

# **School Counselling in Palestine: The Development of the Profession**

## **Participants' Perspectives:**

**The Findings of Surveys of those who have taken Professional Diplomas in School Counselling and Supervision through the Centre for Continuing Education, Birzeit University, Palestine.**

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## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of two surveys of those who have taken the Diploma in School Counselling (2004-9) and the Diploma in Supervision (2006-9) at the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE), Birzeit University. The intentions of these surveys was to elicit participants' perspectives of the programmes in order to contribute to the ongoing evaluation and development of the programmes

These programmes were developed by the CCE in partnership with Friends of Birzeit University with the support of funding from UK Big Lottery Fund, and in co-operation with the Ministry of Education of the Palestinian Authority. School counselling is a relatively new profession in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). School counsellors are the largest group of psycho-social workers in the OPT and provide a service to all Palestinian school children. The programmes were specifically developed to meet the needs of school counsellors employed in the OPT and in response to the needs identified by Giacaman (2004) in her seminal survey - *Psycho-social/Mental Health Care in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: The Embryonic System*.

A good response rate to both surveys was obtained. Over 50% of those who took the Diploma in School Counselling at the CCE in the West Bank and 75% of those who took the Diploma in Supervision responded.

The findings of the two surveys provide detailed information about what motivated participants to take the programmes, their experience of the programmes and their views on how the programmes should be changed and developed in future. In particular the surveys draw attention to an innovative feature of these programmes, namely the provision of field supervision to enable trainees to apply what they have learned in practice. The findings draw attention to participants' views on the importance of both personal and professional development for workers in the school counselling service. They consider that this has been provided by the CCE's programmes. Respondents identify the difficulties and challenges they encounter in their work. They outline how they have been able to apply their learning on the programmes in practice and indicate what their achievements have been since they completed the programmes. Those who responded to these surveys offer a number of suggestions as to how they might develop in future and they point to some institutional obstacles in the path of their delivery of a professional service to schools and students.

The overall impression is that, from the perspectives of those who participated in these surveys, the courses offered by the CCE have assisted school counsellors and their supervisors achieve a clearer and a more confident sense of their professional identity and have helped them provide a better standard of service to young people.

## Introduction

### **School counselling in the Occupied Palestinian Territories**

School counselling is a relatively new profession in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The first counsellors were appointed to work in schools in 1995 following the Oslo Peace Accords (1993-5). Since that point the service has grown rapidly. In 2009 it is estimated that there are approximately 1200 school counsellors based in schools within the OPT, with approximately 840 counsellors employed by the Ministry of Education and the remainder being employed by UNRWA and private schools. There is an aspiration to achieve one school counsellor for every 500 children at school. At present (2009) there is not yet a counsellor appointed to every Ministry of Education school. Many school counsellors work in two schools, which places considerable pressure on the service.

School counsellors are the largest group of psycho-social workers providing services to children in the OPT. They provide a service which can be accessed by the majority of Palestinian children. Working in schools, their responsibilities include collaborating with teachers to identify those with special difficulties (psychological, social or emotional problems); assessing problems experienced by individual students, classes or the school and developing a plan of action to deal with these problems; providing counselling and consultation to individuals and their families to promote social, educational and emotional adaptation; undertaking psycho-social assessments and referring pupils to Ministry of Social Affairs social workers if and when necessary (child protection); developing and implementing preventative activities with groups (e.g. how to avoid drug and alcohol problems, abuse, and violence) and implementing projects to improve the whole school environment. Their role also includes provision of guidance classes to address issues such as examination anxiety, self-confidence and lack of assertiveness, skills in problem solving and conflict resolution. They provide teachers with advice on educational and social issues affecting children. They also collaborate with others to implement psycho-social projects. School counsellors work to a yearly work plan which is based on an assessment of needs within their schools and aligned with the Ministry of Education's strategic plans for the school counselling service.

### **Baseline surveys: the need for professional training in School Counselling and Supervision**

One of the problems with developing a new service, and especially one on the scale of the school counselling service, is the lack of human resources. In the OPT schools counsellors were appointed with minimal training or experience in the field. Most are graduates in social sciences. Giacaman's (2004) baseline survey of *Psycho-social/Mental Health Care in the Occupied Palestinian Territories: The Embryonic System* found that "a combination of donor pressure and the starvation of funds as well as other internal considerations...contributed to an over-rapid launching of this programme with minimal consideration given to model building,...conceptualisation of details ..such as those related to the purpose of counselling in a Palestinian context, structural changes within the school system to accommodate this new project and the human resources [and] ..the management system needed for implementation" (p.19). Giacaman (2004) found that school counsellors had been able to access short training programmes. She noted that these training courses appeared to have been provided in a seemingly haphazard way, often linked to vertical implementation of national programmes funded by international donors. This could mean that training programmes were duplicated with workers taking the same short programme more than once. Moreover, she found that many workers had undertaken short courses in intervention methods designed to mitigate against post-traumatic stress disorder with no follow-up or supervision. These courses had been imported by international donor organisations responding to the increased hostilities of the Second Intifada. She noted that the applicability to Palestine and the effectiveness of some of the approaches taught in such training programmes was questionable. She noted that application of learning from these programmes in practice was not assessed and it is therefore not possible to be confident about the effectiveness such programmes, either in terms of resource allocation or in terms of improved service delivery. The case for a coherent professional education programme for school counsellors, designed in Palestine to meet the professional needs of Palestinian School Counsellors seemed to be made.

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Giacaman (2004) also found that “developmental and supportive clinical supervision is rarely provided. ... Supervision when provided appears to be bureaucratic, with a focus on administrative matters rather than enabling counsellors to deal with the impact of their work and to develop their knowledge and skills” (p.11). At the same time a qualitative in-depth study was conducted (Lindsay (2007)) to explore the particular needs of Palestinian social workers and school counsellors working in times of war. The findings of this study suggested that support for workers needed to be provided on a number of levels. On a personal level, it appeared that factors which may promote resilience and professional development included supervision, opportunities to talk about feelings and share experiences collectively, validation that the work they are doing is important and makes a difference and opportunities for on-going learning and development. On an occupational level, wider recognition of professional roles, continuing professional development and to opportunities to engage in professional associations was indicated. Both these studies made a strong case for training and deployment of professional supervisors for school counsellors.

Based on these studies, the Centre for Continuing Education developed a year-long part-time Diploma in Schools Counselling and a Diploma in Supervision programme (targeted first at professional educators who could provide training supervision and then at supervisors of schools counsellors). The approach taken to develop these programmes was based on the premise that importing a “off the shelf” programme from another country would not be appropriate for a Palestinian context.

### **The development of the Diploma in School Counselling**

In developing the professional Diploma in School Counselling Diploma, the first step taken by the Centre was to work with the Ministry of Education and other employers of schools counsellors and other social workers to develop a Palestinian model of psycho-social intervention. The resulting paper “*Building Balance*” (2004) (published by the Palestinian NGO network) conceptualises a systemic approach to intervention, working to build individual and collective strengths. The detailed specification of the Schools Counsellors’ programme was developed and continues to be modified in liaison with employers and includes field and personal supervision and direct observation and assessment of practice. Taught elements include child and adolescent development; values and ethics; theoretical approaches to intervention, with an emphasis on cognitive and behavioural approaches; working with violence and behavioural problems; working with groups in school; working with individuals and case management (including child protection and referral systems); short term intervention; working with students with special needs; supervision and professional/ personal development. Trainees produce a portfolio of their work through the year, write a reflective commentary on their progress and undertake a graduation project which normally is of a planned and evaluated sequence of intervention sessions with a school year group, but can be a case analysis of planned and supervised work with an individual child.

### **The development of the Diploma in Supervision (School Counselling Supervision)**

In relation to the development of the Diploma in Supervision programme, a totally new type of programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the Centre staff and the external evaluator engaged in a process of critical dialogue to develop ideas about what might constitute professional supervision in Palestine, to review literature and approaches to both field and clinical supervision and consider their applicability and to devise an initial approach to the training and development of supervisors. It was clear the boundaries between social work, counselling and education are very permeable in The Occupied Palestinian Territories where the focus of practitioners’ work can include individual psychosocial interventions, working with communities and working with large groups in schools. The team therefore sought to explore models of practice drawn from each of these professional areas and work towards creating a model that fused these elements. Of particular importance, it was felt, was that any model of supervision developed would need to include significant opportunities for reflection on the personal impact of the work, both on an individual basis and in group supervision settings, as the baseline studies had highlighted the importance of collective working and support. Additionally, given the relatively short history of psycho-social work in The Occupied Palestinian Territories, the fact the many workers were recently appointed with minimal training and rapidly changing nature of practice, it was felt that an strong educative element would be a necessary component of supervision, given that limited numbers of workers had had the opportunity to undertake systematic training and development programmes. It was

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also recognised that those undertaking supervision might need education and upgrading of their skills and knowledge. The inclusion of live supervision and direct observation of practice in models developed for both training and employment purposes was debated. Live supervision and observation of practice would have the added advantage of promoting the assessment of skills in practice and inform evaluation and indirectly assure quality of service for clients and young people in schools. The model adopted by the CCE programme expects supervisors to be able to offer a range of supervisory functions including organisational or management supervision, educative and developmental supervision (including live supervision of practice) and supportive supervision to enable personal and professional growth and development and to help counsellors deal with the personal impact of the work. The innovative elements of the programme that was developed includes the integration of counselling skills, self awareness and growth, and supervision tools, including intensive live supervision. There is requirement that participants will learn both through experiential group learning about supervision, have both individual and group supervision for themselves and undertake supervision practice with at least eight workers over a four month period. This includes live supervision of those they are supervising and in turn the trainee supervisors have live supervision in their process of supervising others. Assessment of the programme is by portfolio, which includes supervision agreements, notes of supervision sessions, feedback on direct observations, and live supervision, an account of the number of hours of supervision and supervised practice undertaken (with a requirement of minimum number of contact hours with supervisees) and a reflective commentary on the trainee's professional development including a professional development plan.

### **Funding**

Funding for the development, provision and evaluation of these courses was secured in partnership with Friends of Birzeit University (FoBZU) from the UK Big Lottery Fund for the period 2004 -2009 (2 grants). Six year-long Diploma in Schools Counselling programmes have been provided (5 in the West Bank and 1 in Gaza) under this funding with 123 School Counsellors completing the Diploma in School Counselling programme. After piloting the supervision programme through certificate level programmes, and training eight training supervisors to Diploma level, the CCE provided 3 full Diploma in Supervision (School Counselling Supervision) in the West Bank in the period 2006-9. 55 people have completed the Diploma in Supervision programme to date (2009).

