



The ECRC's Plan for 2006-2008

***Together and Forever
Let's translate the world declaration
on the survival, Protection and development of
Children to become Applicable***

Every Child deserve better future

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List of Acronyms

ARC:	Arab Resource Collective
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DCI-pal:	Defense for Children International, Palestine Division
ECRC:	Early Childhood Resource Centre
ECCD:	Early Childhood Care and Development
GCE:	Global Campaign for Education
OPT:	Occupied Palestinian Territories
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
PCRC:	Palestinian Children's Rights Coalition
PNA:	Palestinian National Authority
SCCR:	Special Committee on Children's Rights
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund

I- Introduction

A. General Data

Name of Organization:	Early Childhood Resource Centre
Legal Status :	Non- Profit NGO
Name of Legal Representative:	Nabil Sublaban
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B. Concise Background about the Institution

Early Childhood Resource Centre (ECRC) was established as an outreach programme of the Arab Studies Society in 1985, to fulfill an urgent need for improving and formalizing preschool education for Palestinian children. Working with existing nurseries, kindergartens and daycare centers, it has since then expanded to provide training, produce relevant publications and take an active role in educating communities about children's issues and rights. The organization addresses the pressing need for culture-appropriate teaching tools and methods, oriented specifically to meet the needs of Palestinian children, ages six and younger.

ECRC was established and is currently based in Jerusalem. Over its 20 years it has expanded and now serves in four other districts: Nablus, Jenin, Hebron and Ramallah. Operating from these locations, the organization aims to reach as many Palestinian areas as possible.

By working closely with parents, teachers and children, ECRC seeks to restore an educational sector historically suffering from professionally unqualified teachers and decades of neglect resulting from political and social instability. Work in projects is done primarily with mothers and female teachers, in a deliberate effort to empower Palestinian women by enhancing their skills and bolstering their resources.

ECRC has the challenge of operating in an area of intense historical and current turmoil. It contends with roadblocks, imposed curfews, closures and every kind of violence brought on by occupation and political unrest. With the determination not to allow these difficult conditions to impede the work of the organization, ECRC has historically continued in full-steam to deliver its services and accomplish its goals, surviving, for example, the destruction of its training centre in Jenin. The organization's teams have therefore become exceedingly adept at inventing creative and innovative methods of dealing with the challenges that face them.

Since its inception, ECRC has been a traditional partner with many National, Regional and International partners, and has completed a significant number of projects with their endorsement and support. As a private, non-profit NGO by status, ECRC relies entirely on donors' funds and close co-operation, in a manner that allows for full accountability both to the donors and the communities in which it operates.

B.1. Mission Statement

In response to the socio-political atmosphere in which ECRC operates, the Advocacy Project was established. The Project's premises are fixed in the standards of the

Children's Rights Convention (CRC), set forth by the United Nations in 1989. The Project programs address the psychological traumas caused by the violent political atmosphere in which most Palestinian children grow up, and work to educate parents and community leaders about their children's needs and entitlements. The organization's mission statement echoes the text of CRC, such as Article 29, Paragraph 1, Items (a), (b) and (d), which state

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.¹

With the same spirit, ECRC's mission statement is

To upgrade, promote and develop the early childhood education sector in Palestine, ECRC is guided by the comprehensive integrated development approach with the conviction that the development of the child's cognitive physical and psychological processes will eventually lead to the development of a well integrated Palestinian child.

B.2. Institutional Objectives

ECRC's programming is grounded in the belief that social injustice, poverty and discrimination can only be erased when the community invests in progressive and developmentally integrated programs. As such, the organization's strategic goals are centered around children's needs, and are summarized below:

- Implementing the integrated developmental approach to early childhood, care and development (ECCD) based on culture specific patterns of socialization
- Focusing on human resource development of early childhood service providers and capacity building of ECCD institutions.
- Targeting communities and institutions at the grassroots level, with a focus on the needy and the marginalized, in developing sound early childhood education and development approaches
- Carrying out culture-specific research in child psychology, and relevant early childhood education and development program
- Enriching the field of early childhood education and development through the supply of materials, publication, designs, and other resources.
- Coordinating and cooperating with formal and informal institutions related to ECCD
- Raising the awareness of the community at large, and parents in particular, to the importance of ECCD and Children's Rights, through lobbying and advocacy activities

- Addressing the emergency situations that affect children in Palestine

Recently completed are a number of projects aimed at educating and empowering teachers, parents and community leaders as to the developmental needs of children. This includes: knowledge of the skills and resources required to meet those needs; addressing psychological trauma; knowledge of children's rights and how to preserve them (in accordance with CRC); empowering communities to recognize and fulfill

children's necessities; providing pre-schools with relevant books, educational toys and materials which they severely lack.

One such project, *Supporting Traumatized Children in the West Bank*ⁱⁱ, was completed June 2004. The psychological repercussions of the political situation have long been neglected and now appear among UNICEF's top and most urgent priorities for Palestinian childrenⁱⁱⁱ. ECRC's project was conducted in the communities of Jenin, Nablus, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Hebron. A number of workshops were given for parents and teachers on the diagnosis of psychological trauma in children (including when and how to refer severe cases to professionals); and learning how to develop children's self-esteem and strengthen their coping mechanisms. Educators were supplied with resources and educational materials on the subject. Informal network of volunteers was created to provide learning assistance and to befriend traumatized children. Psychological help and support was introduced into regular pre-school activities.

B.3 Governance and Management

ECRC is comprised of an executive committee, which oversees a financial department, five regional training units, a Production and Marketing unit and a children's rights unit, all answerable to a board of trustees (see member list below).

The Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of the Centre's daily operational decisions and activities; including projects, programmes and public relations. It is headed by the Project Director (Mr. Nabil Sublaban) and is comprised of unit coordinators. All decisions involving strategies and policies are referred to the Board of Trustees.

Executive Committee Members

Name	Profession	Gender	Function	Years on Board
Nabil Sublaban	Child Psychologist	Male	Project Director	6
Fayez Al-Fasfous	Educator	Male	Coordinator of Hebron Area	6
Liana Habash	Educator	Female	Coordinator of Nablus Area	6
Abla Mahroum	Educator	Female	Coordinator of Jenin Area	2
Nyhaia Hamad	Educator	Female	Coordinator of CRC Unit and Ramallah Area	2
Kamel Barakat	Accountant	Male	Finance Manager	2

ECRC Board of Trustees Current Members

Name	Profession	Gender	Function	Years on Board
Mazen Hashweh	Educator	Male	President	7
Judeh Jamal	Engineer	Male	Member	3
Assia Habash	Child Psychologist	Female	Member	8
Marwan Tarazi	Information Technologist	Male	Member	2
Dr. Sami Nabulsi	Medical Doctor	Male	Member	7
Sufian Mushashe	Human Development	Male	Member	2
Dr. Umayyah Khammash	Medical Doctor	Male	Member	2

II- Justification: Needs of the ECCD sector in Palestine

Palestinian children suffer the most under the occupation. They grow up in environments of poverty and unrest, charged with hate and injustice. Images of death and fear are commonplace in their everyday experiences. Sounds of gunfire and bombshells are the soundtrack to their lives; on the way to school, while playing outside, at night in bed. In this volatile atmosphere, children's health is neglected, due to lack of medications, immunizations and medical equipment and facilities. Children's education does not receive the attention it deserves, especially for the youngest of them, due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure or the failure to utilize it. Early childhood facilities still suffer from lack of training, lack of funding and lack of fundamental services and furnishings.

II.1-Challenges for Palestinian ECCD Sector

There is a lack of governmental provision for the early childhood care and development (ECCD) sector, resulting in a number of preschools established by private initiatives, charitable organizations or foreign funding. Consequently, there is an absence of formal accreditation programs and standards for preschool personnel, resulting in staffs that are under-qualified and under-trained. In addition, there are few assessment guidelines and procedures for early childhood publications, curricula and projects. There is a serious need for culture-specific teaching tools, materials, toys, educational resources and teaching methods oriented towards the Palestinian child.

A study^{iv} conducted by ECRC in 2003 exposes a number of significant deficiencies in East Jerusalem, Palestinian preschools. It suggests that there is little research done about "the role the preschool must play as an educational and growth and development promoting body versus a place where children are kept". Identified needs include: outdoor play equipment; indoor educational aids and office electronics (such as TVs, computers, photocopiers or books); and, workshops for the development of teachers' and principals' skills.

Teachers have very low salaries and their classes are overcrowded. Teachers and principals surveyed cited training, especially in the early childhood field, as one of the most important needs for them to develop as preschool leaders. However, since this educational sector is neglected, there are scarcely any ways for preschool leaders to receive more adequate salaries, larger educational spaces and better training.

The study shows that although most preschools are coeducational, the number of males enrolled is higher. Moreover, some communities are much more supportive of males in terms of encouraging higher education and providing funding for it. Females suffer from social stigmas concerning their gender roles and abilities.

Other problems plaguing preschools are related to the children's families. Parents are often uninvolved and uninterested in their children's achievements. They have limited experience in identifying children's developmental needs, educational and psychological, especially those requiring special and professional attention. Furthermore, many families live below or near the poverty line and have difficulties paying the high fees of some preschools.

II.2Children's Rights Issues

Being among the most vulnerable of groups, children suffer breaches to their human rights on a daily basis, whether by the occupation forces or at home. According to Defense for Children International (DCI-pal), 44 children have died thus far in 2005 alone^v from Israeli aggression, such as gun fire, assassination attempts, or unexploded

ordnance. Occupation has brought a legion of terrors such as house demolitions, curfews, imprisonment, an ever-present sensation of fear and helplessness and others. In addition to this, children suffer violence from their families –a phenomenon of a dysfunctional society.

