Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees

1996 Annual Report
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Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (PARC)

1996 Annual Report
Foreword

For PARC 1996 was a watershed year with major changes in our working environment. For the first time a Palestinian Legislative Council was elected and the Ministry of Agriculture took full responsibility for the agricultural sector. The Palestinian National Authority extended its sovereignty to all major towns in addition to Gaza and Jericho and now has a major role in Palestinian development. It was clear that to keep pace with these important developments PARC’s role was changing. To move forward and continue our important work as a leading NGO we now had to establish a new identity, clarify our direction and develop good relations and co-operation with the new Ministry of Agriculture.

In response, PARC was motivated to reorganise its structure. The new General Assembly offers a wider and more representational base in the agricultural and general community. A new Board of Trustees was elected and the links with PARC’s staff were strengthened to create a more transparent decision making process.

At the same time, the political and economic situation continues to deteriorate for all Palestinians. The election of the right-wing Likud government in Israel, increased land confiscation and continued closure put greater pressure on the agricultural sector.

Our land is our Palestinian heritage, and agriculture is the foundation of the Palestinian economy. So it was vital that in 1996 PARC continued its work to help Palestinian farmers to
protect their land from confiscation, build towards developing food security, provide employment opportunities, strengthen the agricultural sector and support women in rural areas on whom so much of our future depends.

The success of PARC depends on the commitment and hard work of all those involved, from the General Director and staff to our volunteers, supporters and partners. The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone for their hard work, creative efforts and generous support and extend a warm welcome to all our new friends. We encourage you to continue your endeavours in 1997 to help build towards a strong Palestinian agricultural sector.

Dr. Mansour Gharabeh
Chairperson
Board of Trustees
About PARC

PARC was founded in 1983 by a group of recently graduated agronomists and young farmers. These volunteers worked under difficult political, economic and agricultural conditions to re-establish the important roles of agronomists and extension workers and carry out vital grassroots organising work. They built their success on day-to-day support during the Intifada and countering Israeli policies that aimed to destroy Palestinian agriculture.

From this beginning, PARC has grown into a successful and dynamic NGO. PARC sees itself as a learning organisation that is continually seeking to improve its work and increase its professional level. PARC targets poor and marginalised farmers — both men and women — and aims to improve their ability to make a living from farming and develop a strong Palestinian agricultural sector through the provision of professional services.

Our achievements of 1996 have been an important step in the institution's progress on the ground. PARC works towards the real development of our Palestinian society based on professional cooperation, hard work, initiative and justice.
The Palestinian Situation in 1996

Political Events
The year 1996 saw a continuing deterioration in the political situation. A full closure was imposed on the West Bank and Gaza since February causing high levels of unemployment; land confiscation intensified for the construction of settlements and settler by-pass roads; and attacks on the civilian population by Israeli settlers and military forces continued. The election of the right-wing Likud government in May caused a slow down in negotiations and almost led to the collapse of the peace process. Combined with the deteriorating economic situation tension escalated culminating in violent clashes after the opening of the Hasmonean Tunnel in the Old City of Jerusalem in September. Over 80 Palestinians were killed and more than 1,000 injured.

Effect on Agriculture
Contrary to expectations, in economic terms there has been no ‘peace dividend’. Agriculture is particularly sensitive to the political situation and the effect has been enormous. PARC estimates that gross income from agricultural production in 1996 declined considerably. The closure, curfews and blockades have had a huge impact on marketing with current levels below those before the signing of the peace agreements. Vast areas of fertile agricultural land were confiscated to build settlements and by-pass roads for the use of Israeli settlers.

The agricultural sector has been overlooked in terms of external support. Pledged funds for agricultural development and infrastructure from international donors were minimal. Under 3% of all financial commitments to the Palestinian people was directed towards agriculture. PARC, in co-operation with other NGO’s working in the agricultural sector, has been instrumental in helping to change this view. The importance of agriculture for food and employment generation is being increasingly realised and more ambitious plans for developing the sector are being presented for 1997.
PARC’s Role in 1996

In view of this situation, in 1996 PARC identified the following as priority areas for its work:

Food security and development of the agricultural sector
The importance of food security for Palestine is clear as more people are turning to their land for subsistence. Our extension services focused on strengthening the ability of the agricultural sector to provide food and on encouraging sustainable agricultural techniques.

