



Administrative Report

2021

Establishment and Development:

Arab Center for Agricultural Development “ACAD” was established in 1988 as a project under the name “the United Agricultural Company” in both Jericho and Ramallah cities. The Company aimed at building the economic capacities of small farmers, who were facing risks of collapsing during the Palestinian First Intifada, through in-kind financing. At the beginning, the Company targeted the agricultural areas in the Jordan Valley and then it extended its work to include the Center West Bank and Nablus in the north West Bank.

In 1993, this project was institutionalized to become a developmental organization registered as non-government non-profit organization in Jerusalem under the name “Arab Center for Agricultural Development” as a center specialized in financing small enterprises. The Center identified its general objectives in developing the agricultural sector and helping small farmers through financing, marketing and technical support.

Strategic objectives and goals:

First strategic objective: Empowering and building the capacities marginalized groups including small farmers, women, youth and persons with disability.

Second strategic objective: Contributing in improving Palestinian food security and environment preserving, presenting emergency and relief funds and developing disaster and “C” areas.

Third strategic objective: Building, developing and activating cooperatives in order to improve production and protect individual and collective rights.

Fourth Strategic Objective: ACAD’s sustaining and developing its programs in order to serve agricultural and rural sector.

Vision:

Effective rural agricultural community that depends on its capacities, interacts positively with environment and decides its future by itself, where all can live freely with dignity in the democratic independent state of Palestine.

Mission:

Developmental civil society organization that contributes in the efforts of developing the agricultural and rural sector through partnerships building based in integration, professionalism and targeted groups involving.

Values:

Belonging to land, justice, integrity, participation and faithfulness in work.

Board of Directors:

Dr. Saed Dorra- Board Chairman.

Mr. Amjad Masri- Vice Chairman.

Mr. Samir Barghouthi- Treasurer.

Mrs. Haneen Zaidan- Secretary.

Mr. Ibrahim Barghouthi- Member.

Mr. Hasib Nashashibi- Member.

Mr. Akef Hanini- Member.

Introduction:

The year 2021 was a continuation of the political and economic crisis, which was supported by the difficulties and negative consequences of the Corona epidemic on the Palestinian society and economy, as the Israeli occupation continued its violations of all the rights of the Palestinian people, starting with its violation of the right to life through the continuation of incursions and infringements by settlers and occupation forces, through the deportation and displacement procedures through the demolition of homes and facilities, the restriction of the right to residency, especially in Jerusalem, the continuation of the siege on the Gaza Strip and its cutting off from the world and the continued dismemberment of the Palestinian territories. Limiting movement and obstructing work and projects in Area C, leading to the violation of national sovereignty and restrictions on the powers and capabilities of the Palestinian Authority.

The year 2021 witnessed a dangerous escalation of attacks in Jerusalem, the displacement of Palestinian families from their homes, the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque, and with the escalation of political tensions, Israel launched a bloody aggression on the Gaza Strip, killing 260 Palestinians. With the escalation of tension in the West Bank and Gaza, the territories of 48 witnessed violent clashes, unprecedented in terms of their spread and continuity between Palestinians and Jews from the Palestinian cities occupied in 48 years and strong confrontation movements with the Israeli occupation forces, and with the rise of the Israeli right in the Knesset elections, confrontations and tensions increased with a vacuum at the level of politics and negotiations.

At the Palestinian level, Palestinians were deprived of their right to democratic life and to choose their representatives in the Legislative Council, and by canceling the elections, the constitutional, political and legislative vacuum was extended, embodying the continuation of the division and living in two separate entities in the West Bank and Gaza.

On the economic level, the year 2021 witnessed some improvement in the situation of the Palestinian economy, and timid beginnings to recover from the economic crisis that accompanied the closures related to the spread of the Corona epidemic, with the continuation of the blockade and almost the cessation of foreign aid, and the Palestinian economy recorded a growth rate of 6.7% during the year 2021, however, the economic indicators (GDP and national income) remained below their pre-pandemic level "in 2019", and the per capita GDP witnessed an increase of 4.1%, which reflected positively on Increase demand, aggregate consumption and on investment.

It can be said that most economic sectors witnessed an increase in value added during the year 2021 compared to the previous one, and the largest share was for the construction sector, which achieved an added value of up to 85%, and in the industrial sector, the added value reached 7%, and services 4%, while agricultural activities witnessed a decline in value-added generation by 3%, and unemployment rates remained high to reach 27%, and more than 35% among university graduates. According to estimates, the public debt reached \$ 3.8 billion, and the deficit in the PA's budget reached \$ 1.36 billion.