Nearly six decades of refugee camps and military occupation have caused poverty to grow at accelerated rates. Many Palestinian areas suffer from poor nutrition, contaminated water and deficiency in medical supplies. Children are at the heart of these shortages and suffer the most dramatic effects. Among the striking aspects of poverty among Palestinians are the streets and businesses teeming with child laborers. In another report^{vi}, DCI-pal listed the following as being the main children's rights violations, especially among females, in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT): Right to Life; Right to Liberty (“Since the start of the Intifada, over 2,500 Palestinian children (under 18) have been detained by the Israeli military.”); Right to Education; Right to Adequate Healthcare; and, the Right to an Adequate Standard of Living.

II.3-Opportunities and Risks

Opportunities

ECRC works in a dire environment, in which opportunities for improvement and change are abundant:

- *Improving quality of life:*

The preschools targeted by ECRC programs will benefit from improved facilities, increased professionalism for teachers, increased educational and developmental materials, and many other factors which improve children's safety, receptivity to education and psychosocial skills. All these will increase parents' satisfaction.

- *Changing mentalities:*

ECRC encourages campaigning for children's rights. Its programming offers new and unprecedented programs to involve children, parents, teachers and entire communities in ECCD issues. ECRC addresses gender issues and works to empower women by giving them the tools to become leaders. Preschools that undergo ECRC programming become more respectable institutions that surpass their traditionally-viewed roles as mere daycare centers.

- *Changing laws and regulations:*

ECRC programs mobilize communities to advocate and lobby for children's rights. They give children and adults the tools and networks they need to utilize in order to influence policymaking and become active citizens.

Areas of Risk

As an NGO that operates in politically volatile surroundings, ECRC has learned and continues to learn how to assess and alleviate the risks that threaten its daily operation.

Limitations of movement due to closures and checkpoints affect the organization at all levels. ECRC staff members are not able to reach their workplaces to perform their duties and carry out their programs. Preschools are hindered when teachers or students are not able to arrive on time or are forced to close down for days. Schedules and routines essential for children's education are difficult to sustain. Maintaining steady contact with parents also becomes more challenging for teachers and ECRC staff. In some cases, freedom of movement is allowed only for a specified number of hours in the day. ECRC has a network of human resources all throughout Palestine, but expanding and updating this network is limited by the curfews.

In order to contend with these situations, ECRC has sought to decentralize its activities, operating from a number of locations and relying on communication devices and software (such as conference calls, use of the Internet, etc.) when direct contact is impossible.

A sizeable portion of Palestinians in the OPT live under the poverty line. This poses a threat to the number of children enrolled in preschools, as parents struggle to afford them. It can especially affect the number of enrolled females, as males are culturally given priority in regards to education. With the attention of the National Palestinian Authority (NPA) focused largely on political issues, ECRC risks being limited in its influence on national policies and legislation.

Other operational risks that ECRC faces as it seeks to carry out its work are given below. In all cases ECRC continually works to minimize any negative effects. They are:

Financial Risks:

As a non-profit organization, ECRC is always at a risk of having insufficient funding. However, its wide network of partners, its solid reputation and its praised results guarantee that it will always be an organization worth investing into.

Management Risks:

ECRC is a small organization, run by an Executive Committee and answerable to a Board of Trustees. In order to minimize any management risks, ECRC has always been careful to select only the most qualified experts, who understand the needs of the Palestinian ECCD sector and how to respond to them, to make decisions, and plan and execute programs.

Gender Equity Risks:

This risk is associated with the equal opportunity of employment in ECRC. As well as targeting female teachers, children and mothers. In order to dispel prejudices associated with women's roles in Palestinian Community, increase their staff-confidence and supply them with the tools they need to play more active roles in their communities. Thus, investing in this sector is not only Palestinian demand, it is also International demand.

III- ECRC's Response

This is the environment in which ECRC operates. It responds to these challenges with practical programmes, steeped in CRC and aimed directly at addressing training needs, psychological and gender issues and resource deficiencies. **An evaluation of ECRC performed in 1996 showed that the organization had already established itself as a leader within the early childhood sector in Palestine and among Palestinian NGOs.**

Furthermore, ECRC carried an external review to its work in 2003. The Evaluation mission as part of its work, met with key persons who having observed ECRC's track record over 18 years. One of those is Dr. Mohammed Shadid, Deputy Director of the Welfare Association, which has funded ECRC since it began in 1985. Dr. Shadid strongly affirmed the organization's "central and pivotal role" in ECCD in Palestine. Indeed, he said:

"ECRC is one of our success stories. Our objective has been to help institutions in Palestine empower the community and contribute to self-reliance. ECRC is one of those, and has provided a model that can be replicated"...

"They filled a gap that no-one was able to address, especially in encouraging establishment of kindergartens in rural and remote areas through collaboration with women's organizations. We funded the women's organizations, while ECRC provided the training".

The mission had also met with Qatan's Foundation Director Mr. Ziad Khalaf who had said:

"A historical perspective is crucial. Our's is an authoritarian, paternalistic society and this is engrained in our educational system. It is testimony to ECRC's innovative approach that we are seeing a move from an antiquated system to one that respects the individual qualities of children... this is a vision of utmost importance".

An approach based on respect and an understanding of the needs the individual child has had a personal resonance for Ziad:

"Two of my children attended ECRC's pre-school. One has special needs. The way (the teachers) worked with him was most welcome to us-in seeing and building his abilities, and dealing with his weaknesses with such respect".

ECRC provides training programs for teachers and principals of preschools in order to support them and supply them with the tools they need to better benefit young children. This is achieved with the comprehensive integrated development philosophy that a young child with healthy cognitive, physical and psychological processes will develop into a functional and well-integrated Palestinian child, and eventually, adult.

One of the main areas that ECRC targets is the education and empowerment of women, whether children, teachers or mothers. The purpose is to dispel prejudices associated with women's roles in Palestinian society, increase their self-confidence and supply them with the tools they need to play more effective leadership roles in their communities.

ECRC recognizes the insufficiency in communities' awareness of their children's developmental needs. It therefore responds by instituting educational programs for parents and other community leaders and encourages them to take more active roles in their children's pre-schooling. Such provisions as workshops on CRC or the preparation of educational materials at home and teacher-parent dialogue, including regular home visits, increase parent participation.

Some comments by teachers who participated in past ECRC programs are:

"I started working in the field of early education sixteen year ago. My entry to the field was modest, as I had limited skills and there were very few resources in the kindergarten where I was working. Then I came across ECRC and did one year of training. It was **a turning point in my professional life** in how I saw myself as a kindergarten teacher."

"The **training increased my self-confidence** and strengthened my determination and ability to achieve more. I worked with my fellow teachers to implement what I learned on the training. And we didn't ignore the **important role of parents**. We

managed to turn round their rejection of the **new ideas** we presented to a **supportive attitude** that has even extended to financial support.”

“Together we set up a mothers’ council, then conducted home visits, which helped in **creating the opportunity** for the mothers to take part in kindergarten activities like trips and raising funds through sale of baking.”

However, ECRC's response for the coming 3 years will be through addressing a set of the following projects.

III. 1- Building Capacity of ECCD Personnel Project

III- 1.a- In-Service Training Project

I. Aims and Objectives

This project is intended for teachers already practicing in the ECCD sector. It is an in-service, professional development program for the upgrading of knowledge attitudes and skills. A combination of social, political and economic factors rendered the Palestinian ECCD sector lacking in professionally qualified teachers. This project is derived from a modern vision of ECCD known as the integrated development approach and based on child right-approach. This is a holistic approach, addressing all aspects of a child’s development: behavioral, psychological, emotional, cognitive, social, spiritual, physical, moral and cognitive. Grounded in the CRC, it is adapted to suit Palestinian needs and is bolstered by 20 years of operational experience at ECRC.

The training empowers teachers and equips them with the skills they need to address the needs of their students more effectively in the classroom. Outside of the classroom, it directs teachers in how to engage families in their children’s education, give them support, information and resources to help maintain the learning environment in their homes.

Following are the project objectives:

- Provide basic ECCD knowledge and skills to unqualified preschool teachers.
- Upgrade ECCD teachers’ professional competence.
- Articulate the role of teachers as agents of social change within their communities.
- Improve teachers’ skills and strategies in communication and adult education to empower them in their efforts to advocate an integrated developmental approach to ECCD.
- Enhance teachers’ skills in producing educational materials and audio-visual aids from affordable, ubiquitous resources.
- Refine teacher’s understanding of a child’s home-environment and existing supports
- Provide teachers with the tools to refine families’ understanding of child development and how to provide rich learning environments for their children at home.
- Improve teachers’ skills in preschool-family communication.
- Strengthen connections of both teachers and families to community resources.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

Year	Location of intervention					
	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	23	23	100	-	146
2007	23	-	-	100	23	146
2008	23	23	23	-	-	69
Total	46	46	46	200	23	361

Indirect Beneficiaries

	Jenin			Nablus			Ramallah			Jerusalem			Hebron			Total		
	T	C	P	T	C	P	T	C	P	T	C	P	T	C	P	T	C	P
2006	-	-	-	58	552	460	58	552	460	75	1800	1500	-	-	-	191	2904	2420
2007	58	552	1160	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	1800	1500	58	552	460	191	2904	2420
2008	58	552	460	58	552	460	58	552	460	-	-	-	-	-	-	174	1656	1380
Total	116	1104	920	116	1104	920	116	1104	920	150	3600	3000	58	552	460	556	7464	6220

T: Teachers
C: Children
P: Parents

iii. Project Plan

ECRC's approach to training is participatory and reflects its holistic and integrated development philosophy and humanitarian principles. Social and intellectual interaction is fostered in an open and democratic atmosphere, which encourages experiential learning. The dialogue among learners and facilitators engenders feelings of self-confidence and ownership among participants. The transfer of theory to practice is implemented with the use of many creative techniques (focus groups, individual and group discussions, etc.).

