in construction, is based with the Halhul Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market. The market opened about two years ago. However, the cold storage unit, the only large and modern one on the West Bank, is just now being completed. On this visit, all of the cooling units were installed and functioning. It will be able to receive produce for storage next season. Much to the benefit of the town of Halhul, the market portion of the facility already produces 40% of the municipality's revenues. With the addition of the cooling unit, this percentage will increase.

First and only pelletized animal feed plant. This project was executed with the Ramallah Poultry Cooperative. Not only does it insure that chicken farmers will be able to purchase feed for their flocks, but also it has set the standard in the region for quality, thus helping farmer income. This project went on stream about a year ago. The *intifada*'s emphasis on local production has made it doubly successful.



*ANERA projects not only create much needed employment opportunities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, they provide services to local communities. Above: cold storage facilities for agricultural produce in Halhul. Below: microdairies for milk pasteurization operate in several Palestinian towns.*

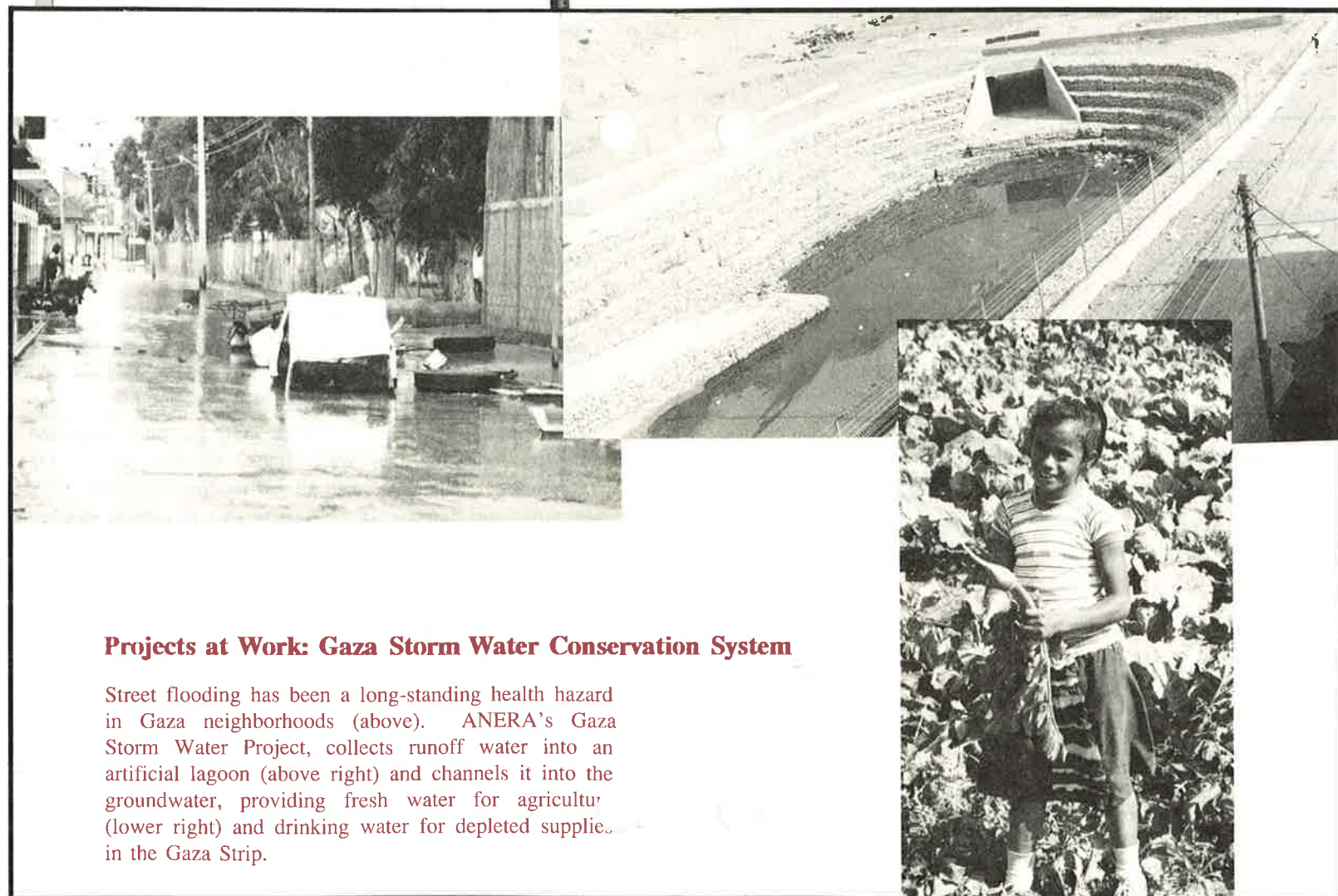


First microdairies. These are small dairies based with cooperatives in the villages of Nassariya, Sawhra Sharqiya, Tulkarem, Jenin, and Beit Nuba. Using milk they pasteurize (the only such pasteurization facilities in the West Bank aside from that of the Arab Development Society in Jericho and Janaideh in Hebron), they make yogurt, lebneh, and white cheese. These hygienic products are then successfully marketed in the West Bank. These projects have become doubly important in the last few years because of the rise in incidence of brucellosis, a disease of cattle, sheep, and goats which can be passed to humans through unpasteurized milk. Without the projects, the farmers would lose much of their income and the population would be more subject to illness from brucellosis.

First cooperative bulldozer units for land reclamation. On the basis of farmer cooperatives, these were established in districts of Nablus, Ramallah, Beit Jala, Tarqumiya, and Khan Younis. Not only are these the first such large earth moving machines in Palestinian hands for land reclamation purposes, they also have caused the operators of other bulldozers (largely focused on quarries and production of stone) to lower prices to the farmer. In the context of West Bank and Gaza events, these projects assist farmers till land they otherwise could not, thus establishing their presence on marginal and previously arid land.