With the holding of part of the elections for local bodies in 2021, democratic life continued to be incomplete in light of the continued infringements on basic freedoms in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the continued adoption of the decree by law as a basis for legislation, the extension of the state of emergency indefinitely, and the accompanying restrictions on Palestinian civil society institutions.

Executive Summary:

Arab Center for Agricultural Development “ACAD” continued to implement the activities of previous projects and implement new projects during 2021, where the number of projects and agreements implemented reached eight projects with a total value of 350,200 US dollars.

ACAD completed the implementation of the activities of the projects funded by the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS), namely “Land and Rights Project” in partnership with the Italian COSPE Foundation, which aims to empower and support cooperative, and “Mustaqbaluna Project”, managed by the Italian AVSI Foundation, which aims to support persons with disabilities, and this project was implemented in cooperation with Bethlehem Arab Rehabilitation Society (BASR), ACAD Finance Company and the Palestinian Employment Fund.

ACAD also worked on the implementation of the activities of the project to improve job opportunities for persons with disabilities in the West Bank in partnership with the Bethlehem Arab Rehabilitation Society (BASR), where persons with disabilities were trained in Nablus governorate.

As for the new projects implemented in 2021, ACAD worked to support the steadfastness of the people in the Palestinian Jordan Valley through the project to support the steadfastness of the people of the village of Humsa Al-Bqai'a, which was implemented in partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture and funded by the French Palestinian Solidarity Association "ALSACE".

The project to promote gender in agricultural value chains was also implemented under the management of CIHEAM Bari and the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, and this project aimed to build the capacity of women, whether in cooperative, charities or women's groups through special training courses in the field of marketing.

CIHEAM Bari Foundation not only supported this project but also played a role in supporting the capabilities of ACAD's staff through intensive training courses in the field of innovative entrepreneurial projects and a course in the foundations of guidance and guidance for these projects, and ACAD also participated in the Entrepreneurship and Creativity Week held in Bari, Italy, where these activities were implemented within the Watermedyin project.

In the Gaza Strip, two projects funded by the Humanitarian Fund were implemented in the Palestinian territories, the first in partnership with Action Against Hunger to provide urgent assistance to vulnerable families and farmers in Rafah governorate, and the second in partnership

with the French ACTED Foundation to support emergency food security and livelihoods for the most vulnerable families affected by the aggression on the Gaza Strip in 2021.

In the field of public relations and networking, ACAD maintained its relations with the local and international institutions and organizations with which it worked and worked to open and renew relations and partnerships with local and international institutions by providing joint projects that achieve the vision and mission of ACAD and work to provide services to its beneficiaries.

In 2021, ACAD also became a member of the Turkish Palestinian Youth Forum for Training and Cross-Border Economic Cooperation, MIP- The Mediterranean Innovation Partnership, the Cooperative Action Coalition, and the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Network (PSEA).



Programs and Projects

The most important projects and activities implemented by ACAD during 2021:

1. Land and Rights Project- Pathways for the Social Solidarity Economy in Palestine:

ACAD completed the implementation of the activities of the Land and Rights Project, which began to be implemented at the beginning of 2019, after signing agreements with cooperatives and transferring financial grants to cooperatives.

ACAD implemented the following activities:

- Follow-up and training cooperatives on how to prepare bids for the purchase of project requirements of equipment, production inputs and others based on the approved policies.
- Training and follow-up cooperatives on how to prepare administrative and financial reports for the project and match them for each item in the project budget.
- Carrying out monitoring visits to associations in coordination with the COSPE Foundation, who accompanied the ACAD staff on each visit, as the visits were in two phases: the first phase in the month of 4/2021 and the second phase in the month of 12/2021.
- Coordination and assistance of the Italian partner Aveprobi Foundation to identify the training needs of the associations first and then arrange and coordinate with the associations and Aveprobi to hold meetings with Italian experts to exchange information on topics such as beekeeping, sheep farming, and organic farming.
- These trainings were conducted through electronic platforms due to the inability of experts to reach Palestine.

The implementation of the following activities has been postponed until the beginning of 2022:

- Exchange visits to targeted associations in 4 governorates.
- Marketing courses for targeted associations in 4 governorates.
- Providing the 20 associations with marketing equipment and tools for their products and projects.

It is noteworthy that the nature of the projects of the 10 cooperatives that ACAD followed up varied between: an agricultural environmental path, the purchase of an agricultural tractor, the development of an olive press, food processing, vegetable milling, the development of a factory for dairy products, sheep breeding, shops selling agricultural production inputs.

Land and rights project is funded by the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS), managed by the Italian COSPE Foundation and implemented by ACAD in partnership with the Palestinian Youth Union, this project aims to support and empower agricultural cooperatives located in the following marginalized areas: Yatta, northwest Jerusalem, Salfit and southwest of Bethlehem.

