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Director’s Message

The year 1997 was a significant one for PARC, as it marked 15 years of hard work, notable for the accumulation of experience and knowledge, and the significant services provided to our key target groups, farmers and women. The quality and quantity of services provided to these important groups had a positive impact on the Palestinian people as a whole, despite the difficult political and economic conditions they are experiencing.

These accomplishments were dependent upon the efforts of volunteers and employees of PARC and support from organisations both here and abroad. Thanks to these contributions, PARC has become one of the most active Palestinian organisations, enjoying good relations with numerous international, regional and local organisations as well as agencies of the United Nations.

PARC is greatly appreciative of all those who participated in the important achievements of 1997, and is hopeful of even greater cooperation and coordination to reinforce those achievements, PARC’s success and the confidence of the local and international communities.

Ismail Daig
General Manager
Mission Statement

PARC is a non-profit organization working in the field of rural development, environmental protection and the enhancement of the role and status of rural women. We offer extension services and work to increase awareness of key issues, and offer support to individuals, groups and organizations working in the same field.

PARC enjoys a broad-based grassroots participation in its programmes, and the knowledge of our beneficiaries is paired with the skills and expertise of our staff, working together to develop Palestinian civil society.

PARC'S Aims

- To expand and protect agricultural land and its productivity.
- To work towards comprehensive environmental development.
- To promote the most efficient utilisation of available water resources.
- To promote and expand all aspects of the productive abilities of rural women and empower their role in the community.
- To assist in the establishment, development and support of institutions, committees and unions and mobilise individuals and groups in order to realize PARC's objectives on the ground in all areas related to its work.
- To develop and enhance complementary agricultural activities.
- To realize the potential of PARC workers, expand their capabilities and increase their productive skills.
- To further develop PARC's dynamic funding strategy.

Standards Of Quality

PARC is working towards the achievement of the ISO 9002 certification of quality control, and is the first non-governmental organisation in Palestine to seek this certification. Our management and staff are committed to providing first-rate development services distinguished by professional and technical excellence using innovative and effective methods.

These services are determined by the economic, social and environmental needs and expectations of marginalised rural groups and are implemented in a way that ensures the optimal use of available resources.

PARC will continue to offer its services through an administrative system that is constantly being improved, and with a committed team of highly skilled staff.
**PARC's Long-Term Strategy**

Believing in the statement that "those who anticipate the future are empowered to create it", PARC has drafted a ten-year strategic plan, covering the period 1998-2008, setting out the priorities and directions for the organisation as a whole. Each department and each individual in PARC is committed to following the path outlined in the strategic plan, in order to meet the needs of rural Palestinian communities, particularly those which are primarily or heavily dependent on agriculture.

PARC has identified the following key areas for immediate and future work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Aim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lack of Food Security</strong></td>
<td>Build food security for all through:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• increasing production of small and family farms for subsistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and local markets;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• developing production techniques with sustainable and gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>focus;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• creating new marketing and processing opportunities for local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>production;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• supporting and strengthening women's and farmers' local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• strengthening local economy through household, income generating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and employment projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neglect of Agricultural Sector</strong></td>
<td>Strengthen and improve the agricultural sector in social and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>economic directions and create a suitable investment climate for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>private sector involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scarce and Mismanaged Resources</strong></td>
<td>Improve efficient use of available resources through:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• environmental protection;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• creating employment, improving skills and promoting workers'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rights and conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Requires Awareness</strong></td>
<td>PARC will develop an extension process that will:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• use new extension methods appropriate to sustainable agriculture;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• develop the local knowledge system;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• develop the participation of women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Marketing</td>
<td>PARC will work towards redressing the obstacle to agricultural development presented by weak marketing, through:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• reducing the negative effects from post-harvest operations in the production process;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• supporting infrastructure, information systems, food processing, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Capacity Needs</td>
<td>Building a democratic civil society requires the strengthening of local organisations. PARC will work towards this goal by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• strengthening institution-building for local organisations, including participatory methods and democratic decision-making;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• increasing opportunities for local organisations to affect sectoral and national development and decision-making;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• improving the understanding of civil society and democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited Role of Women</td>
<td>Empower women to take a central role in society and the development process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People-Centred Development</td>
<td>'Development with people' means that PARC must have an appropriate organisational character. PARC will build on its unique grassroots character to be an independent NGO based on the principles of participation and partnership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for Self-Financing</td>
<td>In order to be sustainable and independent, PARC intends to be more than 50 percent self-financing by the year 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Need to Learn</td>
<td>Learning from experience helps us to keep moving forward-with this in mind, PARC will become a learning organisation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Management Systems</td>
<td>Following on from its commitment to sustainability and participation, PARC will develop non-bureaucratic management built on democratic systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximising Impact</td>
<td>PARC will become a leading rural development NGO with a regional influence and local impact.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The year 1997 saw little improvement in the Palestinian economy. This was largely due to the political stagnation in the peace process, stemming from the Likud-led Israeli government's refusal to implement interim phase agreements. The further redeployments from West Bank rural areas, which were to have been completed by mid-1997, have never happened. The West Bank town of Hebron was left divided after the January 1997 signing of the Hebron Protocol committed Israel to leaving only 80 percent of the town. Reiterated commitments to rural redeployment attached to the Protocol were ignored. The Paris Economic Protocol similarly has yet to be implemented fully. Palestinians remain by and large under closure, facing chronic unemployment which passed the 40 percent mark at one point in the year.

