



**Palestinian National Authority**

**Ministry of Agriculture**

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# **AGRICULTURE SECTOR STRATEGY “ A SHARED VISION”**

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## Chapter I

### 1. Introduction

Agriculture is an essential component of the Palestinian national, cultural, economic and social fabric. Palestinians have been pioneers in transmitting and disseminating agricultural techniques to several countries in the region and outside. In addition to its traditional significance for nations and states, agriculture is particularly important for Palestinians as it embodies their perseverance, confrontation and adherence to their land under the threat of confiscation and settlement activity. It also provides a refuge and a source of income and food supplies at times of crises. In this context, a significant number of Palestinians, who were denied access to work in Israel, have resorted to the agricultural activity.

Soon after it was established, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has realised the importance and need to develop a medium-term policy, strategy and plan for the agricultural sector. In 1999-2000, relevant documents were developed on grounds of major assumptions, including progress in the peace process as well as Palestinians' control of their land and resources under a free, sovereign and safe state. With the outbreak of the second *Intifada* (Uprising), however, the Palestinian agricultural sector has encountered many predicaments. Accordingly, development-oriented efforts were shifted to meet relief and emergency needs.

The plethora of plans and programmes approved over the past years have all lacked a strategic framework and guidance of agricultural development. More importantly, budgetary allocations to the agricultural development process have been limited, representing only 1% of the PNA Public Budget or of the donor funds.

Entitled *Shared Vision for the Development of Agricultural Sector*, this Strategy has been designed to respond to the PNA trends and instructions on the preparation of a set of sector and cross-cutting strategies as a primary approach to develop the 2011-13 Palestinian National Plan (PNP), which will set forth the objectives and priorities of eliminating obstacles and adverse impacts of the Israeli occupation and establishing the Palestinian state.

In August 2009, the Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development (MoPAD) published the *Guidance on Developing Sector and Cross-Cutting Strategies*, which consolidates the approach of developing strategies and serves as a tool that helps ministries and government bodies to develop sector strategies that will meet development challenges. In this context, sector strategies will be more reliable and realistic and will take account of coordination, integration and consistence amongst respective strategies. The Guidance defines a set of equally important principles, which address processes and desired outputs and allow all segments of the Palestinian society to take part in developing strategies. The principles include consensus on the long-term vision; country-led and nationally-owned approach; high-level government commitment; comprehensive and integrated strategies; effect of the occupation on the development and implementation of sector strategies; strategies targeted with clear budgetary priorities; strategies based on a comprehensive and reliable analysis; building on existing processes and strategies; and effective participation for strategy development and implementation. The *Technical Annex of*

*the Guidance on Developing Sector and Cross-Cutting Strategies*, issued in October 2009, also entails technical guidance on developing the components of sector strategies, technical requirements to be met in technical strategies, mandatory forms to be included in the strategies, and various respective institutional steps, mechanisms, roles and responsibilities.

With a technical support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has early taken the initiative to develop and draft the Palestinian agricultural sector strategy. Over the initial period, the following targets have been met:

1. Establish the Sector Strategy Committee (Team), which will lead the process of drafting and developing the Strategy.
2. Develop the main concept paper (*Draft Shared Vision for the Development of the Palestinian Agricultural Sector*), which aims to put in place the general framework of the Strategy as well as to serve as the basis for discussion and consultation with various stakeholders.
3. Set mechanisms to follow up with the work plan and steps following the development of the Strategy.
4. Define the terms of reference of proposed reports and studies.

Presided by the Minister of Agriculture, the Strategy Committee (Team) has been established, involving representatives of stakeholders and actors in the agricultural sector. The Strategy Team held several meetings to approve the work plan and mechanisms as well as to supervise, review and manage relevant action. Between 1 September and 8 October 2009, eight workshops were organised in order to:

- Clarifying and elaborating on the content of the Shared Vision with relevant stakeholders.
- Collecting remarks and recommendations from participants.
- Identification of the contingent and priority needs.
- Briefing the participants about the work mechanism and the next steps.

Workshops were held as follows:

(i) Governorate-level workshops, including in:

1. Southern West Bank governorates, including Hebron and Bethlehem; organised in the city of Hebron on 1 September 2009.
2. Central West Bank governorates, including Ramallah and El Bireh, Jerusalem and Jericho; organised in the city of Jericho on 3 September 2009.
3. Northern West Bank governorates, including Jenin, Tubas, Tulkarem, Nablus, Salfit and Qalqiliya; organised in the city of Nablus on 7 September 2009.
4. Gaza Strip governorates, including Northern Gaza, Gaza, Central Gaza, Khan Yunis and Rafah; organised in the city of Gaza on 6 October 2009.

The aforesaid workshops brought together representatives of farmers, service providers, MoA, government bodies, NOGs, civil society organisations and private sector enterprises in the respective areas.

(ii) Institutional workshops involved representatives of the following:

1. Government bodies; held on 1 October 2009.

2. NGOs and civil society organisations; held on 4 October 2009.
3. Private sector; held on 6 October 2009.
4. Donors and international and regional organisations; held on 8 October 2009.

Appendix (1) below presents reports on the workshops mentioned above.

Outputs of these workshops have established a foundation and a guiding framework for the Sector Strategy Team. In addition, secondary reports developed by specialised technical teams, including experts and specialists from the MoA and civil society organisations, have addressed the following themes: (1) plant production; (2) livestock production; (3) natural resources; and (4) agricultural services.

In addition to the Executive Summary, this Strategy entails seven chapters. **Chapter I** presents an introduction and approach of developing the *Shared Vision for the Development of the Palestinian Agricultural Sector*. It reviews mechanisms of development and national- and governorate-level consultations to ensure that all stakeholders take part in all phases of producing the Strategy. **Chapter II** includes a future vision that will set a framework and define the course of agricultural development in Palestine, as well as the requirements, assumptions and guidelines which should be in place to create an enabling environment that is conducive to realising the vision. **Chapter III** analyses the agricultural sector's status in terms of available resources; production; role of the agricultural sector; problems and obstacles facing the agricultural development process; and a SWOT analysis (i.e. internal and external environment of the Palestinian agriculture). The Chapter also presents a list of relevant bodies as well as the legal framework regulating the agricultural activity. Entitled "Strategic Objectives and Priorities", **Chapter IV** identifies strategic objectives and priorities in light of available data and resources. It also features observations and recommendations produced by the respective workshops. **Chapter V** defines the agricultural sector policies, which will realise the sector's objectives and priorities. In addition, it identifies interventions; components, timeframe and logical sequencing of interventions; and distribution of roles and responsibilities over various phases. **Chapter VI** covers the identification and distribution of development or recurrent resources and responsibilities over the upcoming three years of the Plan as well as the mechanisms of linking the Strategy resources to the budget. Finally, **Chapter VII** addresses the Strategy monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including the achievement of relevant objectives and priorities, progress of work, and defining necessary and appropriate indicators to measure achievement in accordance with requirements set forth by relevant supervisory bodies and the National Monitoring System.

## Chapter II

### 2. Vision of the Agricultural Sector

The vision constitutes the frame work, the guide and the general objective which the agricultural sector is targeting within the next stage. The agricultural priorities, policies, plans and projects are derived from the vision which will be built on the reality and status of the agricultural sector, it also exhibits the guiding principles, assumptions, public and macro policies, precisely, the objectives that are mentioned in the Palestinian Reconstruction and Development Plan (2008-2010), as well as the Ending the Occupation, Building the State Document which was endorsed by the government in August 2009, and constitutes the program of the Thirteenth Government. Within this frame, the future vision for the Palestinian agriculture is:

**Sustainable and feasible agriculture, that is capable of achieving food security, competitive in the local and foreign markets through an optimal use of resources as part of comprehensive development, and cementing the bonds and sovereignty of Palestinians over their land, there on towards building the state.**

This requires the commitment of the consecutive governments, and relevant stakeholders to provide the following foundations for realizing the vision:

- 1- Overcoming the distortions resulted from the occupation and enabling the Palestinians to exercise control over their resources
- 2- Treat the agricultural sector equitably and paying a special attention to it
- 3- The responsibilities and tasks of developing the agricultural sector are shared, integrated and coordinated, within a clear frame of roles and responsibilities amongst its public, civil and private sector institutions in a content of transparency, accountability and integrity
- 4- Whereas the Palestinian agricultural sector mostly relies on small-scale farmers, government bodies and civil society organizations should give high priority to farmers' associations, cooperatives and boards
- 5- Optimally utilize and sustain the available resources, and stress the importance of halting the depletion and the over use of the available resources especially the ground water and range lands, as well as limit the effects and impact of desertification and climate change
- 6- Improve the capability of agricultural sector to attract investments through providing incentives, proper legislations, collateral services and assurances needed to promote the private sector investments
- 7- Consolidate the presence of Palestinian agricultural expertise and competences on the regional and international levels.



## Chapter III

### 3. Agricultural Situation Analysis

#### 3.1 Agricultural Resources

Of the total Palestinian land (6210 km<sup>2</sup>), which comprises the whole territory occupied by Israel during the June 1967 war, the agricultural area is approximately 1.854 million *dunums*, or 31% of the total area of Palestinian land, including 91% in the West Bank and 9% in the Gaza Strip. The rain-fed area constitutes 86% of the cultivated land, including 97% in the West Bank and 3% in Gaza. The irrigated area consists of 14% of the total arable land, including 56% in the West Bank and 44% in the Gaza Strip.

Of the total water use, water quantities available for agriculture amount to 150 million cubic metres (mcm) per annum, distributed to 70 mcm in the West Bank and 80 mcm in the Gaza Strip. Ground water wells are the main water source for irrigation in the Gaza Strip. In the West Bank, irrigation water is supplied by ground water wells and springs, the majority of which are located in the area of the Jordan Valley.

The area of land, which can be considered as rangelands, amounts to 2.02 million *dunums*. However, the area available for grazing is only 621,000 *dunums*. In addition, forests stretch over an area of 94,000 *dunums* throughout the Palestinian territory. However, the areas of rangelands and forests have declined sharply as a result of the Israeli settlement activity and Wall construction. Concentrating in the Eastern Slopes and the Jordan Valley area, Palestine houses a total of 48 natural reserves. Of these, only 17 reserves were transferred to the PNA and the total area of natural reserves amount 514,000 *dunums*.

In the West Bank, Israel exploits approximately 82% of the Palestinian groundwater. About 62.9% of arable land is located in Area (C); 18.8% in Area (B); and 18.3% in Area (A). The western section of the Separation Wall has isolated an estimated area of 900,000 *dunums* of land as well as caused approximately USD 62 million of losses in the agricultural sector.

It should be noted that the 2009 World Bank report on Palestinian water sources indicates that removal of Israeli restrictions and provision of additional water quantities will raise agricultural sector's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 10% and will create approximately 110,000 additional job opportunities.