Protecting the land against confiscation
Land confiscation has reached unprecedented levels as Israeli settlement and bypass roads construction has increased markedly. PARC has been working with farmers to help bring threatened land into more productive use through land reclamation, agricultural roads and terracing.

Creating job opportunities
The continuing closure has caused considerable economic hardship and unemployment. Agriculture is the sector which absorbs surplus labour during periods of crisis. PARC’s work here was two-fold: to create direct employment opportunities through its projects and to make agriculture more productive, thereby indirectly creating jobs.

Supporting the position of rural women
Women in rural areas are being increasingly marginalised. Despite the vital role they play in both agricultural production and the household economy, they have limited access to resources and decision making. PARC’s work in the empowerment of women focused on developing their role in economic production, building up their leadership skills and social organisation.

Building a civil society
There is currently limited social organisation in rural areas. PARC has been developing partnerships and organising farmers in order to strengthen institutions and increase the democratic representation of rural people.

Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees
Despite the sensitivity of the political situation and the consequent pressure our institution and its employees faced, PARC increased its popularity, leadership and strong presence within all levels of society: from direct beneficiaries, institutions and NGO's to the Palestinian National Authority and Ministries.

The following summarise some of our main successes:

- over 24,000 men and women beneficiaries
- 1,921 dunums of land reclaimed
- over 100,000 trees planted
- 252 km of agricultural roads built
- over 26,000 head of livestock inoculated against parasites
- marketing of women's production increased 3-fold
- 128 farmers & 22 agronomists trained

1996 Annual Report
PARC’S Extension Programme

Extension activities
Recognising the vital role played by women in agriculture, PARC’s extension activities are directed towards both men and women. We have a professional team of specialised agronomists and veterinarians to provide a broad range of services focusing on assisting farmers to achieving food security. These services are provided by our Crop and Animal Production Units and our Women’s Unit. Services include advice on olive and fruit tree cultivation, reducing the use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, vegetable cultivation in greenhouses, composting, solar sterilisation, cultivation under shash, veterinary treatment, production of fodder crops, and the use of by-products for animal fodder.

Table: Extension Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Crop Production*</th>
<th>Animal Production*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Bank</td>
<td>Gaza Strip</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locations</td>
<td>118</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>6,421</td>
<td>14,535</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Visits</td>
<td>1,046</td>
<td>855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Visits</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Statistics for women’s activities included in the section on women’s projects on page 20.

Our special campaigns included eradicating bee wasps, spraying against *capnodis*, and spraying with winter oils instead of pesticides and internal and external parasite prevention.
During 1996 we updated and improved our farmer-centred extension methods. As we shift towards food security and sustainable agriculture our methods are changing towards farmer-to-farmer techniques with an emphasis on workshops, training and farmer-based demonstrations.

Extension Information
The extension methods were supported by materials produced by the Agricultural Information Centre. A monthly newspaper, the only specialised agricultural newspaper in Palestine, is produced and distributed to 8,000 farmers and organisations throughout the West Bank and Gaza. In 1996, the Centre branched out into audio-visual work and co-operated with the Extension Unit to produce extension videos in addition to pamphlets and books.
Demonstration Stations
Experiments and demonstrations in crop production are conducted at three main stations in Jericho, Falamiah and Gaza; and the Beit Dajan Farm is used for animal production. During 1996, work at these stations focused increasingly on sustainable agriculture techniques including biological pest controls, reducing chemical inputs, natural fertilisation techniques, water desalination and efficient irrigation systems, and organic vegetable production.

Training
As PARC moves towards farmer-to-farmer extension methods, training becomes an important aspect of the work. Our Training Unit’s role in the extension programme is increasing. Construction began on the new purpose-built training centre in Zababdeh which in the future will be the focus for training in the rain-fed areas.

The central training programme has two facets: farmers’ training and agronomists’ training. The farmers’ training concentrated on agricultural machinery maintenance, bee-keeping and greenhouse vegetable cultivation. In animal production, training was based at the
Beit Dajan model farm. There is a lack of trained agronomists, new agronomists lack practical skills in particular. Our agronomist training programme provides both male and female graduates with a practical background in all stages from preparing the soil to marketing of produce. This aims to provide PARC and other institutions with professional staff and to create employment.