### **Developing programmes in partnership with the Ministry of Education**

A critical element of the development in the development of these programmes has been the establishment of an excellent working relationship between the Centre for Continuing Education and the Ministry of Education Counselling Department. Both partners have worked to develop both programmes to meet the needs of the sector. The Ministry of Education has directly participated in the nomination and selection of school counsellors to take the programmes, participated in the review of students' progress and the evaluation of outcomes of the programme, including hosting workshops, in collaboration with the CCE, for children and young people so that their views about the school counselling service can be heard and contribute to programme development. A major development has been the decision by the Ministry of Education to establish posts for professional supervisors of school counsellors. In July 2008, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched its *Education and Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Towards Quality Education for Development*. In the plan, the appointment of professional supervisors of school counsellors is set out under Educational Policies: Quality Education Component as follows:

“Adopting a professional supervision system in guidance and special education” (p105)

In Annex 4 of this document, (page 145), a plan is indicated “to train 77 educational counsellors in the skills of vocational supervision”. To date 35 supervisors who have graduated from the CCE's Diploma in Supervision course have been appointed, drawn from those who have successfully completed the Diploma in Supervision programme, with at least one supervisor in each district office.

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### **The Perspectives of Participants**

The Centre for Continuing Education is committed to the ongoing evaluation of its programmes and deploys a range of methods to evaluate its provision comprehensively (See Section 2). This study was commissioned to ascertain the perspectives of those who have taken the both the Diploma in School Counselling and the Diploma in Supervision courses in order to contribute to the overall evaluation of the service. Section 2 of this report details the evaluation approach and the instruments used. Section 3 reports on the perspectives of those who have taken the Diploma in School Counselling. Section 4 reports on the perspectives of those who have taken the Diploma in Supervision. A summary and conclusions are offered in Section 5.

### **References**

- Giacaman, R (2004a) *Psycho-social/ mental health care in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; The Embryonic System* Ramallah. Birzeit University
- Lindsay, J (2007) 'The Impact of the 2nd Intifada: An exploration of the experiences of Palestinian Psycho-social counsellors and social workers' *Illness, Crisis and Loss* Vol 15 (2) 137-153.
- Ministry of Education and Higher Education (2008) *Education and Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Towards Quality Education for Development*
- Palestinian NGO network (2004) "*Building Balance*" (2004). Palestinian NGO network

## 2. Methodology and Methods

The goal of the CCE's programmes in school counselling and counselling supervision is that children, including those experiencing conflict and abuse, benefit from appropriate, timely, and relevant assistance and support provided by trained schools counsellors. The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) is committed to evaluating its programmes fully, learning from evaluation and making changes as a result of the evaluation. The CCE's approach to evaluation centres around using participatory methods which seek to tap into the views and perspectives of all stakeholders and utilise as far as possible clear evidence from practice in order to estimate the achievements of their work. The evaluation approach applies Kirkpatrick (1967) adapted by Barr et al (2000)'s model of Levels of Learning Outcomes of Educational Programmes, with an aspiration of obtaining data from all five levels of the model (see Box 1). As well as the standard monitoring and evaluation activities detailed in Box1, the CCE periodically conducts evaluation research projects to learn about the perspectives of stakeholders in greater detail. Recent work in this area has included Perspectives of Head Teachers and Teachers (Refa'e) (2005). This study used focus groups to elicit the views of school staff about the school counselling service. Children's perspectives and experiences have been explored through a large survey (2006-7) with children and 6 children's workshops held in the period 2006-9 (Baidoun and Jariseh, forthcoming 2009). This report details the findings of another evaluation study undertaken in May and June 2009. This study focuses on the views and perspectives of those who had taken the two main programmes offered by the CCE, the Diploma in School Counselling and the Diploma in Supervision.

**Box 1: Application of Kirkpatrick (1967) adapted by Barr et al (2000)'s model of Levels of Learning Outcomes of Educational Programmes as applied to the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) of Birzeit University's Schools Counsellor & Supervisors' Programmes.**

Kirkpatrick (1967) adapted by Barr et al (2000) model of Levels of Learning Outcomes of Educational Programmes	Evaluation approaches taken by the CCE and the External Evaluator on the CCE's Schools Counselling & Counsellor Supervisors' Programmes
<b>Level 1:</b> Learners' reaction: participants' views of their learning experience and satisfaction with the training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCE staff ask participants to evaluate each module of the programme and whole course</li> <li>• Course director meets with groups of participants to discuss their reaction to the programme.</li> <li>• These results are shared with trainers and evaluator and are used to inform changes in the programme</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2a:</b> Modifications in attitudes and perceptions: Changes in attitudes or perceptions towards service users (e.g. school students/ teachers/ counsellors/ parents), their problems and needs, circumstances, care and treatment; and their own professional role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In skills based group learning sessions and supervision sessions, CCE staff ask participants to discuss their attitudes and perceptions. These are recorded on an ongoing basis and are assessed by the staff group.</li> <li>• Sample of participants are interviewed by the external evaluator and these issues are explored.</li> <li>• The outcomes of both measures are discussed and conclusions are drawn</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2b:</b> Acquisition of knowledge and skills: This includes concepts, procedures and principles of working with others and the acquisition of problem solving, assessment and intervention skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CCE employs a range of ways of testing the achievement of these learning outcomes including assessment of performance in learning and supervision sessions, assessment in practice (field supervision), and assessment of participants' final projects and portfolios of practice (log books)</li> <li>• Sample of participants are interviewed by the external evaluator and these issues are explored.</li> <li>• The outcomes of both measures are discussed and conclusions are drawn</li> <li>• <b>Periodic Survey (Lindsay and Baidoun, 2009)</b></li> </ul>

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<b>Kirkpatrick (1967) adapted by Barr et al (2000) model of Levels of Learning Outcomes of Educational Programmes</b>	<b>Evaluation approaches taken by the CCE and the External Evaluator on the CCE's Schools Counselling &amp; Counsellor Supervisors' Programmes</b>
<p><b>Level 3:</b> Changes in Behaviour: This level covers the implementation of learning from an educational perspective in the workplace, prompted by modifications in attitudes or perceptions or the application of newly acquired knowledge and skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCE staff undertake field visits of observation to assess participants' practice. For schools counsellors and supervisors, two observation visits are made, one at an early stage in their programme and one near the end of their programme. This permits comparison judgements to be made.</li> <li>• A sample of participants is interviewed by the external evaluator and these issues are explored. External evaluator undertakes some field visits to assure quality of this process.</li> <li>• The outcomes of both measures are discussed and conclusions are drawn.</li> <li>• <b>Periodic Survey (Lindsay and Baidoun, 2009)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 4:</b> Changes in Organisational Practice This relates to wider changes in organisational practice attributable to an education programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CCE requests feedback from employers and participants.</li> <li>• External Evaluator meets with strategic level employers' representatives to ascertain their views of the programmes</li> <li>• Workshops with head teachers and teachers are being used to ascertain if there are changes in each counsellor's practice as a result of taking the programme</li> <li>• <b>Periodic research – using focus groups (Rifai, 2005)</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Level 5:</b> Benefits to those who use services (e.g. school students/ teachers/ counsellors/ parents), This asks if there are any improvements in the well-being and quality of life of those people who use services which may be attributable to an educational programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This element is difficult to test for these programmes and to be confident in attributing any changes reported to the educational programme as other variables need to be taken into account.</li> <li>• Workshops with school children and teachers and head teachers are used to seek their views on change</li> <li>• Counsellors' project work and log books for the Diploma programme is evaluated in terms of change which results.</li> <li>• <b>Periodic research – Children's views (Baidoun and Jariseh, 2009 forthcoming)</b></li> </ul>

### The research instruments

Two questionnaires were designed in February 2009 focusing on the Diploma in School Counselling and the Diploma in Supervision. Questions in both surveys were framed to find out why counsellors had decided to take the programmes; what their views were of specific elements of the programmes and how they felt the programmes could be developed to meet their needs in work; whether they considered that taking the programme had made a difference to their practice and what they felt were their future development needs. These surveys were translated into Arabic, approved by and circulated by the Ministry of Education and the CCE in May 2009.

### Sample Size, Response Rate And Profile: Diploma in School Counselling

This survey encompassed those who had taken the Diploma in School Counselling in the West Bank in the period 2004-9. Over half of those trained in this period responded with the highest response rate for those who had taken the programme in the current year (2008-9 – 75% of this intake responded) The response rate for this survey is shown in Table 1 below.

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**Table 1: Diploma in Schools Counselling (West Bank): Response Rate by numbers trained**

Date of course	Numbers actually trained	Response Rate
2004-5	19	6
2005-6	19	11
2006-7	21	11
2007-8	22	7
2008-9	20	15
No year indicated		2
Missing		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>101 school counsellors</b>	<b>53 survey responses</b>

**Table 2: Diploma in Schools Counselling (West Bank): Response Rate by gender**

Numbers actually trained		Response Rate	
Male	Female	Male	Female
51	50	28	25

Table 2 shows that a representative response rate from male and female counsellors was obtained.

**Table 3: Diploma in Schools Counselling (West Bank): Response Rate by Employer**

Employer	Actually trained	Response rate
Ministry of Education	81	53
UNRWA	19	
Private School	1	
Total	101	53

Table 3 shows that those who worked for UNRWA, a fifth of those who took the programme in the period 2004-9, did not respond. All the results provided below refer to those working in Ministry of Education schools only.

**Table 4 Diploma in Schools Counselling (West Bank): Response Rate by District**

District	Frequency	Area
South Hebron	2	<b>South</b> 13
Hebron	2	
North Hebron	5	
Bethlehem	4	
<hr/>		
Jericho	2	<b>East</b> 4
Tubas	2	
<hr/>		
Jerusalem	5	<b>Central</b> 12
Jerusalem Suburbs	6	
Ramallah	1	

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District	Frequency	Area
Nablus	1	North 22
Salfeet	5	
Qalqilya	5	
Tulkarem	6	
Qabatia	3	
Jenin	2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>51</b>
Missing (No Response)	2	
Total	53	

Table 4 shows that a good geographical distribution was achieved in the response rate.

### **Sample Size, Response Rate And Profile: Diploma in Supervision**

The survey was of those who had taken the Diploma in Supervision in the West Bank in the period 2006-9. Three-quarters (75%) of those trained in this period responded with the highest response rate for those who had taken the programme over the last two years. The response rate for this survey is shown in Table 6 below.

**Table 6: Diploma in Supervision (West Bank): Response Rate by numbers trained**

Date of course	Numbers actually trained	Response Rate
2006-7	26	19
2007-8	15	13
2008-9	14	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>44</b>

**Table 7: Diploma in Supervision: Response Rate by gender**

Numbers actually trained		Response Rate	
Male	Female	Male	Female
29	26	25	18
		Missing	1

Table 7 shows that a female supervisors are slightly under-represented in the survey response.

