



Agricultural Development Association
(PARC)



Driving Change

PARC Strategic Plan
2014 - 2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Agricultural Development Association (PARC) is launching its strategic plan for the years 2014-2018, under extremely sensitive and complex conditions in the light of the local and the global economic crisis in addition to the region instability, aiming at improving its work, increasing the efficiency of its interventions, and to amplify its role at the local, the regional and the international levels. The process was accomplished in depth analysis for national and sectoral plans to ensure integration and harmony.

PARC's strategic plan is based on several strategic pillars, the foremost of which are strengthening the response of the agricultural sector to the economic and social changes, promoting community participation, strengthening partnership with the private and the public sectors, enhancing and improving PARC's networking and building alliances, increasing the opportunities for the poor and the marginalized people to gain better living standards, enhancing endogenous sources of the institution, efficient usage of available - limited natural resources and their productivity.

During the preparation phase; PARC applied the logical framework coupled and reinforced by its developmental rights-based approaches, taking into consideration the available natural resource and livelihoods assets of PARC's beneficiaries,

ensuring active participation of PARC's different management levels, beneficiaries groups and various actors in the sector. Moreover in-depth situation (SWOT) analysis and evaluation of PARC's strategic position in the Palestinian civil society, external environment surrounding the organization (opportunities and threats) was carried with an analysis of the internal environment of the institution (strengths and weaknesses), which focused on; governance, human resources, administrative and financial regulations and policies in addition to the information systems within the organization.

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PARC'S HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Agricultural Development Association was launched as an initiative by a small group of pioneer agronomists and farmers that emerged from the Palestinian voluntary movement in late 1970s. In early 1980s PARC's role and achievements were recognized throughout the Palestinian territories, aiming at filling the deliberate gap in provision of agricultural extension and developmental services induced by the Israeli occupation authorities. At the time, where the so-called Israeli civil administration intentionally proceeded to deprive the Palestinians of specialized extension programs, establishment of research stations, obtaining modern technology in agriculture, in a deliberate attempt to marginalize the Palestinian agriculture sector and dismantle the special bonds between the Palestinian farmers and their land so as to confiscate it later for settlement purposes.

In 1983, PARC became an organization and committed itself to carry on working to contribute in protecting Palestinian land from confiscation through plantation of the uncultivated areas and providing Palestinian vulnerable farmers with extension services. PARC has undergone a number of various phases throughout the past decades:

First: Voluntarism (1983-1987):

This phase was characterized by the voluntary work of PARC's staff in providing individual farmers with extension services relying on personal and local resources, self-financing, and conducting applied research. It is worth mentioning that the national agenda dominated this phase more than being specialized in the area of agriculture. Also, the basket of services provided by PARC at the time was limited geographically and confined to the Jordan Valley.

Second: Development and Expanding (1988-1992):

This period witnessed the outbreak of the first In-

tifada, during which PARC succeeded in establishing and regulating the work of the Civil Action Public Committees at the national level, which enabled PARC to reach the most marginalized areas, and to serve a broad spectrum of farmers and women. This phase was also marked by the maturation of PARC's developmental concepts and by their adaptation for the Palestinian national struggle agenda.

At this phase a significant growth and diversification of funding sources was recorded, which allowed the organization to expand in contracting local qualifications and shift from the voluntary phase to the paid work, while preserving the volunteer work as the basic cornerstone in rural community development.

Third: Institutionalizations (1993-1999):

Due to the great confidence PARC gained from various local and international parties, PARC hard work had to be crowned by the necessity of shifting to the institutionalization phase (in tandem with the inception of the Palestinian National Authority –PNA- on the

ground and the beginnings of the formation of Palestinian entity).

This phase was characterized by the establishment of specialized associations to deal with the problems in the agricultural sector, such as the Palestinian Farmers Union, the Palestinian Hydrology Group and the Arab Center for Agricultural Development. Also, this phase was recognized by the issuance of the first program document for the period 1998-2008, which was organized and divided to serve specific programs through departments and units that had specific responsibilities and terms of reference, which required advisement and revitalization of the branch offices and providing them with highly qualified teams and equipments. This period also witnessed a significant expansion and a diversification in funding sources and the basket of services provided to various target groups.

Fourth: Capacity building and Specialization (2000-2004):

Based on PARC's belief in the importance and necessity of organizing and mobilizing the beneficiary groups within developmental frameworks based on feasibility and mutual benefit, PARC has adopted this goal as one of its priorities as a mean for the integrated rural development and building the democratic Palestinian society. This period witnessed many main events including the eruption of the second Intifada, which impacted negatively on the local development plans and programs, causing most active organizations to focus and shift to relief work. PARC also accelerate its plans to separate affiliated associations (the Rural Women Development Association, the Youth Development Association and the Palestinian Farmers Union).