**Achievements**
- 128 farmers trained
- 12 male agronomists trained
- 10 female agronomists trained

1996 Annual Report
Land reclamation
This project targets land at risk from Israeli confiscation. PARC covers 50% of machinery costs for the heavy bulldozing work and saplings. In 1996, for the first time, the Women’s Unit played an important role in implementing the project. Another new development this year was the decision to focus on three main locations where participants worked together in groups to maximise impact.

Achievements
• 1,921 dunums reclaimed
• 140 beneficiaries
• 12 locations
Agricultural roads
These help to improve productivity and protect against confiscation by helping farmers to reach their land and provide improved services. PARC worked in cooperation with the Farmer's Union, village councils and beneficiaries' committees throughout the West Bank and Gaza.

Achievements
• 10 km of roads built in Gaza
• 242 km of roads built in West Bank
• over 4,000 beneficiaries

Terracing
This project helped PARC accomplish several of its key aims. Terracing protects land against confiscation by targeting vulnerable uncultivated areas, conserves soil, creates employment opportunities and helps social organisation through working in partnership between the Farmers' Union, Village Councils and Committees and agricultural societies.

Achievements
• 46,304 metres terraced
• 485 beneficiaries in 43 locations
• 1,379 workers employed
Fencing
Particularly in the south of the West Bank much of the land is threatened by grazing sheep and wild animals. By fencing off certain areas, grazing can be effectively managed to limit damage to crops, and new lands can be cultivated.

Achievements
• 2,343.5 dunums fenced
• 128 beneficiaries

Green Hand Programme
Being proud of our natural environment is fundamental in developing a strong commitment to the rural sector. This project worked with school students and farmers to raise awareness of environmental and agricultural issues through campaigns and landscaping projects in public areas. Public festivals helped local communities celebrate their rural heritage.

Achievements
• 44,405 trees planted
• 206 locations
• 2 pamphlets published
• poster campaign
• public festivals
Job Creation in Gaza
Gaza has been severely hit by the closures, and unemployment rates are soaring. In addition to its employment generating projects such as agricultural roads, PARC participated in a PECDAR-run project, and provided employment for some 60 workers.

Achievement
• 60 workers employed

Urban Agriculture
Gaza is a very densely populated area. As a result, very limited land is available for agriculture. In addition, agricultural land is constantly encroached upon by the need to provide housing for the rapidly expanding population. Meanwhile, the severe closures imposed by the Israelis frequently prevent food supplies from entering Gaza. Faced by frequent shortages in even basic food staples such as flour and rice, the issue of food security is of paramount importance. PARC believes that urban agriculture provides a solution. In 1996, PARC developed plans and researching methods in this regard. This will become a fundamental part of our work in Gaza in the future.
Fruit Tree Development Programme
Many fruits in Palestinian markets are imported from Israel or have high prices because our local production cannot match demand. This project encourages farmers to plant rain-fed fruit trees that have a high market demand. This will help us move towards achieving food security and provides an important income to rural households. Many of the areas planted are newly reclaimed land.

Achievements
- 59,587 trees planted
- 1,116 beneficiaries
- 142 locations

Chart 1: No. of Fruit Trees

Plum 8,186

Apple 8,471

Fig 5,436

Pear 1,791

Palm 1,144

11,904

Apricot

Almond 22,655

Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees
Falamiah
The integrated development project at Falamiah is an innovative partnership between PARC, international donors and the people of Falamiah. The project has been developed and implemented using experimental methods based on the participation of the local people in all stages of the project. In June 1996 the project was completed, although PARC will continue to work with the people of Falamiah providing extension advice and support. The project dealt with a broad range of issues including irrigation, land reclamation, agricultural roads, sustainable agriculture and women’s projects.