**Table 8: Diploma in Supervision (West Bank): Response Rate by Employer**

Employer	Actually trained	Response rate
Ministry of Education	49	42
UNRWA	6	2
Total	55	44

Table 8 shows that only a third of those who worked for UNRWA responded. All but 7 for those working for the Ministry of Education responded.

**Table 9 Diploma in Supervision (West Bank): Response Rate by District**

District	Frequency	Area
South Hebron	2	<b>South</b> 11
Hebron	1	
North Hebron	4	
Bethlehem	4	
Jericho	1	<b>East</b> 4
Tubas	3	
Jerusalem	2	<b>Central</b> 7
Jerusalem Suburbs	3	
Ramallah	2	
Nablus	2	<b>North</b> 18
Salfeet	2	
Qalqilya	3	
Tulkarem	4	
Qabatia	3	
Jenin	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	
Missing (No Response)	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	

Table 9 shows that a good geographical distribution was achieved in the response rate with all areas represented. .

#### **Data analysis and time frame**

Responses to both surveys were entered on to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) in June 2009 and analysed in July and August 2009. Results of all open ended questions were transcribed, translated into English and then analysed to determine themes emerging from the data.

### 3. The Diploma in Schools Counselling

**“This course takes a group of psychologists, social workers and teachers who are employed as school counsellors and turns them into school counsellors, with a common and distinct professional identity”**

(Head of Counselling of the Ministry of Education in interview, July 2009).

#### Why did school counsellors enrol on the Diploma in School Counselling?

The survey sought to find out what motivated people to enrol on the Diploma programme and how they had heard about the course. They were asked to indicate their responses to a set of statements derived from motivations commonly reported in monitoring interviews with individual trainees.

**Table 10a: Deciding to take the Diploma in School Counselling Programme**

Statements	<i>Frequency of Responses</i>
I was sent on the Diploma course by my work. I did not choose to take the course	6 (11%)
It was suggested that I apply for the course. I was pleased to have this opportunity.	22 (47%)
I asked to take this course. I wanted to take it.	25 (47%)
Total	53

Table 10a shows that almost half of respondents had sought to take the programme. This finding indicates that the programme is gaining recognition among professional school counsellors. This is confirmed in Table 10b in responses to statements about their pre-course knowledge of the programme. 60% of respondents had heard about the course from other counsellors. The majority of other respondents who stated they were pleased to be invited to take the course also indicate motivation. The only a small number of respondents did not actually want to take the programme. It may be that some of those who did not respond to the survey had the same views and felt they had been compelled to take the programme.

**Table 10b: Previous knowledge of the Diploma in School Counselling Programme**

Statements	<i>Frequency of Responses</i>
a) I had heard about the course from other school counsellors who had taken it. I knew a bit about the course before I applied.	32 (60%)
b) I did not know anything about the course before I applied. I did not know what to expect	21 (40%)
Total	53 (100%)

Table 10c shows that the majority of respondents (88%) felt that this course would enable them to learn more and develop professionally. They expressed a degree of confidence in their work and openness to learning. A small number (3) expressed a degree of resistance to learning. Another three expressed a lack of professional confidence.

**Table 10c: Feelings about what they might learn on Diploma in School Counselling Programme**

Statements	Frequency of Responses
Before I started the course, I felt I knew a lot about school counselling practice. I did not think I would learn anything new on the course	3 (6%)
Before I started the course, I felt that there were things about school counselling I needed to learn more about. I felt I was good at my job, but I still needed to develop my skills and knowledge	46 (88%)
Before I started the course, I felt a bit unsure of my work as a school counsellor. I was not sure if I was doing my job correctly. I knew I needed to learn more.	3 (6%)
Missing responses	1

The findings shown in Table 10c are perhaps not surprising when compared with the **employment and educational profile of respondents to the survey**. Only 4 respondents had been employed as school counsellors for four years or less (7.6% of respondents). 48% (25 respondents) had been in their posts between five and eight years. The remaining 23 respondents had been employed for nine years or more, 11 since the inception of the school counselling service. All respondents were graduates in the social sciences (with psychology (16 respondents) and social work (16 respondents) being the most common degree subjects). Two of the respondents had recently obtained Masters degrees. The impression is gained of a group concerned about their professional development.

### **Was the curriculum relevant to their work as a schools counsellor?**

The CCE, through its regular monitoring and evaluation processes and liaison with the Ministry of Education, has attempted to develop and hone a professional curriculum which will support school counsellors in their work and improve the standard of service offered. The curriculum is currently (2008-9) delivered over 450 contact hours with blocks of learning on specific topics of relevance to school counsellors (*for a list of topics see Table 11*). Recently there has been a strong focus on the personal development of counsellors in response to feedback from supervisors that some counsellors had had difficult and unresolved issues in their own lives and that on occasion this got in the way of their working effectively with young people. The programme specifically seeks to develop counsellors' work in providing group guidance sessions and provides an introduction to using counselling skills in working with individual children. Key emerging policy themes are introduced into the programme in a timely way. Recently (2007-9) there has been increased focus on child rights and child protection and referral systems in line with emerging developments nationally in this area.

**Relevance of the curriculum** The survey sought school counsellors' views on whether the topics covered on the programme were actually relevant to their work and whether counsellors felt the balance of time devoted to each subject was correct. The results are shown in Tables 11 a and b below.

The findings shown in Table 11 a are generally that all elements of the programme are useful. The graduation project, where trainees are required to carry out a planned sequence of guidance work with school class was seen by all as being most useful, possibly because trainees could see their learning on the programme being directly applied to their work and because of a sense of pride in this achievement. The applicability of both the group activities sequence and the graduation project to all counsellors might have been predicted. All counsellors provide group guidance sessions and all were required to do applied work with the graduation project. More general information (what is counselling – introductory sequence) being seen as one of the least relevant, possibly because trainees have already covered this

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on Ministry of Education induction programmes. The finding that learning about referral systems is not easily applied in work may be because these systems are at an early stage of development in the OPT and were not as fully addressed in earlier years of the Diploma programme. Overall this suggests that there are no major changes needed for the curriculum topics, (apart from standard updating) from the perspective of school counsellors.

**Table 11a** Was what you learned on the Diploma course useful to your work as a school counsellor?

Order of Priority to trainees	Topics covered on the course	Useful. I have been able to apply what I learned on the course in my work	Interesting – but not really useful to my work. I have not been able to apply this topic in my work	Not useful or relevant to my work as a school counsellor	Missing responses
1	Graduation project	53 (100%)			
2	Group activities – group work and guidance classes	52 (98%)	1 (2%)		
3	Cognitive and behavioural problems	49 (94%)	3 (6%)		1
4	Ethics and principles of counselling	50 (94%)	3 (6%)		
5	Child and adolescent development	49 (92.5%)	4 (7.5%)		
6	Group counselling	49 (92%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	
7	Personal development	47 (89%)	6 (11%)		
8	Group supervision	46 (89%)	6 (11%)		1
9	Using Drama	46 (87%)	6 (11%)	1 (2%)	
10	Counselling skills (Egan)	46 (87%)	6 (11%)	1 (2%)	
11	Child rights and Child law	46 (87%)	7 (13%)		
12	Career counselling	43 (83%)	8 (15%)	1 (2%)	1
13	Main theories of counselling (Behavioural/ Egan)	42 (79%)	10 (19%)	1 (2%)	
14	What is counselling. Counselling in Palestine. The difference between counselling and guidance	41 (79%)	10 (19%)	1 (2%)	1
15	Referral and networking	33 (62%)	19 (36%)	1 (2%)	

N=53

The sought to ascertain counsellors' views on the **balance of time** spent on each subject on the curriculum.. Results are shown in Table 11b below. From the perspective of school counsellors. Over two thirds of respondents feel that the balance of time given to the graduation project; "What is counselling. Counselling in Palestine. The difference between counselling and guidance"; ethics and principles of counselling; child and adolescent development; and cognitive and behavioural problems. Between 10 and 20% of respondents felt that too much time was allocated to ethics and principles of counselling; main theories of counselling (Behavioural/ Egan); child rights and child law; using drama; "What is counselling"; child and adolescent development and referral and networking. There are some similarities between these findings and those shown in Table 11a with reference to perceptions of relevance. Over a third of respondents felt that too little time was given on the curriculum to using drama; counselling skills (Egan); group supervision; main theories of counselling (behavioural/ Egan); career counselling; personal development and group counselling. Using drama (the issue 50% of respondents felt more time should be devoted to) was only introduced from 2008 on the curriculum and

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this may have intrigued respondents from earlier years. This subject was popular with the 2008-9 cohort and over half the respondents from this cohort also felt more time should be given to this subject. There appears to be a consensus that more time should be given to learning about counselling skills (Egan). This finding is also consistently reported in the evaluation interviews with counsellors. It would appear that for many trainees, including those with Masters degrees in counselling and related subjects, this is a new subject as they have not been exposed to practical skills and methods on their degree courses. It may be that the CCE may wish to consider reviewing this time allocation. It may also be that this subject touches on the issue of providing individual support and guidance to school students, an issue which emerges later in the findings as an area where counsellors feel they need more opportunities to learn and develop. Group counselling (working with small groups of students on specific issues) is also seen as a development need. The findings related to group supervision and professional development may be related to these counsellors' need for supervision and professional support in the work.

**Table 11b Consider the amount of time spent on the course on each topic. Do you think the time spent was about right, too much or too little?**

Topics covered on the course	The time spent on this topic was about right	Too much time was spent on this topic	Too little time was spent on this topic	Missing
Graduation project	41 (77%)		12 (23%)	
What is counselling. Counselling in Palestine. The Difference between counselling and guidance	40 (76%)	6 (11%)	7 (13%)	
Ethics and principles of counselling	39 (75%)	10 (19%)	3 (6%)	1
Child and adolescent development	36 (68%)	6 (11%)	11 (21%)	
Cognitive and behavioural problems	34 (66%)	3 (6%)	15 (27%)	1
Child rights and Child law	34 (65%)	7 (14%)	11 (21%)	1
Referral and networking	34 (64%)	6 (11%)	13 (25%)	
Group activities – group work and guidance classes	32 (63%)	2 (4%)	17 (32%)	2
Personal development	29 (56%)	3 (6%)	20 (38%)	1
Career counselling	27 (53%)	4 (8%)	20 (39%)	
Group counselling	28 (53%)	5 (9%)	20 (38%)	
Group supervision	27 (51%)	3 (6%)	23 (43%)	
Counselling skills (Egan)	24 (45%)	4 (8%)	25 (47%)	
Main theories of counselling (Behavioural/ Egan)	24 (45%)	8 (15%)	21 (40%)	
Using Drama	20 (38.5%)	6 (11.5%)	26 (50%)	1

Key n=53

Trainees were asked what was the **most important topic on the programme for them**. Results showed that learning counselling skills (Egan), group guidance and counselling, and personal development were for the large majority of respondents the most important topics offered by the programme.