First stormwater conservation system. This project in the city of Gaza is one of the most important of these unique contributions. We have been working on the system for about nine years. Its fortunes - often delays - were heavily affected by political events in Gaza. It was started with the late Mayor Rashad Shawa when ANERA and the Gaza Municipality jointly funded the excavation of a large artificial lagoon. After the mayor was removed from office by the military authorities, the next stages of the project were postponed literally for years. However, in fits and starts we were able to work out modalities whereby the construction of the rainwater conservation system could be legitimately continued. Under these arrangements, one of the large collectors was constructed, linking a major catchment area with the settling pond and artificial lagoon. I am pleased to report that sufficient work was completed so that, with the first rains of the season, it could function. The project drained about 40% of the entire city. With the construction of one additional, quite short collector, an added 10% of the city will be drained in about one month.

In that the work to date has taken nine, often arduous years, we are quite pleased it has arrived at this functioning stage. We do have a couple of more phases planned. First, we need to complete considerable stabilizing and percolating works in the lagoon. Second, we hope to build another major collector that will reach an additional 30% of the city. Aside from draining the city's streets, the major benefit from this project is that the conserved storm water will percolate into the groundwater table, rather than be channeled to the sea, providing valuable fresh water in an acutely water-short Gaza Strip.



**Projects at Work: Gaza Storm Water Conservation System**

Street flooding has been a long-standing health hazard in Gaza neighborhoods (above). ANERA's Gaza Storm Water Project, collects runoff water into an artificial lagoon (above right) and channels it into the groundwater, providing fresh water for agriculture (lower right) and drinking water for depleted supplies in the Gaza Strip.

First modern slaughterhouses. Another Gaza Strip project that has taken a long time is the Khan Younis slaughterhouse. This project should have been completed in about eighteen months, but has dragged on for at least three years. The delays may be attributed to the military occupation and the social and political strains in the Gaza Strip, exacerbated by the intifada. Nevertheless, when I visited the facility in November 1989, it was 99.5% complete and was going to start operating as soon as our engineers signed off on the building. Two other slaughterhouses in Nablus and El-Bireh in the West Bank are also nearing completion.

