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Sustaining Hope Not Hardship

Paul Butler, ANERA Country Director for the West Bank and Gaza

Sustainable development has been defined by the fulfillment of human needs so that these needs can be met in the present and future without damaging the natural environment. I visited a small ANERA project that put this textbook definition into perspective for me. The small Palestinian Bedouin refugee community located in Yatta in the extreme southern part of the West Bank ekes out a marginal existence from animal husbandry and part-time work in Israeli settlements. This community lives in “Area C,” part of the West Bank under 100% Israeli jurisdiction.

Living on the most marginal lands, these communities cannot receive any services from the Palestinian Authority (PA) given that they reside in Area C. Instead they rely on the crumbling services from infrastructure (health, water, sewage, etc.) built more than 40 years ago. International aid agencies like ANERA must request special permission to do work in Area C from the Israeli authorities in the West Bank.

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ANERA News

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: Children in one of their new classrooms that ANERA built for them in the Anab Al-Kabir school in the West Bank.
© Yasmine Qutob | ANERA

by the Numbers

West Bank Bedouins in Area C

Percentage of the West Bank considered Area C, where Israel retains control over security, planning and zoning: **60%**

Number of Bedouin and other herders living in Area C: **27,500**

Percentage of Area C which is off-limits to Palestinian construction: **70%**

Percentage of households connected to water: **9%**

Number of people benefiting from ANERA's construction and renovation of 100 cisterns in the Bedouin community of Al Ramadeen: **5,000**

Number of students who can now attend high school in the small Bedouin village of Anab Al-Kabir, thanks to ANERA's addition of seven new classrooms to their primary school: **160**

Number of jobs, to date, generated by ANERA's rehabilitation of the Hamidah Al Najadah Clinic in Area C and located in the far southeast of the West Bank: **276**

Our Sustainers

It is fitting that in this newsletter we take a moment to thank ANERA's Sustainers. It is vital to our ongoing work that a small community of ANERA donors have elected to make a monthly contribution.

Some ANERA Sustainers have been giving every month for over a decade and the group of donors is growing — it has more than doubled in the past four years.

Some gifts come from individuals living on a fixed income who don't want to worry about whether they have sent a contribution to ANERA lately. And, some are young people who are just starting to earn a salary and find that spreading the contribution over 12 months makes a larger gift more feasible to their budget. For many, giving automatically just makes it easy.

"I support ANERA on an automatic monthly deduction basis," says monthly donor Nabil Mufti, "because it is easy to forget that we have to share our good fortune with the less fortunate."

Whatever the motivation, the result is a little more peace of mind for families who deserve to know they can count on us.

To ANERA's Sustainers: **Thank you.**

More information can be found on page 7 of this newsletter or you can send in the enclosed envelope and mark the box that says "charge this to my account every month."



Students of Anab Al-Kabir School enjoying their newly renovated building.

“ During one of my visits to the community, a young girl called Iman, no older than 12, approached me. She told me her school was small and there weren’t any classrooms for the students in the eighth grade and upwards. As she was speaking, she started to cry. She told me that soon she would no longer be able to continue her education and instead would be forced to either herd sheep or get married, even at such a young age... Luckily, ANERA was able to do something about it and she is still in school today. ”

- Mohammed Abu-Rajab, ANERA Hebron Area Director

With \$22,000 in USAID funding, ANERA was able to fully rehabilitate the school in Anab Al-Kabir, a predominantly Bedouin village 15 miles south of Hebron, including the addition of seven new classrooms and a computer room. The new boundary wall, playground, water fountain and sanitation facility renovations make the school a much healthier and safer place to study.

Sustaining Hope Not Hardship (continued from page 1)

In the case of this small hamlet southeast of Yatta, ANERA was granted permission to expand and rehabilitate the Hamidah Al Najadah Clinic. Built in 1972 by the Israeli Civil Administration, the clinic was rehabilitated by the United Nations Relief Works Agency (UNRWA) in 2006, but the size remained the same: from three small rooms the clinic offered the only source of health services for 4,000 people. It lacked a pharmacy, laboratory, storage facilities and a fully functional examination room.

With \$180,000, ANERA is now expanding the clinic by constructing and furnishing two more examination rooms, a pharmacy, laboratory, and toilets. The clinic’s water and sanitation facilities were also improved. New water tanks and waste disposal units are being installed. The outside walls of the building are also being strengthened and rehabilitated.

When one is driving through the West Bank, it is impossible to avoid seeing the ubiquitous signs indicating that a non-governmental organization and donor financed a project. The vast majority of these projects are within the PA-controlled Area A and the joint Israeli-Palestinian Area B. This clinic ANERA is renovating is one of the rare projects completed in Area C. Its upkeep is supported by contributions from the community, which bolsters its viability and sustainability in the future.

Despite the challenges in obtaining the necessary permits, ANERA must strive to initiate more of these projects. For a small investment, the lives of marginalized people like these Bedouin communities can be transformed.

Paul Butler became ANERA's country director for the West Bank/Gaza in October 2011. Before joining ANERA, Butler served as regional director for the Middle East and Caucasus for Bridging the Divide, developing programs in Armenia, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. He also served as country director for Mercy Corps and Catholic Relief Services in Iraq, West Bank/Gaza and India.



Building Blocks of Sustainability

Sustainability is at the heart of ANERA's mission. Through partnerships and close consultation with local groups and communities, we respond to economic, health and educational needs with solutions that carry on well past our initial involvement.

In reality, sustainability means giving people hope that they can meet their family's needs today and tomorrow.

Over the course of nearly 44 years, ANERA has listened to what people in their local communities want, and delivered – with their help – countless projects that have had a lasting impact.

Here are just a few examples...