**Elements/ topics which are not dealt with on the course and should be dealt with.** In the survey trainees were asked to indicate if there were any elements missing from the programme or other topics which should be covered. Box 2 below provides these results. It should be noted that some respondents who had taken the course in earlier years refer to “missing” topics which are now covered on the

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programme (such as referral, child rights and drama). Of interest are the points made about working with teachers, principals and parents. Many of the areas mentioned are covered on the programme, and there is a limit to the number of hours which can be given to each topic. Perhaps there might be scope to develop more e-learning materials to cover some of the theoretical issues mentioned. The provision of supervision for school counsellors (many of these supervisors are starting work in September 2009), may help address some of these needs.

### **Box 2: Areas seen to be missing from the course which might be covered in future courses**

(feedback from all respondents, N=53)

**Individual counselling:** Working with individual school students. This was the most frequent request made and included.

- How to work with individuals, and select and using different theoretical approaches
- Presenting case studies - for example, *“how would the process of participation be if we wished to take part in a conference regarding a case. Presenting study cases for educational purposes”*

**Coping and Working with Challenges,** including

- Working with school principals, teachers and parents
- Therapeutic group building skills
- Violence in schools, alternative methods and approaches to working with cases of violence
- Coping with behavioural disorders amongst students
- Working with those with special needs/learning difficulties
- Trauma

**Theoretical perspectives**

- Addressing other themes such as psychological disorders, therapy methods and diagnosis
- Other counselling theories such as cognitive and humanist theories
- Stress elimination exercises and skills
- Psychological debriefing /crisis management
- Child rights and child protection

**Documenting work**

- Recording skills
- Time management
- Use of computers in counselling

**Using creative methods**

- Drama
- Using drawing

**Group work/supervision**

- Advanced group awareness classes

**Referral**

It will be important for the CCE to keep under review the curriculum for the Diploma in School Counselling programme in order that they work in partnership with the Ministry supervisors and determine what elements of the current programme might be addressed through professional supervision. If some elements of the current programme can be addressed through professional supervision, perhaps more time could be allocated to counselling skills development. It is also worth considering if **“upgrading” courses** could be offered to those who have taken the programme in earlier years to include elements such as new referral systems for child protection, child rights, and using drama and art in group guidance sessions.

### School Counsellors' views about Field Supervision

Field supervision is one of the unique features of the Diploma in Schools Counselling. It was introduced on the Diploma in School Counselling programme in 2004 in order to ascertain if those taking the programme were able to apply what they had learned in work. Field supervisors appointed by the CCE visit each trainee at least twice in their workplace. They observe them working with a class guidance group and they read their plans for counselling in their schools and their case records. They provide those they are supervising with structured feedback using a standardised form. The survey asked school counsellors about their views about the field supervision process.

**Table 12: School Counsellors' views about the Field Supervision process**

Statements	Responses		
The visits of the field supervisor to my school helped the head teacher and my colleagues know about the course I am doing	I agree 34 (68%)	I disagree 9 (18%)	I do not know 8 (16%)
I prepared special sessions with students that my supervisor could observe. I had to make special arrangements	Yes 28 (58%)	No 18 (38%)	I do not know 2 (4%)
The supervisor observed me undertaking my ordinary work with students in the school.	Yes 33 (65%)	No 17 (33%)	I do not know 1 (2%)
The first time I was observed, I was nervous. I worried about what the supervisor would think and say. I thought I might be doing the work incorrectly	I agree 15 (31%)	I disagree 33 (67%)	I do not know 1 (2%)
The supervisor's feedback on my work with students was not surprising. I could agree with everything he said.	I agree 39 (80%)	I disagree 8 (16%)	I do not know 2 (4%)
The supervisor gave me ideas about how I might improve my work	I agree 37 (77%)	I disagree 9 (19%)	I do not know 2 (4%)
The supervisor commented on things which I had done well.	I agree 46 (94%)	I disagree 2 (4%)	I do not know 1 (2%)
After getting feedback on my practice from the supervisor, I changed my approach to my work	I agree 38 (78%)	I disagree 8 (16%)	I do not know 3 (6%)
The supervisor provided me with clear and helpful feedback on my written work. I was able to make changes to my work as a result of this feedback.	I agree 35 (72%)	I disagree 10 (20%)	I do not know 4 (8%)
I looked forward positively to the second visit from my supervisor. I was not nervous.	I agree 46 (94%)	I disagree 2 (4%)	I do not know 1 (2%)
The supervisor provided me with support about how to manage my work	I agree 38 (81%)	I disagree 8 (17%)	I do not know 1 (2%)

**Key:** N=53 Missing cases omitted and Valid Percents indicated

School counsellors often report that their role is not understood by head teachers and teachers in their school and their absence from school to attend training is resented. One of the aspirations of the CCE is that the visits of field supervisors might assist in their school colleagues learn more about the programme they were undertaking. It was good to note that two thirds of respondents felt that the visits of the field

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supervisor to their school helped the head teacher and their colleagues know about the course they were doing.

In relation to observed practice sessions, whilst a half of respondents noted that they had had to make special arrangements for observation, 65% indicated that they considered that the supervisor observed them undertaking their ordinary work with students in the school. There was a concern that counsellors might be setting up special events for observation. These findings indicate that the assessment of practice was more often of these counsellors' normal practice

One third of respondents indicated that the first time they were observed, they were nervous and worried about what the supervisor would think and say as they thought they might be doing the work incorrectly. The majority considered they were not nervous, which may indicate that these trainees were well prepared for observation and understood the process of supervision, as opposed to inspection. 94% of trainees noted that they looked forward positively to the second visit from their supervisor and were not nervous. This showed that in the first visit and through the programme, the purpose and process of supervision had been established in a positive way.

A high concordance rate was indicated in relation to trainees' response to the feedback they received with 80% indicated that the supervisor's feedback on their work with students was not surprising and that they could agree with everything the supervisor said. This shows that the trainees had been prepared to be open to feedback and were able to accept feedback in a mature way. Two thirds of respondents indicated that their supervisor gave them ideas about how they might improve their work.. It is not possible to know why others felt that they were not given ideas for improvement. Perhaps they did not recall this, accept this or perhaps they had little to improve. Perhaps supervisors need to develop in the area of providing developmental feedback.

One of the strongest findings is that respondents noted that their supervisor had commented on things which they had done well (94%) This is important as positive reinforcement means that behaviour is more likely to be repeated. For two thirds of this sample, supervision and feedback appears to be promoting change. A similar number agreed that the supervisor provided them with clear and helpful feedback on their written work and that they were able to make changes to their work as a result of this feedback. It is positive that the majority of trainees felt they were helped in this area. It is worth noting that a number of trainees felt in response to an earlier question, that more attention should be given to helping counsellors document and record their work. This may be an area for ongoing development on the programme.

The majority of respondents (81%) indicated that the supervisor had provided them with support about how to manage their work.

### **What School Counsellors think they have gained from field supervision**

The survey sought to capture the views of all those who had taken the programme on what they felt they had gained from the field supervision process through an open-ended question. 39 counsellors responded to this question. These results were analysed and several common themes were evident. These are shown in Box 3 below with an indication of the frequency of this theme being mentioned. Some respondents only commented that supervision was "*of benefit*". Three respondents indicated that this experience had not been valuable. These respondents came from earlier cohorts (2005-6). One said that he had not had any field visits; one noted that they had had only one field visit; one noted that the field supervisor had arrived late, was rushed and was disruptive (this supervisor is no longer being used by the CCE). Responses were positive from all other respondents.

**Box 3: Counsellors' views of the benefits of field supervision**

- It develops the **counsellors' performance in group/class guidance sessions**, including preparation for classes and classroom management (8 responses)
- It develops the **counsellor's skills in planning and organising work**, including time management and recording skills (7 responses)
- **Receiving feedback** on their work provided by the supervisor during visits, particularly following observation of counselling sessions is a benefit (6 responses)
- Field supervision is a source of personal/ moral support and boosting self confidence (5 responses)
- Regular follow up is helpful (3 responses)
- Field supervision provides a source of **help in coping with individual cases** (2 responses)
- A field supervisor can provide **support with working with the school administration staff** (1 response)

*"Field supervision was .....of personal benefit ...and influenced my professional skills development. It enriched my knowledge and helped me acquire the skills needed"*

*"It provided me with positive feedback on my achievement; this was a first experience for me."*

**School Counsellors' suggestions for the improvement of field supervision**

The survey asked respondents for their views on what they felt could be done to improve field supervision, again through an open ended question. 39 people responded. Several common themes were evident. As noted above, three respondents were not satisfied with the process and suggested broadly improvement in the organisation of the process. Other suggestions are shown in the box below with an indication of the frequency of this theme being mentioned.

**Box 4: School Counsellors' suggestions for the improvement of field supervision**

- **More time should be allocated to field supervision** on the Diploma programme with more visits, and at different times, including before May (8 responses). One suggested how this might be achieved: *"I propose to reduce the number of counsellors for each professional supervisor in order to enable the supervisor to follow up with the counsellors with less pressure"*
- **Issues relating to supervisors themselves** (5 responses): their role and tasks could be set out more clearly (1 response); they should be an outsider (1 response); *"should exchange amongst the different areas"* (1 response); and should possess *"effective, applicable and persuasive techniques, mechanisms and suggestions for counselling"* (1 response) and they should provide the counsellor with feedback rather than an assessment (1 response),
- **Field supervision should focus on areas counsellor needs assistance with.** Some identified such areas, including networking; working with the school administration; helping the counsellor during his/her transfer from one school to another. (4 responses)
- **Field supervision should have a wider brief.** Respondents suggested more consultations, supervision on individual cases, interviews, working parents and other educational counselling areas and more emphasis on counselling rather than files (3 responses)
- **Workshops, further courses and a regular follow up** of the graduates of the Diploma (3 responses)
- Field supervisors should **advocate for counsellors** who wish to work in a particular school setting (i.e. basic, elementary, secondary or higher school) (1 response)
- **Supervision groups** should divide counsellors into sectors based on their capacities and years of service (1 response)
- **Classroom guidance sessions should be videotaped** and thoroughly discussed during the provision of feedback (1 response)
- **The CCE should consult counsellors** in defining the needs for the CCE's plan on a regular basis (1 response)

## School Counsellors' graduation projects

The Graduation Project is a highlight of the Diploma course. Carrying out planned sequences of work with young people was uncommon when the Diploma in School Counselling was first introduced. This has now changed and become more normal practice, with 78% of respondents to the survey indicating that they had carried out such planned sequences of work before. In undertaking the graduation project, trainees undertake an assessment of needs in order to determine the subject most needed for group intervention in their schools. They plan and research a group intervention approach and carry this out over 8-10 sessions working with the same class group of young people. They are observed by a field supervisor once during the period when they are carrying out their project. They are then required to evaluate their work. All projects are assessed by course trainers and samples are provided to the Ministry of Education Counselling department for information. In the survey, trainees were asked to indicate the subject of their graduation project. Broad themes of subjects of graduation projects are shown in Box 5 below. Respondents were asked if, after completing the Diploma programme they had been able to provide another sequence of planned sessions with a class. Less than half of the overall respondents to the survey answered this question, with 21 people indicating that they had again provided planned sequences of group guidance..