Moreover, during this phase PARC had a significant role in hosting and developing the role of the Palestinian NGOs Network, and in the adoption of the law

which governs the work of these organizations (Law No. 1 of 2000). This period also witnessed the start of constructing the separation and the annexation wall, which impacted profoundly the national struggle and the lives of people in adjacent areas, prompting PARC to provide a new basket of services to mitigate the destructive effects of this wall and organize many events to expose this practice on the local and international levels.

Fifth: Networking and collations (2005-2013):

At the beginning of 2005, PARC was able to prepare its second program document (before the conclusion of the ten-year program document formulated in 1998) for the period 2005-2007, which focused on the contribution to the attainment of food security and sustainable development, while the capacity-building program came second due to the widespread of the unemployment and the elevated poverty rates, and thus making PARC focus its efforts to achieve the first goal.

During this period PARC managed to strengthen the partnership programs with the private sector and move forward towards marketing programs/agro-processing and export to foreign markets. We also succeeded in entering into alliances with organizations working in the rural development sector PARC is a pioneer in this area, since PARC has been leading several programs in the development of the agricultural sector and Palestinian rural development in collaboration with several civil society and private sector organizations.

This period was characterized by PARC's broad representation in Palestinian civil society organizations within the local and regional networks (OA, agronomists, etc).

WHO WE ARE?

Vision:

PARC is a pioneer national developmental organization with a regional trend committed to rural and agricultural development, social justice and national liberation.

Mission:

We are a national developmental organization that strives to develop the agricultural sector, strengthen the resilience of farmers, reach out to the poor and marginalized groups and their CBO's, mobilize and develop the capabilities of rural people to enable them to control their resources, through the work of a distinguished professional teams and a loyal volunteers. This has been accomplished through creative programs and transparent management and through technical practices to contribute to the establishment of a free and democratic Palestinian society with the values of social justice.

Governing Values:

- **Transparency;** in the provisions of services to beneficiaries, in management of the resources, and in allowing access to information by different stakeholders.
- **Rights-based justice** and non-discriminatory approach in the provision of services to the end beneficiaries.
- **Volunteerism** is a core value upon which PARC

was established, and it contributed to its evolution to become one of the leading Palestinian civil society organizations.

- **Recognizing and respecting the others'** as one of the rules that governs the Palestinian civil society.
- **Renovation and innovation** are major values that have characterized PARC in its journey.
- **Loyalty and sense of ownership** as two of the most important pillars to ensure PARC's developmental and organizational sustainability.
- **Continuous self-learning** as an inexhaustible source and a driving force that permitted PARC to reach and maintain this leading position within the Palestinian civil society.
- **Community partnership** has been and will remain to be one of the values that govern PARC's work.
- **Effectiveness and social responsibility** in the management of resources and the development of structures and systems.

Goals and Objectives:

- To reduce the food security gap at the national level.
- To expand the rural civil society contribution to decision-making.
- To increase the contribution of the agricultural sector to the national income.

Developmental Purpose:

Attaining strong Palestinian rural communities fortified with its agricultural sector and enhanced by sovereignty.

Strategic Objectives:

- Strengthening the agricultural sector profitability and its competitiveness.
- Holding the occupation accountable towards Palestinian rights related to the agricultural sector and rural areas.
- Creating an enabling legal environment and governmental policies for the development of the agricultural sector and rural areas.
- Enhancing the role of agricultural cooperatives and grassroots institutions working in agricultural and rural development.
- Enhancing PARC's efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and accountability.

Target Groups:

• Individual Services

Small and medium farmers working in rain fed and irrigated agriculture, while giving the priority for those working in the marginalized areas and area (C) according to the Oslo agreement, Jerusalem and Jordan Valley, and the areas affected by the separation and annexation wall. Special attention will be given to rural women, focusing on those working in agriculture, to empower them politically, socially and economically.

PARC will also work with youth, especially those working in agriculture and will encourage their engagement in this sector, and will work also with the marginalized groups in the rural areas especially the unemployed.

• Collective Services

PARC will target farmers', women's and the youth's associations, organizations, and cooperatives to enhance their governance and to develop their areas of action/work to become more effective in the service of their target groups and communities, to attain a leading role in building the Palestinian civil society and the Palestinians living in the shataat Diaspora.

Moreover PARC will promote the civil and political rights for the Palestinian marginalized communities; especially the rights to return and compensation in collaboration with civil institutions in the Arab world interested in the exchange of knowledge and successful development models. Moreover PARC will target the Palestinians in the shataat (Diaspora) and movements of peace and solidarity with the Palestinian people locally and abroad.