As part of the Levant countries and Fertile Crescent, the Palestinian territory is rich of agricultural biodiversity. It is also a hub of the introduction, development and domestication of various crops. Furthermore, wild species are a significant genetic source. Of the list of 30 major crops in the world, the Palestinian territory contributes with five crops, including wheat, barley, peas, lentils and bitter vetch (*Vicia ervilia*).

Additionally, the Palestinian territory enjoys a diversity of climate and multiple agricultural environments that qualify it to produce several crops over different periods of the year. During the past years, however, global climate change has affected the Palestinian territory, particularly

in terms of increasing and recurrent years of drought, frost and floods. These climatic changes had led to increasing water needs for plants. For example, the 2007-08 drought season caused a 35-40% reduction in the production of rain-fed crops. Losses were estimated at approximately USD 130 million.

In 2004, a total of 101,172 agricultural holdings were in operation in the Palestinian territory. Of these, 69.5% were plant holdings; 7.3% livestock holdings; and 23.2% mixed holdings. 89% of holdings are located in the West Bank and 11% in the Gaza Strip.

**Main obstacles, challenges and issues pertinent to agricultural resources:**

1. The Israeli occupation and resulting predicaments, particularly confiscation of land and water; impact of the Wall, including isolation of land and seizure of water sources; prevention of grazing; uprooting of trees and forests; denial of access to developing water and land sources; destruction of agricultural and water infrastructure; and division of the Palestinian territory into Areas A, B, and C.
2. Deteriorated status and incompetent use of agricultural resources, increased percentage of water wastage, and limited use of non-fresh water.
3. Over-pumping, unlicensed wells, as well as encroachments on land and conversion of land into non-agricultural purposes.
4. Incomplete legal framework relating to the management of agricultural resources and weak enforcement of respective laws and regulations.
5. Overlapping and conflicting powers as well as weak institutional framework.
6. Weak mechanisms that deal with disasters as well as with manifestations of climate change and desertification.
7. Deteriorated status of rangelands and biodiversity.

### **3.2 Agricultural Production**

Agricultural production, both plant and livestock, contributes directly to achieving food security and fighting poverty by providing food, income and work for farmers and other stakeholders, thereby improving peoples living conditions. Local agricultural production brings about self-sufficiency of the majority of vegetables, olives, olive oil, poultry, eggs, honey, grapes and figs. It should be noted, however, that most production inputs and supplies are imported.

Over 2004-2008, the area of land cultivated with fruit trees, vegetables and field crops rose by 1.6%, 3.9% and 0.8% respectively. Even though the production of vegetables and field crops increased by 18% and 11% respectively, fruits production dropped by 21%. Appendix (1.1) below shows the development of cultivated areas and plant production over 2004-2008. Olive production, however, is instable due to the phenomenon of fluctuating production every other years. In general, production of fruits over the recent years has dropped despite the fact that areas of land cultivated with fruit trees rose. This is mainly because of the significant decline of the areas and production of citrus fruits. Appendix (1.2) below shows the production of fruits, olives and citrus over 2004-2008. Appendices (1.3) and (1.4) present the areas cultivated with fruit trees, vegetables and field crops throughout the Palestinian territory per governorate over 2004-2008.

During the same reporting period, the number of cattle rose by 1.8% and layers chickens by 7.2%. On the other hand, the number of goats, sheep and broiler chickens dropped by 19.2%, 15.1% and 17.4% respectively. With regard to livestock, meat production of sheep, goats, poultry and fish decreased by 16.9%, 18.9%, 17.5%, and 9.8%. In addition, honey production declined by 32%. Meanwhile, cattle meat production rose by 0.4% and milk and eggs by 71.7% and 7.3% respectively as is shown in Appendices (1.5), (1.6), (1.7) and (1.8) which cover developments in the number and production of livestock over 2004-2008. Appendices (1.9) and (1.10) show the number of livestock throughout the Palestinian territory per governorate over 2004-2008.

**Main obstacles, challenges and issues pertinent to agricultural production:**

1. The Israeli occupation and resultant impediments, including limited area of sea fishing; permanent and ongoing closure; flooding markets with Israeli products; displacement and intimidation of Bedouins and fishermen; limited freedom of the movement of goods and persons; bans of the importation of breeds, crop seeds and seedlings from abroad. In addition to denying farmers to access their farms, mainly the areas behind the separation wall, the military areas in Gaza Strip and the prohibition of importing certain inputs.
2. High production costs are essentially a result of additional costs earned by brokers in agricultural commerce, the largest portion of which is conducted through Israeli merchants as well as by extra links.
3. Main reliance on importation to provide production inputs and supplies as well as sharp rise in prices directly impact farmers' profits and added value of the agricultural sector. In 2008, the value of plant production amounted to approximately USD 855 million and livestock production about USD 503 million. On the other hand, plant production inputs reached USD 169 million and those of livestock production were USD 308 million. Over the same year, the added value of both plant and livestock production was USD 686 million and 195 million respectively. This shows that production inputs in ratio to the production value were approximately 20% for plant production and 61% for livestock production, highlighting a low competence and profitability in this vital sector.
4. Declined productivity is a major result of weak application of modern agricultural systems and techniques by farmers; underdeveloped research and extension; unavailable enhanced breeds with high productive characteristics; and weak veterinary services, plant protection, marketing, financing, and post-harvest services. As a striking example, agricultural added value of rain-fed land (which comprises 86% of the total arable land) is only 5%.
5. Endemic and transboundary diseases; weak application of plant and livestock health care procedures; and unavailable modern and integrated management systems for plant and livestock production.
6. Weak coordination between relevant institutions, particularly between service providers, thereby affecting the cost and quality of agricultural services.
7. Weak activities associated with manufacturing and exporting the agricultural produce.
8. Incomplete, weak and unconsolidated legal framework, featuring discrepancies between the West Bank and Gaza Strip.
9. Limited fishing area as well as outdated fishing equipment and devices.

### 3.3 Agricultural Services

Provision of proper agricultural services is a significant factor that will positively impact competitiveness of agricultural products, particularly under the circumstances prevalent in the Palestinian territory. In addition to weak service delivery, Israeli distortions and absence of real support of agricultural products or exports are investment disincentive factors, which also debilitate agricultural competitiveness and profitability. Below is a presentation of the status of agricultural services:

**1. Agricultural research:**

Established at the Qabatiya Agricultural Station in 1994, the MoA Palestinian National Centre of Agricultural Research, conducts agricultural research. Additionally, agricultural stations of the MoA as well as faculties of agriculture and other centres conduct agricultural experiments and produce agricultural research papers. The An Najah National University, Hebron University and Al Azhar University also house three faculties of agriculture. Moreover, a number of NGOs conduct agricultural research and experimentation.

**2. Agricultural education:**

Two agricultural schools operate in the Palestinian territory, including the Beit Hanun Agricultural School in the Gaza Strip and the Al 'Arrub Agricultural School in the West Bank. The former houses two sections on plant and livestock production and the latter five sections: Plant Production, Livestock Production, Food Processing, Machineries and the Environment. The Beit Hanun School accommodates 100 students and Al 'Arrub School 100-200 students. In addition to a distance learning programme offered by the Al Quds Open University, the three faculties mentioned above provide higher education in the field of agriculture. Besides the degree conferred in major agricultural specialisations, the said faculties offer programmes in certain fields. In 2009, a total 960 B.A.'s students and 57 M.Sc.'s students were enrolled on agriculture-related educational institutions.

**3. Agricultural extension and training:**

Several government bodies, civil society organisations and private sector enterprises provide agricultural extension and training. Official extension services are provided by extension workers at MoA Directorates throughout governorates or at extension Units, of which 2-5 units are run in each governorate. Tasks and topics offered by each extension body vary in terms of targeted groups, topics or commodities addressed. All agricultural institutions also provide training to farmers, extension workers and other actors in the agricultural sector. Mostly, training activities are carried out internally at training centres of the MoA or NGOs. On the other hand, some training programmes are offered abroad.

**4. Veterinary services:**

The veterinary services delivered contribute in protecting human and animal health, through the monitoring of the epidemic and common diseases, and the implementation of early warning and mitigation programmes, in addition to vaccination campaigns conducted by the veterinary service, which also assures the safety of the animal produce. It also controls the quality and the safety of the medicines, its uses and effectiveness which contribute to eradication of diseases and protection of public health.

**5. Plant protection:**

Plant protection services play a vital role in protecting the plant production through the execution of the legislations and sanitary and phytosanitary measures which prevent the entrance and dissemination of the diseases in the country. Moreover, it provides all the requirements for the international trade and agreements related to quarantine and plant protection. The Ministry of Agriculture is the authorized body for the registration, control and management of the trade and handling operations within oPt. MoA also performs major tasks related to save use of pesticides and chemicals and the rationalization of its uses which have direct impact on agriculture, environment and food safety. On the other hand, the private sector conducts certain agricultural extension activities in the field mainly for marketing purposes.

**6. Agricultural and rural finance:**

Agricultural and rural finance bears an increasing significance and plays a greater role in the guidance of agricultural development and achievement of agricultural strategy objectives and national goals in general. Though only 30% is provided, the annual demand of agricultural loans is approximately USD 150 million. Despite the fact that many agricultural lending enterprises have been incorporated since PNA was established, their capacity to meet needs of the agricultural sector are still limited. Of these, 11 corporations are members on the Micro-Lending Network. A significant portion of agricultural financing is also secured by agricultural merchants and through lending from relatives and acquaintances.

**7. Agricultural insurance:**

In view of high risk and obscurity factors in the agricultural activity, agricultural insurance activities face many problems and impediments, including high costs which render insurance unfeasible for farmers in light of applicable pure commercial data and grounds. Therefore, a primary legal and regulatory change should be introduced in order to create a system of agricultural insurance, which will exert immediate, positive impacts on farmers' profitability, promote investment potentials and increase work opportunities.

**8. Agricultural marketing and post-harvest services:**

Agricultural marketing services and post-harvest activities suffer from multiple structural problems. The Israeli occupation is the main detriment and impediment to these services and activities. Despite high priority emphasised by relevant, successive policies and plans, the status of agricultural marketing and post-harvest services is practically much less than the required level. However, some limited activities and successes have been reported in this area. In view of the occupation and its respective consequence, Israel is the main agricultural and commercial partner of the PNA. In most cases, exports and imports are delivered through Israeli merchants and brokers. On the other end, the many commercial agreements concluded by the PNA with Arab and non-Arab states and blocs are of a limited benefit. Implementation of sound agricultural practices (GLOBALGAP) has also become to be a prerequisite for successful and sustainable marketing of Palestinian agricultural products in foreign markets.