### Box 5 Themes of Graduation projects undertaken on the Diploma in School Counselling

- Raising educational achievement (9 responses)
- Reduction of violent behaviour and aggression (13 responses)
- Building self esteem and self confidence, friendships and positive relationships and life skills (14 responses)
- Health and development (including stress reduction) (6 responses)
- Helping girls cope positively with sexual harassment (3 responses)
- Working on individual cases (2 responses)

Key N=47

## The Impact of Children's Workshops on the counsellor's work

Since 2007 the CCE and the Ministry of Education have hosted workshops for representatives of children and young people from each school of each of the counsellors on the programme. Two workshops are convened each year. Children are asked for their views on the school counselling service at the initial workshop. The same children are invited back to attend the second workshop and asked to comment if they have noticed any changes in what the school counsellor does in school. Not all the same children attended both workshops.

In the survey, those counsellors who had taken the course in the period 2006-9 were asked for their views on the impact of the children's workshops (33 valid cases). The findings were that 26 out of 31 respondents said that they had heard about the views expressed by students at the workshops. 29 out of 32 respondents thought the students became more interested in working with them after attending the workshops and 31 out of 32 felt that the children in their schools had a better understanding of the school counsellor's role after they attended the workshops. This points to the possible value of these workshops in promoting children's engagement with the school counselling service.

## The Impact of Teachers and Head Teachers Workshops on the Counsellor's work

Since 2007 the CCE has hosted workshops for teachers and head teachers from the school of each counsellor currently undertaking the programme. The intention of these workshops is to ascertain the views of teachers and head teachers about the school counselling service, obtain feedback from the school and promote collaborative working between the school staff and the counsellor.

In the survey, those counsellors who had taken the course in the period 2006-9 were asked for their views on the impact of the teachers and head teachers workshops (33 valid cases). The findings were that 26 out of 31 respondents said that they had heard about the views expressed by teachers at the workshops. 21 out of 29 respondents thought the teachers and head teachers became more interested in working with them after attending the workshops. Eight did not know or were not sure. 22 out of 28 respondents felt that the teachers and head teacher in their schools had a better understanding of the school counsellor's role after they attended the workshops. This points to the possible value of these workshops in promoting teachers and head teachers' engagement with the school counselling service and partnership working between the CCE, schools and school counsellors.

### Do counsellors consider that they are working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in School Counselling programme?

In the post-project survey counsellors were asked for their views about whether they felt the way they worked changed as a result of taking the programme. They were asked to comment on the key elements the Diploma programme seeks to address. The results are shown in the tables below. The two sets of questions (desired and undesired attributes) are shown in two separate tables but were interspersed on the survey. This shows that respondents were considering their responses to each question carefully.

In Table 14a results are generally positive. As can be seen, the strongest clustering of all results is in the "I agree" category with over 85% of all responses being in this category for most statements. The exceptions are the questions related to "*I have a better relationship with my head teacher and teaching colleagues. They understand my role better than they did before and I work more with them*" and "*The head teacher supports and understands my work in the school*". This points to the ongoing need for work in this area. This might be undertaken through aspects of the Diploma programme (such as the workshops for teachers and head teachers). However it is noticeable that even a proportion of the counsellors who took the programme in 2007-9 when workshops were provided, expressed views which suggested that some difficulties exist. It may be that changes need to happen at Ministerial level, including appointment of sufficient school counsellors for each school and more information giving and liaison with head teachers to support the counsellors. The other finding of note is relates to the question "*I have changed the way that I provide class guidance sessions. I am using more interactive methods in working with students*". One of the aims of the programme is to promote participatory learning approaches when counsellors provide group sessions. It was noticeable that all the recently trained counsellors responded positively to this question. In the past two years the amount of time given to this area has increased and includes teaching on drama. This may account for this result. The table below shows counsellors' perceptions in response to the negatively framed questions. The fact that there is clustering on the "I disagree" answers suggests that generally positive outcomes have been obtained by the programme.

**Table 14a: Are you working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in School Counselling? (Desired attributes)**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
The Diploma course helped me to have a better understanding of the role and work of a school counsellor	47 (98%)		1 (2%)
I am now able to plan my work better and set goals and objectives for my work	47 (98%)		1 (2%)
I have a better relationship with my head teacher and teaching colleagues. They understand my role better than they did before and I work more with them.	36 (75%)	7 (15%)	5 (10%)
I have changed the way that I provide class guidance sessions. I am using more interactive methods in working with students	42 (89%)	7 (15%)	5 (10%)
I have developed and changed the way I provide counselling and support to groups of students. I have been able to use group work skills.	44 (96%)	2 (4%)	
I have developed and changed the way I work with individual students referred to me. I am using new skills learned on the programme	45 (96%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
I think that children and young people should be consulted about my plan of work for the year.	41 (87%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)
Supervision and personal development sessions helped me learn more about myself and make changes.	41 (87%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)
I valued professional supervision on the programme and feel that it is important for all professionals to have regular supervision	43 (92%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)
I learned a lot on the programme from other counsellors. I think helps my practice to have group supervision	41 (87%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)
As a school counsellor, I can help the school become a safer place for students. I can help to change things at school to help stop violence and abuse.	41 (89%)	1 (2%)	4 (9%)
As a school counsellor, I am able to support students getting involved in decision making and developing their self confidence	47 (100%)		
It is easy for me now to put forward new ideas for working with teachers and students in my school.	47 (100%)		
I now know when I need to get support for myself and who I should go to for help	44 (94%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)
I have learned about how to access materials I can use in my work and I regularly research and find new materials to use with students	42 (89%)	2 (4%)	3 (7%)
The head teacher supports and understands my work in the school	37 (79%)	7 (15%)	3 (6%)
It is important for me to work with parents and help them understand my work with their child	46 (98%)	1 (2%)	
I am proud to be a school counsellor and feel that it is an important role that can make a real difference for children and schools	46 (98%)		1 (2%)

**Key: N= 47 All missing responses omitted**

One of the findings of note in Table 14b is the number of respondents who do not know about child protection services. These are new services currently being introduced in the OPT and it is perhaps to be expected that those who had taken the course in earlier years would not have been introduced to these changes. It is notable that those who completed the programme in 2008-9 all indicated that they did not agree with the statement that they were doing the same in their work as prior to taking the Diploma programme. 9 people answered affirmatively to this question - a quarter of those who took the programme in earlier years – suggesting that they perceive that nothing has really changed in their practice. It is only possible to speculate on why this might be the case. Perhaps they may or may not be able to recall and measure their pre-diploma practice. Perhaps they have encountered structural difficulties in their schools in making changes. This is indicated in the 6 responses of the

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pre-2008-9 cohorts that it was hard for them to carry out their work as they do not have regular guidance sessions scheduled. Perhaps the course really made no impact on them. The responses of those (11 people) who consider that they no longer need supervision is also concerning. This suggests that they have not internalised that supervision is one of the hallmarks of professional practice. Working with these counsellors may pose a challenge to the newly appointed professional supervisors – and will hopefully be an issue they will be able to address with these counsellors in a positive way.

**Table 14b: Are you working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in School Counselling? (Undesired attributes)**

Statements	Responses		
	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I am really doing the same in my work as I did before taking the Diploma programme	9 (19%)	36 (77%)	2 (4%)
I <b>do not</b> know what specialist services I should use for referral – such as child protection services	12 (26%)	25 (54%)	9 (20%)
I do <b>not</b> think I need supervision of my work now. I know what to do and I do it.	11 (24%)	34 (72%)	2 (4%)
I <b>cannot</b> really put into practice what I learned on the Diploma course.	3 (6%)	43 (94%)	
It is hard for me to carry out my plans. I do not have regular guidance sessions timetabled	7 (15%)	36 (81%)	2 (4%)

**Key:** N= 47 All missing responses omitted

### What counsellors feel they now need to develop themselves as school counsellors.

Counsellors were asked to identify their priorities for ongoing professional development. The results of this question are shown in Table 15 below.

**Table 15: What do you think you now need to develop yourself as a school counsellor?**

Statements	First set of figures =results from earlier cohorts. Figures in <b>bold</b> = results for the 2009-9 cohort.		
	<b>A priority. I need this to do my work</b>	<b>This could be useful</b>	<b>Not needed</b>
Regular supervision and observation of my practice	27 (53%)	24 (47%)	
The opportunity to meet regularly to develop ideas with other school counsellors in my area	26 (51%)	25 (49%)	
The opportunity to observe other school counsellors working with guidance classes	19 (37%)	29 (57%)	3 (6%)
The opportunity to attend workshops and training events	34 (68%)	16 (32%)	
The opportunity to attend conferences on school counselling	27 (53%)	23 (45%)	1 (2%)
The opportunity to take a Masters degree	26 (51%)	19 (37%)	6 (12% (Note **))
The opportunity to learn how to be a supervisor by taking a Diploma in Supervision course	23 (47%)	16 (33%)	10 (20%)
Access to on-line learning courses and professional reading materials	32 (63%)	18 (35%)	1 (2%)

**Note \*\*:** 2 respondents indicated that they had Masters Degrees already and one respondent was completing a Masters.

