BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Centre for Continuing Education
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BACKGROUND OF THE CENTER

The Center for Continuing Education (CCE) at Birzeit University is a non-profit and non-sectarian public-service organization. For the last fifteen years, the Center has been one of the core community-service extension units of the University and a provider of professional development in Palestine. Since its establishment in 1991, the CCE has been working on developing human resources and upgrading the skills and capabilities of professionals and organizations. To this purpose, the Center draws on its own human and physical resources and those in the rest of the University, and on expertise in the outside local and international community. The clientele served is local, national and regional civil society organizations, as well as the private and public sectors.

MISSION

> *CCE seeks to build the capacity of institutions and local communities to be able to achieve their goals effectively and efficiently through the design, development and implementation of high quality innovative and holistic models and programs in areas of organizational development, educational reform, and community empowerment*

As we pursue our aim of improving the skills of our clients and the community at large, CCE adopts a holistic approach to development and capacity building that not only enriches the experience of individuals, but also enhances the potentials of their organizations. In designing our programs, applicability to the Palestinian marketplace and societal needs is an essential element. This connection is enhanced by forming internal and external local and regional partnerships with various organizations.

WE VALUE

- High quality
- Impact driven
- Relevance to the local context
- Innovation in Development
- Continuous learning

CCE Strategic Objective for community development sector for 2010-2015 years

Improve performance of organizations working in the community development, towards achieving their missions in line with national priorities and goals

Outcome 1: *Human resources at community development organizations are qualified and highly motivated*

Output 1: Personnel have the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills

Output 2: Governing bodies and leadership within these institutions lead the institutions based on "best practices" in good governance.

Output 3: Effective human resource management systems and practices

Outcome 2: *Operations at community development organizations are effective, efficient and built on models of good governance*

Output 1: Effective and transparent operational and financial systems

Output 2: Organizations are using results-based monitoring and evaluation systems

Outcome 3: *The goals and programs of community development organizations are aligned with the priorities of the society*

Output 1: Sector priorities and goals developed in partnership

- Remaining current with 21st century advances
- Design based research, and "use of classrooms as laboratories"
- Higher level thinking skills (critical thinking, problem solving) and student centered learning
- Technology as an effective enabler in development
- Empowerment, participation, inclusion, teamwork
- A holistic approach including coping skills, global citizenship and responsibility

AREAS OF FOCUS
<u>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:</u>

- ***We assist communities in planning for and managing developmental resources***. Our implementation approaches and methodologies support participatory decision making, local capacity building, community control of resources, and empowerment of marginalized groups such as women, youth, poor, and disabled people.

  The key pillars of our community-development approach are community empowerment, local government empowerment, accountability and transparency, and learning by doing. With these pillars in place, CCE community interventions create sustainable and wide-ranging impacts by mobilizing communities, and giving them the tools to become agents of their own development.

- ***Capacity-building of LGUs*** – we build capacities of LGUs to lead the community development and be pro-active in fund-raising for their communities' developmental needs. Our interventions aim at ensuring that local government is both strengthened and accountable, effective and efficient in service delivery, and building the social capital.

<u>ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT</u>
Vision and mission – we support the organization to develop its overall direction and purpose

- *Strategic and business planning* – we develop priorities, define the longer-term direction and financial implications for the organization to meet its goals

- *Program planning* – we articulate a coherent set of programs that advance the overall mission of the organization

- *Organization structure* – we work with our clients to determine the best way to structure the organization based on present needs and constraints, with an eye towards fulfilling the mission with an energized, enthusiastic staff

- *Administrative, financial and operation systems and procedures* – we develop procedures and systems which, fitting the organization structure, lead to more efficient and effective performance of the organization

- *Monitoring & Evaluation* – we establish a measurement process to evaluate program/intervention outcomes and impact, including financial and non-financial metrics, and qualitative observations

- *Implementation planning* – we work with key constituents to agree upon what needs to be accomplished, by whom, by when – and, follow the process to ensure success

- CCE conducts in-depth **analysis of the organizations and projects performance** including determination to which degree they have been successful in meeting the intended goals and objectives, and assessment of the potential sustainability. Assessment concludes in concrete recommendations for achieving better performance along with identifying potential areas of improvement.