The program is comprised of three components:

Component 1: Pedagogical learning

Training Workshop Sessions

This is a series of 51, 5-hour workshop sessions on the basic principles of child development and care. The content is based on accepted principles of child psychology, as applicable to Palestinian children and their culture, and steeped in the CRC. The workshops are interactive and have a heavy emphasis on dialogue between participants and facilitators. Through individual and group discussions, teachers are encouraged to reflect on and draw from their own experiences. Supplemental reading materials are prepared by training staff and provided.

The core training consists of:

- A two-week intensive training period in August preceding the school-year, establishing introductory concepts to help teachers commence the year
- Weekly one-day training workshops throughout the school year
- The training program concludes with one week of intensive workshops at the end of the school year. These concentrate on planning, evaluation and the establishment of an ongoing relationship with ECRC.
- Ongoing reflection and feedback sessions.

Field Visits

In order to ensure the transfer of workshop theory into workplace practice, ECRC staff provides on-site, follow-up visits. During the training period, 2-3 visits are made, each lasting 6 hours and scheduled to coincide with and relate training sessions and topics. The follow-up includes:

- Observing teacher implementation
- Raising questions on problems encountered
- Helping the teacher to find alternatives and solutions
- Working with the physical set-up of the preschool environment
- Following-up on implementation of activities with parents

Coordinating children's rights awareness activities

Practicum

A number of local model preschools are identified by ECRC as practice teaching sites, and teachers are invited to take part in practice teaching. This involves:

- Becoming acquainted with the children with whom the teachers will be working
- Observing the physical set-up of the preschool and the organization of the program
- Observing activities and participating by filling out activity forms on management skills and a checklist on the teacher's role
- Planning one activity for the day following a feedback session
- Implementing activity, then planning two more activities after an additional feedback session
- Reflecting upon and evaluating the entire process: the implementation of activities, feedback sessions, the trainees and the training program.
- A final application day of all activities in each teacher's preschool, observed by an ECRC counselor

The training program concludes with one week of intensive workshops at the end of the school year. These concentrate on planning, evaluation and the establishment of an ongoing relationship with ECRC.

Component 2: Teacher to Parent

One of ECRC's training program's chief objectives is the integration of parents into their children's development. ECRC trainees show parents how and encourage them

to produce educational materials at home, such as games, toys, puppets and puzzles. They are also empowered to design activities which foster cognitive development. These help create a fun and positive learning atmosphere and extend the child's education into the home. The broad framework of this program rests upon the principles of participation, active learning and empowerment of families and teachers. By exploring cooperative problem identification and solving, respect for individual and family values within the context of CRC, and development of resource networks within communities, teachers and parents develop the tools they need to become effective children's rights advocates. These strategies also grant teachers a fuller appreciation of the child's home environment and supports.

Some of the methods used by teacher trainees to implement this component include:

- Engaging the parents of five selected students through at least five 3-hour home visits during the school year
- Conducting two, general workshops for the parents of all students in their classes, to discuss issue of mutual interest, including health, children's rights, nutrition and discipline.
- Conducting three production workshops for parents, to demonstrate ways to create toys and learning activities with simple resources.
- Encouraging parents to get involve at the daily life of the KG's.

Teachers are also encouraged to pursue their own initiatives for extra-curricular training credit. They may invite local experts or provide resources for educational purposes, undertake improvements for their classroom or preschool, promote fundraising, volunteerism or similar contributions from parents and community members.

In the pursuit of Palestinian women's empowerment, this initiative primarily targets mothers, but fathers are invited to participate to the extent possible.

ECRC staff conducts follow-up and feedback sessions with trainees and parents to evaluate the effectiveness of this training component. Past evaluations have shown overwhelming support, especially among parents.

Component 3: Psychosocial rehabilitation

The ongoing crisis in the West Bank and Gaza is causing economic, physical and social breakdown of Palestinian communities. As at June '02 all major Palestinian towns and cities, with the exception of Jericho, are under Israeli military re-occupation, curfew and/or closure.

The military re-occupation and violence continues across the main Palestinian population centers. Increasing numbers of Palestinian children who have witnessed arrest and detention of family members, destruction of their homes, killings, beatings and injuries are developing severe psychological problems. This impact will have a lasting effect upon their minds, behavior and attitude, especially if they can't express and discuss what they have seen, felt and thought. Children, parents, teachers and community leaders require skills and support to cope with or accommodate this situation.

Short-term consequences for the children are acute shock; this can be best described as temporary physical and mental 'paralysis' during which the organs become unbalanced and dysfunctional. Longer-term consequences can include loss of bladder and bowel control, withdrawal, aggression, violence to self and others, eating

disorders, suicidal behaviors and depression. Without intervention these children are especially vulnerable to becoming victims again, or becoming perpetrators of violence themselves. The task of containing what could prove to be a psychological disaster is a complex one, which requires great commitment, professionalism and sensitivity.

This activity aims at providing psychosocial support to traumatized children by conflict; by training teachers, parents and community leaders to identify and work with traumatized children across the West Bank.

The activity will be based on a holistic approach that looks at a child's emotional, social, physical and cognitive well being. Community based centers (kindergartens, schools, community centers) across the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Furthermore, the psychosocial intervention and rehabilitation component focuses on:

- * Develop children's self esteem, strengthen their coping mechanisms and provide them with skills to face and overcome traumas, losses, stress and troubles connected to the violent conflict and military re-occupation.
- * Identify and refer severely traumatized children to professionals.
- * Integrate traumatized children back into the community.
- * Establish a network of volunteers to provide learning assistance and befriend children who have been traumatized.
- * Introduce psychosocial help and support in regular pre-school activities.

iv. Outcomes

Summative over three years

- 361 teachers will benefit from this program directly and 556 teachers indirectly
- 7464 child and 6620 parent will benefit indirectly from this program.
- 2510 Training workshops, 5 hours workshops sessions (12550 hours) will be conducted during the coming 3 years.
- Between 722-1083 field visits, 6 hour each long, will be conducted by ECRC's staff to follow the trainee teachers in their working sites.
- 361 training material kits will be distributed for participant teachers.
- 432 days, 5-6 hours each will be allocated for teachers for practicing (practicum component).
- 5415 home visits each, 3 hours long will be implemented by the trainee teachers.
- 1083 production workshop will be conducted by the trainee teachers and the parents of the children
- 722 general meetings (2-3 hours each long) will be held with children's parents. 5500-5700 parents will be expected to be involved.

Formative over three years

- Teachers will become well-versed in quality ECCD teaching methods.
- Teachers will develop more interactive, respectful and communicative relationships with students and parents.
- Teachers will improve at planning appropriate activities and evaluating their impact.
- Teachers will learn how to produce low-cost, appropriate educational games, toys and activities.
- Teachers will become more sensitive to and involved in the psychosocial lives of their students.
- Parents will become more involve in preschool activities
- Community awareness towards children's rights and needs will be raised.

- ECRC's integrated development approach will be incorporated into more institutions.
- Community knowledge, skills and attitudes towards dealing with children in crisis situations will improve.
- Coordination between early childhood institutions will improve
- ECRC training staff's knowledge, experience and skill will develop.

v. Budget

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-	28,935	28,935	72,958	-	130,828
2007	32,150	-	-	72,958	32,150	137,258
2008	35,722	35,722	35,722	-	-	107,166
TOTAL	67,872	64,657	64,657	145,916	32,150	375,252

III- 1.b- Training of Trainers Project

Aims and Objectives

This project involves the training of principals or head-teachers of preschools by ECRC staff, in order for them to function, in turn, as trainers of their own staffs. This is an effective method for producing on-site resources for preschool teachers. Training is based on the integrated developmental approach with the aim of communicating this philosophy through the hierarchy of each preschool.

The unique, influential status of principals and head-teachers allows them to act as agents of social change both among their staffs and in their communities. This role is highlighted in the training course and its utilization is the long-term objective of the project. Representatives will be selected from among the graduates of the last five years of ECRC's In-Service training program, with priority granted to principals or head-teachers from preschools with at least 3-4 teachers due to their broader scope of influence. These representatives will be given further training in order to become more effective facilitators of teacher development and advocated for child welfare within their communities. The assumption is that teachers who have benefited from ECRC's integrated developmental programming and have had classroom experience will better understand how to apply this knowledge in their own preschools and communities.

Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	-	-	25	20	45
2007	20	20	20	25	-	85
2008	-	20	-	-	20	40
Total	20	40	20	50	40	170

Indirect Beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	-	-	68	50	118
2007	50	50	50	68	-	218
2008	-	50	-	-	50	100
Total	50	100	50	136	100	436

Note: The Indirect beneficiaries of this project will be pre-school teachers

Project Plan

There are two main components to the project:

ECRC staff will lead workshops focusing on the following topics: children's development and aptitude for learning; psychosocial intervention and rehabilitation; group dynamics; principles of adult education; planning; basic principles of administration; and, training in advocacy and lobbying in local communities.

ECRC trainers make field visits to follow up on the beneficiaries of training workshops on an individual basis. Principals and head-teachers are required to organize and conduct training sessions for their staffs based on what they have acquired in the workshops. ECRC trainers observe these sessions, then offer their constructive criticism and comments on techniques for effective and participatory training. These visits are sustained all throughout the training course, and concentrate on every aspect of training, beginning with the planning process, continuing through implementation and finally, evaluation and follow-up.

Outcomes

Summative outcomes over 3 years

- 170 head teachers and principles will benefit directly
- 436 teachers will benefit indirectly
- 170 training material kits will be distributed for participants
- 1200 training hours will be implemented
- 340 field visit will be conducted

Formative outcomes over 3 years

This project enhances teachers' skills, knowledge, experience and attitudes toward the ECCD sector. By empowering and training Lead teachers, ECRC assures the sustainability of quality learning in preschools.