2. Emergency aid to rebuild winter fodder stocks for the village of Humsa Al Bqai'a:

In early 2021, and as part of the Israeli occupation forces' pressure campaign on the residents of Humsa village to deport them, the Israeli occupation army once again demolished livestock houses and pens, so ACAD worked to support the steadfastness of the residents of Humsa village by distributing 12 tons of fodder and barley to 8 families with livestock pens.

The project was supposed to be implemented within a short period of no more than a month, but obstacles, closures and demolitions were delaying the delivery of fodder.

It is noteworthy that this project is funded by the French Palestinian Solidarity Association "ALSACE" and implemented by ACAD in cooperation with the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture.



3. Urgent assistance to vulnerable families and farmers in the Rafah governorate of the Gaza Strip:

In partnership with Action Against Hunger (AAH) and funded by the Humanitarian Fund in the occupied Palestinian territory, ACAD implemented this project, which aimed to contribute to restoring agricultural livelihoods and achieving food security for vulnerable families affected by stress and shocks in Rafah governorate in the Gaza Strip, targeting small farmers in the areas of Oraibeh, Mosbeh and Mirage.

Where the beneficiaries were initially selected in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, we were provided with lists of farmers nominated to benefit from the project. Then carry out need's identification visits by social researchers to select the most deserving beneficiaries of the grant.

Through the disbursements made to farmers, greenhouses were rehabilitated for 61 farmers in Rafah governorate where they have access to quality agricultural inputs to rehabilitate their productive assets and agricultural production.

The agricultural practices of the target farmers were also improved by receiving appropriate technical support from agronomists, and an agricultural extension leaflet prepared by ACAD staff was prepared and printed and distributed to farmers.

The duration of the project is 9 months with a total value of \$ 101,478.40.



4. Mustaqbaluna Project:

The implementation of the project activities started in 2019, where ACAD implemented in the first-year training courses aimed at building the capacity of 66 trainees of persons with disabilities in the field of project management from the governorates of Nablus, Hebron and Bethlehem. In the second year, 60 economic feasibility studies were prepared.

In the third year, exchange visits were supposed to be carried out for 110 beneficiaries in order to exchange experiences and learn about the experiences of successful entrepreneurial projects, but in order to ensure the safety of the beneficiaries due to the outbreak of COVID, the activity was changed to orientation visits to beneficiaries in Jenin, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, Tulkarem, Tubas and the Jordan Valley, where advice, guidance and guidance were provided to 78 beneficiaries.

"Mustaqbaluna- Our Future" is a project funded by the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation (AICS) and managed by the Italian AVSI Foundation and implemented by ACAD in partnership with ACAD Finance Company, the Bethlehem Arab Rehabilitation Society and the Palestinian Employment Fund.

5. Emergency food security and livelihood support for the most vulnerable households affected by the May 2021 hostilities in the Gaza Strip:

The overall objective of the project is to ensure food security and restore access to livelihoods for the most vulnerable families affected by the recent escalation of hostilities against Gaza by providing them with cash assistance.

Where the beneficiaries were selected from the southern governorates of the Gaza Strip: Central, Khan Younis, Rafah, and through coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, lists of the most vulnerable farmers were obtained, and the needs of the beneficiaries were identified through the implementation of field visits by social researchers to determine the most eligible farmers to benefit from the grant, and financial payments were delivered to 57 beneficiaries through ACAD directly and 100 beneficiaries who contracted directly with ACTED.

The project period is from 15/8/2022 to 24/1/2022 with a value of \$ 79,200, the project is funded by the Humanitarian Fund in the Palestinian Territories and implemented by ACAD in partnership with ACTED.



6. Improving employment opportunities for persons with disabilities in the West Bank:

This project was signed at the end of 2020 and its activities were implemented in 2021 in partnership with the Bethlehem Arab Rehabilitation Society, where 25 beneficiaries of persons with disabilities in Nablus governorate were trained on project management for five continuous days.

After the completion of the training, orientation field visits were conducted in the city of Nablus and its villages for each beneficiary and 20 economic action plans were prepared for them.



7. Enhancing gender mainstreaming for sustainable rural development and food security actions:

The project is funded by the Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation and implemented by the Italian CIHEAM Bari Foundation and the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, and the role of the ACAD revolved around building the capacities of women, whether in cooperative, charities or women's groups through training courses, where the courses focused on 4 topics: cooperative thought and principles of cooperative work, project management, product quality control, and e-marketing, which was the topic that was focused on, as the aim of the training was to introduce the beneficiaries to e-marketing channels and increase their awareness of research.