**Main obstacles, challenges and issues pertinent to agricultural services:**

1. Impediments generated by the Israeli occupation and practices, including restricted freedom of movements and denied access to certain necessary agricultural medicines, fertilisers and inputs.
2. Declined levels of services delivered to farmers and weak service-related infrastructure, mainly due to inadequate budgetary allocations and unavailable capacities.
3. Weak institutional infrastructure and human resources as well as overlapping tasks and roles amongst various bodies.
4. Incompatible agricultural education outputs with market requirements, in terms of specialisation, quality and number of graduates. In addition, external training activities are mostly inconsistent with actual needs.
5. Absent law on agricultural insurance, lacking mechanisms necessary to deal with natural disasters and weak agricultural and rural finance services.
6. Weak application of scientific research and weak linkage between research, extension, technology transfer, agricultural education and training.
7. Insufficient incentives to attract the investment need for service delivery and launching of relevant projects.

### 3.4 Institutional framework

Agriculture is a multidisciplinary and multifaceted sector and involves innumerable bodies. Below is a presentation of the status of institutions involved in the agricultural sector:

#### 1. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and PNA

PLO has played a pivotal role in shaping the context that paved the way to agricultural growth and development. PLO negotiators' ability to curb negative impacts resulting from the continuing Israeli occupation, and ultimately remove them, will mitigate or exterminate many of the major predicaments the agricultural sector encounters. As is stated in the PRDP 2008-10 and the 13<sup>th</sup> Government Programme, the PNA also plays a major role in making general policies that support the introduction of legislative and regulatory amendments, which will promote investment and strengthen agricultural development.

In addition, the PNA carries out a pioneering and supportive role in restructuring public institutions, which provide basic services to the sector of agriculture. It also allocates necessary budgets and requests that donors support this sector.

#### 2. MoA

MoA performs primary duties in the regulation and management of the agricultural sector. It is tasked with oversight, supervision and delivery of certain basic services. MoA carries out its assigned mission from its main offices in Ramallah as well as through 16 Agriculture Directorates throughout governorate centres, in addition to the town of Dura in the governorate of Hebron. An identical number of Veterinary Directorates also operate in governorates. A total of 45 extension units, with 2-5 units distributed to each governorate, carry out extension activities in the West Bank. Each guidance unit covers a group of villages and residential compounds. MoA action and services focus on planning; drafting of policies, strategies, laws and regulations; service delivery; implementation of projects; development of natural and agricultural resources; enabling Palestinian farmers to attach to their land; and fighting plant and livestock diseases and pests.

MoA employs a total of 1,409 staff members, half of whom work in the West Bank and the other half in the Gaza Strip. Employees holding Ph.D., MA, and BA degrees are 18, 80 and 716 respectively. In addition, the Ministry employs 61 vets and 534 other persons with various specialisations. In 2008, MoA's budgetary allocations were approximately NIS 72 million. Still, MoA's share of the development budget is so small, not exceeding 10%.

**3. Other ministries and public bodies:**

Beside MoA, several other ministries and public bodies play basic roles in the development, regulation and delivery of services to the agricultural sector. These include Palestinian Water Authority; Palestinian Environment Quality Authority; Ministry of National Economy; Ministry of Local Government; Ministry of Planning and Administrative Development; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Labour; Ministry of Social Affairs; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Women's Affairs; governorates; Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics; Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Reconstruction (PECDAR); Palestinian Land Authority; Palestinian Standards Institute; and Palestinian Investment Promotion Agency. These institutions carry out assigned activities from their main offices in the city of Ramallah as well as through respective branches and directorates throughout the Palestinian territory.

**4. Semi-government bodies:**

Pursuant to Article (1) under the Amended Law on Agriculture No. (11) of 2005, three agricultural commodity councils were established as semi-government bodies. Acting under special regulations, these include the Palestinian Olive Oil and Olive Council; Milk Council; and Grapes Council. The said Councils set up frameworks that regulate the working relationships of respective stakeholders.

**5. NGOs and civil society organisations:**

In light of harsh circumstances witnessed by the Palestinian society, especially before the PNA was established, NGOs and civil society organisations have played an essential role in the Palestinian economic and social development in general, and in the agricultural development in particular. These organisations continue to carry out basic roles in assisting the agricultural sector through cumulative experience and close interaction with farmers, specifically small-scale ones, and with the grassroots and marginalised groups. In carrying out their activities, NGOs and civil society organisations have benefited from limited bureaucratic and routine procedures, easy movement and external funds and support. The few past years have also witnessed a remarkable activity of international NGOs and civil society organisations in Palestine.

A total of 35 Palestinian NGOs and civil society organisations operate in the field of agriculture. Lines of activity and geographical scopes of these organisations vary, and so do the number of their staff members, budgets and implemented projects. In addition, approximately 15 foreign NGOs and civil society organisations with an agricultural activity work in Palestine.

It should be noted that a large portion of donor funds is channelled through NGOs and civil society organisations. These organisations also fund agricultural activities from their own income and resources.

There are also various networks and associations of NGOs and civil society organisations, which are active in the agricultural sector and in relevant areas, including the Palestinian Non Governmental Organizations Network (PNGO), (SHAM') network, which involves a number of agricultural organisations; and Union of Land-Palestine; which include several agricultural and rural development institutions.

#### **6. The private sector:**

Distinctive of the Palestinian agriculture is the long absence of the State's role in the management and administration of this sector. Unlike many countries of the Third World and others, the Palestinian agricultural private sector continued to carry out assigned tasks with minimum support and orientation until the PNA was established. Compared to other farmers around the world, it might not be an exaggeration to say that Palestinian farmers are the least category that receive direct or indirect support from their government. Additionally, Palestinian farmers have paid an exorbitant price for the harsh restrictions and practices of the Israeli occupation.

In 2006, a total of 180 agricultural cooperative societies were reported to be operating in the Palestinian territory. These included 71 cooperatives in northern West Bank; 53 in central West Bank; 34 in southern West Bank; and 22 in the Gaza Strip. Over the same reporting period, 7,207 agricultural installations were in place, including 4,378 in northern West Bank; 644 in central West Bank; 722 in southern West Bank; and 1,463 in the Gaza Strip. Of these, livestock and poultry installations comprised 81% of the total number of facilities.

#### **7. Donors and international organisations**

A large number of the agricultural sector projects are funded and supervised by donors and international organisations through PNA bodies, Palestinian civil society organisations or international bodies. Of the total expenditure in all other sectors and activities, donors have spent less than 1% in support of the Palestinian agricultural sector. Eight major donors have supported the agricultural sector. Of these, the Netherlands has contributed with approximately 24% of the agriculture-designated funds, spending 34%, 24% and 12% of these funds for supporting projects of land reclamation, infrastructure and crops respectively.

The Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) is another mechanism of financing the Palestinian agriculture. Between November 2008 and late October 2009, about USD 23 million were allocated to the agricultural sector, representing 44% of the requested funds or 4% of the funds provided to all sectors despite the fact that preliminary pledges and commitments to financial support far outweigh these figures. Moreover, the Sector Working Group (ASWG) is an important mechanism that coordinates efforts of immediate agricultural stakeholders. Presided jointly by MoA and Spain, and involves representatives of Palestinian organisations, the donor community and international institutions.



### 3.5 Achievements and Current Activities

In spite of frequent setbacks in the peace process, ongoing Israeli destructive attacks on the Palestinian people and economy and Palestinian internal crises and problems, many achievements have been made, including:

- Reclaiming a large area of land, which was unexploited or neglected. Approximately 70,000 *dunums* of land have been reclaimed; a total of 3.5 million square metres of support walls built; and agricultural roads measuring 3,000 km in length constructed.
- Helping farmers confront measures posed by the Israeli army and settlers. Activities have been launched to compensate farmers affected by the Wall, fishermen in Gaza and others who suffered from Israeli direct attacks and closure regime. Farmers also received assistance to cope with difficult weather conditions, such as drought, frost and severe winds.
- Providing agricultural services, including extension, veterinary medicine, protection, research, technology transfer, training and labs despite of their limitations.
- Promulgating the Palestinian Law on Agriculture No. (2) of 2003, in addition to several relevant regulations.
- Setting the agricultural policy and certain subsector strategies as well as concluding a number of agreements and memorandums of understanding with many states and with national and foreign institutions.

Over the period from January 2008 to September 2009, 709 agricultural activities and projects were implemented throughout the Palestinian territory, with a total cost of USD 25 million. Approximately 94,000 Palestinians, about 26% of whom were women, have benefited from these activities. Of these, around 20 current projects will continue to be implemented over 2010 or beyond. Focusing on livestock and water services, the largest portion of these projects took place in the districts of Hebron and Nablus. According to the information system on agricultural projects, the governorates of Deir al Balah and Gaza have least benefited from the said projects.

In 2009, MoA is carrying out a total of 29 projects, including 5 projects on extension and rural development; 10 on soil and irrigation; 2 on plant protection; 3 on veterinary services; 2 on forests and rangelands; 1 on planning and policy-making; and 1 on fisheries.

### 3.6 Legal framework

In addition to 11 regulations, the Law on Agriculture No. (2) of 2003 constitutes the basic legal framework that regulates the agricultural activity and covers all aspects of agricultural development. Still, there is a dire need to enact many other regulations and basic directives in order to complement the legal framework. It goes without saying that enforcement of these items of legislation is equally important. Beside the Law on Agriculture, a number of laws bear an immediate relation to the agricultural sector, including the Law on Natural Resources No. (1) of 1999; Water Law No. (3) of 2002; Environment Law No. (7) of 1999; Law of Public Health No. (20) of 2004; Law of Charitable Associations and Civil Society Organisations No. (1) of 2000; Budget Law No. (7) of 1998; Law of Civil Service No. (4) of 1998; Law of Public Supplies No. (9) of 1998; Investment Promotion Law No. (1) of 1998; Law on the Palestinian Specifications and Standards No. (6) of 2000; Law of Cooperative Societies No. (17) of 1956 in force in the West Bank; and Law of Cooperative Societies No. (24) of 1933 effective in the Gaza

Strip; Law of Lands of 1857, Law of Income Tax No.(17) of 2004, and the Palestinian Cabinet of Ministries decision to exempt farmers from the value added tax .

Appendix (2) elaborates on the linkage between these pieces of legislation and the agricultural sector.

### **3.7 Impact of the Israeli occupation and subsequent predicaments**

To list damages as well as direct and indirect adverse outcomes generated by the Israeli occupation and practices is not an easy task. Like a snowball, Israeli negative consequences continue to be in place and interact. In the West Bank, direct damages amounted to approximately USD 114 million, including USD 62 million as a result of the Separation Wall. Losses incurred by the Gaza Strip were estimated at about USD 265 million. Relevant major aspects of these damages and losses are addressed under various sections of this Strategy. Coping with reported losses and damages will be a primary requirement in the process of ending the occupation and establishing the State. Furthermore, cross-cutting or subsector strategies need be developed, taking into account the new realities that will emanate from establishment of the State, particularly in relation to the agricultural sector. These will include water and water uses; full control of land; crossings and borders; free geographical passage with Gaza; etc.