Achievements
- 16 km roads upgraded, 1,500 dunums reclaimed
- irrigation system constructed (not yet operational)
- Women’s Centre built 40 women completed sewing training
- 12 women now employed in sewing outside Falamiah
- commercial herb production started by women
- revolving loan set up for bee-keeping

Organic Agriculture
Organic agriculture is considered to have considerable potential in Palestine. Although there is currently no domestic market for organic produce, higher prices can be obtained in the European market, in which Palestine has the opportunity to develop a competitive advantage. PARC is developing research in organic cultivation in Jericho and Gaza as well as at the demonstration station in Falamiah.
Water is of critical importance in Gaza where there are barely sufficient resources for domestic consumption and existing supplies are dwindling rapidly as they become increasingly saline. PARC is helping farmers to build wells to collect rainwater from greenhouse roofs and collection pools to create an alternative supply for agricultural use. We are also developing the use of saline and waste water technology. PARC has a project to distribute and demonstrate 'carefree' desalinisation machines.

Achievements
- 50 pools with 130m³ capacity
- 11 'carefree' machines for 25 beneficiaries
Agro-processing

There is currently a very limited agro-processing capacity in Palestine. However, this is a vital area to develop in order to create a thriving agricultural sector. PARC is building two processing units for Gaza and Jericho which will employ women to produce different jam varieties. The units have been built, equipped and are in the process of doing test runs before starting production.

Achievements
- 2 units built & equipped
- 70 women trained
- 20 experiments conducted

Local Seed Development

This project is seeking to develop a supply of local seed varieties on a commercial basis. There is currently no effective supply for Palestinian farmers and most obtain foreign seeds at high costs and low quality from Israeli sources. The local diversity is being eroded and certain characteristics are in danger of being lost. Priority is given to small-holder vegetable issues. Cultivation and selection is done on farmers’ land to ensure applicability to the local situation.

Achievements
- commercial seed production started for some varieties
- farmer managed field trials for evaluation on 11 dunums in Ramallah area
Women’s Projects

In addition to the agricultural extension programme and participating in several of PARC’s other projects, the Women’s Unit has a comprehensive programme of projects specifically for women. Along with the women we work with, we prioritised certain key needs for rural women including integrating women into economic production, household economy such as food processing, empowerment through skills building and developing women’s participation in civil society through organising women’s groups and developing leadership skills.

Achievements
- 186 locations
- 3,407 beneficiaries
- 2,754 field visits

Women’s Groups and Social Development

Women’s groups are an important way to help increase women’s participation in civil society and give them opportunities to develop their leadership and organisational skills. In Gaza, women’s groups are now the main target group of the Unit, and the Rif Algad cultural centre was opened in Karara village to offer training and extension to women.

In the West Bank, training and extension was provided in a variety of issues ranging from domestic violence, democracy and leadership skills to health and psychological awareness.
Achievements
- worked with 36 groups and 518 beneficiaries in Gaza
- groups set up in 8 new locations in Gaza
- Rif Algod Cultural Centre opened
- 3 leadership training courses in West Bank
- 239 social lectures held in West Bank

Credit programme
The Credit Programme plays a crucial role in the Women's Unit strategy to integrate women into economic production. Through the provision of small loans to individuals or groups, women set up income generating projects which have the capacity to make a considerable contribution to their household income. Projects are diverse but include chicken and egg production, sheep rearing, dairy production, food processing and handicrafts. Many of the animal production projects were adversely affected by the sharp increases in animal fodder prices. PARC provides training in business skills and extension support as needed. During 1996 the project became a true revolving fund with the first loans made using repayments from other participants.
Small Enterprise Services Centre — Gaza
This is a pilot incubator project for small income generating projects. The centre offers training, extension and other services before offering loans for rural and poor women.

Achievements
• centre fully equipped and opened
• awareness campaign involving over 700 women
• 300 applications for loans received

Administrative Training
The aim of this programme is to develop the administrative skills of women in small enterprises. It involves planning, evaluation, development, decision making, time management, book-keeping, marketing, communications and general management. Complementing this programme are specialised workshops for follow-up.

Achievements
• 150 women trained
• 9 courses held
Co-operatives
Co-operatives have been a central part of the Women's Unit's policy to develop women's participation in economic production. During 1996 PARC focused its work on four areas. Administrative and management levels were developed considerably in the Maithaloon crushed wheat co-operative and in the Biddo couscous and handicrafts co-operative. A seed improvement co-operative was set up in the Hebron area developing seeds for squash, snake cucumbers and eggplants; and training began with five villages in the Jordan Valley Food Processing Co-operatives.

Nutrition and Food Processing
This project is in high demand from the women because it offers the opportunity to learn cheap and effective food processing methods. The Women's Unit provided lectures and demonstrations, and carried out field visits to give follow-up support to participants. The Unit also promoted their produce at food exhibitions.