The training also identified costs and delivery systems that can help beneficiaries better estimate the cost of their goods and products so that they can choose a pricing methodology and apply it to earn profit after developing plans and strategies and that it is very important to collect feedback from customers to help them maintain their advantages and work to improve their weaknesses.

As mentioned earlier, the project targeted women, whether they were in cooperatives, charities or women's groups, where the number of women's cooperatives and groups that benefited from the session reached 18 cooperatives and the number of participants reached 43 women

The courses were distributed in three cities: Hebron: cooperatives from Hebron and Bethlehem, Nablus: cooperatives from Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarem, Tubas and Qalqilya, and Ramallah: cooperatives from Ramallah, Jerusalem, Jericho and Salfit participated.



8. Youth and Innovation for Sustainable Water and Marine Resources Management in the Mediterranean Project:

Within the activities of the Watermedyin project funded by the CIHEAM Bari Foundation, which was initially concerned with developing and raising the capabilities of ACAD staff by holding an intensive training course on entrepreneurial projects, guidance and guidance for entrepreneurial projects, and then after the end of the training, ACAD worked to provide 16 orientation meetings for two advanced entrepreneurial projects: the Palestine project and the olive cultivation project.

ACAD also played a role and participated in the selection of the best Middle Eastern projects that were nominated to participate in the Entrepreneurship and Creativity Week held in Bari, Italy.

List of projects implemented in 2021

Project Name	Donor	Expenses (\$)
Developing the Food Processing Unit- Beit Askaria	L'Avenir Social Association 'CGT	11,559
Educational agricultural initiative- Beit Ummar	L'Avenir Social Association 'CGT	5,909
Let's start up	EducAid	6,100
Promote cooperation and economic exchange	EU, managed by the Palestinian Consultative Commission for the Development of Non-Governmental Organizations	8,784
Land and Rights Project	Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation, managed by COSPE	146,134
Humsa project	French- Palestinian Solidarity Association "Alsace"	4,745
"Mustaqbaluna" project"	Italian Agency for Development and Cooperation, managed by AVSI	4,228
Promoting gender in agricultural value chains	CIHEAM Bari	10,649
Urgent assistance for farmers	OCHA, managed by ACF	101,478
Supporting emergency food security and livelihoods	OCHA, managed by ACTED	50,614
Total value of projects and agreements implemented in 2021		\$350,200

Public relations and networking

❖ **Public relations and networking at the local and international levels:**

ACAD continued to emphasize its relationships and partnerships with financiers and former partners and to work on presenting joint projects. ACAD also maintained its relations with local and international institutions and organizations that it worked with, it also worked to open and renew relationships and partnerships, as follows:

▪ **CIHEAM Bari:**

An agreement was signed to implement the project of promote gender in agricultural value chains, and ACAD staff participated in training courses organized by CIHEAM Bari as part of the activities of the WaterMedyin project implemented through them, and they also participated in the creative week of entrepreneurial projects that was held in Italy.

▪ **Partnership with the French ACTED Foundation** and renewing relations to implement the project of support emergency food security and livelihoods for the most vulnerable families in Gaza.

▪ **OXFAM:** To present “Ibtkar” project with several partners such as ACAD and COSPE.

▪ Membership in **MIP- The Mediterranean Innovation Partnership:** a network specialized in innovative youth entrepreneurship and technology dissemination in the Agrifood sector.

▪ Membership in **the Cooperative Action Coalition.**

▪ Membership in **PSEA Network, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.**

▪ ACAD has maintained its membership in the PNGO, the Global Land Coalition Network (ILC), the Rights Network for Land and Housing, and the Food Security Sector (FSS).

❖ **Participation in international conferences:**

- Participate in **Mediterranean Innovation Agrifood**, which was held in Bari, Italy, as part of the activities of the WaterMedyin project. This conference focused on meeting partner institutions from Tunisia, Lebanon and Palestine to exchange experiences. Then all creative youth entrepreneurial projects were presented, and the winning projects received grants amounting to \$10,000.

Resources

❖ **Human resources:**

The number of employees at the end of 2021 was (12) employees, 7 females and 5 males.

ACAD worked on developing the capabilities of the employees through their participation in training courses held by international and local institutions, namely:

- **Two Trainings with CIHEAM BARI:** the first course, Innovation support organization as a key for development. The second course, Innovation Agrifood, and these two courses were attended through electronic platforms.
- Three courses organized **by the Palestinian NGO Network:** a project management course, a needs assessment course, and a triple nexus course.
- A course of mechanism of cash assistance and e-voucher, and the gender-based violence course organized by **OCHA**.
- Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse- PSEA trainings and workshops.