### **3.8 SWOT analysis**

Over recent decades, the Palestinian agricultural sector has accumulated rich experiences, which should be fully taken into consideration over the upcoming phase of ending the occupation and establishing the State. Accordingly, strengths and opportunities will be utilised and consequences of weaknesses and threats alleviated and properly addressed. Below are the major components of the SWOT analysis of the Palestinian agricultural sector:

#### **1. Strengths:**

The Palestinian agricultural sector enjoys several positive features, constituting internal strengths that can be built on. These should also be taken into account in the process of setting the Strategy and implementation plan:

- Available public agricultural institutions, which have been established in a relatively good manner, along with a large-scale geographical coverage.
- Active NGOs and civil society organisations, which cover the majority of the agricultural development components.
- Available qualified staff members.
- Modern and comprehensive Agriculture Law, despite the fact that respective regulations have not yet been issued and notwithstanding weak enforcement.
- Available basic structures and infrastructure, including universities, community colleges, training centres, research and experimentation centres, labs, etc.
- The diversity of climates
- Skilful and committed farmers.
- Good experience in dealing with states of emergency and crisis management.
- Awareness of significant developments and changes, such as genetically modified organisms (GMOs), climate change, etc.
- Availability of human resources with potential capabilities and potential contribution to agricultural development

- Integral relations and positive cooperation between private and public sectors in agriculture

## 2. Weaknesses:

A realistic strategy should also locate and assess internal weaknesses of the agricultural sector, as well as take them into consideration in order to alleviate their adverse impacts:

- Low productivity and profitability of the agricultural activity and incompetent use of resources and inputs, particularly in the livestock sector.
- High potential of being affected by climate change and fluctuation of global prices.
- Weak performance of the public sector, agricultural institutions and cooperative system; inadequate performance; incompatible organisational structures, numbers and tasks; and debilitated coordination between institutions of the agricultural sector.
- High profit margins of merchants, taking into account that the majority of inputs and exports are circulated by Israeli merchants and agents.
- Weak capacities and competences in the areas of policy-making, policy impact assessment, planning and monitoring and evaluation.
- Lacking a national umbrella for comprehensive planning and supervision of the agricultural sector as well as weak participation in the decision-making process.
- Weak systems of service delivery, provision of production inputs and use of information technology.
- Inadequate awareness of the significant initiative-taking approach in planning and administration in order to alleviate abrupt climatic changes.
- Weak system of agriculture-related education and incompatible outputs with needs.

## 3. Opportunities

The external environment, which positively impacts development of the agricultural sector, serves as a major opportunity and contributor to enabling and preparing the suitable environment for the growth and sustainability of agriculture. These opportunities are as follows:

- Arab and international sympathy and support to the PNA and to the Programme *Palestine: Ending the Occupation and Establishing the State*.
- Increasing awareness around the world and amongst members of the donor community of the significance of supporting agricultural development as a basis for fighting poverty and achieving food security.
- Palestinian agricultural products have access to Arab countries with an exemption from customs fees.
- Sympathy and support to Palestinians/products and of the Holy Land in external markets.
- Commercial agreements concluded with states and Arab and international groups.
- Potential for agri-tourism

## 4. Threats

At the same time, account should be taken of a number of threats, which negatively impact agricultural development, in the process developing the Strategy, including:

- Israeli reactions that aim to dismantle the plan of ending the occupation and establishing the Palestinian State as well as to undermine the security and political situations.
- Continued policies of land confiscation, seizure of water sources, Wall construction, settlement activity and division of the Palestinian territory into Areas A, B, and C.

- Limited budgetary appropriations for the agricultural sector by the PNA and the donor community.
- Lacking plans and regulations on land use and continued corrosion of agricultural land.
- Flooding the local market with Israeli and settlements' products; restricted movement of individuals, services and commerce; and ongoing closure and siege.
- High costs of inputs.
- Increased and recurrent years of drought, in addition to the impacts of climate change on local resources and biodiversity.

### 3.9 Role and importance of agriculture

As mentioned above, the role and importance of agriculture is not restricted to financial and social aspects only, but it is also a major contributor to:

**1. Protecting land from confiscation and settlement activity as well as safeguarding Palestinian water rights and use:**

Land reclamation, water harvest and cultivation of trees have been amongst the measures that helped undermine Israeli settlers' false pretexts, stating that their presence on the Palestinian territory is expedient to protect the environment and to provide job opportunities for Palestinians. In addition, these activities have refuted claims behind confiscating land on the Palestinian side of the Separation Wall for "security" reasons.

**2. Food security:**

Local agricultural produce accomplishes self-sufficiency with regard to the majority of vegetables, olives, olive oil, poultry, eggs, honey, grapes and figs. Recent studies and surveys released by FAO and World Food Programme show that 25% and 61% of Palestinian households in the West Bank and Gaza suffer from food insecurity. Additionally, 11% of the West Bank households and 16% of the Gaza households are prone to food insecurity. With respect to those in possession of agricultural land, 21% of West Bank households suffer from food insecurity.

**3. Provision of job opportunities and income:**

Historically, the agricultural sector in Palestine has been a major source of job opportunities. A large percentage of Palestinians depend on agriculture as either a main or a secondary source of income. However, manpower in the agricultural sector dropped from 15.9% in 2004 to 13.4% in 2008. On the other hand, agriculture has provided a significant number of work opportunities for Palestinian workers who lost their jobs in Israel during the first years of the second *Intifada*. In addition, approximately 35% of working women in the West Bank and Gaza work in the agricultural sector.

**4. Contribution to the GDP and exports:**

Clearly, official figures on the contribution of agriculture in the GDP do not reflect the actual importance of the Palestinian agricultural sector in terms of its indirect role and linkages with other sectors and activities. Moreover, released agriculture-related information and data are not accurate.

Compared to 10.3% in 2004, the agricultural sector contributed by 8.1% of the GDP in 2007. Significant quantities of flowers, vegetables and olive oil are mainly exported to Israel, EU members states and some Arab countries. In 2007, Palestinian agricultural

exports represented approximately 15.2% of the total Palestinian exports, amounting to around USD 40 million.

**5. Environment conservation:**

Basically, environment can be protected through measures that target the conservation of soil and water; cultivation of fruit trees, olive and other trees; rehabilitation of rangelands; forestation; protection of agro-biodiversity; and combating desertification, reuse of sewage treated water, recycling and production of compost, in addition to halting the urban expansion on the fertile agricultural lands.

**Value added of the agricultural sector in developing and enhancing other sectors** Industries of fertilisers, seeds, irrigation systems, machineries, agricultural chemicals and others primarily rely on agriculture for marketing. In addition, several other commercial activities, including transportation, wholesale and retail trade, restaurants and food processing depend on the agricultural produce as a major contributor thereto.

## Chapter IV

### 4. Priorities and Strategic Objectives

To accomplish the agricultural sector's vision over the upcoming phase requires a clear demarcation of respective strategic priorities and objectives for the sector, taking into consideration the guidelines stated in the MoPAD-issued *Technical Annex of the Guidance on Developing Sector and Cross-Cutting Strategies* as well as guidelines on general political issues, inferred from *PLO Permanent Status Guidelines for the PRDP* (September 2009) of the PLO Negotiations Affairs Department. Strategic objective will lay the foundation for drafting sector strategies within the following guidelines and frameworks:

- (i) Results of consultations conducted especially for this purpose, including those made in governorate-level workshops, institutional workshops, or other consultations and meetings carried out over consultation phase.
- (ii) Outcomes of activities carried out and reports delivered by the four technical teams, which presented an in-depth diagnosis and analysis of the status of subsectors as well as relevant interventions and recommendations to develop these subsectors, including plant production, livestock production, natural resources and agricultural services.
- (iii) Results of the analysis of the attached forms, which have been developed for the purposes of the Strategy based on MoPAD's request. These include:
  - Annex (A): Policy Summary Form
  - Annex (B): Policy Implementation Form
  - Annex (C): Consultation Record Form
- (iv) Strategic objectives will respond to farmers' needs and aspirations with a view to an optimal use of available resources and in consistence with national objectives and priorities as detailed in the 13<sup>th</sup> Government Programme *Palestine: Ending the Occupation and Establishing the State*. In particular, these will cover national objectives; institutional development and enhancement; and policies to be implemented by the Palestinian Government to restructure the economy as a basis for building a modern Palestinian State. Involving MoA, Ministry of National Economy, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology and Palestinian Land Authority, the said policies are as follows:
  - Creating an investment enabling environment;
  - Promoting the private sector's role;
  - Supporting Palestinian products and expertise;
  - Developing local resources;
  - Developing infrastructure;
  - Transmitting knowledge and supporting Palestinian creative action; and
  - Expanding the scope of bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

In addition, MoA will seek to achieve the following objectives over the next phase:

- Safeguarding food security, in both qualitative and quantitative terms, and targeting the accomplishment of self-sufficiency in regard of local livestock and plant products.
  - Promoting economic agriculture and increasing investment in the agricultural sector.
  - Consolidating effective agricultural service delivery.
  - Developing, managing and safeguarding an optimal use of natural resources.
- (v) The document on *Strategic Objectives and Priority Interventions*, developed by MoA in partnership with other relevant bodies in May 2009, entails six strategic objectives:
- Improving the working environment in the agricultural sector.
  - Enhancing capacities of various bodies and institutions working in the agricultural sector.
  - Improving conditions of food security.
  - Protecting and developing agricultural land.
  - Safeguarding Palestinian water rights and the agricultural sector's water share.
  - Increasing the profitability of the agricultural activity.
- (vi) Palestinian civil society organisations developed a vision of the agricultural sector, which was entitled *Reality and Horizons of Development* and compiled in parallel with MoA's May 2009 *Strategic Objectives and Priority Interventions*. In order to build an effective, efficient and sustainable agricultural sector, the said vision sets forth three basic frameworks:
- Technical framework and management of natural resources.
  - Institutional and legal framework.
  - Socio-economic framework.

To realise this vision and its respective frameworks, guidelines and aspects of each framework have been identified, along with a set of proposed policies and mechanisms.

- (vii) The *Palestinian Agricultural Policy of 1999* was the first Palestinian agricultural policy that included the following six objectives:
1. Optimal use of agricultural resources, specifically land and water, in an economically competent manner, ensuring sustainable status, environment conservation and contribution to realising food security.
  2. Develop and upscale the Palestinian countryside by implementing integrated rural development programmes, of which agriculture is the backbone. This activity will also adopt the principle of public participation, promote integration and coordination with civil society organisations, integrate gender issues, and encourage farmers' associations and other target groups.
  3. Increase and upgrade the competitive capacity of agricultural products throughout local and foreign markets.
  4. Enable the private sector to easily play its assigned role in the agricultural and rural development process.

5. Support and strengthen the institutional structure and legal framework of the agricultural sector; develop human resources; and attain a maximum competence of service delivery.
  6. Promote agricultural cooperation or integration on the Arab and regional levels as well as take an effective part in regional and international organisations and agreements pertaining to agriculture and food.
- (viii) The MoA *2010 Plan and Budget* features a diagnosis of agriculture-related problems and challenges as well as respective manifestations, symptoms and causes. It also presents strategic objectives, programmes, targets and performance indicators. In this context, the MoA *2010 Plan and Budget* involves eight programmes that cover various aspects of the agricultural development.