**Key:** N= 47 All missing responses omitted

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These results show the keenness of this group of school counsellors for on-going professional development. They appear to enjoy and find workshops, training events and conferences valuable. It is interesting that counsellors are interested in having more access to on-line learning courses and professional reading materials. It may be an area for the CCE to consider for future development. The finding in relation to these counsellors' aspirations to take Masters degrees is predictable. This is regularly mentioned in evaluation interviews with counsellors and is an aspiration to keep under review as it may be something Birzeit University might consider offering in the future. It was good to note that the significant proportion of respondents would like to take on supervisors' training in future, but less heartening to note that only half of respondents saw professional supervision as a priority for their future learning. This indicates that the professional culture in relation to supervision is changing, but there is some way still to go in this respect. A subsequent question asked whether respondents had professional supervision currently in their work. Only 17 respondents in all had supervision currently from a Ministry of Education newly employed supervisor and 12 other respondents has had access to supervision through a supervisor in training on the CCE Diploma in Supervision course. Those who were currently engaged in supervision process were more likely to see this as a priority for their development. 13 of the 17 those who had regular supervision from an employed supervisor indicated that this was a priority for them with the remaining 4 supervised respondents indicating that this could be useful. This is a more promising result, indicating that the value of work-based supervision for professional development may become apparent to counsellors when this system is fully put in place. Counsellors were asked to indicate other ideas for their professional development. These findings are shown in Box 6 below.

### **Box 6: Other ideas for professional development indicated by counsellors**

#### **New Ideas**

- A workshop targeting school principals to provide support to the counsellor and offer an opportunity for serious professional work
- Designing summer counselling programs to cope with all sectors of school students

#### **Attending relevant workshops**

- All training courses should be complementary to the main theme of the counselling diploma; trainings should also be applicable
- Pursuing professional self-development through participation in training courses and programs that serve my role as a school educational counsellor

#### **Supervision related development**

- One great idea that I would like to share with you is receiving assistance in professional supervision Being updated with information and skills in the field of supervision and counselling
- Exchange of experiences, provision of material and supervisors' continuity in the follow up for more encouragement and less frustration which is a major factor in impeding progress
- I am subjected to professional supervision; I believe that the more genuine the professional supervision was, the better the counsellor's professional performance was
- Regular reviewing and applying the topics that we were educated in through the different fields of counselling in schools

#### **Co-working with other school counsellors**

- The opportunity to observe other school counsellors who are involved in guiding classes for development purposes and exchange of experiences
- Organizing an open day for counsellors at the beginning of every month to discuss counselling-related issues and counsellors' concerns and needs, bearing in mind that school principals allow counsellors to leave class and attend meetings after 11:30, which is very demanding and exhausting

#### **Specialist training**

- Conducting intensive specialised professional courses in individual counselling
- Individual counselling, drama and professional guidance
- To hold more trainings on responsive skills
- Regular participation in specialized professional courses

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### E-learning

- To provide a computer for each counsellor and allow schools to have an internet connection.
- Providing counselling videotapes to counsellors for learning purposes

### Institutional changes - specialism

- To allow counsellors to choose the age group that he/she wishes to work with; for example, counsellors can choose to work at primary or secondary schools.

### Aspirations and wishes

- Travelling abroad for the purpose of exchanging experiences and techniques
- Self development is always a major consideration; however, financial and academic challenges impede my efforts to achieve it
- I only wish that all be achieved; this would be more than enough

## Difficulties encountered by School Counsellors

One of the aspirations of the CCE, through its provision of Diploma in School Counselling and Diploma in Supervision programmes has, since the inception of these programmes, been to facilitate ways to ensure that these workers are properly and professionally supported in order that they can do their work to a good standard. These workers, who were appointed to their posts without professional training, are at the receiving end of much of the trauma and stress experienced by children and young people. This may be exacerbated by the stress of the political situation in the OPT. The post-project survey sought to capture from schools counsellors what they considered were the most difficult things they have to deal with in their work and their views, having undertaken professional training, on how best they might be supported.

There was a good response rate from all those who had taken the Diploma programmes about the most difficult things that they have to deal with in their work. Some of these issues raise questions about what might be done to support counsellors in their work, and include issues about institutional reform and ongoing training and development.

### Institutional issues related to the counsellor's role and position within the school

Thirteen counsellors cited difficulties in this area. They noted that they felt that their role was not understood by school teachers, principals and also by the parents of children attending the school. For some the situation was worse than their role not being understood. As some counsellors put it, one of the most difficult things they had to deal with were

*“Negative perceptions of some of the teachers regarding counselling and the counsellor's role”.*

*“A lack of cooperation amongst school teachers”*

Counsellors noted that they had done their best to overcome some of these problems by

*“Influencing others to believe in my role”*

*“Enhancing relationships and creating harmony with students and teachers”*

One commented that for him *“with professional supervision, the counsellor's role became clearer”*. Another noted that he had had to do some personal development

*“Dealing with authority figures was the biggest challenge in the course of my work; it was full of tensions and therefore required change”*

Two respondents saw being appointed to two schools as being a major issue. This is a problem which the Ministry of Education is well aware of and would like to be in a position to change.

*“Working in two schools requires more time, effort and regular follow up. Besides, absence of the counsellor of one school can have a negative influence over achievements”*

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*“Execution of two programs, with the development of two plans, for two schools that include 1000 female and male students”*

Two respondents commented on their perception that there is a lack of a regulatory framework which would give them authority to act:

*“Regulations concerning educational counsellors are unclear”*

*“The absence of a law that grants authority to school counsellors when dealing with certain cases – can lead to duplicity in decisions taken for some student cases”*

For some, actually having a space both in the school and on the timetable was an ongoing problem:

*“[There is] no place in school for the educational counsellor”*

*“Group counselling should be applied in groups \ contradiction of the classes and work“*

### **Problems with parents**

Eight counsellors mentioned issues to do with parents being one of the most difficult things a school counsellor has to deal with in their work. Issues to do with parents included their non-attendance at meetings, problems in communicating with parents, the problems students experience with their parents (including sexual abuse), parents condoning absenteeism and school dropout, and *“parental procrastination in providing assistance to their children in achieving change”*.

### **Networking and referral problems**

Five counsellors mentioned problems relating to networking, referral and risk management as being the most difficult things a school counsellor has to deal with in their work. Examples of statements included:

*“Interaction with the local community (parents, organisations) \ organisational networking, especially in Jerusalem”*

*“It is difficult to predict the [outcomes of] transferred cases due to the ineffectiveness of organisational networking in Ministry of Education. I seek the development of networking programmes to protect children”*

*“Challenges and obstacles are inescapable, yet we are encouraged to anticipate evil before it occurs”*

### **Dealing with difficult individual cases**

Twenty-one counsellors mentioned difficult *“critical” “hot”* cases as being their greatest challenge. These are cases *“that need urgent decisions”* and were highly *“sensitive”*. Five counsellors mentioned sexual harassment and abuse cases as being particularly difficult. Other issues included school violence, assault, drug addiction, trauma, political violence and working with students with special needs. Eight counsellors specifically mentioned that working with individual cases was difficult for them as this *“requires time and high standards of professionalism”*. Counsellors frequently mention in evaluation interviews that they require more input on case work and counselling skills. It may be that the source of these requests is their feelings of inadequacy in dealing with these *“critical hot cases”* and it may be that the CCE should consider providing a second level development programme for school counsellors in working with individual cases.

### **Working with groups in school**

School counsellors are required to provide group guidance classes in schools. For three respondents these classes were the most difficult things they have to deal with in the course of their work.

## School counsellors' ideas about the support they need

Forty-nine of the fifty-two respondents to the survey offered ideas through an open ended question. These responses have been grouped into common themes.

### a) Supervision

The most frequent suggestion related to support was the need for regular professional supervision (mentioned by 19 respondents). Respondents felt that "regular", "long term" supervision should be offered to all school counsellors, for the purpose of "improving performance", providing "more support and assistance" so they "can continue with their work". As one respondent noted:

*"One person should provide me with information, skills, support, encouragement and positive feedback"*

The supervisor should "support and advocate for educational counsellors" and "provide them with feedback on their achievements". Furthermore

*"Supervisors should conduct workshops in schools to draw attention to the importance of counselling and cooperation with counsellors and schools"*

They felt that "counsellors should have opportunities to join the professional supervision diploma."

It seems that if the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan is acted on to provide professional supervisors for all school counsellors by 2011, this set of support aspirations may be realised. It is good to note that these counsellors appear to have seen the benefit of the supervision provided within the CCE's Diploma in School Counselling programmes.

### b) Institutional change and support

Sixteen respondents suggested that counsellors might be best supported by changes in institutional arrangements and through regulations setting out their roles and responsibilities. An example of such a response is:

*"The Ministry should stipulate regulations concerning the nature of counsellors' work in school, in terms of student absence, delay, dropping out, etc. Regulations should also stipulate their rights and duties and whether they should serve in one school only. School principals should pressure counsellors to offer classes and work on implementing their plan. Counsellors should be given a phone land line and a computer"*

Respondents suggested that the Ministry of Education could help.

*"The Ministry of Education should boost motivation, simply because counsellors are often marginalised and do not share similar privileges as those of teachers"*

*"The Ministry of Education should call counsellors to work in one school only and consult them in the development of the yearly counselling plan"*

*"The Ministry should hold consultations with educational counsellors"*

Other respondents called for "legal protection at work" (3 responses); "additional rewards"; "the authority to transfer students within the school"; "a special budget for counselling in schools"; "enhancement of counselling responsibilities"; and "cooperation between school principals and counsellors". As one counsellor noted:

*"The School principal should be aware of the importance of the presence of a school counsellor"*

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Three respondents felt that **role clarity** would be supportive. They called for definition of the *“fine details of the counsellor’s role in school by the Ministry”*; *“engaging counsellors in conferences discussing their role in schools”* and one suggested that counsellors could assist in this process:

*“More illustration to school principals, teachers and parents on the role of counsellors in schools, preferably through issuing a booklet, with donor support, where counsellors will join in writing it.”*

### **c) Diploma courses and training**

Twelve respondents saw training and education courses as a source of support which would enable them to perform their work better and promote liaison and support amongst counsellors. Short training courses and workshops were seen to be helpful in this regard, and this may partially explain why this was mentioned as a professional development need by so many respondents. The CCE Diploma in School Counselling was mentioned by a number of respondents:

*“All educational counsellors should be entitled to join in the school counselling diploma program, through which they shall receive substantial support and training along with other colleagues by influential trainers in the field of counselling. They will benefit from the diploma courses, particularly self-appreciation. Group supervision helps counsellors communicate with others”*

*“I believe that all counsellors need to take part in need of counselling diploma due to its positive impact on the counsellor’s profession”*

For some, learning new skills and acquiring new techniques was supportive in that it:

*“Helps us appear more credible and develops our work”*

Other suggestions included training on individual counselling, drama and drawing. This training should be *“realistic rather than idealistic or theory based trainings. Trainings should address day-to-day incidents in schools”* and *“facilitate performance of counselling”*. Supporting counsellors by offering Master’s programme to continue with their education was also requested.

### **d) Debriefing and stress reduction**

Five respondents felt that *“debriefing activities”* could be supportive. This could include reduction of stress arising from work. It was also suggested that *“avoiding pressuring counsellors to perform unessential or unrelated tasks”* might help.