Palestinian farmers are particularly hard-hit. Since the beginning of the peace process, there have been no solutions offered to the marketing problems farmers experience, whether exporting to Israel or neighbouring Arab countries. In addition, agricultural land continues to be seized by the Israeli authorities for bypass road construction and settlement building - over 30,000 dunams (8,000 acres) of land have been confiscated since 1993. The denial of water rights remains in force. Settler vandalism against Palestinian orchards, the rampant cutting and uprooting of productive trees, continues. Settlements continue to spew out untreated sewage, which seeps into Palestinian farmland and water supplies.

The biggest obstacle to peace and prosperity has been the closure, now entering its eighth year. Since 1993 and the start of the peace process, the closure has been even more rigid, and neither the Palestinian Authority nor donors have supported the agricultural sector sufficiently with financial resources to offset the losses incurred by the closure. Ideas and suggestions for projects abound, however, among NGOs, PA institutions and international organisations. However, at year end, those ideas had still not been translated into real support.

In the midst of this, PARC is turning its focus toward more sustainable production systems, the conservation of resources and the environment, and working toward food security. PARC's approach has been directly dictated by the needs of communities on the ground.

PARC has also been concentrating on improving relations with the Palestinian Authority, through joint projects and other activities. PARC offered assistance to other NGOs as well, and chose to take a more active role in the Palestinian NGO Network, one of the coordinating bodies for NGO work in the country.

A summary of PARC's achievements over the year follows.
PARC's Major Achievements in 1997

Programme Highlights

- Reclamation of 4,000 dunams (1,000 acres) of land
- Construction of 600 kms of farm roads
- Opening of first comprehensive rural development project in Palestine in Falamia village
- Outstanding performance by Rural Women's Department, with higher number of beneficiaries, greater impact and more favourable evaluation in comparison with other organisations
- Establishment of irrigation and environmental unit and initial steps taken in implementation of projects
- Participation in audio visual materials for media purposes to establish an effective training programmes/TV documentaries on extension awareness
- Completion of construction of the Zebabdeh training centre; began construction of Gaza training centre; preparatory steps taken for establishment of Jericho and Ramallah training centres

Organisational Highlights

- Completion of the draft ten-year strategy for the organisation
- Completion of the new organisational structure
- Completion of requirements for quality control classification ISO 9002
- Successful training and joint work with partner organisations
- Preparatory stages completed for establishment of investment services and training departments, including organisation of structure and positions
- Outstanding performance by PARC/Gaza, and particularly good relations with other NGOs
- Expansion of grassroots base among farmers, and increased acknowledgment of appreciation and respect for PARC's work
- Opening new lines of networking with Italian and Danish NGOs
- Improved relations with governmental bodies, particularly the Ministry of International Planning and Cooperation (MOPIC), the Ministry of Local Governance, and PECDSAR.
- Improved status within the Palestinian NGO network (PNGO) and improved relations with NGOs, particularly in Gaza. Election of PARC as member of the coordinating committee of the PNGO
- Establishment of working relations with international organisations based in Palestine
- Maintained good relations with international and partner organisations; organisation and implementation of joint activities, workshops and conferences
- Directing focus of work trends and organisation policies toward organic and sustainable agriculture and integrated pest management
- Receipt of numerous acknowledgments and expressions of appreciation in Legislative Council sessions and from the Land Defense Committees, other organisations and individuals

Administrative Highlights
- Improved transparency in reporting; increased publications of reports in the press and received thanks from the Palestinian Authority's Higher Monitoring Committee
- Improvement in technical and administrative skills through specialised training programme
- Interactive and integrated relationship between workers, departments and regions
- Administrative restructuring of investment projects in order to assure availability of financial resources

Difficulties Encountered in 1997
- The effectiveness of certain training courses was not up to anticipated levels
- PARC activities in the media did not effectively reflect the actual work done
- There remains no documentation of PARC's history of activities; information system still lacking
- Efforts to establish income-generating investment projects which could cover much of PARC's administrative costs were unsuccessful
- Animal production and information units remained restricted to traditional activities
- Institution-building of partner organisations has not yet achieved anticipated levels
- Relations with Ministry of Agriculture need continued strengthening
- Continuing lack of law regulating NGOs
PARC’s Extension Department supports and encourages Palestinian farmers through its outreach programme, providing on-site training and assistance to the farming and animal husbandry sectors. The Extension Department not only assists individual farmers, but works to increase cooperation between the farm and the village, between communities, and between organisations specialised in agriculture and rural development.