(ix) Sector, cross-cutting and subsector strategies:

Agriculture affects, and is affected by, a set of other sector policies and strategies, which must be taken into consideration in the process of developing agriculture-related strategic objectives. These strategies are as follows:

- National Strategy of Food Security: Essentially, agriculture contributes to achieving food security in a direct manner through production and provision of job opportunities, income, and food to agricultural households. Agriculture is also influenced, both directly and indirectly, by importation policies, food assistance and aid, and networks of social safety and security.
- Water Strategy: The agricultural sector is the largest consumer of water in Palestine, which already suffers from a severe water scarcity due to Israel's virtually full control of Palestinian water sources and restrictions imposed on the provision of additional water sources. Furthermore, Palestine suffers from institutional problems and an incompatible environment that does not help attract investment to this vital and significant sector. Nonetheless, promoting the capacity and productivity of current water sources, water harvest activities and use of non-fresh water are areas that are directly related to the agricultural activity.
- Other strategies, including the Environment Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy, Agricultural Biodiversity Strategy, and Agricultural Research and Extension Strategy.

**Strategic objectives of the agricultural sector:**

In view of the aforesaid frameworks and guidelines, priorities and strategic objectives of the agricultural sector over the next phase will be as follows:

**1. Promote farmers' perseverance, attachment to their land and retention of their occupations:**

Palestinian farmers' adherence and attachment to their land is one of the most important components of resisting the occupation and settlement activity. This will pre-empt Israeli plans, which aim to evict the Palestinian population from their land and dismantle the sacred link between the Palestinian farmer and his land. Therefore, consolidating Palestinian farmers' perseverance is a primary objective and a priority in the Agricultural Sector Strategy. This task will be realised by continually exercising various agricultural



activities, to handle Israeli predicaments, and paying due attention to small-scale farmers, poor population in rural areas and women.

**2. Effectively and sustainably manage agricultural resources throughout the Palestinian territory:**

Water share per capita in Palestine is probably the least in the world. In fact, water supply plays a pivotal role in the vertical and horizontal expansion in the agricultural sector. However, exploitation of and access to water sources is severely impeded by the many predicaments posed by the Israeli occupying authorities. Therefore, restoring Palestinian water rights and full control of the Palestinian territory on the 4 June 1967 border is a national priority and objective as well as a prerequisite of the peace process. In any case, an integrated management of land and water resources in a manner that maximises efficiency and economic revenues and ensures safe and sustainable use of those resources will remain to be a priority and a major strategic objective. Also, safe land use planning and stopping the distortions such as urbanization, sewage and untreated water, solid waste and industrial residues are important issues.

**3. The agricultural sector will have a proper institutional, legal framework as well as develop and rehabilitate manpower that will help end the occupation and establish the State:**

Beyond doubt, institutional and agricultural foundations and infrastructure have been established over the previous phase. These have managed to accomplish some of the main tasks and requirements that supported agricultural development. In addition to civil society organisations and private sector enterprises, which have remarkably contributed to managing and developing the agricultural sector before and after the PNA was established, MoA and relevant government bodies have played a central role in leading and directing this sector. However, the institutional and legal framework that regulates agricultural activity is still in need of foundational reforms, including a clear identification of tasks, objectives and roles assigned to main stakeholders as well as development of effective and efficient mechanisms for integration and coordination between various agricultural bodies. Accordingly, respective requirements and mechanisms should be in place in order to render successful institutional development, a salient component of which is the development of the human capital.

**4. Improve the productivity of both plant and livestock activities and its contribution to realising food security:**

This objective poses both a challenge and an opportunity for Palestinian agriculture and farmers, especially small-scale farmers, breeders of sheep and goats, growers of field and rain-fed crops and olives. In these activities, productivity and added value are very low. Hence, upscaling the productivity of these and other areas will be a high priority during the next phase, because it exerts an immediate impact on improving farmers' incomes and standards of living and on enhancing food security conditions and relevant reflections on the gross national income and exports.

**5. Appropriate agricultural infrastructure and services:**

Infrastructure and services that respond to farmers' and investors' needs are major tools and requirements to attain a sustainable agricultural activity. It goes without saying that many countries compete over providing indirect subsidy and support to farmers in an

attempt to circumvent a direct subsidy delivery to the agricultural sector. Conversely, more investment and focus should be channelled towards this strategic objective over the next phase.

**6. Improve the ability of the Palestinian agricultural products to compete in local and external markets:**

Increasing the share of Palestinian agricultural products in local and foreign markets requires that the whole chain of agricultural commodities be revisited. This objective can be realised by producing commodities that are competitive in terms of quality and price as well as by raising the share of local products as replacement of imported agricultural commodities and products. This requires a review of the whole commodity chain in order to maximise the export, and so will the profits and revenues made by farmers and resources used.

**7. Enhance the agricultural sector's operational capacity to help achieve the requirements of state-building:**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Government Programme identifies national foundations, objectives and activities, which the PNA recognises as its highest priorities to be accomplished within the next two years. Whereas the agricultural sector is a major contributor to the process of ending the occupation and is an essential participant in building the Palestinian State through its designated role and immediate contribution to realising the government's development goals, the provision of certain requirements directly pertaining to sovereignty, including in relation to agricultural commerce, food safety and oversight of trade and intensification of efforts to attract more support, assistance and finance from the international community and UN organizations to stop Israeli aggressions and to support Palestinian rights, is a strategic priority and objective, which this Strategy will seek to bring about.

## Chapter V

### 5. Agricultural Sector Policies

Clear, consistent and integrated policies should be developed in order to accomplish the priorities and strategic objectives stated under Chapter IV. Several policies have been designated for each strategic objective in accordance with the logical sequence of the set of objectives, policies and interventions, which are defined in MoPAD documents on developing sector and cross-cutting strategies. To this avail, this Chapter summarises these policies and policy interventions that will implement each identified policy.

#### 5.1 Policies that will promote farmers' perseverance, attachment to their land and retention of their occupations

##### **5.1.1 Rehabilitate the damages and support affected farmers by Israeli aggressions**

The siege and recent Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip have exerted destructive and disastrous effects on the Gaza agricultural sector, with an estimated USD 400 million of direct and indirect losses. Losses have been incurred mainly by Israel's denial of access to production inputs, cessation of exporting agricultural products, prevention of Palestinian fishermen from sailing and exercising their fishing activity, and destruction of the agricultural infrastructure. Below are the interventions proposed to implement and realise this policy. The Separation Wall has exerted destructive impacts on the Palestinian agriculture and farmers. In addition to its political purposes, the Wall imposes restrictions on Palestinian farmers living behind and near it in an attempt to force them to abandon their farming and, ultimately, leave their land. The same conditions are applicable to Palestinian farmers residing in the vicinity of Israeli settlements. Consequently, supporting these farmers is not only an agricultural development priority and necessity, but it is also a national need. Implementation of this policy will directly contribute to accomplishing the main goals stated in the 13<sup>th</sup> Government Programme

##### **1. Support small-scale farmers and fishermen in Gaza Strip:**

Small-scale farmers constitute a vast majority of the estimated total of 12,000 farmers. Of a total 1,000 fishing boats, only 12% are large vessels. This intervention aims to provide small-scale farmers, fishermen and livestock herders with production inputs and components as well as rehabilitate and restore irrigation systems, greenhouses, boats, barracks, etc., which were destroyed by the Israeli occupying forces.

##### **2. Support farmers export crops growers:**

Agricultural exports, particularly flowers, strawberries and certain kinds of vegetables, have represented a significant portion of the whole Palestinian agricultural exports activity and contributed to improving levels of income and revenue in the Gaza Strip. This intervention seeks to support farmers and farmer associations to reproduce agricultural export-oriented commodities by rehabilitating the productive and marketing infrastructure and by supporting post-harvest services.

**3. Rehabilitate the destroyed agricultural infrastructure:**

In addition to the recent Israeli offensive on Gaza, frequent incursions and attacks have destroyed a large portion of the agricultural infrastructure, including agricultural roads, water sources and the fishing port. Accordingly, this intervention will be concerned with rehabilitating these essential facilities, which directly impact farmers' profitability.

**4. Provide agricultural production inputs and support farmers affected by the Separation Wall:**

In the seam zone, farmers suffer from a number of impediments generated by the Wall, including restricted movement of farmers, workers and agricultural production inputs, which result in incurring further costs. In order to promote these farmers' perseverance, direct support should be delivered to them. In particular, production inputs should be provided, including seeds, seedlings, fodder, fertilisers, medicines and treatments. These items should be supported in a manner that indemnifies farmers for additional costs and losses they incur, and establish special fund for protecting and development of the lands affected by the wall.

**5. Provide incentives and support farmers residing in the vicinity of Israeli settlements**

Farmers, who run holdings near Israeli settlements, are subject to frequent attacks and risks, particularly during harvest seasons of olives and other crops. As a result, a large number of farmers are unable to harvest their crops, or are forced to harvest them at earlier or later times. Moreover, Israeli settlers frequently damage agricultural infrastructure, uproot and cut down trees, and prevent the grazing activity. In this context, this intervention aims to provide incentives as well as material and immaterial support to those farmers to help consolidate their perseverance and enable them to exercise their agricultural occupations and make a living, thereby promoting resistance and termination of the Israeli occupation and the settlement enterprise.

**6. Assist in preparing compensation files for farmers in accordance with the International Law:**

Ongoing Israeli attacks and practices against Palestinian farmers impinge on international laws and bills. These include, *inter alia*, land confiscation; seizure of water sources; denial of civilian access to food; movement restrictions; closure regime; and destruction of agricultural infrastructure and properties. Therefore, developing and documenting compensation files for affected farmers will be an important intervention, which should be fulfilled over the upcoming phase.

**5.1.2 Support and protect marginalized groups especially, small-scale farmers, rural poor, women and Bedouins**

Supporting these groups is a main policy and strategic priority to be implemented during the next phase. It will directly contribute to achieving households' food security and providing job opportunities for a significant number of seasonal and temporary workers. This policy will be brought about by implementing the following interventions:

**1. Intensify income diversification projects:**

Small-scale farmers and residents of rural areas and Bedouins need to diversify their sources of income by exercising agricultural activities, which complement those which they already perform, such as keeping bees, rabbits, poultry, sheep and goats; tending house gardens; launching food processing projects; etc. In addition to improving the living standards of farmers and population of rural areas, this intervention will enhance the competent use of available resources and reduce rates of food insecurity.

**2. Increase labour-intensive projects:**

Costs associated with creating work opportunities in the agricultural sector, including in relation to land reclamation and cultivation, are amongst the least in comparison to other sectors. Labour-intensive agricultural activities, especially protected and export crops, also provide additional job opportunities for farmers and residents of rural areas as well as for their households.