OUR BELIEFS

- We believe that the Palestinian people have the right, like the rest of the peoples of the earth, to freedom and sovereignty over their territory and resources in an independent state.
- We believe that the Israeli occupation of Palestine is illegitimate, and until the end of this occupation, Israel must be held accountable for all violations of Palestinian rights.
- We believe that the Palestinian agricultural sector throughout the years of occupation and since the establishment of the Palestinian Authority has been marginalized and did not get its right to development and neither sufficient budget was allocated to do so.
- We believe that grassroots organizations in agriculture and rural communities have an important role in promoting the agricultural sector and their communities, and so adequate resources and support must be ensured.
- We believe that women, in general, and rural women, in particular, have been marginalized given that they constitute a fundamental driving force for change, while the enhancement of their role and their empowerment are two of the most important pillars of sustainable development.
- Since the Palestinian society is a young society, in which more than 50% are youths, building their capacities is integral to their development and to meet their needs and aspirations.
- WE believe that the private sector has an important role to play in the development of the agricultural sector, without transforming small farmers to farm workers.
- We believe that solidarity groups are an important supporter of the struggle of the Palestinian people and they play a major role in exposing the practices of the occupation, which requires special attention to strengthening ties with these groups in all parts of the world.
- We believe that the achievement of PARC's goals and programs and maintaining its excellence and leadership require a modern leadership and an institutional management that take into account the significant changes taking place in the civil society nationally, regionally and globally.

OUR APPROACH

To achieve the change sought by the Agricultural Development Association (PARC), it will endeavor, where possible, and through its rights-based approach to development, to ensure consistency and complementarities between working on sustainable development and relief in emergency situations, and lobbying and advocacy to ensure the fundamental rights of the targeted groups. Within the framework of this approach, PARC will focus primarily on the following fundamental rights:

- The right to social justice, where focus will be placed upon the small and medium-sized farmers' categories, both men and women.
- The rights of citizens in crisis situations (a violation of Palestinian rights by the occupation constitutes one of the most important determinants of sustainable development in occupied Palestine).
- The right to access the basic services, especially water and sanitation.
- The right to work for vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- The right to adequate and healthy food.
- The right to organize and assemble peacefully and political and community participation.
- Gender Equity, together with the gender dimension, will be viewed as a common component present in the formulation of all of PARC's interventions.
- The right to access to natural resources (land, water, and pasture areas).
- The right to access to financial sources.
- The right to access to cultural and knowledge sources
- The right to trade union or institutional organization.

Within this approach, priority will be given to the following aspects:

- Building the capacities of individuals and grassroots organizations in the targeted areas by our interventions to enable and empower them to be more capable of serving themselves, their members and their community. This will be accomplished by adapting successful development models that constitute levels of development in their geographic regions and sector developmental in a way that can be built upon.
- PARC endeavors to build partnerships with grassroots organizations and with other national institutions to form lobbying and advocacy groups to drive the requested change.
- Continuous self-learning from our experiences and the documentation of these experiences in a way that allows the accumulation of knowledge and experience, which will serve the administration of the institution and the community.
- PARC is a deep-rooted organization that has been working in the field of develop-



ment for thirty years and will keep on mobilizing the necessary sources and activates and its own resources (human and material) to ensure the sustainability of PARC and its services to the groups targeted by its activities.

- PARC seek, via this developmental approach, to strengthen the role of the various beneficiary groups in holding the Palestinian government and the various actors accountable, including PARC itself, to be more responsive to the requirements and needs of the marginalized areas and to fulfill its obligations according to the plans.
- PARC will seek, via this approach, to strengthen the role of the various target groups in holding Israeli government accountable for its policies aimed at stripping citizens of their rights, which are guaranteed by all international conventions, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention.



AREA OF INTERVENTIONS

Strategic goal number 1:

Higher revenues and better competitiveness opportunities for Palestinian products, i.e. Strengthening the agricultural sector profitability and its competitiveness) through:

- Developing and improving land productivity and accessibility.
- Ensuring additional water resources.
- Increasing and developing fodder production, animal breed and pastoral areas.
- Improving and expanding fish farming.
- Strengthening households' economy and marketing mechanism in favor of the small producers.
- Supporting and expanding application of renewable energy.
- Protecting and developing local seeds among producers and consumers.
- Establishing of business oriented models/ economic entrepreneurs with partnerships among private sector –farmers' bodies.
- Developing microfinance products for agriculture development.
- Improving crop pattern and diversity based on consumer needs.
- Improving agriculture infrastructures facilities.
- Improving the quality of local products.
- Improving farmers' competitiveness through certification.
- Developing and strengthening Palestinian branding, trade market and certifications.
- Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the extension services program.
- Improving and encouraging applied research and innovation.
- Strengthening skills and capacities of workers in pre and post harvesting.
- Strengthening and empowering farmers committees.
- Supporting cooperation and networking among different stakeholders.