In 1997, the Extension Department focused on support to farmers’ organisations, encouragement of sustainable farming and water management practices, and environmental conservation. Specific strategies were implemented which would help Palestinian farmers in their fight against land seizures, the preservation of traditional - and ecologically sound - farming techniques, and decreasing dependence on chemicals. Women participated in greater numbers in Extension Department activities in 1997, as a result of the increased coordination between the Women’s Department and the Extension Department. In 1997, an estimated 30 percent of the beneficiaries of the Plant Production Unit’s programmes were women.

The Extension Department is comprised of the Plant Production Department and the Animal Production Department - altogether some 30 agronomists, veterinarians and support staff - and in 1997 their work assisted almost 17,000 farmers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Plant Production Department

Practical assistance to farmers continued in 1997, with five spraying campaigns implemented, benefitting 1,392 farmers throughout the country. The spraying campaigns included an environmental awareness component this time, as PARC’s trainers continue to inform farmers of more environmentally friendly techniques to resolve farming problems, e.g., integrated pest management and solar sterilisation. Farmer awareness campaigns involved training in the use of verdigris and plaster to combat diseases in fruit trees, accompanied by an educational pamphlet listing the advantages of this practice. Similarly, 17 campaigns against the almond bee wasp were conducted using mechanical techniques rather than chemicals; over 5,700 kgs of infected almonds were burned, assisting 826 farmers. Ninety-nine men and women participated in nine demonstrations of techniques for pruning olive trees, and there were demonstrations in composting and other organic fertilisation techniques.

Extension workers in the Plant Production Department profited enormously from workshops on integrated pest resistance (held in Jordan), and on organic farming (held in the West Bank). Workers felt that they had benefited in terms of theoretical knowledge and in addition boosted their professional self-confidence.
Plant Production Department Activities / 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field visits</td>
<td>453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>3283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary locations</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spraying campaigns</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>1392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almond pest eradication</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit tree preservation</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees treated</td>
<td>91531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seedling plantation</td>
<td>34028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiary locations</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved seed distribution</td>
<td>59.5 kgs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved seedling distribution</td>
<td>17500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved seed collection</td>
<td>49 kgs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Land Development and Reclamation

Reclaiming and developing the land is a key strategy in combating the continuous land seizures and land clearances for settlement building and settler road construction. PARC’s land reclamation project is integrated with various other components of a wider land development strategy which includes shoring up deteriorating terraces, increasing access to crops through new farm roads, and distributing fruit-bearing seedlings. This integrated approach is aimed at encouraging farmers not to let land lie uncultivated — ripe for confiscation — through facilitating their profitable use of the land. Farm roads which increase ease of tending and harvesting, seedlings freely distributed, and rehabilitation of terracing to increase water catchment — these are the basics of PARC’s land development and reclamation programme.

In 1997, the Extension Department expanded the scope of its land reclamation work to encourage farmers to visit sites outside their own area where successful reclamation work had been carried out. Twelve such farmer exchanges were conducted in 1997. The purpose of this type of exchange is to encourage more farmers to reclaim uncultivated land, as well as to promote farmer-to-farmer contacts. Land development work expanded greatly over the year, with 15 supervisors working in the field, in addition to the extension workers and project administrators. Farm roads linking agricultural-based villages were a priority in 1997, and work was carried out in some...
100 villages with 70 bulldozers and baggers. The number of farmers benefiting from farm road construction rose significantly, and twice as many farmers benefited from the terracing work carried out by the Extension Department. Almost 4,000 dunams (1,000 acres) of uncultivated land were reclaimed by 531 farmers - surpassing the project's annual goal by almost four times. Clearly, this project has struck a chord in farmers, as the response to land reclamation efforts, and the demand for farm roads and terracing, has been phenomenal.