**3. Empower women's role in the agricultural sector:**

Women play an effective and substantial role in the agricultural development process. They are responsible for a large portion of both plant and livestock agricultural activities. In addition to the unpaid household activity, approximately 35% of paid working women are employed in the agricultural sector. Empowering women aims to upgrade a competent agricultural production and added value by assisting and supporting them to adopt and implement a set of relevant activities and projects. In this context, this intervention will accommodate many activities, such as processing of agricultural products and implementing agribusiness and marketing projects. In these projects, priority will be given to women with care responsibilities and to poor women. This includes support projects implemented by women, support women production cooperatives, development of special data base for women in agriculture, improvement of women access financial resources and knowledge and to support innovative women initiatives in agriculture.

## **5.2 Policies targeting the effective and sustainable management of agricultural resources throughout the Palestinian territory**

### **5.2.1 Increase water availability and improve supply management**

By implementing this policy, water quantities designated for the agricultural activity will be increased, either by securing Palestinian water rights or by upgrading the management and competent use of existent irrigation water sources. This policy will be carried out through the following interventions:

**1. Rehabilitate water infrastructure**

This intervention will seek to rehabilitate wells, springs and pools.

**2. Raise water sources designated for agriculture**

This intervention will seek to use brackish and treated water in the agricultural activity; develop water harvesting activities and attain Palestinian water rights.

### **5.2.2 Improve demand management of the agricultural water**

Focusing on enhanced competence, this policy will also rationalise the use of water allocated for agricultural purposes. Encroachments on agricultural water sources will be curbed and water use will be regulated through the following interventions:

**1. Enhance the efficiency of water transportation and distribution systems:**

This intervention will be carried out mainly by upscaling the competence of, replacing and rehabilitating water transportation and distribution systems, as well as by providing water storage systems.

**2. Upgrade irrigation systems and use complementary irrigation**

This activity will convert surface irrigation and open cultivation systems into modern irrigation and cultivation techniques, and establish complementary irrigation programmes.

**5.2.3 Sustainable use, increasing the area, reclaiming the land and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity:**

This policy aims to increase and green the area of agricultural land as well as to construct agricultural roads in order to protect land against erosion or deterioration and protect wildlife and agricultural biodiversity. This policy will be achieved by implementing the following interventions:

**1. Identify, classify and reclaim lands and enhance the productivity**

Through this intervention land use and sustainability to different economic and agricultural purpose and upscaling of land reclamation and planting it with the suitable crops will be attained.

**2. Afforest government and privately-owned land:**

A significant portion of government and privately-owned land is uncultivated due to either the deteriorated status of soil or difficult access thereto or in available water resources. Therefore, this land will be cultivated with forest trees and focusing on multi-functioning varieties. Public bodies and civil society organisations will also be promoted to take part in this activity.

**3. Develop and rehabilitate rangeland:**

Since the majority of rangelands have been subject to desertification which over-grazing is considered its main causes. Therefore, rehabilitating pastures and increasing their vegetation cover will require a combined action of rehabilitation, protection, organising grazing activities, and encouraging herders to cooperate with one another to manage and organise their herds and grazing activity.

**4. Conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity:**

Preservation and sustainable use of various agricultural resources is of particular importance. Accordingly, this intervention will seek to establish natural reserves in order to conserve all aspects of agricultural biodiversity as well as the biodiversity of different agricultural and environmental areas. These will be preserved through respective farms or banks.

## 5.3 Policies that support institutional and legal frameworks as well as develop and rehabilitate manpower working in the agricultural field

### **5.3.1 Upscale the competence and effectiveness of agricultural institutions**

Even though competent and efficient agricultural institutions are a prerequisite for developing the agricultural sector, this policy will directly contribute to realising our national goal of ending the occupation and establishing the Palestinian State. It also aims to review roles and tasks assigned to the agricultural sector's institutions in light of our new national and sector-based strategic objectives as well as to provide necessary requirements by putting in place the following interventions:

**1. Develop subsector and subject matter strategies:**

More detailed agricultural subsector strategies should be prepared for certain major subsectors, including agricultural research and extension, management of natural resources, marketing, financing, lending, etc. Such strategies will support and translate the agricultural sector-related strategic objectives in different areas.

**2. Develop institutions and activate cooperation between agricultural institutions:**

Clear identification of the roles assigned to the PNA, civil society organisations and the private sector in the context of realising the strategic objectives of agricultural development in general is a major strategic intervention. Against this backdrop, future role and tasks of the MoA should be highlighted. Additionally, due attention should be paid to MoA's planning, oversight and supervisory roles; service delivery; projects not carried out by MoA; and projects implemented by other actors, including by civil society organisations or the private sector. Activities carried out by supervisory or coordinating councils as well as committees and bodies responsible for managing the agricultural sector should also be institutionalised. In addition to updating the financial and administrative systems related to agricultural sector.

**3. Develop agricultural database and information:**

Updated and accurate data are essential for the right decision and proper planning, therefore it is of great importance to review the data collection mechanisms including its accuracy and endorsement, the roles of different institutions at all stages and to assure transparency and simplicity in collecting and handling the data.

### **5.3.2 Update and consolidate the legal framework**

Although the Law on Agriculture is relatively modern, a set of regulations and directives necessary for regulating and guiding the agricultural sector's activities are needed. Also, expedient mechanisms and tools to enforce agriculture-related legislation should be established. Consequently, this policy will be accomplished through the interventions below:

**1. Review agriculture-related regulations and identify the pieces of legislation that should be developed or updated:**

The set of agriculture-related regulations is a reflection and translation of policies. Therefore, these regulations need be revisited and revised. Taking account of the need to

consolidate them, items of legislation necessary for the upcoming phase should also be identified.

**2. Develop and/or update and approve necessary regulations:**

The preparation and formulation of the legislations to complete the legal frame, in addition to its endorsement, enforcement and activation in order to stop aggression and to limit the depletion of resources, environmental damages, protection of local producers and consumers, control the markets and smuggling are considered priority for agricultural development.

**5.3.3 Train and rehabilitate human resources**

Development of the agricultural sector basically relies on the existence and provision of qualified agricultural cadres and leaders in various fields. These should be capable of developing agricultural institutions and enable them to deliver services and carry out assigned tasks in a competent manner. This policy will be realised by implementing the interventions below:

**1. Identify training needs and human resources for agricultural institutions:**

In the context of defining the new tasks and roles of agricultural institutions, relevant needs of human resources, training and rehabilitation should be spelled out. Whereas there is a surplus of certain specialisations, other fields suffer from shortfalls. Needs will be clearer when respective institutions are restructured and when existent specialisations are matched to actual needs.

**2. Develop and implement human capacity development programmes:**

In light of identified needs of human resources and training activities, programmes will be launched to redistribute, rehabilitate and train human resources, especially within MoA. In addition, required specialisations will be provided and mechanisms will be developed to utilise available competences and expertise throughout other Palestinian bodies.

**5.4 Policies that aim to improve the productivity of both plant and livestock activities and its contribution to realising food security**

**5.4.1 Apply modern systems in plant production**

Although more than 86% of agricultural land is rain-fed, this land contributes to the agricultural added value by 5% only, reflecting a remarkable decline of productivity in this area. On the other hand, there are good prospects to improve and intensify the productivity of other crops. This policy will be brought about through the following interventions:

**1. Enhance the productivity of field crops:**

This intervention will upscale the competent use of agricultural resources and production inputs. It will also promote the application of appropriate systems, techniques and technical packages that seek to increase productivity and maximise farmers' profits generated from rain-fed grains, beans and rain-fed vegetables.

**2. Improve the productivity of olives:**



Olive groves constitute over half of the cultivated land in Palestine. Olive growers, however, suffer from major problems, particularly a fluctuating production every other year, whereby produced amounts are less than 100 kg / dunum/ year. In addition, farmers face problems resulting from diseases that hit olive trees and unstable prices. Therefore, this intervention will disseminate sound techniques and practices and will affect all olive production activities and sound chain.

**3. Upscale the productivity of fruit trees:**

Even though a large portion relies on importation to meet local market need, there is a significant potential to improve the productivity of fruit trees. Competitive crops can also be disseminated throughout external markets, generating good revenues for farmers.

**5.4.2 Shift to systems of intensive and semi-intensive livestock production**

As a clear indicator of the weak productivity in this important sector, production inputs were approximately USD 465 million in 2007 whereas the value of the production itself was about USD 404 million. This means that the production value was in the minus, demanding urgent and significant interventions. A large number of livestock breeders, including around 31,000 small-scale farmers, are prone to suffer from poverty. Accordingly, this policy will be achieved through the following interventions:

**1. Improve the productivity of sheep and goats:**

This intervention will upgrade systems of farm management, veterinary services, breeds enhancement, and competent use of inputs, particularly fodder and medicines. It should be noted that 80-85% of livestock production inputs are imported, also special attention should be given to camels and horses.

**2. Increase the production of fodder crops and provide fodder alternatives:**

The value of fodder represents 61% of the total livestock production supplies. In contrast, a large portion of agricultural and food processing and production wastes are not exploited. If utilised well, these will reduce importation and improve farmers' profits. Neighbouring countries have witnessed many successful experiments in this field, which this intervention will disseminate and encourage farmers to adopt. The intervention will also provide fodder at competitive prices.

**3. Aquaculture:**

Public consumption of fish is increasing. Despite the fact that some efforts have been made in the field of aquaculture, these are still modest and limited. Therefore, farmers and investors should be promoted and prepared by creating an enabling environment and providing basic requirements, including fingerling farms, veterinary services, extension, marketing, etc.

**4. Apiculture and honey production:**

Despite the correlative increase in the number of modern beehives and rate of honey production, there are still significant prospects to enhance productivity on household and commercial levels. This intervention will, therefore, focus on supporting poor rural households and small-scale farmers in order to diversify their sources of income and improve food security conditions. In addition to promoting cooperative activity by all

beekeepers, the intervention will provide services of protection, disease treatment and marketing.

## **5.5 Policies targeting the establishment of agricultural infrastructure and delivery of appropriate agricultural services**

### **5.5.1 Create an investment enabling environment and promote investment in the agricultural sector and relevant services**

Over the upcoming phase, special attention should be paid to and focused on creating an enabling environment that channels investment towards agricultural and other relevant activities, including inputs, services, post-harvest activities, and delivery of high-quality agricultural services timely and at affordable prices. This will directly contribute to supporting the 13<sup>th</sup> Government Programme, which targets ending the occupation and establishing the Palestinian State. Below are the interventions proposed to realise this policy:

#### **1. Develop feasibility studies on agricultural investment:**

Developing preliminary feasibility studies on investment in various agricultural and other relevant areas is particularly important to achieve agriculture-related strategic objectives. This intervention includes, but is not restricted to, cut flowers; roses; seeds; sheep and calf fattening; stations for producing modified rams; export crops; palms; slaughterhouses; processing of agricultural products; etc.