Strategic goal number 2:

Holding the occupation accountable towards Palestinian rights related to the agricultural sector and rural areas.

- Pursuing the Israeli's occupation to protect farmer's rights and compensate them for damages.
- Supporting farmers' efforts in prosecuting Israeli's occupation.
- Drawing attention to the situation at the checkpoints and crossing borders.
- Monitoring and documenting the movement of the Israelis' product in the Palestinian markets.
- Supporting farmers' initiatives to invest in their agriculture lands behind the apartheid wall.
- Encouraging and promoting the presence of local products.
- Boycotting of the Israelis' settlement products.
- Raising the Awareness of the solidarity groups to magnitude of the Israeli's violations to the rights of producers and farmers.
- Supporting the cooperation and coordination with the boycott committees.

Strategic goal number 3:

Creating an enabling legal environment and governmental policies for the development of the agricultural sector and rural areas.

- Development of an economic incentive's package for agricultural rural areas.
- Promoting Land registration.
- Support and development of different risk insurance and emergency response systems
- Protection of the agricultural farmland usage.
- Developing of Palestinian Standard and specifications.
- Activating trade exchange agreements.
- Import and export
- Developing of Brand name – trade mark.
- Developing the agricultural calendar.
- Organizing awareness campaigns in the field of legislation governing system.
- Developing a pattern of holding the private sector accountable to the farmer's rights.
- Development of the agricultural census and linked them with the development plans.
- Strengthening consumer committees.
- Developing of farmer's health insurance.
- Monitoring of local policies and strategies.

Strategic goal number 4:

Enhancing the role of agricultural cooperatives and grassroots institutions working in agriculture and rural development.

- Promoting collective ownership of production inputs.
- Mechanization and agro-processing.
- Developing mechanisms of collective purchasing
- Upgrading infrastructure of marketing and production.
- Purchasing and collective marketing.
- Cooperative capacity building
- Developing governance system and practices
- People organization and mobilization.
- Establishing cooperatives.

Strategic goal number 5:

Enhancing PARC's efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and accountability.

- Ensuring PARC's sustainability (efficiency & effectiveness).
- Fundraising by ensuring diversity of resources.
- Developing the organization's property returns and investments.
- Developing logistical support and information and communication systems.
- Strengthening the governance in the organization.
- Developing policies and procedures.
- Staff training.
- Training of volunteers.
- Improving media and telecommunications
- The formation of employees committees.
- Strengthening the governance in the organization.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In implementing the Strategic Plan; PARC will develop an action plan for the next five years according to the logical framework approach, where milestones will be adopted to measure the extent of success upon the completion of this plan. PARC will also estimate budgets necessary to do so, taking into account the economic conditions experienced by the global economy, in general, and occupied Palestine in particular. Furthermore, necessary indicators will be formulated to measure the extent of achievement of objectives and outcomes and it will be tracked by Management Information System. These indicators will be defined to ensure a common understanding by all employees and to build a more harmonious institutional culture pertaining to these indicators and objectives, which the plan seeks to achieve.

For this purpose, the necessary plans will be developed to measure these indicators, verify their completion,

and develop action manuals that PARC had prepared for the sound implementation of various projects. Also, an initial survey will be carried out so that it becomes the reference for any upcoming evaluation.

In accordance with the policy of strategic planning in the organization, a semi-annual review of the developed implementation plan will be carried out. Also, a comprehensive evaluation will be conducted after two years of the initiation of the implementation of the plan, during which the implementation mechanism could be adjusted and the necessary review will be carried out in accordance with the developments on the ground.



RISK MANAGEMENT AND THE PROCESS OF CHANGE

To implement the strategic five-year plan; PARC will develop a plan for risk management at internal and external levels which may arise during the period covered by the plan. It will identify the trends of such risks and the management response to them, development of human resources to facilitate dealing with all risks in the appropriate time and place, and to reduce the possibility of their occurrence as much as possible until we reach a point of setting an early warning system for risks mitigation.

Regarding the management of change; PARC has identified its need to make fundamental changes in the organizational structure including: decision-making mechanisms, restructuring of the organization departments and branches, changes in the patterns of intervention with target groups, smoothly accomplishing the transitional process with high level of discipline, contributing to the development of the organization's efficiency, ensuring higher commitment to the fulfillment of the strategy implementation requirements, and minimizing the resistance to change.