After undergoing 150 hours of training, teachers will have a better understanding of, among others, the following fundamental early childhood topics and principles: group dynamics; developmental characteristics from birth-6 years of age; principles of management and supervision; basics of training and workshop planning; building relationships with preschool parents; and, working with children in difficult circumstances.

Budget

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-	-	-	20,440	19,208	39,648
2007	21,342	21,342	21,342	22,711	-	86,737
2008	-	23,714	-	-	24,010	47,724
TOTAL	21,342	45,056	21,342	43,151	43,218	174,109

III- 1.c- Teacher to Teacher Project

i. Aims and Objectives

ECRC endeavors to reach the maximum possible number of beneficiaries in the ECCD sector. However, as resources are limited and needs are urgent, in 1998 ECRC developed the Teacher to Teacher project. The project aims to train select ECRC graduates to become trainers of disadvantaged teachers in remote areas, who have no access to ECRC programs. This process enables a greater number of educators to benefit from the many important elements of the program and its educational framework in a cost-effective manner.

The project objectives are:

- Extending the reach of ECRC's training program
- Exposing teachers who are unable to join ECRC's programs to the basics of ECCD
- Empowering teachers to become leaders in their own environments
- Enriching ECRC's training program with innovations and creative ideas springing from educators in their roles as Lead Teachers

Each Lead Teacher works with two trainee teachers, the majority of whom are stationed in villages and refugee camps. The tools that the trainees acquire, the skills they develop and the ideas that they share with their Lead Teachers empower them and help them engage their communities in ECCD and become active advocates for children's rights. This is far removed from their traditional reputation as mere babysitters. Their communities begin to respect them as educators and leaders. As for the Lead Teachers, they consistently report that they too learn much from the experience (particularly in more remote and disadvantaged areas), enhancing their skills and growing as teachers, trainers, leaders and advocates for children.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	45	-	45	-	45	135
2007	-	45	-	45	-	90
2008	45	-	45	-	45	135
Total	90	45	90	45	90	360

Indirect Beneficiaries

	T Jenin C		Nablus		Ramallah		Jerusalem		Hebron		Total	
2006	75	720	-	-	75	720	-	-	75	720	225	2160
2007	-	-	75	720	-	-	75	720	-	-	150	1440
2008	75	720	-	-	75	720	-	-	75	720	225	2160
Total	150	1440	75	720	150	1440	75	720	150	1440	600	5760

Note: The indirect beneficiaries will be the pre-school teachers, teachers, and their students.

T: stands for indirect teachers

C: stands for indirect children

iii. Project Plan

The project is comprised of the following components:

- ECRC conducts a 15-day intensive training course for Lead Teachers. This will empower them to implement the program with trainees. Topics covered include: program set-up, in terms of content, goals, methods, building communication skills, adult learning, group dynamics, supporting children in crisis, implementation and evaluation, and working with families.
- Twelve site visits conducted by Lead Teacher and trainee, six at trainee's site, and six at Lead Teacher's site. These will focus on organizing the educational environment, implementing developmental educational methods, organizing production workshops and training for making educational toys and materials with simple resources, enriching the educational environment with local resources, and promoting the importance of working with families and providing methods for doing so.
- ECRC staff conducts two field visits to each participant for observation and discussion.
- ECRC staff meets with participants every six weeks to follow program progress and examine planned activities.

iv. Outcomes

Summative outcomes over 3 years

- 360 teachers will benefit directly (120 lead teacher and 240 trainee teacher)
- 600 teachers will benefit indirectly.
- 5760 child will benefit indirectly.
- 120 training workshops (400 hours) will be conducted for lead teachers.
- 240 field visits will be conducted by ECRC's staff to follow the project implementation in the field (in total around 960 hours)
- 360 training material kits will be distributed on participants.
- 1080 exchange field visits will be done by trainer and trainee teachers.
- 90 incentives paid to lead teachers, which enhance their salaries

Formative outcomes over 3 years

- Teachers will become well-versed in quality ECCD teaching methods
- Teachers will develop more interactive, respectful and communicative relationships with students and parents
- Teachers will improve at planning appropriate activities and evaluating their impact
- Teachers will learn how to produce low-cost, appropriate educational games, toys and activities
- Teachers will become more sensitive to and involved in the psychosocial lives of their students
- Parents will become more involve in preschool activities
- Community awareness towards children’s rights and needs will be raised
- ECRC’s integrated development approach will be incorporated into more institutions
- Community knowledge, skills and attitudes towards dealing with children in crisis situations will improve
- Coordination between early childhood institutions will improve
- ECRC training staff’s knowledge, experience and skill will develop

v.

Budget

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	17,248	-	17,248	-	17,248	51,744
2007	-	19,164	-	19,164	-	38,328
2008	21,293	-	21,293	-	21,293	63,879
TOTAL	38,541	19,164	38,541	19,164	38,541	153,951

III- 1.d- Parent to Parent Project

i. Aims and Objective:

Since the establishment of ECRC, the basic components affecting early childhood education and care were identified as the child, the educational institution and the family. Over the last decade, ECRC devoted time and energy to investigate the best possible means to incorporate parents' educations programmes in a systematic way in the training programme as part of developing a long term plan for community awareness to promote and focus on the needs of children in their early years of life. Based on this, parent education is an integrated component of the teacher's in-service training program carried out every year. In order to go beyond that notion, parent to parent project has emerged.

The Parent to Parent project is a pilot initiative targeting parents who have been indirect beneficiaries of the In-Service and working with families Projects. These parents will serve as extension agents to promote improved parenting practices and greater awareness of ECCD issues in their communities. Their work will help mobilize community members to become active advocates and lobbyist for children’s rights.

The project will consist of a series of workshops for parents to establish them as Lead Parents. Lead Parents will then hold their own meetings with other parents to discuss the relevant issues.

The objectives of the project will be:

- Activating parents' role as partners of their children's broad educational process, particularly in the ECCD sector
- Enhancing and improving parents' knowledge skills and experiences in the ECCD sector
- Establishing educational networks among parents
- Encouraging parents to be advocated and lobbyists for children's rights

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

	Jenin		Nablus		Ramallah		Jerusalem		Hebron		Total	
	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T	P
2006	-	-	-	-	15	45	-	-	-	-	15	45
2007	-	-	15	45	-	-	-	-	15	45	30	90
2008	15	45	-	-	15	45	15	45	-	-	45	135
Total	15	45	15	45	30	90	15	45	15	45	90	270

T: for teachers

P: for parents

**Total of Direct Beneficiaries for three years: Teachers 90
Parents 270**

Outcomes

Summative outcomes over three years:

- 90 teachers, 90 lead parents and 180 trainee parents will benefit directly from the project.
- 480 hours of training will be conducted with the target teachers.
- 300 training hours will be provided for the lead teachers.
- 360 training material kits will be distributed for the projects participants.

Formative outcomes over three years:

- The teachers will gain other avenue of mobilizing the community toward ECCD sector benefit.
- The parents knowledge, skills and experiences at ECCD field will be improved and enhanced.
- Parents able to contribute effectively at ECCD field.
- Parents are knowledgeable and skilled to formalize and establishing parent's associations and networks.
- Parents are more ready to deal with their children appropability and are more capable to advocate for children's rights.

Outsides the context of this project's formal workshop framework, participating parents will have an effect on any other parents, educators or policymakers they come into contact with.

i. Budget

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-		15,064	-	-	15,064
2007	-	16,738	-	-	16,738	33,476
2008	18,598	-	18,598	18,598	-	55,794
TOTAL	18,598	16,738	33,662	18,598	16,738	104,334

III- 1.e- Child to Child Project

i. Aims and Objectives

ECRC believes that children can be participants in knowledge construction rather than passive recipients of instruction. The CRC declares and recognizes participation as an essential right for children. In addition, research and experience suggest that children can often learn more effectively from their peers than from adults. For these reasons, it has created the Child to Child project, which connects children aged 9-14 years with children aged 3-8 years, most of whom are at the Kindergarten (KG) stage. The older children will function as mentors for the younger ones, creating a less intimidating and more stimulating environment that adult mentors could not emulate.

The project's activities and workshops are directed towards empowering children to become active in issues that concern them. These issues include learning the tools to affect policymaking, imbuing a sense of self-respect and respect for others, and learning how to deal with crises. Throughout the program, children will also be encouraged to articulate their opinions and needs.

Topics to be covered include: children's rights; working with children in crises; violence between school-children; respect for public property; and, relating with special needs children and respecting them.

The project's objectives consist of:

- Granting children an opportunity to be involved in policymaking on issues that concern them
- Developing children's skills in planning, communication, evaluation and others areas
- Empowering children to take responsibility for decisions that concern them
- Develop children's abilities to interact with and manage crises and other difficult situations
- Assisting children in the accumulation of informational resources which concern their lives and surroundings
- Breaking boundaries that exist between children and adults
- Making clear to children that interacting with them is on the basis that they are partners and not mere recipients

- Encouraging communal recognition of children's expressive abilities.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

	Jenin		Nablus		Ramallah		Jerusalem		Hebron		Total	
	Mentors' child	Mentee's child										
2006	-	-	-	-	15	180	-	-	-	-	15	180
2007	-	-	15	180	-	-	-	-	15	180	30	360
2008	15	180	-	-	15	180	15	180	-	-	45	540
Total	15	180	15	180	30	360	15	180	15	180	90	1080

iii. Project Plan

ECRC staff will select a number of KGs belonging to a larger school. Staff will prepare necessary reading materials and other appropriate resources for participating KGs. Activities will be implemented in accordance with the topics covered. Activities will consist of a number of workshops presenting the topic, a series of meetings and discussions conducted by the mentors, and a number of field trips to visit organizations that work in the ECCD sector.