#### **2. Provide investment incentives:**

Despite the relative advantage of certain agricultural subsectors and activities, there is still a lot to be done in order to promote internal investment and secure external funds for the agricultural sector. Therefore, an adequate set of incentives and guarantees should be in place to cope with risks and obscurity generated by the Israeli occupation and measures. Also needed is a legal environment, financial and commercial facilities, etc.

### **5.5.2 Upgrade extension services, plant protection, veterinary medicine and agricultural research**

The quality, competence and provision of agricultural services, such as extension services, plant protection, veterinary medicine and agricultural research, directly impact the cost and competitive status of the agricultural produce. Supported institutional structures of service providers, a clear division of roles and promoted farmers' associations will also positively affect agricultural services. Moreover, quality control, consistency and avoided conflicts are essential factors that will optimise competent agricultural services. This policy will be brought about by putting in place the interventions below:

#### **1. Review and assess sector needs of agricultural services:**

An overall assessment of all services delivered to farmers on various levels, areas and fields should be conducted. Accordingly, effective and efficient agricultural service delivery will be promoted in cooperation with respective service providers.

#### **2. Develop and implement specialised service programmes:**

in light of the needs assessment, specialised service programmes will be developed to address areas of extension, veterinary medicine, protection, scientific research, etc. The

said programmes will cover commodities, farm systems, environment/climate aspects, etc.

### **5.5.3. Invigorate activities of lending, rural finance, and agricultural insurance**

With less than 1% of loans, agriculture is the least sector that benefits from services delivered by banks and the banking system. Same applies on agricultural insurance which is practically, out of place. Therefore, provision of funds and agricultural insurance services are a primary prerequisite to expedite and maintain agricultural development and sustainability. To accomplish this policy, the following interventions will be in place:

#### **1. Establish agricultural lending bank and support existing institutions**

Due to the special nature of agricultural sector which is affected to great extent by the risks and uncertainties which directly impact the production, productivity, profitability which in turn influence the ability of farmers to finance. An agricultural credit and finance bank is needed to respond to farmers and investor needs in agriculture. Support should also be given to the existing institutions that provide different agricultural finance activities.

#### **2. Promote and rejuvenate the Law on Agricultural Insurance:**

Whereas it is in the final stages of approval, campaigns and consultations should be intensified in order to define the mechanisms and requirements necessary to render successful the enforcement of this law. This intervention will secure budgetary allocations and create institutional and administrative structures of agricultural insurance. In addition to other activities, negotiations will be conducted with insurance companies and banks and funds will be channelled.

### **5.5.4. Develop mechanisms to cope with natural disasters**

Agricultural sector is characterized by high risks and uncertainties, especially in the light of the climatic change. Therefore, mechanisms should be developed and adopted to cope with these changes, and to avoid the negative impact, reduce its damages and adopt with its consequences as much as possible. This policy will be achieved through the following intervention:

#### **1. Identify and adopt mechanisms for early warning and coping with agricultural disasters:**

Frequent phenomena of drought, frost and floods are a manifestation of the global climate change, directly affecting farmers and causing severe damage to the agricultural enterprise. As a result, early warning mechanisms should be developed and applied. Stakeholders will also be duly informed so that they take the proper measures and deal with these conditions.

## **5.6 Policies that will improve the Palestinian agricultural production capability of competition in local and external markets**

### **5.6.1 Enhance both plant and livestock agricultural production**

Upgrading productivity and quality is a primary factor in the process of improving the competitive status of Palestinian products throughout local and foreign markets. This policy will be in place by implementing a set of interventions that mainly target areas and activities with a high potential to upscale the agricultural productivity and quality, including:

**1. Develop and apply quality standards:**

A complete set of agricultural production standards should be developed, adopted and applied rigorously to imported commodities, local products and exports. This intervention will basically aim to complement this set of standards and adopt necessary mechanisms for implementation.

**2. Raise farmers' and exporters' awareness of quality standards and market requirements:**

Farmers and exporters should be aware of quality standards and specifications. In view of the direct relation with improving their profits and preserving markets and public safety, farmers and exporters should adhere to and implement the said standards and specifications.

**3. Establish the expedient infrastructure for agricultural marketing:**

Providing infrastructure, including information systems, labelling and packaging stations, means of transportation, wholesale markets and necessary labs, is an essential requirement to bring about objectives of this Strategy. This also demands a real, effective and efficient partnership between the private sector, public sector and civil society.

**5.6.2 Guide the Palestinian agricultural production to meet requirements of local and external markets**

In no way shall local markets be viewed as ready to assimilate all agricultural products, nor shall external markets be seen as an extension of local ones. Each market has its peculiar requirements and conditions, which must be identified over various seasons. Accordingly, respective plans and strategies should be developed and farmers and exporters guided to such markets. This policy will be achieved by implementing the following interventions:

**1. Develop and implement programmes on diversifying agricultural production and increasing profitability:**

Over the next phase, this intervention will maximise revenues and profits generated by production factors and products by optimising the relative advantage of the Palestinian agriculture and by shifting to highly-competitive crops.

**2. Provide incentives and create the enabling environment to produce export crops and commodities that will replace imports:**

Not to mention associated risk and obscurity factors, the process of producing export crops and alternative commodities may face some technical and logistical problems. Therefore, necessary incentives and enabling environment should be in place so as to promote the production of such crops and commodities.

**5.6.3 Promote and protect Palestinian agricultural products**

This policy aims to promote Palestinian agricultural products, improve their competitiveness and protect by applying the interventions below:

**1. Launch campaigns to promote and protect Palestinian agricultural products:**

This intervention will organise exhibitions, hold seminars and other activities both internally and externally, and focus on the type and quality of the Palestinian agricultural produce. It will also highlight other themes, including organic agriculture and the fact that products are originated in Palestine or in the Holy Land. Campaigns should be intensified to protect Palestinian produce from the unfair competitive, settlements production and dumping, also markets need to be controlled and cooperation between consumers protection cooperatives and to prepare lists of settlement produce to promote its boycotting regional and international levels should be promoted.

**2. Develop programmes to support agricultural exports:**

In order to enable Palestinians to compete on fair grounds in external markets, farmers and exporters should be compensated for the impediments and additional costs generated by the Israeli occupation and measures. Certain export commodities will also be supported for a limited period of time. It is important to maximize the benefit from the trade agreements and accords signed with other countries and to review it to assure national interest.

## **5.7 Policies that aim to enhance the operational capacity of the agricultural sector to help achieve requirements of the state-building**

### **5.7.1 Provide agricultural control on borders and on land and sea outlets**

Preparations should be in place for the stage of ending the occupation and establishing the State. In particular, oversight measures will be applied on borders and on land and sea crossings so as to control the access of commodities, products, livestock and oversee compatibility with approved conditions and specifications. This policy will be in place by implementing the following interventions:

**1. Develop agricultural quarantine requirements:**

Livestock and plant diseases generate severe economic losses. Also, diseases that are common to humans and animals sometimes affect human health. In order to curb the communication of such diseases across borders, an expedient agricultural quarantine infrastructure should be established as an immediate and necessary contribution to achieve objectives of this Strategy and support components of state-building.

**2. Rejuvenate agricultural trade systems and requirements:**

Once crossing points and borders are under PNA's full control, procedures and mechanisms of regulating foreign trade, application of relevant international laws and agreements, development of relevant forms, endorsement of signatures and terms of reference, etc. will need prior preparation and approval.

### **5.7.2 Provide reference national labs**

Several national authoritative labs will be in place to analyse, diagnose and verify quality in various agricultural fields. This policy will be brought about through the following interventions:

**1. Establish labs for testing production inputs**

These labs will cover agricultural resources (e.g. water and soil) or diagnose inputs (e.g. fodder, pesticides, medicines, etc.) and will focus on serving farmers throughout their residential locales.

**2. Establish disease and pandemic labs:**

Labs that diagnose plant and livestock diseases and pandemics will be established throughout the Palestinian territory.

**3. Establish labs for food quality and safety**

Necessary labs to diagnose the quality and safety of food supplies and agricultural produce will be incorporated throughout Palestinian governorates.

## Chapter VI

### 6. Impacts of the Strategy on the Resources

This ambitious Strategy deals with and covers an important stage in the history of our Palestinian people, namely ending the occupation and establishing the state. Clearly, implementation and realisation of objectives set out in this Strategy will necessitate that several requirements be fulfilled. Necessary financial resources, which will help accomplish these objectives, are of singular importance, taking into account that a major shift in the agricultural sector demands exceptional efforts and budgets so that it can play its significant role and utilise resources, capacities and expertise in a competent and sustainable manner.

In this context, a special emphasis should be dedicated to the partnership between the public and private sectors as well as to the pivotal role played by the civil society in the process of agricultural development in Palestine. Hence, a clear distribution of tasks, roles and responsibilities and adoption of clear coordination, oversight and accountability mechanisms are prerequisites for a successful implementation of this Strategy. Each public sector institution and civil society organisation should reallocate roles between and within its respective bodies, thereby accomplishing tasks and delivering services in an efficient and cost-effective fashion.

Supervision, oversight and accountability are important factors to ensure smooth implementation, achievement and use of resources in the designated purposes. To this avail, transparency, decentralisation and participation are necessary conditions that should be included throughout phases of action on this Strategy, including in relation to planning, implementation, supervision and monitoring and evaluation.

In this stage, the Strategy will achieve a set of strategic objectives, which will in turn be realised by adopting a set of policies for each strategic objective. Each policy will also be implemented through a set of interventions that are integrated with other policy interventions in order to bring about strategic objectives of the agricultural sector, thereby contributing to accomplishing the common vision of this sector. Table (1) below shows estimated costs of interventions, policies and strategic objectives.