The land development achievements of 1997 are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>No. Farmers</th>
<th>No. Locations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Terrace construction</td>
<td>126,022 m³</td>
<td>1,012</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm road construction</td>
<td>614 km.</td>
<td></td>
<td>271 roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of fencing</td>
<td>5,588 dunams</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of plastic</td>
<td>162.22 kg.</td>
<td>612</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation of seedlings</td>
<td>91,281 seedlings</td>
<td>1,679</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reclaiming land</td>
<td>3,962 dunams</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Land Development and Reclamation

(1) Terrace Construction

(2) Seedling Cultivation

(3) Farm Road Construction

(4) Land Reclamation
Animal Production Department

Five veterinarians, working together with agronomists, assisted sheep breeders in 65 villages in 1997, through courses, field visits and injection campaigns. The long-term aim is to upgrade sheep breeding and disease resistance. Twenty-five training courses were conducted in 1997, using the demonstration station at Beit Dajan and benefiting 385 breeders. Beit Dajan was also the site of 179 demonstrations for numbering and agricultural filing, and sheep breeding techniques. Over a thousand demonstrations were given last year of the hormone and sponge technique of sheep breeding, and 238 demonstrations on sterilisation were conducted.

Field visits to sheep farmers, 1,663 throughout the year, resulted in curing 7,914 cases of infected sheep.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field visits</td>
<td>1663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>12087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock treated</td>
<td>7914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spraying campaigns</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Injection campaigns</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>1269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock treated</td>
<td>33079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixty-five organized vaccination campaigns were implemented, during which 33,079 sheep were injected in two stages, with 1,269 sheep farmers being assisted. The problem of external parasites was addressed through 42 spraying programmes which covered 929 farms.

Beekeepers were again the focus of assistance; in addition to training courses encouraging beekeeping and five workshops for established beekeepers, 16 experimental campaigns against the spider of wind pipes in bees were carried out, as were six anti-bee wasp campaigns.

Other Activities

Training

Agronomists from the Plant Production Department concentrated their efforts on farmer training in 1997, with 17 percent more lectures (117 in all) to farmers on topics such as land reclamation, decreasing dependence on pesticides, and home garden production. Staff conducted 453 field visits in 1997, an almost 50 percent decline over 1996. This marked the shift in approach away from one-on-one field visits to more practical extension work which is accessible to a greater number of farmers, i.e., group demonstrations, awareness and information campaigns, etc. Demonstrations, which numbered almost five times over the year's target goal at 158 in all, addressed composting techniques and benefits, solar sterilisation methods, rainfed potato cultivation, organic fertilisation, and related topics.

In addition, over 300 men and women attended workshops in beekeeping which were aimed at encouraging this sector.
Sustainable agriculture
PARC continues to promote traditional and more sustainable practices in farming. Improvement of local seed production continues to be the subject of intensive work with farmers; 59.5 kgs of improved seeds were distributed for cultivation, and 17,500 seedlings from improved seeds were distributed in seven different locations with 138 farmers in order to conduct field tests on the new strains. Local produce currently targeted in this project include the staple crops aubergine, tomatoes, squash, wild cucumbers, pumpkins and gumbo. An additional 49 kgs of improved seed were collected in 1997.

Rainwater collection and rainfed cultivation was encouraged in 1997, and solar sterilisation was the subject of 29 demonstrations. Thirty-nine demonstrations of composting methods were given to 417 farmers, both men and women. An educational pamphlet and video were made demonstrating the how's and why's of composting.

Green Hand
The Green Hand campaign is the forestation programme through which PARC has distributed hundreds of thousands of tree seedlings, aimed at beautifying the landscape and public places and increasing public awareness about the need for environmental conservation. In 1997, in coordination with the Ministries of Education and Youth, 34,028 flowering and green tree seedlings were planted in 235 public gardens in schools throughout the country. Accompanying their new trees, the schools received gardening tools, posters and an informative pamphlet on the environment.
While PARC's programmes share a common objective of increasing women's participation in all their activities, the Rural Women's Department implements projects specifically aimed at Palestinian women and their needs. PARC's work with women focuses on practical skills training as well as more general promotion of women's role in their communities. Particularly in times of economic recession, women are key to sustaining the family, through their home gardens; food processing for home consumption or sale; and other means of supplementing the family income and food supply.

PARC supports rural women through practical skills training related to agriculture and food processing, as well as through leadership, literacy and credit programmes which can help to expand the proactive role they already play in the home and community.

We witnessed a satisfying increase in the number of women participating in programmes and activities implemented by the Rural Women's Department. There was a particularly notable expansion in the practical skills courses in comparison with 1996. The number of food processing courses tripled and the number of demonstrations doubled - both a reflection of the continuing economic decline which is forcing women to look for more alternatives to ready-made foodstuffs. The training courses in expansion and improvement of home gardens witnessed a similar expansion - 25 percent more courses than in 1996 reaching a much wider group. There were 226 home garden demonstrations carried out in 1997 - an average of two demonstrations every three days.