EDUCATION:

- We work on the development of the capacity of Palestinian education and training institutions to implement broad effective reform of the Palestinian educational system, by adopting innovative learning solutions supported by technology.

- CCE has worked to achieve this through the development of local models and methodologies which are based on global best practice but customized to Palestinian needs, development of a critical mass of change agents inside educational institutions with the educational and organizational capacity to catalyze innovative solutions supported by technology, and to lead and sustain ongoing widespread educational reform, and partnerships with the private sector to enhance support for education and the creation of an industry revolving around innovation in learning supported by technology.

OUTREACH

CCE has a strong presence in the North and South of the WB, with two offices operating in Nablus and Hebron that employ two senior community development specialists and 11 fieldworkers who have outreach to the remotest WB villages.

CCE STRUCTURE
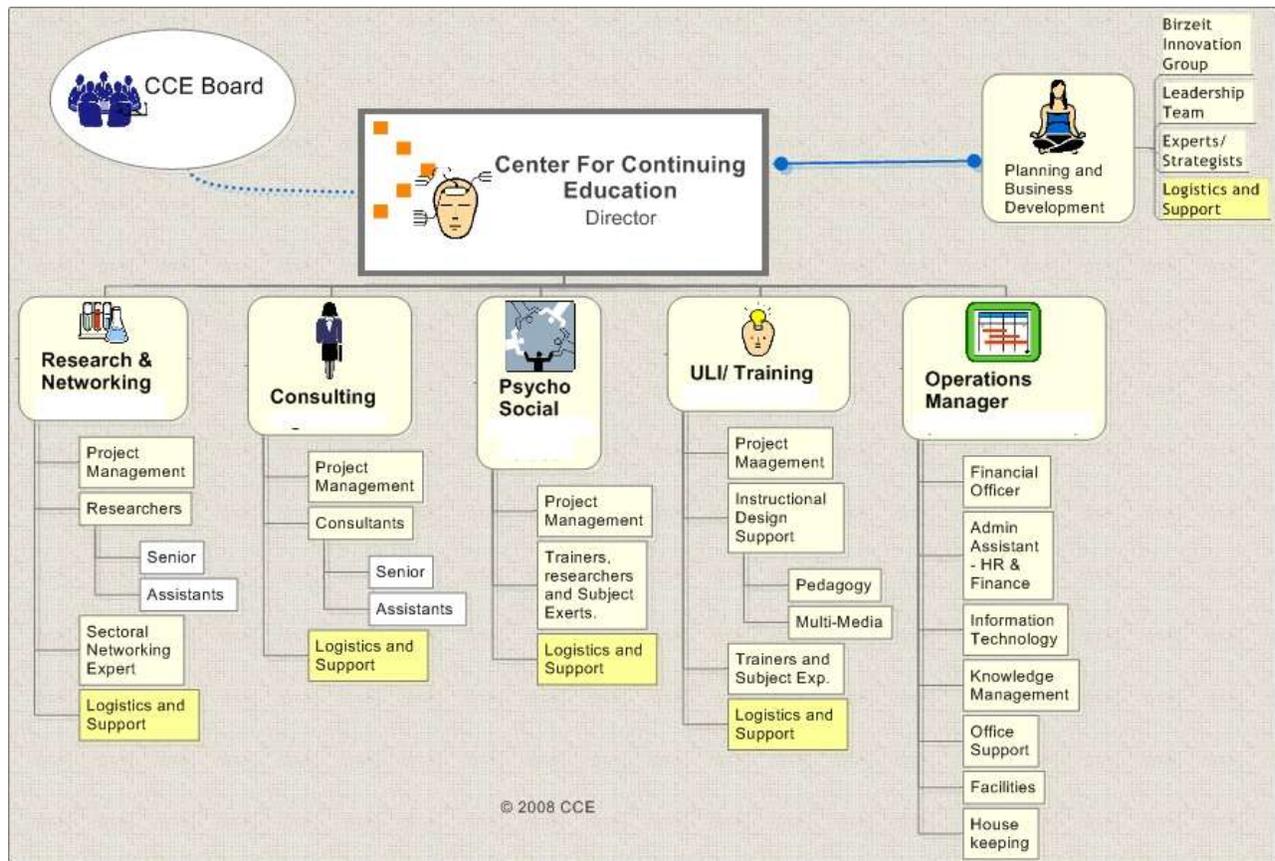
CCE manages its various activities through its four main units: Consulting, Psycho-Social, Research and Networking, and the Unit for Learning Innovation and Training. We have also initiated a "Knowledge Consortium" that brings together the University's most leading centers and their extensive partner networks, human resources and expertise to lead the role of an advisory committee and bring forth local consultants for specific interventions implemented by CCE.