Participating KGs for the pilot project in the first year, are expected to be from Al-Mustaqbal Schools, Al-Najah School and Beit-Our Tahta Club. 15 children are expected to function as mentors for 180 KG students, for a total of 90 mentors and 1080 mentees over 3 years.

iv. Outcomes

The Child to Child Project is expected to effect the following changes and developments:

1. Evolution of a practical model for involving children into the broader educational process;
2. Enlightenment of school teachers, principals and families of children's capabilities as proactive actors in the educational process; and,
3. Mobilization children to advocate and lobbying for their rights, needs and other related issues.

v. Budget:

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-	-	18,144	-	-	18,144
2007	-	20,160	-	-	20,160	40,320
2008	22,400	-	22,400	22,400	-	67,200
TOTAL	22,400	20,160	40,544	22,400	20,160	125,664

III- 1.f- Working with Families Project

i. Aims and Objectives

In order to be effective in influencing Palestinian children's quality of life, ECRC must consider and address all aspects of children's environments. It is not sufficient to augment the quality of their preschool education, but vital also to influence the atmosphere in which they spend most of their time: the home. According to Family Resource Coalition in the USA, "The family is a child's first source of information and the primary model for how a child experiences relationship"¹. Parents' attitudes towards their children and the extent of their involvement in their lives play a critical role in children's development. The family atmosphere can affect a child's self-image, confidence, communication, self respect and respect of others and an immeasurable number of other factors.

A major component of the In-Service training project for teachers is the requirement to work closely with families of preschoolers through a variety of means. This is part of a broader training topic on how to work and communicate with parents. In addition to and as extension of this effort, and in step with its holistic developmental vision for children, ECRC has conceived its Working with Families Project. This project will pave the way for other ECRC programs, such as the Parent to Parent Project, for which parents exhibiting motivation and readiness will be invited to participate. In addition, it will help create parental networks, such as parents' associations.

Any intervention with the family must have a long-term impact and should focus on developing and increasing parents' understanding and awareness. This will help them modify their attitudes regarding child-rearing practices within the local cultural context. With this in mind, ECRC will organize a number of workshops in which ECRC staff will engage parents in issues that concern their children. ECRC has identified and targeted a number of sites for this project.

Project objectives are to enable parents and increase their awareness in the following areas:

- Transformation CRC guidelines into a practiced reality
- Gender issues and how children experience them
- Effective techniques of dealing with children in crises or difficult situations
- Roles parents play in their children's lives
- Making use of and critiquing children's educational materials and stories
- Providing for special needs children and integrating them into preschools and local communities
- Participation in children's activities and its impact on their development
- Development of communication skills
- Addressing various issues such as violence or unemployment with children

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	-	200	-	-	200
2007	-	200	-	-	200	400
2008	200	-	200	200	-	600
Total	200	200	400	200	200	1200

Indirect Beneficiaries (Children)

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	-	800	-	-	400
2007	-	800	-	-	800	1600
2008	800	-	800	800	-	2400
Total	800	800	1600	800	800	4400

iii. Project Plan

Teachers who have benefited from past ECRC programs will accompany ECRC staff as understudies, so that they may be able to carry out the same work in the future. ECRC will follow these steps to put its Working with Families Project into motion:

- Coordinating with local community representatives to schedule meetings
- Scheduling a meeting to delineate all aspects of the project, such as goals, objectives, implementation and duration
- Implementing program in accordance with the agreed work plan and timeframe
- With each group, ECRC will schedule six, 3-hour meetings over six to eight months.

iv. Outcomes

Educating families in children's rights is one of the most vital steps in ensuring those rights are observed. In addition, equipping parents with the tools to deal with myriad parental situations, such as child trauma or special needs, can result in healthier and happier children. Parents will be able to influence the type of environments that their children interact in and the materials they utilize. This obliterates parents' position as passive recipients of whatever the preschool, the local media and policymakers have to offer them

A family's involvement in its child's life promotes a sense of community, which leads to healthy ideas and attitudes when the child becomes old enough to play an active role in his/her community. This implies a strong sense of respect for others and a desire to impact lives in positive and constructive ways.

Making the home a healthy educational environment will have an immense impact on a child's academic performance. Assisting with homework or planning creative and fun ways to teach him/her can affect a child's achievement levels and bring the family closer together.

Teachers who accompany ECRC staff in this project will benefit by gaining expertise in communicating with families and engaging them in relevant ECCD issues.

v. Budget

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-	-	35,616	-	-	35,616
2007	-	39,573	-	-	39,573	79,146
2008	43,970	-	43,970	43,970	-	131,910
TOTAL	43,970	39,573	79,586	43,970	39,573	246,672

III- 1.g- Short Specialized and Advanced Training Project

i. Aims and Objectives

Each year, ECRC provides a number of classes on consultancy or training of personnel in the childhood sector. These classes have been provided upon special request. Considering the frequency of these requests, ECRC has decided to respond by creating the Short Specialized and Advanced Training Project.

This project is intended for ECRC graduates who would like to make the transition from being paraprofessionals to professionals. It offers teachers a further specialization in some of the topics covered in the initial In-Service courses. In addition, it provides an opportunity for ECRC staff to follow up on the graduates' work beyond the scope of the initial project period. As such, the courses covered will be of a more advanced nature.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Direct Beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	-	-	-	25	-	25
2007	25	25	-	-	25	75
2008	-	-	25	25	-	50
Total	25	25	25	50	25	150

Indirect Beneficiaries

	Jenin		Nablus		Ramallah		Jerusalem		Hebron		Total	
	Teacher	Children	T	Ch	T	Ch	T	Ch	T	Ch	T	Ch
2006	-	-	-	-	-	-	63	600	-	-	63	600
2007	63	600	63	600	-	-	-	-	63	600	189	1800
2008	-	-	-	-	63	600	63	600	-	-	126	1200
TOTAL	63	600	63	600	63	600	126	1200	63	600	378	3600

iii. Project Plan

The training will consist of 12, five-hour sessions (60 hours in total). Sample courses could include: Learning through Arts and Drama; Working with Parents; Music as a Medium for Learning; Children's Rights; Gender Issues; and, Environmental Issues.

iv. Outcome

This project is expected to increase the specialization of educators and empower them in order to help them become leaders in their own respects. It is also an excellent tool for ECRC to increase its network of ECCD organizations and institutions, because of the cooperation that will be needed to put this project into effect.

v. **Budget**

	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSALEM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	-	-	-	8,652	-	8,652
2007	9,613	9,613	-	-	9,613	28,839
2008	-	-	10,681	10,681	-	21,362
TOTAL	9,613	9,613	10,681	19,333	9,613	58,853

III.2- Production and Marketing Project

i. **Aims and Objectives**

The Production and Marketing Project is comprised of three main components:

1. Production

The purpose of the production component of the project is to increase the quantity of high-quality Arabic-language publications and culture-relevant toys, games and audiovisual materials for the Palestinian early childhood sector. The project aims to do so at minimum production and circulation costs. In addition to benefiting preschools and families, the project will provide training materials to support ECRC training programs and produce annual calendars and other topical items to raise awareness and support of children's rights.

Educational worksheets and workbooks are produced, along with ECCD guidebooks for teachers and parents. All the materials produced are steeped in the basic principles of ECCD and are adapted to suit the specific cultural needs of the Palestinian child. Past publications for children have included the storybook such as The Money tree, Saïd and the Nightingale, Karma, Faris can help, Faris and Amal, Where Did Fula Disappear? I'm not Naughty, the workbook Sadiqi Marah (published in two volumes) and the Arabic Language Series books, such as The Family, Play, Olives, the Market, Winter, Animals, Professions, Spring, Transportation and Summer. Published teacher's guides have included, Creative Movement, Logico-Mathematical Readiness, Creative Art Expression, Physical Setup of the KG, Drama, Language Readiness, Nature and the Environment and Creative Movement. Other sample publications have been Me and My Child (parents' and teachers' guide to child development), Marah and Let's Sing Together (children's cassette-tape), ECRC brochure, My KG (poster), and children's rights greeting cards. In addition to some publication about psychosocial rehabilitation and awareness programmes.

Some of the items are produced by ECRC staff, while others are contracted out to local writers, illustrators and producers under the supervision of the Centre. **The presence of this project is a guarantee for income generation** (please see budget sheet below). The project has the potential to continue to be progressively self-supporting and to attract small donors interested in filling the critical need in literature for and about Palestinian children.

2. Marketing

The purpose of marketing at ECRC can be summarized in the following points:

- Promoting ECRC publications through public relations, informational workshops, brochures and the use of the ECRC website

- Disseminating ECRC publications for use throughout the Arab World
- Spreading awareness of ECRC ideas and its mission through meetings with donors and hosting consortiums to discuss its work
- Guarding and preserving ECRC printing rights and intellectual property
- Help beneficiaries make use of ECRC publications by holding meetings on how to use them effectively (or example, the Arabic Language Series workshops to show teachers how to make use of the Series, which have caused a significant rise in its sale)

3. ECRC Library

A specialized library was developed over ECRC's 20 years to provide enriching resources for the Centre's various activities and programs. Due to the aforementioned lack of ECCD publications in Arabic, the library is largely comprised of foreign-produced reference books and audio-visual aids. This restricts the utility of the library for those teachers hindered by the language barrier. As such, the library primarily serves the ECRC staff, teachers, professionals in the field of child psychology, and university professors and students.

ii. Project Plan

1. Production

Plans for 2006-2008 include the production and publication of the following items:

- A series of children's worksheets on the environment
- A teacher's guidebook and workbooks on environmental health and protection for use in preschools
- An extended teacher's instruction manual for use with the Language Series
- Story series volumes and *Sadiqi Marah* (reprints)
- Educational books for preschools to support mathematical development.
- A parent information pamphlet on ECCD and particularly in gender and children's rights issues.
- Annual calendar on the theme of children's rights, illustrated and with commentary by Palestinian children

2. Marketing

The marketing component will be directed towards such efforts as advertising, public relations and publicity, distribution and placement strategies, and the maintenance of the ECRC website.