The Rural Women's Department programmes in 1997 are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>No. Implemented</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotion of Household Production:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home garden development demonstrations</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>3,965 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food processing training courses</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1,537 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food processing demonstrations</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>2,846 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to factories/cooperatives</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>989 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibition of home produced goods</td>
<td>16 (3 w/ other NGOs)</td>
<td>9,950 visitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of resources in household production</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>2,168 women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental training courses</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>254 women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Promotion of Medicinal Herb Cultivation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of chamomile/thyme seedlings</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamomile demonstrations</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures on medicinal herbs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Women’s Empowerment & Networking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative training courses</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative training workshops</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership training courses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological, social and health awareness lectures</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>3,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological, social and health awareness training courses</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy courses</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit exchanges</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of women's clubs</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microenterprise loans</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14 individuals &amp; 3 cooperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading handicraft skills: training courses in embroidery, ceramics, etc.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrations/graduations/other festivals focusing on women</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,790+ women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Rural Women’s Department**

Training Programmes / 1997

(Includes demonstrations, workshops, and courses)
Environment & Irrigation Department

In its first year of operation, this Department provided an impressive level of support to the Extension and Women’s Departments, and implemented a variety of activities on its own. With its central focus being more efficient management of water resources and other environmental issues, Department staff were actively educating farmers, housewives, and other sectors of the community through demonstrations and other training sessions.

Demonstrations centred on the use of specialised irrigation tools: the Tenchometre and Watermark, both of which measure humidity; and Carefree, which reduces damage to crops from high salinity. Other topics introduced to farmers included solar sterilisation, reuse of waste water in home gardens, and the hazards of pesticides.

Training Provided

- Tensiometer / demonstrations
- Watermark / demonstrations
- Carefree / demonstrations
- Solar sterilisation / demonstrations
- Household waste water reuse / workshops
- Rural environment management / workshops
- Health hazards of pesticides / lectures
- Liquid residue management / workshops
- Pollution of artesian wells / lectures
- Farmer exchange visits

Practical Assistance Provided

- Construction of 47 150 m³ pools in the Gaza Strip
- Completion of 200 m³ upper reservoir
- Distribution of 230 protective suits for pesticide use
- Distribution of 5 different posters on environmental protection
- Preparation of 3 pamphlets on safe use of pesticides

Administrative & Institutional Development

PARC continues to work toward improving itself as an organisation, in terms of how it relates externally to partner organisations and beneficiaries, but, equally importantly, in its internal systems and operations. One reflection of the continuing work on self-improvement is the low
turnover rate of employees; only seven out of 91 employees resigned in 1997.
Eighteen additional staff were taken on in 1997, and two new departments were established: the Training and Support Services Department and the Environment and Irrigation Department. A third, the Institutional Establishment and Development Department, is currently in the process of being established. Two new sections were operationalised in 1997 as well: the ISO section and the internal information section. These new structural additions were made with the aim of developing PARC's capacity, not through the simple addition of staff, but through qualitative changes in the structure and assignment of responsibilities.

PARC remained committed to full employment opportunities for women. At year end 1997, women comprised 40 percent of PARC's overall staff, a five percent increase over the previous year. While the number of women in senior managerial positions remains limited, we provided three women the opportunity of upgrading their academic level in order to be able to secure positions of greater responsibility in the future.

Through its project work, PARC provided short-term (six months to one year) employment to some 100 people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, within the land reclamation work, demonstrations and agricultural machinery projects. After assessing their situation in 1997, by year end, PARC had implemented a policy of covering all such short-term workers with benefits. There has been a noticeable improvement in professionalism, attitude and commitment to the work.

Major strides have been taken in three key areas of our evolution as an organisation.

**Administrative support** to staff was improved in 1997, with:
- computer networks improved and nine computers upgraded;
- each branch office supplied with fax and photocopying machines;
- improved communications systems and facilities, including increased number of telephones;
- improved capacity for in-house printing and dissemination of information;
- improved transportation system for employees;
- expanded insurance coverage for employees and addition of optional life insurance coverage, but at reduced costs to PARC;
- additional opportunities for staff to upgrade academic levels, at local universities and abroad.

**Administrative structures** were upgraded in 1997, as PARC works to modernise, through:
- simplified lines of authority - each employee has only one supervisor;
- clearly defined managerial roles - each manager has a focused area of responsibility;
- clearly defined units responsible for specific areas of work;
• continued decentralisation of decision-making and administrative responsibilities;
• retaining enough organisational flexibility to successfully absorb change and modifications.

The overall quality of PARC's work has been upgraded over the past year, through the installation of the ISO system. PARC is working to satisfy the requirements needed to obtain the ISO 9002 certificate as a non-profit institution, which it intends to have in 1998. PARC will be the first organisation certified by the ISO in the region.