**Table (1): Estimated Costs of the Strategy over 2011-13**

(NIS '000)

Policies	Interventions	2011	2012	2013	Total
<b>1. Strategic Objective: Promote farmers' perseverance, attachment to their land and retention of their occupations</b>		<b>600,000</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>555,000</b>	<b>1,755,000</b>
1. Rehabilitate the damages and support affected farmers by Israeli aggressions	1. Support small-scale farmers and fishermen in Gaza Strip	100,000	80,000	80,000	260,000
	2. Support export crops growers	80,000	100,000	80,000	260,000
	3. Rehabilitate the destroyed agricultural infrastructure	80,000	90,000	70,000	240,000
	4. Provide agricultural production inputs and support farmers affected by the Separation Wall	80,000	100,000	100,000	280,000
	5. Provide incentives and support farmers residing in the vicinity of settlements	79,000	50,000	50,000	179,000
	6. Assist in preparing compensation files for farmers in accordance with the International Law	1,000	-	-	1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>420,000</b>	<b>420,000</b>	<b>380,000</b>	<b>1,220,000</b>
2. Support and protect marginalized groups especially, small-scale farmers, rural poor, women and Bedouins	1. Intensify income diversification projects	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
	2. Increase labour-intensive projects	65,000	65,000	65,000	195,000
	3. Empower women's role in the agricultural sector	15,000	15,000	10,000	40,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>180,000</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>	<b>535,000</b>
<b>2. Strategic Objective: Effectively and sustainably manage agricultural resources throughout the Palestinian territory</b>		<b>345,000</b>	<b>360,000</b>	<b>355,000</b>	<b>1,060,000</b>
1. Increase water availability and improve supply management	1. Rehabilitate water infrastructure	80,000	80,000	80,000	240,000
	2. Raise water sources designated for agriculture	35,000	35,000	30,000	100,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>115,000</b>	<b>115,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>340,000</b>
2. Improve demand management of the agricultural water	1. Enhance the efficiency of water transportation and distribution systems	35,000	35,000	30,000	100,000



Policies	Interventions	2011	2012	2013	Total
	2. Upgrade irrigation systems and use complementary irrigation	40,000	40,000	40,000	120,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>75,000</b>	<b>75,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>220,000</b>
3. Sustainable use, increasing the area, reclaiming the land and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity	1. Identify, classify and reclaim lands and enhance the productivity	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
	2. Afforest government and privately-owned land	15,000	20,000	25,000	60,000
	3. Develop and rehabilitate rangeland	30,000	35,000	35,000	100,000
	4. Conserve and sustainably use agricultural biodiversity	10,000	15,000	15,000	40,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>155,000</b>	<b>170,000</b>	<b>175,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>
<b>3. Strategic Objective: The agricultural sector will have a proper institutional, legal framework as well as develop and rehabilitate manpower working in the agricultural field</b>		<b>51,500</b>	<b>52,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>138,500</b>
1. Upscale the competence and effectiveness of agricultural institutions	1. Develop subsector and subject matter strategies	350	1,200	-	1,550
	2. Develop institutions and active cooperation between agricultural institutions	500	-	-	500
	3. Develop agricultural database and information	150	300	-	450
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,500</b>
2. Update and consolidate the legal framework	1. Review agriculture-related regulations and identify the pieces of legislation that should be developed or updated	-	-	-	-
	2. Develop and/or update and approve necessary regulations	500	500	-	1,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,000</b>
3. Train and rehabilitate human resources	1. Identify training needs and human resources for agricultural institutions	500	-	-	500
	2. Develop and implement human capacity development programmes	49,500	50,000	35,000	134,500
<b>Total</b>		<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>135,000</b>

Policies	Interventions	2011	2012	2013	Total
<b>4. Strategic Objective: Improve the productivity of both plant and livestock activities and its contribution to realising food security</b>		<b>435,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>	<b>430,000</b>	<b>1,300,000</b>
1. Apply modern systems in plant production	1. Enhance the productivity of field crops	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
	2. Improve the productivity of olives	150,000	150,000	150,000	450,000
	3. Upscale the productivity of fruit trees	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>250,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>250,000</b>	<b>750,000</b>
2. Shift to systems of intensive and semi-intensive livestock production	1. Improve the productivity of sheep and goats	100,000	100,000	100,000	300,000
	2. Increase the production of fodder crops and provide fodder alternatives	50,000	50,000	50,000	150,000
	3. Aquaculture	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
	4. Apiculture and honey production	10,000	10,000	5,000	25,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>185,000</b>	<b>185,000</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>550,000</b>
<b>5. Strategic Objective: Establishment of agricultural infrastructure and delivery of appropriate agricultural services</b>		<b>220,000</b>	<b>205,000</b>	<b>195,000</b>	<b>620,000</b>
1. Create an investment enabling environment and promote investment in the agricultural sector and relevant services	1. Develop feasibility studies on agricultural investment	1,000	-	-	1,000
	2. Provide investment incentives	49,000	50,000	50,000	149,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>
2. Upgrade extension services, plant protection, veterinary medicine and agricultural research	1. Review and assess sector needs of agricultural services	500	-	-	500
	2. Develop and implement specialised service programmes	99,500	100,000	100,000	299,500
<b>Total</b>		<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>
3. Invigorate activities of lending, rural finance, and agricultural insurance	1. Establish agricultural lending bank and support existing institutions	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000
	2. Promote and rejuvenate the Law on Agricultural Insurance	20,000	20,000	20,000	60,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>

Policies	Interventions	2011	2012	2013	Total
4. Develop mechanisms to cope with natural disasters	1. Identify and adopt mechanisms for early warning and coping with agricultural disasters	30,000	15,000	5,000	50,000
	2.				
<b>Total</b>		<b>30,000</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>
<b>6. Strategic Objective: Improve the ability of Palestinian agricultural production capability of competition in local and external markets</b>		<b>235,000</b>	<b>235,000</b>	<b>160,000</b>	<b>630,000</b>
1. Enhance both plant and livestock agricultural production	1. Develop and apply quality standards	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	2. Raise farmers' and exporters' awareness of quality standards and market requirements	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	3. Establish the expedient infrastructure for agricultural marketing	70,000	80,000	50,000	200,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>80,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>230,000</b>
2. Guide the Palestinian agricultural production to meet requirements of local and external markets	1. Develop and implement programmes for diversifying agricultural production and increasing profitability	80,000	75,000	50,000	205,000
	2. Provide incentives and create the enabling environment to produce export crops and commodities to replace imports	40,000	35,000	20,000	95,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>120,000</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>	<b>300,000</b>
3. Promote and protect Palestinian agricultural products	1. Launch campaigns to promote and protect Palestinian agricultural products	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
	2. Develop programmes to support agricultural exports	30,000	30,000	25,000	85,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>35,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>7. Strategic Objective: Enhance the agricultural sector's operational capacity to help achieve the requirements of state-building</b>		<b>41,000</b>	<b>39,000</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>130,000</b>
1. Provide agricultural control on borders and crossings	1. Develop agricultural quarantine requirements	10,000	9,000	10,000	29,000
	2. Rejuvenate agricultural trade systems and requirements	1,000	-	-	1,000

Policies	Interventions	2011	2012	2013	Total
<b>Total</b>		<b>11,000</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>
2. Provide reference national labs	1. Establish labs for testing production inputs	10,000	10,000	10,000	30,000
	2. Establish disease and pandemic labs	10,000	10,000	15,000	35,000
	3. Establish labs for food quality and safety	10,000	10,000	15,000	35,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>30,000</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>100,000</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1,927,500</b>	<b>1,926,000</b>	<b>1,780,000</b>	<b>5,633,500</b>



The above table shows that the total estimated costs of the Strategy is NIS 5,633,500 billion, equivalent to approximately USD 1,502,267 billion. These are allocated to 50 interventions under 19 policies of 7 strategic objectives. These will be funded by the PNA Public Budget, donors and the private sector.

In relation to the allocation of roles and responsibilities, MoA will be the main body that is responsible for developing, leading, supervising and monitoring the implementation of the set policies. In turn, MoA will effectively engage other government bodies, civil society organisations and private sector enterprises in this process. Annex (B) below shows the bodies that will implement various interventions, projects and activities.

## Chapter VII

### 7. Monitoring and Evaluation

#### 7.1. Monitoring and Evaluation

As an indispensable part of the Strategy, monitoring and evaluation will reflect and identify outputs, commodities and services delivered as an outcome of implementing interventions and expenditures and using available resources. In addition, technical aspects, quality and time frames necessary to carry out activities and interventions are essential requirements, which should be included within the monitoring and evaluation indicators. It goes without say that drafting concise and realistic indicators are directly linked with assumptions to be developed so as to render successful the Strategy implementation. In comparison to other sectors, risk and obscurity factors in the agricultural activity are high. Furthermore, achievements and progress in implementing objectives set by the Strategy are influenced by the Israeli occupation's measures, budgetary allocations and weather conditions, particularly drought and frost.

Monitoring and evaluation of the progress made, achievements and implementation impacts will be used to upscale performance and administration by building on positive aspects, avoiding negative points and adjusting the course of action during the implementation process. The monitoring and evaluation system will be carried out on various levels, including the body that is immediately responsible for implementing activities and interventions; the umbrella institution to which the implementing body reports; MoA; MoPAD and the respective donor. Sometimes, a multilateral evaluation will be conducted mostly during or at the end of the relevant activity or intervention.

Prior to working on developing achievement indicators, it is necessary that the situation of the targeted case be identified. This includes, but will not be limited to, defining the production levels, productivity, costs and revenue of used inputs. Accordingly, these will lay down a foundation to measure and identify the levels of change. The link between an intervention and activity, on the one hand, and achieved changes, on the other, are important in order to determine whether the change in production or productivity is wholly attributed to the intervention, or whether other factors or projects have influenced and played a negative or positive role in this process. Additionally, the cost associated with the monitoring and evaluation process should be reasonable and not require a massive effort to obtain or verify.

Again, it is important that objectives, policies, interventions, projects, activities and costs be reviewed in light of monitoring and evaluation results. This is equally applicable to indicators, especially when financial allocations, budgets and duration of achievement are subject to change, or when assumptions are not realised, or in the event contingent developments and conditions are in place.

Account should also be taken of logical sequencing in the process of designing and developing monitoring and evaluation indicators; accomplishing and implementing activities and projects will lead to achieving intervention objectives, which will in turn realise policies, ultimately bringing about a strategic objective. The total set of strategic objectives will contribute to putting in place the agricultural sector's vision. As mentioned above, because developing concise monitoring and evaluation indicators depends on the overall annual budgets per activity and project, which will be provided in the process of developing the PNP 2011-13, below are general and sector-related indicators that will be accurately completed and identified after the PNP is developed:

1. To increase the ratio of self-sufficiency of local agricultural products by 5% by the end of 2013.
2. To enhance the added value of the agricultural sector so that it reaches USD 1 billion by the end of 2013.
3. To provide an additional ( '000) \_\_\_\_\_ thousand working days during the PNP years.
4. To increase the value of agricultural exports, so that they amount to USD 60 million by the end of 2013.
5. To finalise the process of promulgating and amending the following agriculture-related pieces of legislation:
  - To promulgate the Law on Agricultural Insurance; and
  - To enact another 11 agricultural-related regulations.
6. To restructure and regulate the MoA and National Agricultural Research Center, as well as to establish supervisory and commodity Councils, including:
  - Agricultural Council;
  - Milk Council;
  - Grapes Council;
  - Bees and Honey Council;
  - Aromatic and Medical Plants Council, and
  - Vegetables Council

## 7.2 Accountability

The PNA should not only be fully committed to monitoring and evaluating the Strategy as an essential requirement to ensure successful implementation, but it must also be committed to the principle of accountability, which is immediately intertwined with transparency. In addition to reinforcing one another, both mechanisms contribute directly to improving a competent, effective and equitable development and development administration throughout the public sector, private sector or civil society organisations. Targeted groups and beneficiaries from the outcomes of development process and interventions will be more entitled and capable than others of judging the quality, suitability and competence of achievements made once they can access relevant information and facts in a timely fashion. Accountability will be fragile in the absence of transparency. Without accountability, transparency will be fruitless.