### **e) Understanding and appreciation by others.**

Four counsellors called for more *“understanding and appreciation”*. They felt that counsellors needed *“moral and material support”* and that they *“should be listened to by seniors”* who should

*“Be aware of the circumstances that could impede the performance of counsellors; understanding the differences in the different work positions and finally to put an end to the common belief that all people can make similar achievements regardless of their circumstances”*

### **f) More resources**

Four suggestions related to the availability of resources being supportive were made. These included access to computers; a counselling library; availability of a professional and specialised activities guidebook and *“a website link that includes all counsellors for outreaching goals”*.

## School counsellors' perceptions of their greatest achievement in their work as a school counsellors

In the survey respondents were asked to indicate what their greatest achievement has been as a school counsellor. 46 school counsellors responded to this open-ended question. Their responses, which are provided in full in Box 7, provide a picture of a more confident group of workers than has perhaps come across in earlier sections of this report. Their statements celebrate a range of achievements from establishing good relationships within their schools and communities, successfully planning and carrying out their work, gaining trust within their school, recovering stolen property to completing the Diploma programme at the CCE successfully. Perhaps the most moving testimonies are those when counsellors feel they have been able to help individual children experiencing extreme difficulties. The impression is gained of dedicated workers who do their best, often in very difficult circumstances.

### Box 7: School counsellors' perceptions of their greatest achievement as a school counsellor

1. Completion of the diploma programme; I have now become more professional at work and I have mastered counselling skills
2. Completion of the diploma requirements in a positive manner and the application in the field of the topics we were educated in. My self development "personally and professionally"
3. Contributing to improving the perception of educational counselling amongst students, administrative body, teachers and parents
4. Delivering to students, teachers and parents the counselling message, and receiving their feedback and reactions towards this message
5. Elimination of frequent school absences. Reducing rates of school dropouts. Helping build a relationship of understanding and acceptance between students and teachers through different programmes
6. Exerting good efforts into enhancing the relationship between students and teachers in school. Encouraging parents to communicate with the organisation. The change that took place in the school this year due to the efforts put into students, teachers and parents
7. Actually, all deeds and actions carried out by counsellors, particularly concerning the help of students, are considered great achievements. I make as well great achievements
8. Authenticity in work. Credibility in communicating with students. Work satisfaction. Making some achievements, such as counselling guidebooks and student activities
9. Building sound relationships with students, teachers, administration and parents. Working on individual cases
10. Learning skills concerning cognitive and behavioural theories "Egan"
11. Coping with individual cases\ case-study coping methods
12. Fall in the number of school absences and morning delays. This was achieved by full cooperation of the school administration and principal who had particularly showed great concern towards those two problems. Coordination and networking with parents. Presenting "Aman" programme in classes of counselling with a slight development on it
13. Gaining the confidence of students, teachers and administration in transferring cases and welcoming students to offer their consultations (self transfer)
14. Group counselling and guiding in classes. Helping some students to reach their goals
15. Having a better understanding of my professional role. Exchange of experiences amongst counsellors in all governorates
16. Helping students choose a specialisation with accordance to their desire, abilities, willingness and their grade average. The graduation project achieved positive results.
17. Helping students in emotional debriefing and the possibility of resolving their future problems
18. Helping students overcome their problems and better adapt to all aspects of their lives
19. Helping students solve their issues, through cooperation with their families
20. I am aware of my role and responsibilities; I seek to constantly develop my performance, skills and knowledge
21. I became the facilitator at the group guidance sessions; I have coped with some students' behaviours in the tenth grade. I have applied the testing skills which I acquired in the diploma. I succeeded in restoring a stolen item from one of the schools. I was given back this stolen item because of the skills I gained in the diploma
22. I have built confidence in my relationship with students and parents. I have earned the love of the people through my work as a school counsellor

**Box 7: School counsellors' perceptions of their greatest achievement as a school counsellor**

23. I have managed to work in two schools and perform proper coordination despite work pressure and the counselling diploma. Developing a professional counselling programme targeting first grade students till Tawjihi [final year] students, compared to previous programmes where only students in the tenth grade and Tawjihi were targeted- a need-assessment application to identify students' needs in an organised manner; a plan was developed based on those needs
24. I managed to develop a detailed plan and implement it-a training on new techniques in my line of work
25. Joining the diploma programme is a significant achievement; I have largely benefited on both the personal and professional level, particularly with regards to training on graduation project, counselling skills, self development, communication and outreach. For the most part, I learnt to communicate with my colleagues at the diploma and benefit from the exchange of knowledge and experiences
26. Joining the school counselling diploma and attending all courses in this field. My work with students Challenging the pressures and difficulties of counselling
27. Joining the school counselling diploma and being introduced to new concepts in counselling. The graduation project which I submitted to the CCE upon completion of the diploma
28. My abilities of adaption and endurance in difficult circumstances. My ability to prove myself as a school counsellor who has a role and duties to perform
29. My first achievement is being a school counsellor. Other achievements include protecting a student from sexual harassment, protecting a student from drug addiction, and raising awareness amongst students on most aspects of counselling
30. My success in a number of individual cases. Introducing my role to students and teachers
31. On a personal level: developing my counselling skills to improve my professional performance by joining the school counselling diploma
32. Parental appreciation towards educational counsellors are considered major achievements, in addition to the role counsellors play in helping individuals overcome their learning and behavioural problems
33. Positive interaction with students. Creating various activities such as plays and text writers. A good relationship with teachers and administration
34. Reiterate the importance of the role of counsellors and the need to hold on to their ethics regardless of pressures
35. Students acquire necessary skills that help encounter their problems. School administration encourages the work of counsellors and provide them with support
36. Students' comprehension of the concept of professional guidance. Students' understanding of educational consulting processes
37. The awareness and knowledge of the school team in counselling and their contribution in succeeding counselling work in school. Engagement of students in the eighth, ninth and tenth grades in discussions and dialogue to resolve their problems and eliminate the level of violence in those classes
38. The biggest achievement was in the group counselling
39. The desire to communicate, understand their problems and help them resolve their problems
40. The school principal's understanding of the counsellor's role is a success on my personal professional level
41. The strong relationship I share with students, teachers and local community. Unique relationships
42. This year's main achievement is the changes that took place in one class of students where the plan was implemented. The practice of skills, in fact, has resulted in better achievement and development amongst students
43. To be able to restore life in one female student; to protect her from loss of self, and feelings of deprivation and social exclusion
44. Understanding my role and acquiring the ability to introduce and illustrate it. Organising the work and developing plans
45. When I succeed in providing assistance in counselling services to school students. When I master communication and outreach skills with students and colleagues at school. When I manage to have good communication with students' mothers.
46. Working with student groups through debriefing sessions. Good planning and implementation in an organised and written manner

## **Conclusions and Recommendations – Diploma in School Counselling**

The results of this survey have indicated the developing professionalism of school counsellors who are able to identify themselves as school counsellors and articulate their achievements and common needs and aspirations. It has also shown the degree to which they perceive that the CCE's Diploma in School Counselling programme has assisted them in their progress. The results have pointed to areas for future development both of Diploma in School Counselling programmes and of the institutional system in which school counsellors work.

- The School Counselling Diploma provided by the CCE appears to have been recognised both by the Ministry of Education and counsellors themselves as essential professional training for those taking up school counselling posts. This Diploma programme, once taken by the majority of school counsellors, should act as initial training for those taking up posts as counsellors.
- The core curriculum for this initial programme appears now to have been established. Elements of this curriculum will need to be adapted in line with on-going policy changes (child protection). Other curriculum elements which might be considered at this level are enhancing inputs on achieving positive working relationships within schools with teachers, head teachers and parents (negotiating and influencing skills); using creative methods with young people in group guidance classes (art, drama and activities) and increasing the use of case study material on how to work with critical cases.
- The current Diploma in School Counselling programme can only introduce counsellors to the skills required in undertaking individual case work with complex cases. There is a consistent demand from counsellors for more assistance in this area. Whilst some of the work counsellors are undertaking in this area at present (e.g. sexual abuse and sexual harassment cases) will in future be referred to the child protection system, much will remain with the school counsellor (e.g. school violence, absenteeism, school drop-outs). The CCE and the Ministry should consider if there is a need for providing a second level course for school counsellors in undertaking individual work with students.
- Alternatively, with the growth of the employed professional supervision system for school counsellors, it may be that the CCE can, in negotiation with and with preparation of the newly appointed professional supervisors, refocus its programme to place more emphasis on working with individual students and groups, delegating to supervisors development work in relation to providing guidance sessions.
- Developing in-service training to train employed supervisors to act as field supervisors for those taking the Diploma in School Counselling
- School counsellors have suggested that e learning might support them in their professional development and suggested the development of School Counselling web based resources. Some have indicated their willingness to assist in this area. Others have asked for a manual for school counsellors. These ideas appear to have merit. The CCE might investigate this further and there may be potential for the development of a small scale project proposal to take this further, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education.
- School counsellors have indicated a number of institutional problems affecting their work. These findings should be shared with the Ministry of Education.

## 4 The Diploma in Schools Counselling Supervision

I am so proud of this programme. It has developed its own pace and its own legs to walk on. (Course Director, 22/7/09)

### Why did school counsellors enrol on the Diploma in Supervision?

The survey sought to find out what motivated people to enrol on the Diploma programme and how they had heard about the course. They were asked to indicate their responses to a set of statements derived from motivations commonly reported in monitoring interviews with individual trainees.

**Table 16a: Deciding to take the Diploma in Supervision Programme**

Statements	Frequency of Response
a) I was sent on the Diploma course by my work. I did not choose to take the course	6 (14%)
b) It was suggested that I apply for the course. I was pleased to have this opportunity.	19 (44%)
c) I asked to take this course. I wanted to take it.	18 (42%)
Total	43
	Missing = 1

Table 16a shows that the majority of respondents either wanted or had asked to take the Diploma in Supervision course. This course has only been offered in its current form for only three years. In the period 2004-5 a number of Certificate programmes in Supervision were offered. Those who asked to take the course included those who had taken Certificate level courses and those who had heard about the course from others.

**Table 16b Previous experience of Supervision**

Statements	Frequency of Response
a) I had never had professional supervision ( <i>translated as technical supervision</i> ) myself before taking this course	30 (68%)
b) Before taking the course, I had been in a supervision group with someone who was taking the Supervision Diploma at the CCE	7 (16%)
c) I had had professional supervision in my work before starting the course	7 (16%)
Total	44 (100%)

One of the challenges for the CCE in providing the Diploma in Supervision programme in the period from 2006-9 was that the professional supervision system had not yet been established. This meant that many of those nominated for the programme had not had personal and professional experience of supervision of their own practice. Table 16b shows that over two-thirds of those who took the course to train to be supervisors had no previous experience of supervision or a model of this process on which to draw. A small number had been exposed to supervision for a short period via a person in training on an earlier Diploma programme than the course which they themselves took. This profile is likely to change imminently as those taking the course in the future are likely to have had experience of professional supervision offered by employed supervisors who have already taken the Diploma in Supervision course as the Ministry of Education increasingly employs graduates of this programme. The majority of respondents to this survey were travelling hopefully when they joined the programme. Their ideas of what supervision could and should be were likely to have been fairly unformed.