The ***Consulting Unit*** is tasked with managing all of the consulting projects through interventions in the community and organizational development and poverty reduction – whether in the private, public, or non-governmental sectors.

The ***Unit for Learning Innovation & Training*** is the learning research and development arm of the Center that specializes in the field of development of learning methodologies - particularly the introduction of information and communication technologies as a learning tool. The Unit is also responsible for all trainings conducted.

The ***Research & Networking Unit*** aims at identifying means and ways by which to expand the scope and quality of the Center's programs to the community and develop new, innovative and effective solutions for our target population based on the environment that we operate under; and to localize relevant global innovations and developments.

The ***Psycho–Social Unit*** delivers training in psychological and mental health issues, running several professional diploma programs in school counseling, family counseling and counseling supervision.

CCE HUMAN RESOURCES

More than 100 employees and consultants are working at the Center specialized in different areas; Community & Organizational Development, Poverty Reduction, Gender & Social Inclusion, Management, Finance, Public Administration, Monitoring and Evaluation, Learning and Education, IT, Psycho-Social and other related fields, all of whom are exclusively committed to CCE and its values. In addition, the Center has access to a large number of BZU professors. CCE also maintains a pool of local and international consultants that it employs on projects.

CCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

CCE is one of the extension units of Birzeit University. As such, it runs its operations in accordance with Birzeit University policies and procedures. ***BZU has well established procedures for human resources management, procurement and financial management***. Those procedures are based on a combination of relevant national and international standards and best practices. Day-to-day operations of these three functions are supported by an integrated computerized management information system, which provide for effective, efficient and transparent performance.

Moreover, CCE has developed an integrated ***Quality Assurance System*** of the efforts given by its experts in order to assure that they are operational, efficient and meet the clients' needs.

This system adapts to the content of each project and assures, not only that the goals, objectives and results are met, but also that the client, consultants, and professional institutions keep a positive souvenir? and benefit from the experience. The objectives are to achieve an excellentoutcome of the project. Information must circulate properly to all participants and steps are carried out to the satisfaction of all concerned parties.

CCE FACILITIES

CCE's offices and training center are located in the West Bank town of Ramallah.
In early 2006, CCE has opened new state of the art offices in the Al-Massa Building at Al Irsal Street.
Training facilities of more than 1000m^2 square include four training halls and computer lab, all equipped with cutting edge technology including videoconferencing equipment, video streaming servers (for broadcasting training activities), learning management system, LCDs, smart boards, TV sets, and video and audio systems. Small rooms for group work, special cafeteria, and two large balconies where trainees can socialize during breaks give participants additional comfort.

Office facilities of more than 1000m^2 square allow allocation of sufficient space to teams working on different CCE projects. Office facilities are equipped with all

required furniture and technological tools including computers, printers, fax machines, etc.

A special meeting room provides convenient and comfortable facilities for the meeting; it is equipped with a smart board, computer, LCD projector, and AC.