Training & Support Activities Department

Training work was carried out separately in three departments in PARC in 1997, the Training Department, the Information and Awareness Department and the Consultancy Department. The departments were integrated at the end of 1997, and the new department's main aim is to provide supporting services to PARC staff, to partner organisations and projects; and to farmers.

In 1997, the Training Department provided important support to the Extension and Rural Women's Departments, and implemented key training activities on its own as well. In total, 884 trainees participated in courses organised and run by the Department in 1997. The year's activities are summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Department Activities / 1997</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training with local institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal training for PARC staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training women agronomists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training agronomists (Animal Production Department)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training agronomists (Plant Production Unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative training for women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's leadership training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative training for farmers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of partner organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consultancy Unit

The Consultancy Department had three primary working goals for 1997:

- development and implementation of a planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) system in PARC and facilitation of the strategic planning process;
- supporting the development of new directions in PARC as required and assisting in PARC's planning and policy-making;
- continuing with the evaluation programme.

In 1997, the Consultancy Department concentrated on strengthening the planning work in PARC and, in particular, on developing the strategic plan which is an essential part of the linking of levels of planning and therefore is a prerequisite for any PME system. The Department led the strategic planning process in PARC. This is the first time that PARC has specifically prepared a strategy plan and it therefore required a considerable investment of time and effort on the part of all the staff involved. The Consultancy Department designed the framework for the planning process, facilitated the analysis of information and set up several workshops for PARC staff to participate in defining the strategy aims for PARC. A draft report was completed and 1998 plans have been prepared using that strategy as a basis.

Other work focused on planning the PME system and researching the methods to be used, participating in the ICCO/Christian Aid PME working group, identifying needs and holding some preliminary training workshops for PARC staff.

An important aspect of the Department's work is in supporting new initiatives in PARC and helping to develop new directions for the organisation. Reflecting the major changes ongoing in PARC, during 1997 this was a major part of the work for the Department. The initiatives the Consultancy Department was involved with in 1997 include the Gender Focus Programme, ISO 9000, and the new Training Department. In addition, the Consultancy Department has been providing support to several other departments and programmes.

In addition, facilitating evaluations remained a significant part of the Department's work, although it is moving away from doing separate evaluations. In 1997, the Consultancy Department continued to work on the Agricultural Information Centre evaluation and the evaluation of the Falalim Project. The Department staff looked to increasingly involve project staff in a central role in the evaluation teams so that evaluation work is no longer seen as the sole responsibility of the Consultancy Department, but instead is seen as an integral part of project management. The success of this approach is evident in the fact that several evaluations were made with only limited support from the Consultancy Department.
Agricultural Information Centre

PARC continued to support its training and extension activities with an increasing number of written and audio/visual materials produced by its Agricultural Information Centre. 1997 saw the publication of eight issues of the monthly agricultural news, the only newspaper of its kind in the country; some 8,000 copies of each issue were distributed in rural areas, to farmers, to farming and agricultural organisations. PARC’s quarterly English-language newsletter, PARC News, continued publication and 500 copies of each issue were distributed to institutions in and outside of the country. In 1997, the Agricultural Information Centre introduced Farming in Palestine, a regular English-language update of news related to land and the agricultural sector. Farming in Palestine is aimed at increasing awareness among international organisations of the difficulties faced by Palestinian farmers; 52 organisations both here and abroad received copies of this news service.

Extension and training support were provided by the publication of pamphlets on environmental and other issues. The Centre also supervised the editing and design of five educational books over the year, and 10 information pamphlets on the Extension Unit's activities.

Media coverage of PARC's work increased significantly in 1997, as PARC demonstrated its commitment to public accountability. Among many other activities, the Centre published news of PARC projects on average three times a month in the local Arabic-language press. And audio/visual information works expanded as well, with four films produced - on land reclamation, efficient use of pesticides, olive cultivation, and the women's unit work in Gaza - and broadcast over local television. By the year end, another three films were in production, on raising sheep, compost techniques and land reclamation in the Ramallah area.

Information activities for 1997 can be summarised as follows:
Type of Activity Details

- Monthly agricultural newspaper
- PARC News (English)
- Farming in Palestine (English)
- Books
- Extension Unit pamphlets
- News & educational pamphlets
- Brochures
- Press statements & clarifications
- Press field visits & meetings
- Exhibitions
- Workshops & conferences
- Local press coverage of PARC's activities
- Joining local television station
- Cooperation with local TV stations
- TV reports on PARC activities
- Production of video films

- TV interviews with PARC staff
- Cooperation with local radio stations
- Local and international networking