First municipal light industry complex. This unit is located in Beit Jala. It opened its doors three years ago. Aside from providing about 15% of the municipality's revenues, it has also stimulated the establishment of light industry in the area and generated new employment, including from nearby Deheisheh Refugee Camp.

First - and only comprehensive - phylloxera control program. Phylloxera is a disease of grape vines. When it strikes, the grape vines must be replaced with phylloxera resistant American root stock. ANERA set up a program to help farmers replace their vines. We are now assisting the Hebron Marketing Cooperative, the project implementor, establish an up-to-date nursery, using modern grafting techniques to propagate the phylloxera resistant root stocks. This technology will, in turn, be shared with other local nurseries. Grapes are a very important cash crop for the Bethlehem-Hebron region of the West Bank. Thus the success of this project will contribute significantly to future income and welfare of the Palestinians in that region.

First direct agricultural exports to the European Community. For a number of years, there was considerable talk and some activity concerning the Palestinians' direct export of fruits and vegetables to Europe. Last winter, after considerable diplomatic maneuvering at many levels and substantial ANERA input into the infrastructure of exporting vegetables, the first shipments were made. These shipments, though, were only partially successful. Some think that the problems the Palestinian farmers encountered - delays in shipping and improper setting of temperatures in the ships, resulting in damage to the vegetables - were sabotage. Others believe it was bad luck or inadequate planning. Still others think it was a combination. Whatever is the case, this season both the Gaza citrus growers and the Jericho (West Bank) vegetable farmers are going to export again in much larger quantities. For this winter season, ANERA helped the Jericho Agricultural Produce Marketing Cooperative build a grading, sorting and packing shed and has provided other technical inputs. This project, like many of the others, is designed to help Palestinians increase and insure their incomes and thus their welfare in future years.

Peter Gubser  
President, ANERA

*The financing for these projects has come from ANERA donors, grants from the United States Agency for International Development, and the contributions of the participating Palestinian institutions. ANERA extends its hand of thanks and appreciation to all those participating in these projects.*

**ANERA has received special gifts...**

**IN HONOR OF:**

Cindy Abbas, Gaby Abdelnour, Victor S. Asfour, Leila and Rima Bordcosh, Father Elias Chacour, Mrs. John Davis, Mr. & Mrs. Parke A. Dickey, Alfred Einstein, Harold C. Goddard, Mrs. Jeannette Harder, Ruth LaMonte, Sally and Tom Mallison, N.S. Mansour, Mary Ann Nelson, Eugene Ranan, Dr. and Mrs. Wadi Sawabani, Mrs. Edith Stonequist, Farid and Theodora Tabri, Dr. and Mrs. Francis Woods, Mrs. Robert P. Woods, Palestinian Children

**IN MEMORY OF:**

Alphonse DeRosso, Haj Mohmoud Farah, Dr. Mahmud A. Hamid, John E. Koeugh, Malcolm Kerr, T.E. Lawrence, Julie E. Lee, Ibrahim Matar, Ellen Odeh Nassaf, Alex Odeh, Felicia M. Ojarovsky, Joseph Rapa, Yazan Safadi, Gene Yatlee, and...

**Robert L. Fisher, Former Director of ANERA's AMER Division**

Robert L. Fisher, a former director of American Middle East Rehabilitation (AMER), the medical division of ANERA, passed away on December 26, 1989. Bob, as he was affectionately known at ANERA, had a long career in the U.S. Army, the State Department and UNRWA, where he was country director for Gaza and Jordan. He headed AMER from 1976 until he retired in 1979. In his various positions, Bob contributed to the world. He will be missed.

Enclosed is a gift for ANERA's projects in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

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

*Contributions to ANERA are tax-deductible and should be sent with this form to the ANERA office. Thank you for your help!*

*This newsletter was written by Peter Gubser, ANERA's President and produced by Jonathan Bronsky, ANERA's Executive Assistant. Photos courtesy of ANERA staff.*



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