In addition to the marketing objectives listed above, plans for 2006-2008 also include the purchase of an ECRC vehicle. Experience has shown the transport of materials and publications to be very costly. A vehicle for the exclusive use of the Centre will minimize these costs. The purchased vehicle will have to be of a robust nature, due to the circuitous routes that must be followed in the presence of the Separating Wall.

3. ECRC Library

The library is still relatively small. It is the hope that its holdings will be increased over the next few years. Library expansion plans include the acquisition of a large number of additional reference volumes in both Arabic and English, the renewal and

increase of relevant journal subscriptions, physical expansion of library space and the development of a web-based library search engine connected to other local databases.

iii. Outcomes

The expected outcomes are numerous and far-reaching. Production and acquisition of resources supports all ECRC endeavors. It provides beneficiaries with essential ECCD materials that they would be unable to find elsewhere. It supplies ECRC staff and other ECCD professionals with the vital resources to pursue their training programs, research initiatives and children’s rights advocacy campaigns. It enriches the educational and developmental experiences of children. In addition, it provides a source of income for the Centre.

The marketing efforts ensure that the organization can be as effective as possible in reaching the largest possible number of beneficiaries for the maximum impact.

iv. Budget

UNIT	MARKETING	LIBRARY	PUBLICATIONS	TOTAL
YEAR				
2006	*110,000	3,000	112,784	225,784
2007	7,700	3,500	175,504	186,704
2008	8,500	3,500	211,680	223,680
TOTAL	126,200	10,000	499,968	636,168

* The budget implies purchasing a car for marketing purpose.

III.3- Children’s Media Project

i. Aims and Objectives

Using the media as an educational tool is a very powerful method of spreading information and awareness of ECCD and children’s rights issues. It is also an effective platform for children to voice their opinions and participate in issues that concern them. Local televisions, radio and print media suffer from a deficiency in programs by and oriented towards children. In a move towards addressing these issues, ECRC is proposing in the Child’s Media Project. Potential partners are: the Palestinian Ministry of Information; Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation; Al-Quds University Institute of Modern Media; the Media Institute at Bir-Zeit University; and, of course, ECRC.

The project’s broad **objectives** are the following:

- Empowering children to become active in issues that concern them by granting them a voice in the media and giving them opportunities to plan and participate in their own programs
- Increasing the number and quality of children’s programs that are wholesome, educational and appropriate for Palestinian children
- Spreading awareness of children’s issues and their rights to educate the public and influence policymaking
- Empowering Palestinian media channels by increasing the expertise of media employees

Within these objectives, ECRC will contribute by utilizing its resources such as information and training centers. ECRC's vast informational resources and partner network will be indispensable for addressing ECCD and children's rights components of the project. ECRC's training centers can be used to hold workshops for augmenting media employees' skills.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

The program's beneficiaries will first and foremost be children. Parents, Palestinian media, policymakers and entire communities will also benefit from this project.

iii. Project Plan

ECRC's participation will begin by recruiting a Media Officer and Coordinator who will oversee ECRC's part in the Project, which will consist of three main parts:

1. Producing and publishing an educational supplement on children's issues to accompany the Project
2. Producing and broadcasting radio programs on children's issues with help from partner radio stations
3. Evaluate the Project by measuring its impact and effectiveness

iv. Outcomes

Instead of being passive recipients of what policies, traditional ideas and media give them, Children will be able to speak up and take part to influence these factors.

Communities will gain positive, educational programs that promote healthy development of their children. Educating communities about their children will help them be better responsive to their needs and mobilize them to become advocates for their children's rights.

Palestinian media will benefit both by the increase in quality programming and in their employees' expertise.

v. Budget

MEDIA PROJECT

YEAR	ACTIVITIES	BREAKDOWN BUDGET	TOTAL BUDGET
2006	PREPARATION PHASE		
	RECRUITING MEDIA OFFICER & COORDINATOR	6 MONTHS X \$1,500	\$9,000
2007	PRODUCTION PHASE # (1)		
	1- PRODUCING & PUBLISHING EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT ON CHILDREN'S ISSUES (AS AN ANNEX AT THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER)	6 ISSUES X \$2,500	\$15,000
	2- PRODUCING & BROADCASTING RADIO PROGRAMMS ON	12 EPISODES X \$1,500	\$18,000

	CHILDREN'S ISSUES		
	PERSONNEL COST		
	- MEDIA PROGRAM OFFICER	12 MONTHS X \$1,500	\$18,000
	SUB TOTAL COST		\$51,000
	ADMIN. COST (15%)		\$7,650
	TOTAL COST		\$58,650
2008	PRODUCTION PHASE # (2)		
	1- PRODUCING EDUCATIONAL SUPP	4 ISSUES X \$2,500	\$10,000
	2- PRODUCING & BROADCASTING RADIO PROGRAM	8 EPISODES X \$1,500	\$12,000
	3- MEASURING THE EFFECTIVNESS AND THE IMPACT OF THE PROJECT		\$5,000
	PERSONNEL COST	10 MONTHS X \$1,500	\$15,000
	SUBTOTAL		\$42,000
	ADMIN. COST (15%)		\$6,300
	TOTAL COST		\$48,300

Budget Summary

MEDIA CHILD'S PROJECT	
YEAR	BUDGET
2006	\$9,000
2007	\$58,650
2008	\$48,300
TOTAL	\$115,950

III-4. Advocacy Project

In the turmoil of the unstable political situation in the OPT, children are born and grow up without any concept of what they are entitled to in terms of nutrition, respect, education, safety and many other basic rights and necessities. The political situation is not the only obstacle between Palestinian children and their rights. Another is the ignorance of family and community leaders of these rights, on whom children, in their vulnerability, depend for survival, protection and growth. Unfortunately, however, children's rights issues are swept aside in the presence of other major and more immediate hurdles, as seen by the community.

Since its inception, ECRC has been a patron of children's rights through its community awareness and training programs. ECRC promotes a holistic approach for childhood development. A child should be well nourished and protected, and have a strong sense of self-worth and identity. A child should have opportunities to learn and play an active role in his/her living environment. The project targets children of all

ages, but focuses mainly on those who are eight years old and under. In spite of the numerous challenges offered by the political situation, ECRC has been very successful in attaining its goals.

The overall **objectives** of the project consist of:

- Lobbying for and advocacy of children's rights at all levels; locally, regionally and globally
- Raising Awareness on the importance of CRC and its implementation locally and regionally
- Developing programs and materials based on CRC
- Promoting the translation of CRC materials into local implementation through activities, methodologies and culturally relevant materials and resources
- CRC training, which consists of implementation of children's rights and monitoring and documentation of violations
- Networking with other local, regional and global governmental bodies and NGOs working on children's rights, human rights, gender, youth and health issue to ensure full protection and holistic development for all Palestinian Children
- Strengthening national resources and capabilities
- Promoting and mobilizing child-centered community development

Project Components

Following are the concrete steps which ECRC takes in regards to its Advocacy Project:

A. Lobbying and Advocacy

All of ECRC's programs highlight and stress children's rights as outlined in the CRC, with the aim of transforming their beneficiaries into advocates who continuously lobby for them. The violation of children's rights has directly affected the wellbeing of the Palestinian family. Two examples of areas of particular concern are the shortage of medical supplies and gender discrimination.

ECRC has devoted many resources to the education of teachers, families and communities about CRC principles. It has done so partly by networking with other institutions, ministries and organizations working in the ECED and children's rights sectors. ECRC's lobbying and advocacy efforts include:

- Advocating and lobbying for Palestinian children's rights at all levels; local, regional and global
- Documenting, assessing and monitoring of children's rights violation in Palestine in order to ensure the protection of children through a clear and accountable system
- Networking and disbursing information to other NGOs with similar objectives locally, regionally and globally

To these ends, ECRC will utilize local and international media resources. It has provided and will continue to provide, where applicable, training to policymakers and community leaders on the CRC. In the long term, ECRC plans to create its own researched programs aimed at enhancing CRC awareness.

B. Programs and Training

As documented in previous sections, ECRC also promotes children's rights by creating training programs designed for the organization's staff, preschool teachers and parents and community leaders. To achieve ECRC's specific advocacy objectives, the following three training programs were designed:

1. Training preschool teachers in advocating children's rights:
 - a. Raising teachers' awareness and encouraging them to lobby for children's rights
 - b. Enhancing teacher's knowledge of CRC principles and providing them with suitable materials in order to assist them in the communication of these principles to parents
 - c. Developing proper skills for applied activities of CRC principles. Training teachers to translate these principles into daily practice in their preschools and to other beneficiaries
 - d. Training teachers to integrate children's rights into a holistic, integrated developmental approach
2. Training parents of children ages from birth to eight years:
 - a. Increasing parents' awareness and assisting them in becoming more responsible for their children's developmental needs and rights
 - b. Helping produce more capable parents demanding higher standards of care and protection for their children, thus promoting the conditions for happier, healthier children
3. Training of children aged 10-14 years in CRC –incorporating the media to advocate CRC principles on their behalf:
 - a. Raising children's awareness of their rights
 - b. Developing their skills to express their views through the media
 - c. Activating their participation in issues concerning their survival and protection

C. Target Groups

It is imperative to stress that the target group is, at essence, Palestinian children. All training provided to parents, teachers, policy makers and media groups will be provided to the end of benefiting the children, first and foremost.