...agriculture

To address public health issues, ANERA's Creative Health Campaign built enduring relationships between local non-profits and Palestinian and Lebanese communities.

LEBANON



...communities



Beginning in 2006 ANERA's DHIAFEE program trained owners of cottage inns throughout Lebanon in developing and improving their facilities and marketing strategies. The inns continue to offer guests appealing, family-owned lodging options.

LEBANON

...training & capacity building



ANERA was the first big donor to the Al-Ahli Hospital in Hebron, giving \$1,500,000 that started the hospital's construction in 1988. The hospital has a 200-bed capacity and serves the southern West Bank with a population of 600,000. In 2005, ANERA gave the hospital a blood count machine (pictured).

WEST BANK

...clinics & hospitals



...schools & universities



By supporting agricultural cooperatives, like the one pictured in Tulkarem, ANERA bolsters agribusiness systems that bring farmers together to purchase materials, share equipment, and market and sell products.

WEST BANK



Over 30 years ago, in 1979, ANERA helped create a water management system that continues to this day to direct large quantities of rainwater to a depleted aquifer in Gaza City.

GAZA

...water infrastructure



The playground and sports field ANERA installed three years ago in the middle of Nahr El Bared refugee camp is filled every day with happy children. This special space has flourished because it is lovingly maintained by people who live in the camp.

LEBANON

...playgrounds & parks

Since 1995, the Gaza Women's Loan Fund has helped thousands of women entrepreneurs, like this seamstress, to open new businesses or improve existing ones.

GAZA



...loans



In 2008 alone, ANERA constructed 53 classrooms in 14 schools, which continue to provide safe and stimulating learning environments for thousands of children.

WEST BANK

...classrooms



For five years, the sewage network ANERA installed in the Beit Lahia neighborhood of Al Atatra has served the 12,000 residents well by eliminating floods of sewage that overflowed out of manholes during the rainy season.

GAZA

...sewage networks

Sustainability and Sustenance

Ein El Helweh Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon looks like a concrete jungle. Electric wires criss-cross overhead and down gray concrete walls along narrow alleyways, often leaving hardly any room for sunlight to penetrate into the overcrowded camp.

But, that bleak landscape is slowly changing as small patches of green begin to appear on rooftops, window sills and balconies. It's a scene filled with lavender, basil, thyme, peppers, eggplants and tomatoes, thanks to ANERA's pilot urban agriculture project.

In partnership with the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Ein El Helweh Women's Program Center (WPC), ANERA aims at improving living conditions in the camp through a capacity-building program on sustainable urban agriculture. The initiative includes the use of rooftop rainwater collection systems, drip irrigation, and training sessions on planting and caring for plants. WPC is transforming into a greenhouse as a prototype of the "green vision." Vertical plantings will cover cement facades to help improve air quality and offer visual relief from the stuffy grayness of crowded camp living.

Maryam Awad, one of 26 women participating in the program, laughs as she describes her feelings when she plants on her roof. "I feel like I am helping a child or a lamb grow. Even though the steps are a little hard for me to climb, I walk up [to my roof] every day to take care of them." Her passion is contagious. Her children are now interested and visit her garden daily, learning the tools of the trade in the process.

These burgeoning urban farmers are now starting to use the herbs and vegetables they grow for home cooking.

For residents of Ein El Helweh, the home garden project cultivates a sense of self-reliance and a positive change in otherwise stressful and challenging conditions. It also offers a sustainable solution to the ever-present challenge of food security.

With your further support, this exciting pilot program can grow and nourish many more families.



An agronomist from AUB (right) advises on caring for plants.



Green is competing with the criss-cross of wires that hang overhead in every refugee camp.



Em Hussam, one of 26 women participating in the program, poses next to her rooftop plants.



Can they count on you?

Whether you give **\$5 or \$500 a month**, you will be giving peace of mind to struggling families throughout the Middle East.

Your monthly contribution helps us **expand our programs, rehabilitate more preschools, bring water to more towns, give work to more fathers and mothers.**

And our monthly donor community makes it possible for us to respond quickly in times of emergency.

ANERA is one of the very few groups that Palestinian families can count on for ongoing support.

Become a monthly donor TODAY.

To use your checking account:

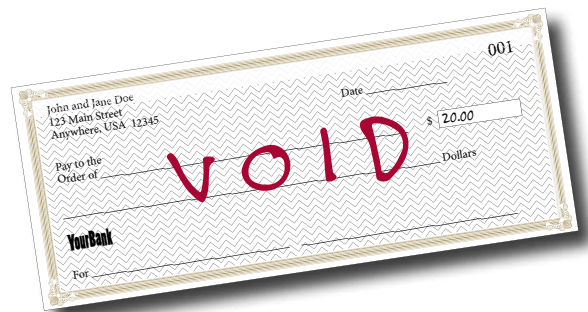
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- OR -

To use a credit card: fill out the enclosed envelope.

- OR -

To sign up online: visit www.anera.org/monthly.



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Sustaining Hope Not Hardship



from the desk of
Bill Corcoran, President

Dear Friend of ANERA:

Palestinian refugees and families in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon live in dire conditions which can rob them of the ability to be self-reliant.

That's where ANERA comes in. Our work gives families the tools they need for economic empowerment and self dignity. We can provide tools that are sustainable. We can put together the building blocks, literally, for classrooms and training centers that can open up opportunities for a better future.

As you can see from the examples in our newsletter, it does not take momentous, expensive programs to change lives. It can be as simple as connecting families to clean drinking water or providing a planter and seeds. It means responding to a community's needs and giving them the tools to carry on without us, rather than having to rely on relief and charity.

As always, I am grateful to ANERA's community of donors who make it possible for families to do more than simply survive.

Bill Corcoran