8 issues / 8,000 copies each
3 issues / 500 copies each
6 issues / 52 copies each
5 produced
10 produced
2 produced
3 produced on environment and Extension Unit
8 produced on land confiscation, agricultural losses, related issues
15 with local & international media, including Time, NY Times, Jerusalem Post
8 in which PARC information was presented
7 on fodder, gender, family violence, agriculture, administrative systems, etc.
On average, once every 10 days
Agreement signed with al-Watan
Broadcasts arranged with 5 stations
36 broadcasts
4 produced (land reclamation, pesticides, olives, Gaza women's unit) and 3 in production at year end
3
Agreements with 3 stations
Active communication with 26 research centres and publishing houses; participation with numerous local institutions, particularly the Land Defense Committee
Financial Department

Funding PARC in 1997:

The year 1997 has been distinguished with the increase in the funding capacity of the activities carried out by PARC, especially outside the core program, whereas it focused on training and food security projects. Nevertheless, the core program maintained a stable capacity of funding and number of donors.

In addition to that, projects focused in Gaza Strip were funded to benefit the target groups without passing the money through PARC.

Numerically, we can explain what has been mentioned as follows:

| PARC has had from outside the core program for projects | $ 2,585,914 |
| PARC has had from the core program | $ 1,926,395 |
| PARC contributed in the projects | $ 619,298 |
| Funded programs and projects paid directly to beneficiaries | $ 435,000 |
| Community contribution | $ 1,386,000 |

The real value cost of the overall projects exceeded the mentioned value, due to the voluntary work carried out by the village councils, farmer's committees, field workers, supervisors, and women whom contributed ocular material, effort and time in order to support the established women projects.

As for the administrative expenses, it decreased to 9% due to the development in the performance of the employees and of the decrease in the capacity of the expenses and project management. Whereas the year 1996 the administrative expenses reached up to 11%.

The following table shows the priorities of PARC according to the funded programs:

| Land Development Projects | 48% |
| Training Projects | 11% |
| Extension Projects | 9% |
| Environmental Projects | 3% |
| Experiments & Research | 4% |
| Farmer's Organizing Projects | 6% |
| Women Projects | 8% |
| Information & Supporting Services | 2% |
| Administrative Expenses | 9% |
According to these priorities we can see the following:

1- The land development projects (land reclamation, opening agriculture roads, and planting seedlings, etc.) is still the first priority due to its intimate relation with food security. Nevertheless, food security projects are costly and take about half of the project's budget.

2- PARC maintained its present concern in the extension projects, but with improving the quality of the provided extension services.

3- The training unit maintained its provided services, in addition to adding the institutional training process which is considered one of the significant elements of PARC's strategy.

4- PARC has increased its concern in the organizing projects and rebuilding the farmer's organizations, especially the present.

5- PARC undertook the environmental projects, which were not considered in the program of the year 1996.

In general, we can see a significant shift in the capacity and quality of projects carried out by PARC in the year 1997, according to the needs of the target groups, requirements of the developmental plans on the national level, and without conflict with the other developmental organizations.

Public Relations

The main goals of the Public Relations Department are to:

- secure continued and regular funding for PARC;
- strengthen development and cooperative relations with partner organisations locally and internationally;
- open up new funding channels with the European Union and international organisations;
- strengthen ties with Palestinian partner organisations through the consultant assigned for this purpose;
- direct part of the overall funds to PARC's partner organisations;
- submit new project proposals under the name of PARC's three societies;
* arrange visits to a number of countries in order to explore possibilities of cooperation.

By June 1997, the Public Relations Department had already met its goals for the year and a new work plan had to be devised. In total, the Department was responsible for submitting 40 new funding proposals; compiling 20 narrative and financial reports on various PARC's projects; and hosting 55 delegations to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Public Relations Department played a key role in securing increased stable funding for PARC in 1997, and in advocating for a number of issues at the field level through field visits with officials, partners and solidarity organisations and groups. The Department responded promptly to the emergency situation created by the winter hurricanes in Jericho, publishing an urgent appeal for relief and preparing a number of funding proposals for donors concerned in this area.

**Investment Services Department**

All projects requiring investment management and subject to taxation are put under the administration of this Department. There were a number of technical and administrative achievements for the Department staff in 1997, particularly in terms of organising and operationalising the Department.

The Department is divided into three sections: food processing; marketing; and real estate, etc. In the food processing section, the Sultan Factory ceased operations in 1997 due to a lack of working capital. The jam project was highly successful, however, producing different varieties of high-quality fruit jam in Jericho. There were a number of other products made during the year which are in demand both locally and abroad.

Marketing efforts in 1997 including the export of products from women's cooperatives and farmers to the alternative market in Europe, particularly to Oxfam/Belgium as well as other European countries. PARC also began preparing for the domestic and external marketing of vegetables and fruit. The export process to Russia and Israel has already begun, and a market in Ramallah was opened for organic and other produce.