Achievements
- 379 lectures and demonstrations held
- 20 field visits made
- 12 food exhibitions attended
Co-operation with Institutions

The momentum behind creating a strong agricultural sector in Palestine is the spirit of co-operation. PARC believes that only by working together with other institutions — local and international, governmental and non-governmental — can a cohesive strategy for developing the rural sector be successfully implemented.

Ministry of Agriculture

NGO's face a rapidly changing working environment with the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority. PARC and the Ministry of Agriculture have been working together to develop positive and open relations and to find a balance between our roles so we can work in a complementary way for the common good of Palestinian agriculture. PARC has participated in several workshops held by the Ministry and joint projects are being formulated including training, agricultural roads and land reclamation. PARC participates in several co-ordinating committees set up by the Ministry.
Land Defence Committees

The year 1996 witnessed an increase in settlements, settlement road building and land confiscation. As a result, settlements became a vital issue for organisations and the people alike. PARC supported the expansion and strengthening of the Land Defence Committees resulting in an increase in the growth of the general committee at both the institutional and the popular levels.

Achievements

- many demonstrations held with prominent media coverage
- special programme with pastoral groups distributing 50 tents, filling wells and subsidising fodder and fencing
- distribution of olive trees for threatened lands
Palestinian Farmers’ Union (PFU)
The support PARC gives to farmers’ organisation is vital in ensuring the success of its programme. This support focuses on enabling farmers themselves to play an effective role in dealing with the many issues facing the agricultural sector. The PFU is the main organisation through which PARC works. It is a grassroots organisation and its general aim is to organise farmers. Following a joint evaluation by PARC and the Union, the Union revised its development strategy and established newly defined relations with PARC. Several of PARC’s activities were co-ordinated by the Union.

Achievements
• reclaiming VAT on agricultural inputs
• employing professional management staff
• providing various services to farmers

Local NGO’s and Organisations
PARC is a leading member of the Palestinian NGO network and has set up several joint projects with other NGO’s. This network is playing a crucial role in helping establish a legal framework for the work of NGO’s.

PARC is also implementing several of its projects through village development committees and local councils.
To keep pace with advances in programme activities, PARC seeks to improve the efficiency of its administration, ensure the smooth operation of all projects and build a strong institution. During 1996, administrative changes in PARC centred around the key themes of policy and planning, professionalism and specialisation, gender, decentralisation, transparency and building external relations.

Human Resources
The large increase in projects required an increase in the number in employees in the West B reached a good balance between field, project and administrative staff. The following chart illustrates significant changes in our employee situation:

Chart 2: Staff breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1995</th>
<th>1996</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total staff</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of women</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of men</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degrees</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomas</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff Training
Training is the key to developing high levels of professionalism and specialisation, and the Training Unit's work reflected PARC's commitment to this. In 1996, training particularly targeted enhancing the management skills of staff. Short training courses, workshops, seminars, brainstorming sessions and periodical meetings were all part of the programme.

Decentralisation and Transparency
The grassroots nature of PARC requires a decentralised and open character. The year 1996 saw increasing levels of decentralisation in the administrative structure and associated improvements in communication systems. Clear and efficient communications are always an issue in Palestine with the continual closures and blockades.

Transparency helps to guarantee effective management and decision-making. During 1996, considerable effort went into developing monitoring and reporting, culminating in the publication of progress reports in the local press. PARC also reviewed its 1997 workplan with official institutions in order to develop complementary services for the target groups and prevent duplication.

Policy and Planning
Special effort was directed towards policy and planning during 1996. As a result of the evolving political situation and the establishment of the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, it is important that PARC clearly defines its identity and develops clear policies and plans that will foster co-operation and the cohesive development of the agricultural sector. We started a strategic planning process and prepared a comprehensive 3-year Plan of Operations.