Description of Activities

Using CRC principles as a guide for advocating and lobbying for Palestinian children's rights, ECRC will follow these steps to achieve its goals:

Creating Materials and Providing Resources

- a. Producing a leaflet which introduces the ECRC's Advocacy Project, its aims and objectives.
- b. Reprinting of coloring books for children entitled *Lana Haq*, Arabic for "We Have a Right"
- c. Producing simple brochures on children's rights
- d. Developing culturally relevant games based on the CRC
- e. Promoting the translation of CRC materials into local activities and exercises to supplement available training resources
- f. Identifying and presenting resources on children's rights for Palestinian children
- g. Utilizing posters, pins and t-shirts advocating children's rights

Networking

ECRC places an emphasis on networking with local, regional and international NGOs and governmental bodies specializing in all avenues of human rights and ECED issues. This will produce channels for the sharing of information, experiences and resources. ECRC's approach to networking lies within its framework of holistic development for Palestinian children. The following levels of networking will be pursued:

a. Local Networking

This will be done with the relevant ministries; Education, Social Affairs, Culture and Arts, Planning and International Cooperation, and with the Secretariat of National Plan of Action for Palestinian Children. In addition, ECRC will continually seek network ties with local, service-rendering NGOs, such as: DCI-pal, Tamer Institute, Al-Haq, Medical Relief Society, Palestinian Counseling Centre, Al-Tufula Centre (Nazareth), Coalition of Palestinian NGOs, UNRWA and other women's associations and faith communities.

ECRC is currently a member of the Palestinian Children's Rights Coalition (PCRC). The Coalition is comprised of local NGOs and works on lobbying and advocacy for Palestinian children's rights at various fronts. Its membership helps keep ECRC up-to-date with current Palestinian children's rights developments and places PCRC as a valuable resource.

b. Regional Networking

ECRC is a partner of the Arab Resource Collective (ARC), an NGO based in Cyprus which acts as a regional and global networking body. ARC organizes workshops on a variety of issues, including children's rights, and supplies related resources and materials to the region.

ECRC members participate in regional conferences sponsored by the Arab Council on Early Childhood and Development (Egypt), and conferences organized by the World Dialogue Centre based in Nicosia, Cyprus, among others. ECRC members will continue to research regional networking opportunities and seek new relationships with emerging organizations.

c. International Networking

ECRC is a partner to UNICEF and regularly participates in international conferences on ECED and children's rights. The Centre was involved in the UN Special Session on Children in New York in May 2002, and has since been working on the implementation of the document adopted by the General Assembly.

Moreover, ECRC took part in the PCRC Palestinian Delegation presenting the Palestinian Alternative Report to the Special Committee on Children's Rights in Geneva (SCCR), Switzerland in June 2002. In October of that same year, with the help of PCRC, ECRC participated in observing Israel's presentation of its report on children to the SCCR in Geneva.

These and similar efforts will persist in ECRC's international networking policies. Other partner organizations in ECRC's international network include Education Action International, Italian NGOs Coalition, Children's Rights International Network and Global Campaign for Education.

Mobilizing Through Creating Active Awareness, Personnel Training and Capacity Building:

The aim is to spread awareness of CRC principles in the community, highlighting the importance of their implementation in daily practices. This will be done through a program with the following components:

- a. Enhancing parents' and educators' knowledge of CRC and working towards changing negative, prevailing attitudes towards children's rights
- b. Empowering of parents and educators through improving their skills in promoting their children's rights
- c. Mobilizing teachers and families to develop a healthy support system for children within their communities. This will help ensure the protection of Palestinian children.

Media

The local media can be a powerful resource for raising CRC awareness, clarifying and highlighting responsibilities of all community members towards the child. ECRC plans to take advantage of media sources in the following ways:

- a. Radio programs for and by children
- b. Frequent Articles on children's rights in local newspapers
- c. Children's TV programs focusing on their rights and responsibilities, emphasizing both the importance of children's participation in the understanding of their rights and raising awareness in their communities by expressing their needs and rights.

For more information, please see Child's Media Project section.

Expected Impact on Target Groups

The expected outcomes of the project include:

- Strong community awareness and sense of responsibility towards Palestinian children and their innate rights
- The Creation of a broader community base of professionals working on the protection of Palestinian children and advocating children's rights.
- More child-friendly communities
- Better NPA legislation on child issues and more involved policymakers
- The amassing of new resources on children's rights to be utilized for local lobbying and advocacy purposes

Budget

ADVOCACY - BUDGET	
2006	\$118,078
2007	\$131,198
2008	\$145,775

III.5- Kindergarten's Infrastructure and renovation project

i. Aims and Objectives

Parallel to the training, awareness and advocacy projects that ECRC offers is the Preschools Project, which targets West Bank and Jerusalem preschools and KGs for physical upgrading. This upgrading includes improvements of indoor and outdoor facilities, such as renovation or expansion, and augmentation of toys and

equipment. ECRC will select marginal and disadvantaged sites for the implementation of this project and monitor its progress. The teachers at these sites will be enrolled in ECRC's yearlong In-Service Project to provide these needy locales with material and human resource development.

The objectives of the project are straightforward:

- Renovation, such as painting or maintenance needs
- Improving the safety features of the sites by clearing and reclaiming structures, such as derelict rooms or unsatisfactory bathrooms
- Expanding available spaces and/or adding new ones
- Equipping areas in need, such as playground, playrooms, nurseries

ii. Program Beneficiaries

	Jenin	Nablus	Ramallah	Jerusalem	Hebron	Total
2006	10 KGs	10	10	30	10	70
2007	15	15	15	30	15	90
2008	20	20	20	-	20	80
Total	45	45	45	60	45	240

iii. Project Plan

The project's beneficiaries will be selected according to the following criteria:

1. Priority will be given to preschools in poor and remote areas
2. Preschools will be examined and selected according to their educational and infrastructural needs. Preference will be given to sites that lack sufficient resources, such as finances, materials and training
3. Readiness for cooperation and coordination between preschools and local community institutions will be taken into consideration

Preschools will be evaluated according to adherence to existing regulations and to international educational standards. A structural assessment will be made of such items as: heating; safety of building and play areas; sanitary needs; humidity control; illumination; suitable allocation of spaces; and, proper air circulation. An evaluation of the preschools' educational materials will also be made.

Progress will be closely followed by ECRC. Monitoring of the project's infrastructure will follow these guidelines:

1. Monthly (or more frequent, if need be) site-visits by the Project Coordinator, the object of which will be to oversee the project's progress, verify correct implementation and address emergent needs and problems. The Coordinator will document progress of work, and speaking with

administrators and teachers, will corroborate its adherence to plans and that agreed improvements are being put into place.

2. Preschool administrators will be requested to send progress reports every three months, and present receipts and invoices of the work accomplished.

3. Regular meetings with local NGO partners, to evaluate and monitor project's progress, coordinate activities, and troubleshoot potential problem areas. Additional, unscheduled meetings will take place if need be.

iv. Outcomes

This infrastructure component of ECRC's work complements the training component. These vital alterations improve children's health and safety. In addition, they enrich the resources available to teachers significantly, which contributes to the facilities' learning environments. Not needing to worry about building maintenance work, teachers will be free to concentrate on teaching and quality programming. Parents will be more inclined to send their children to early childhood institutions that are safe and welcoming. This improves the quality of life for these especially disadvantaged families and, by extension, communities.

v. Budget

DEVELOPING, UPGRADING & ENRICHING PRESCHOOLS						
	JENIN	NABLUS	RAMALLAH	JERUSAL EM	HEBRON	TOTAL
2006	23,000	23,000	23,000	161,290	23,000	253,290
2007	38,333	38,333	38,333	161,290	38,333	314,622
2008	56,790	56,790	56,790	-	56,790	227,160
TOTAL	118,123	118,123	118,123	322,580	118,123	795,072

III.6- Research Project

i. Aims and Objectives

This project was established to address to the severe scarcity of ECCD research in the Arab World, particularly in Palestine. Work in Arab early childhood sectors has therefore forced dependencies on Western research and ideas which have limited or no applicability for local needs. The aim of this project is to produce and promote culture-relevant research, dealing with issues that are relevant to Palestine's historical, political, socioeconomic and geographical contexts in particular. In addition, this research is also intended to inform ECRC's own programming efforts.

The scale of these studies would severely tax ECRC's current human resources. For that reason, the Centre has decided to contract out the data collection and analysis for these research activities. The Centre will supervise all work done and provide significant input into study design. This arrangement will both ensure that studies meet the needs of the community and build capacity in local research sector.

Activities in this unit have included the following studies:

- *The Quantitative Survey of Preschool Education in the West Bank* was carried out. It was funded by the Canadian International Development Research Center and published in November 1990
- Data collection and entry of *The Effect of Exposure to Violence*, a research project carried out by Palestinian anthropologists
- Data collection and entry, and revision of data collection instruments were completed for the first part of an Erikson Institute-sponsored research project on the effects of violence on Palestinian children in the West Bank
- Data collection and entry for the second part of the Erikson Institute project was carried out by a PhD fellow and hosted by ECRC
- ECRC hosted and participated in an action research project entitled, *The Profile of the Palestinian Child in the West Bank and Gaza*. The Project was organized by the Welfare Association, Geneva, and carried out by a team of Palestinian researchers in the fields of health, education, psychology and sociology. The research was published in 1991
- *A Review of the Preschool Sector in East Jerusalem* was carried out with the participation of 101 preschools and published in December 2003. The research was supported by the Palestinian Center for Micro Project Development and funded by the European Commission.

ii. Program Beneficiaries

Any individuals or institutions studying or working in the Palestinian ECCD sector will benefit from the Research Project. The beneficiary list includes parents, teachers, academics, researchers, the Ministries of Education and and Social Affairs, preschools, grade schools and NGOs.

iii. Project Plan

ECRC's Research Project will proceed in two directions:

a. Developing tools and mechanisms for assessing stakeholder knowledge, needs and preferences:

In order to provide research which is responsive to local community needs, it is vital to clearly understand those needs first. Therefore, one of the key activities in the Research Project is the design of tools and mechanisms for assessing parents', teachers', administrators' and policymakers' knowledge and opinion of ECCD issues.