The real estate and shares section deals largely with the follow-up process involved in establishing the Zebabdeh, Gaza and Ramallah training centres. In addition, however, the section monitors shareholding companies, including the Palestine Chicken Company, and the Cooling and Storage Company. PARC is also on the board of trustees of the two companies.
PARC is well aware of the urgent need for coordination and integration between governmental and non-governmental organisations, particularly given the difficult circumstances being experienced by most Palestinians. Developing services which can respond to the current and projected level of need requires such integration.

In addition, Palestinians are passing through a transition period, a period of building which will help determine our future as a country. The establishment of a firm cooperative relationship between governmental and non-governmental organisations, with a clear foundation and guidelines provided by the rule of law, will serve as a progressive model for cooperation in other areas.

In this respect, 1997 saw significant development in the relationship between PARC and PA organisations, with a number of joint activities implemented, including joint work with 11 ministries; regular meetings with Palestinian governors in the different regions; establishing a relationship with the Palestinian Legislative Council and Council Members; establishing a cooperative relationship with the Civil Coordination Office in each region; and coordinating with both governmental and quasi-governmental bodies such as PEC DAR, the Palestinian Water Authority; and the Palestine Broadcasting Company.

PARC also succeeded in establishing joint programmes with a number of local organisations working in rural areas in the health field; in legal, social and cultural activities; environmental awareness; sports; and credit. In 1997, PARC worked with about 100 local organisations specialised in agriculture, health, training, education and research, as well as legal and national institutions, eight universities and high school education institutions. PARC found that such arrangements provided the opportunity for new learning experiences and helped to defray the costs of some of the activities due to the contribution of programmes and capacity of other organisations.

PARC coordinated with dozens of international organisations working in the country, participating in joint projects or coordinating activities in order to avoid replication of effort. PARC benefited from this coordination not only by strengthening its relationships with international organisations, but also by profiting from the exchange of information and experience and improving its administrative and financial performance.
Last year saw the continued development of cooperative relations with over 30 international and regional organisations in the fields of gender, planning, monitoring and evaluation; organic farming; food security and environmental issues. In 1997, PARC was involved in 24 conferences and regional, Arab and international workshops; in addition, we hosted 15 experts and technicians who shared their information and experiences with PARC staff.

Work Plans 1998

Within the context of the long-term strategy formulated by PARC staff, the following specific objectives have been targeted for 1998:

**Internal Work Plans**
- Implement the interim structure plan
- Complete requirements for obtaining ISO 9002 certification
- Complete work on central offices in Ramallah, Jericho and Gaza
- Work on the financial and administrative improvement of investment projects
- Establish internal management information system
- Continue to improve internal work environment in order to increase effectiveness

**Programme Goals**
- Further shift focus of programme work toward sustainable and organic agricultural practices
- Establishment of a unit concentrating for institutional development and grassroots work
- Establish rural development and training institute
- Delegate more authority to regions and project managers
- Begin development of audio/visual outreach – advertising, television, etc.
- Upgrade services provided to women and continue establishment of women's clubs
- Expand food security, irrigation, environmental and land reclamation projects
- Establish women's credit institution and merge with Arab Centre for Agricultural Development
- Offer agricultural marketing services, particularly targeting export and organic farming
- Open educational garden in PARC/Jericho
- Target public gardens and parks through Green Hand programme
Organisational Goals

- Promote more coordinated and participatory work at regional and international levels
- Work on improving relations with governmental and non-governmental organisations (e.g., through provision of training services to the latter)
- Target the establishment of partner institutions like the Farmers' and Youth Unions
- Celebrate PARC's 15th anniversary as public occasion
- Establish certification board for organic produce
PARC extends heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the friends and partners who supported our work in 1997.

*Core programme supporters include:*
Christian Aid
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*Other partners include:*
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**Internal Information**

**Internal Monitoring**

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- Gaza Branch Administration

**Rural Women Development Department**

- Tulkarm Branch Administration

**Extension & Land Development Department**

- Nablus-Salfet Branch Administration

**Environment, Irrigation & Technology Transfer Department**

**Institutional Building & Grassroots Relations Department**

**Training & Support Activities Department**

**Financial Department**

**Investment Services Department**

**Staff**

The number of full time employees in the core program is 95 of whom 40% are women.

- No. of employees in the West Bank: 70
- No. of employees in the Gaza Strip: 25
- No. of male and female agronomists and vets: 48.
- 4 employees have a Ph.D, 19 have MSc, and 54 a BA & BSc holders.

The rest of the staff has secondary education.

The average number of employees contracted for project term is around 150.
PARC in Palestine

Main Office and Branches

The main office is located in Beit Hanina a northern suburb of East Jerusalem.

Branches are located in Gaza, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jericho, Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem.

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Jenin: 06-436673  Bethlehem: 02-6470812
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