Mainstreaming Gender
PARC is acutely aware of the need to ensure both equal opportunities for women within the organisation and ensure that all its projects take gender relations into consideration. Through the Gender Focus Programme, PARC is aiming to set up a policy which will mainstream gender and ensure that all projects are gender sensitive. In 1996, male and female staff participated in a gender diagnosis of PARC which will form the basis for this programme.
Consultancy Unit
The Unit played an important role in PARC’s progress during 1996. The main priorities for the Unit revolved around strengthening methods of planning and evaluation. The Unit developed a framework for strategic planning, prepared the 3-year plan of operations and is setting up a planning, monitoring and evaluation system. A comprehensive evaluation of the Core Programme was carried out and throughout the year several other programmes were evaluated. The Unit helped to develop new directions such as sustainable agriculture and gender by encouraging the participation of all staff through workshops.

Agricultural Information Centre
The main work of the Centre is in providing materials for the extension programme (see page 8). But the Centre is also active in presenting PARC’s work through the media. Throughout 1996 the Centre was able to build good relations with local media with several interviews on Palestinian Radio and numerous press releases to newspapers. PARC NEWS, an English language newsletter, plays a vital role in keeping our friends and partners around the world informed of our activities. After an evaluation, the Centre is looking to make positive steps forward in 1997.
Public Relations Unit

The Unit helped PARC to exceed expectations through achieving the necessary funding to cover all the planned activities. They maintained and developed relations with consortium members and supporting agencies, and established and maintained good relations with national and international institutions and consulates. As a result they were able to make a positive impact on the progress of the organisation and reinforce its networking and local and international relations.

The significant political events of 1996 required the Unit to issue statements detailing the losses and impact on agriculture and the traumatic effects on Palestinian farmers.
Finance

Our financial strategy for 1996 mainly revolved around improving the financial system to enable it to ensure clarity and transparency, and a connection between financial and technical reporting. It has been improving co-ordination with PARC's other Units to facilitate accurate and appropriate reporting. This has had positive results this year with a much smoother and more efficient system now in place.

PARC has been working according to legal guidelines and regulations. There are no specific accounting principles yet established for Palestine, therefore PARC follows internationally accepted methods.

It is obvious that one year is insufficient to show a clear financial picture, bearing in mind that the better part of the year was used in organising the department and the financial system. We hope that 1997 will witness the development of the department and the full implementation of the new systems.

Investment projects

PARC recognises that it cannot indefinitely rely on covering costs from donors and is working to develop its own income generating activities. While working to eventually provide PARC with an income to cover administration costs, these projects also contribute to developing the agricultural sector. During 1996, PARC focused on strengthening existing projects such as the Agricultural Services Company and the vegetable and banana farms in Jericho. These projects are still at a formative stage, and have not escaped the effects of the political and economic situation. Therefore, we have not yet reached the targets of self-financing that we had set for ourselves.
In 1997 PARC will build on the accomplishments of 1996 at the administrative, financial and technical levels. The main goal will be to achieve food security for needy rural communities through the approach of sustainable agriculture. Particular attention will be given to rain-fed regions. An increased number of projects will be directed towards water and land resources in an attempt to conserve these scarce resources. Due to the significant role of women in agricultural work, PARC will prioritise women and gender relations, giving appropriate attention to service provision and empowerment.

Administrative developments will focus on creating a high level of professionalism and a transparent organisation that meets the needs of the marginalised and poor rural men and women. We will continue to publish progress reports, discuss our plans and policies openly and welcome the comments and contributions of everyone.

PARC will seek to complement its own capacity in an endeavour to meet the aspirations of the Palestinian people. We will co-operate with private organisations working in rural areas. An important part of this will be our new initiative in providing institutional building support to selected organisations such as the Youth Union, Farmers' Union and Land Defence Committees.

Co-operation with governmental organisations representing the Palestinian National Authority will be a major element of our work in an attempt to build a democratic, civil society and as a step towards creating an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Ismail Daiq
General Director
Board of Trustees

West Bank
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PARC is pleased to extend its sincere appreciation and thanks to all our friends and partners for supporting the programmes and activities of PARC throughout 1996.

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Gaza: 07-867178; Ramallah: 02-9952650; Ramallah Laboratory: 02-9956852; Nablus: 09-380912; Hebron: 02-9924288; Jenin: 06-436673; Bethlehem: 02-6470812; Tulkarm: 02-675948; Jericho: 050-549925

Main Office: PO Box 25128 Shu'fat - Jerusalem
Tel: 972-2-5833818; Fax: 972-2-5831898; E-mail: parc@netvision.net.il