For the 2006-2008 period, questionnaires will be developed and focus groups assembled around the following issues:

1. Quantitative and qualitative review and analysis for ECCD sector;
2. The effects of ECRC programming on Palestinian communities; and,
3. Action research on the internal evaluation of ECRC's programs and product.

Findings will constitute the foundation for long-term studies of the evolution of public attitudes towards the above issues. They will also inform the design of future ECRC programming in these areas.

Action research on and internal evaluation of ECRC programs and products:

Over the years, ECRC has continually gathered data from its implemented programs. Evaluations of ECRC training programs are done on annual and topic-specific bases. This data is intended for use in revisions and decisions regarding program content and methods, and in establishing priorities in the

production of resources. Pilot testing of programs, such as the Teacher to Teacher and Parent to Parent projects, contributes significantly to their evolution.

This type of internal research will be sustained for the 2006-2008 period, and tailored in response to changing data needs of the various ECRC programs.

iv. Outcomes

Much-needed, specialized studies, specific to the Palestinian ECCD sector will be carried out and made available. Research will be done within an organized framework, with appropriate supervision and specified objectives. The use of this research will help academics, educators and policymakers to respond more effectively to Palestinian children’s particular needs.

v. Budget

<u>RESEARCH ACTIVITY</u>	<u>TIMEFRAME FOR IMPLEMENTATION</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
RESEARCH # 1			
QUANTITATIVE & QUALITATIVE REVIEW & ANALYSIS FOR ECCD SECTOR	2006	RAMALLAH & JENIN	\$20,000
	2007	NABLUS & HEBRON	\$23,000
	2008	GAZA & BETHLEHEM	\$30,000
RESEARCH # 2			
THE EFFECTS OF ECRC PROGRAMING ON THE PALESTINIAN COMMUNITIES	2007	WEST BANK	\$20,000
RESAERCH # 3			
ACTION RESEARCH ON THE INTERNAL EVALUATION OF ECRC'S PROGRAMS AND PRODUCT	2008	ALL ECRC INTERVENTION AREAS	\$12,000
		TOTAL	\$105,000

IV- Impact of the Proposed Plan

ECRC’s ultimate goals are to improve the quality of life for Palestinian children, and to empower and mobilize entire communities to become active participants in children’s issues, and advocates and lobbyists for children’s rights. The Centre seeks to accomplish this goal through its various programs and initiatives which supply children, parents, teachers and communities at large with essential tools. These tools are the mechanisms by which issues such as gender equality, freedom of speech, freedom of self-expression, psychosocial issues, political problems and a plethora of others can be addressed.

ECRC’s holistic approach to children’s development dictates an involvement from community members at all levels. Training programs empower teachers to become more effective educators, communicators and advocates. Projects that target parents empower them to be activists and to assume participatory roles in all aspects of their children’s development. Children’s development is enriched by enhancing their

educational and recreational atmospheres, and giving them the tools to deal with crises and difficult situations.

To accomplish its goals, ECRC will use all possible available resources; from printing publications, to utilizing the Palestinian media, to establishing networks of organizations and governmental bodies to act as valuable resources for teachers and parents in their ECCD-related undertakings.

V- Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Procedures

Monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of an organization's work are vitally important as ways to assure that work is being carried out to the highest standards and fullest satisfaction. As such, it is a fundamental part of any organization's operation and the method by which it is held accountable to its donors, beneficiaries and the communities in which it operates. At ECRC, monitoring and evaluation are done on a continuous basis which reflects the Centre's transparency and integrity. These procedures are also an important way of identifying necessary revisions, changes or improvements to programs.

Monitoring

Monitoring at ECRC is done systematically. The Project Coordinator visits the various ECRC-affiliated preschools, attending classes and speaking with teachers and principals to verify that the programs are being carried out satisfactorily. Preschool principals or administrators in turn formally report their progress every three months, documenting receipts and invoices of accomplished work. On a larger scale, meetings are conducted with the organization's partners to evaluate programs and identify problems and their solutions.

The Program Manager is responsible for the following monitoring methods:

1. Meeting with training program staff on a monthly basis, to discuss the implementation, methods, resource needs, content, difficulties and revisions of the program. At these meetings, solutions are developed to tackle identified problems.
2. Meeting periodically with families participating in the outreach component to examine the appropriateness of program aims, resources and methodology. Suggestions for further improvement are also noted and taken into consideration.
3. Meeting periodically with formal and informal institutions' supervisors and community leaders participating in the program to examine the appropriateness of program aims, resources and methodology. Suggestions for further improvement are also noted and taken into consideration.
4. Meeting periodically with beneficiaries, head-teachers and principals of participating preschools to discuss and evaluate the implementation and methodology of the programs.

Evaluation

Evaluation is done on a continuous basis and at all levels. Feedback is given on all aspects of the training sessions and periods. Evaluations done by teachers cover the effectiveness of reading materials

Every June, a comprehensive review is done with the participation of trainers, counselors, coordinators, the programme manager and the project director. Past programs are assessed in terms of effectiveness, input and results and teacher assessment. In light of those comments, preparations are made for the following year, allowing for new ideas, changes and improvements. Evaluation follows these steps:

1. After each training session, beneficiaries fill out an evaluation form. Training staff fills out evaluation forms after each training topic is completed and conducts feedback sessions to discuss all aspects of the training period.
2. Beneficiaries fill out an evaluation form after each topic. Discussions follow the evaluation, covering the effectiveness of reading materials, resources and other props and approaches employed in the workshops.
3. The training staff fills out an evaluation form at the culmination of each topic.
4. Parents with children in participating preschools give verbal input.
5. Personnel working in the ECCD sector supply feedback periodically.
6. Each program is reviewed in full at the end of a training period with participation of ECRC staff at all relevant levels.

Reporting

1. Beneficiaries are required to submit reports detailing the achievements and commenting on programs in terms of their implementation methods, context, and suitability for community needs. Suggestions on development are also requested.
2. A report is submitted by the project training staff to the Project Manager at the completion of each task.
3. The Project Manager submits quarterly progress reports on each project and a final report at its culmination.

VI- Sustainability of the ECRC

ECRC's purpose is to provide sustainable solutions to the problems plaguing the ECCD sector in Palestinian communities. It aims to achieve this sustainability by spreading awareness among community leaders and policy makers of the developmental, educational, psychological and human rights needs of the ECED sector and by equipping them with the tools essential for supplying those needs. In addition, ECRC has a strong emphasis on the integration of parents into discussions about and involvement in the development of their children.

Sustainability of the ECRC work

The sustainability of ECRC's work is dependent on the continued demand for its services in the Palestinian ECCD sector. ECRC contributes to the increase of this demand through spreading awareness for the needs in this sector and through the success of its programs. The operation over 20 years has produced an vast increase in the quality of instruction in preschools and vital communication between preschool leaders and the communities in which they work. The organization's programs have become well-known in Palestinian communities and among governmental bodies, establishing a network of official and unofficial channels for potential beneficiaries.

An important factor indicating potential, long-term sustainability of ECRC's work is the absence of other local organizations of its kind. Although the local community and government are unable to provide the bulk of the necessary funds for its operation, they do provide other indispensable support. Their involvement in input, evaluation, planning and development of programs is considered among the organization's valuable assets. These contributions ensure the sustainability of ECRC's programs by making the organization the property and responsibility of the communities in which it operates.

Institutional Sustainability

The sustainability of ECRC as an institution and the demand for its programming depend on the following factors:

1. Continued commitment towards professional development and upgrading of skills of teachers and principals through participation in ECED programs.
2. Continued commitment of charitable organizations, women committee and the private sector towards the development and upgrading of the local preschools which they support.
3. Continued commitment of specialized, early-childhood organizations towards coordination with ECRC for planning training programs and producing resources.

Economic Sustainability

ECRC has long sought ways to become self-supporting. These included a number of fee-based services, the production of materials for sale (such as publications) and the collection of minimal fees from participants of training programs. However, these measures are unlikely to make ECRC, or any similar NGO, self-sustaining in the short term due to the dire nature of the economic and socio-political environments in which it exists. Financial contributions from local communities and the NPA are minimal. Therefore, although ECRC continues to search for income-generating and cost-reducing opportunities, it is currently heavily dependent upon grant funding. Novib, the EU, the Ford Foundation, EU Micro projects, the OPEC foundation, the Welfare Association and others have constituted ECRC's major funding sources.

Internally, ECRC supports its regional programs in the following ways:

Continued appropriation of necessary funds for covering the program costs. (If and when there comes a time when local institutions are able to meet these expenses, the center will shift its focus on to more resource production, research and pre-service training projects.)

Allocation of expert staff time for the training of participants.

Provision of training materials and resources.

Associations with other early-childhood institutions for the construction of a beneficial, professional network.

VII References:

ⁱFull text can be found at the Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights website, <http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

ⁱⁱSupported by Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)

ⁱⁱⁱ“Top priorities for 2005 are to restore basic services for Palestinian children such as... a response to the children's psycho-social distress.

The chronic consequences of the conflict, due to closures, barriers and movement restrictions, result in a fragmentation of society [and] impoverishment.”

Source, UNICEF website, <http://www.unicef.org/oPt/overview.html>

^{iv}*A Review of the Preschool Sector in East Jerusalem*, December 2003. Supported by the Palestinian Center for Micro Project Development and funded by the European Commission

^vReporting period from start of 2005 until September 1, 2005. See DCI-pal website, <http://www.dci-pal.org/english/Display.cfm?DocId=284&CategoryId=11>

^{vi}Letter and Report to UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against women, June 17, 2004. See DCI-pal website, <http://www.dci-pal.org/english/display.cfm?DocId=251&CategoryId=2>

¹Family Resource Coalition, Chicago, Illinois. *Family Support and Family Literacy*.

www.parentinginformation.org/familysupportprogs.htm. Retrieved September 23, 2005.