**Table 16c Aspirations when applying to take the Diploma in Supervision**

Statements	Frequency of Response
a) Before I started the course, I was working as a professional supervisor. I wanted to do this course to support me in my work.	2 (4%)
b) Before I started the course, I was working as a counsellor. I wanted to progress in my career to be a supervisor and I thought this course would help me achieve this goal	31 (71%)
c) Before I started the course, I just felt I wanted to learn more. I was not sure if I wanted to be a supervisor.	11 (25%)
Total	44 (100%)

Table 16c charts some of the initial motivations of applicants to the programme. Career advancement (statement b) in Table 16c) appeared to be a primary motivation for over two-thirds of those who took the programme. This finding was not surprising when the **educational and employment profile** for respondents is considered. 80% of respondents had been employed as school counsellors for eight years or more, with 50% (22 people) with twelve years service or more . A quarter of respondents (11) held a Masters degree.

### **Trainees’ opinions of the subjects covered on the Supervision Diploma**

The CCE is keen to develop the curriculum of the Diploma on Supervision in response to feedback from trainees. Respondents were asked to assess the value to them of elements of the curriculum. Results are shown in Table 17 below.

**Table 17a: Trainees’ opinions of the subjects covered on the Diploma in Supervision course.**

Topics covered on the course	Positively changed the way I see myself and my work	Useful to some extent	I knew this all already	Not relevant to me at all.
Introduction to programme and role and responsibilities of the supervisor	32 (73%)	11 (25%)	1 (2%)	
Counselling skills	38 (86%)	6 (14%)		
Review of counselling theories	12 (27%)	21 (48%)	11 (25%)	
Behaviour problems and violence	9 (20%)	25 (57%)	8 (18%)	2 (5%)
Theory and approaches to supervision	30 (68%)	14 (32%)		
Management of Supervision	37 (84%)	6 (14%)	1 (2%)	
Supporting and helping supervisees	32 (73%)	9 (20%)	3 (7%)	
Supervision Planning	40 (91%)	3 (7%)		1 (2%)
Appraisal and providing feedback	38 (87%)	4 (9%)	2 (4%)	
Personal development	34 (79%)	8 (19%)	1 (2%)	
Group supervision	38 (87%)	5 (11%)	1 (2%)	

**Key:** N= 44. All missing responses omitted

From the perspectives of the trainees, it would appear that most elements of the curriculum are seen to be important for their development and practice. Only two elements are singled out – the review of counselling theories and the input on supervising counsellors to work effectively with behaviour problems and violence as not having promoted positive changes in the way the trainee saw themselves and their work. Counselling theories were seen as useful though to some extent. This may be an issue for the CCE to examine more closely as this may be a delivery issue or this subject might not be so essential on this programme. One of the issues for the CCE is that those taking the programme include those who

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have taken the CCE Diploma in School Counselling and have therefore been introduced to some elements such as counselling theories in the past. However all cohorts to date who have taken the programme have included those with no specific training in this area and who needed to learn key principles in order to be able to supervise.

Respondents were also asked for their views on the balance of time apportioned to each element of the programme. The results are shown in Table 17b. This shows again that for the most part, the amount of time allocated to each topic was seen to be right. The result identified as an issue in Table 17a- working with behaviour problems and violence again stands out. The majority of those who took the course in 2008-9 (9 out of 12) felt that the time given to this area on the programme was about right. This may be because the input on this area increased for 2008-9 in response to feedback. Counselling skills and personal development are both indicated as areas to keep under review.

**Table 17b: Trainees' views on the amount of time spent on various topics on the course.**

Topics covered on the course	The time spent on this topic was about right	Too much time was spent on this topic	Too little time was spent on this topic
Introduction to programme and role and responsibilities of the supervisor	42 (96%)	4(4%)	
Counselling skills	29 (66%)	2 (4%)	13 (30%)
Review of counselling theories	32 (74%)	6 (13%)	6 (13%)
Behaviour problems and violence	23 (52%)	5 (11%)	16 (37%)
Theory and approaches to supervision	31 (70%)	4 (9%)	9 (21%)
Management of Supervision	36 (82%)	2 (4%)	6 (14%)
Supporting and helping supervisees	30 (70%)	4 (9%)	9 (21%)
Supervision Planning	31 (71%)	2(4%)	11 (25%)
Appraisal and providing feedback	31 (71%)	4(9%)	9 (21%)
Personal development	29 (66%)	4(9%)	11 (25%)
Group supervision	35 (80%)	5 (11%)	4 (9%)

**Key:** N= 44 All missing responses omitted

In the survey, respondents were asked to identify what, for them, was the most important topic on the programme in an opened question. Of the 42 responses to this question, 19 people mentioned **supervision skills**, 17 people identified **self development**, 8 people **appraisal and feedback**, 5 people **planning supervision** and 3 noted that **learning how to provide supervision groups** was important for them.

Respondents were asked if there were there any topics or subjects missing from the course and to identify what other topics or subjects do they thought should be covered on the course. Frequently offered suggestions included:

- Extending the focus of the programme to include more input on supervision of individual cases and group counselling (7 responses)
- Individual supervision of counsellors
- Relating areas of supervision to children's age-groups, so that supervisors would be more focused and effective in their work
- The administrative side of supervision within the education directorates and schools
- More detailed training on providing feedback and evaluation (5 responses);
- Looking at "supervision's unhealthy processes",
- Supervision of groups (3 responses);

Other individual suggestions included case-management skills; assertiveness; documentation and time management; professional language; hosting a supervisor to give support to those trained as supervisors

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(note: this is already in place – with the main trainer at the CCE providing this service voluntarily); more frequent supervision visits (2 responses) and finally it was suggested that the CCE might “*consider the vision of the future programme.*” For one respondent, no change was required. He noted:

*“All topics complement each other within a comprehensive curriculum. In my perspective, it is a programme of great value”*

### Undertaking the practicum – group supervision

Trainees on the Diploma in Supervision are required to work with up to eight schools counsellors as supervisors in order to complete the required practicum elements. They are required to draw up an agreement with the eight counsellors about how they will work in a group, provide two group sessions per month during training, offer a set number of individual supervision sessions with each counsellor and observe them working in their school on two occasions, examine and discuss the counsellor’s records and documentation, and provide them with written feedback on their work. As part of their graduation project, they are required to evidence all these activities, using standardised pro-formas developed by the CCE. They are also required to obtain feedback from the counsellors on their practice as a supervisor. In completing their graduation project, trainees are required to offer a critical reflection on their practice and identify areas for future development. The on-going monitoring and evaluation of Diploma in Supervision programmes since 2004 noted that similar processes seem to have been found that led to a sense that the stages which a trainee supervisor goes through in setting up and providing group supervision and in working with individuals within that group providing individual supervision of their practice and undertaking field visits.

In the survey it was attempted to test out some of these ideas about processes to see if a model might be built which would be useful for future planning and development of the programmes. Those who had taken the Diploma in Supervision over the last three years were asked to respond to a number of statements in the post-project survey which traced the processes which seemed to be emerging from the on-going evaluation of the programme in relation to providing group supervision. Some additional statements were included which were framed as reverse questions to prompt respondents to think carefully about the statements. The results of these questions are shown in Tables 18a,b and c below.

**Table 18a: Undertaking the practicum – starting the group supervision process**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. It was easy for me to set up a supervision group according to the criteria	41 (93%)	3 (7%)	
2. At the beginning, all my colleagues were pleased and enthusiastic about being part of my supervision group	28 (64%)	13 (30%)	3 (6%)
3. At the start, some people in my supervision group were suspicious about the supervision process and were defensive	35 (80%)	9 (20%)	
4. Spending time at the beginning drawing up group and individual agreements was important. It helped us all be clear about our roles	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	
5. At the beginning, I was nervous about working with a supervision group. I was not confident in my ability to manage the group	21 (48%)	21 (48%)	2 (4%)
6. At the beginning, I thought those I was supervising might not accept me in the role and that they might know more than me	9 (21%)	33 (75%)	2 (4%)
7. I found that I was able to use the skills I learned on the course to help the group start to work together	44 (100%)		

**Key** N=44 Missing answers omitted

### 1. Starting the group supervision process.

- a) **Institutional support for the programme is important** and is clearly shown in the answer to question 1. Trainees were supported by the Ministry of Education in identifying 8 school counsellors as “volunteers” for them to undertake the practicum of the programme, hence perhaps the positive result on question 1. The criteria referred to are that a gender balance and a mixture of experience and types of schools (primary and secondary) was required. This element will need careful consideration in the continuation of the programme, as eventually all counsellors will have professional supervision..
- b) **Some degree of reluctance and suspicion of the supervision process from those supervised may be expected.** The answers to questions 2 and 3 above, show that while a majority of supervisors perceived that colleagues would be pleased and enthusiastic about being part of their supervision group, most recognised that some of their colleagues might be suspicious of the process. This perhaps shows the degree to which professional supervision is in its infancy in the OPT. Most workers experience of “supervision” in the past had been of “inspection”.
- c) **It is important to spend sufficient time to draw up clear group supervision agreements .** This is clearly indicated in the survey results. Interviews over the past three years as part of the evaluation process have found that considerable time is needed in the supervision group to ensure that this is completely well. The time spent on this activity may be critical to the success of the process.
- d) **It is normal for some supervisors to feel nervous and unsure at the start of the supervision process. They will need support at this time.** Answers to questions 5 show that about half the trainee supervisors admitted feeling nervous about working with a supervision group and not confident in their ability to manage the group. A much smaller proportion (9 out of 44) were worried that they might not be accepted by those they work with. These responses point to the importance of providing support, confidence boosting and assistance with problem solving for new supervisors. This finding was confirmed by interviews with trainee supervisors who often noted that this could be a critical point for them. Personal development sessions which promote self awareness seems to be particularly important. Trainee supervisors have to learn to recognise their reactions when they encounter resistance and develop ways to overcome reactions which are not helpful. (For example, in the 2008-9 cohort, one of the interviewees for monitoring and evaluation had to learn to manage feelings of anger, another had to learn how to say “No”).
- e) **Planned deployment of team building skills will help.** All respondents noted that these techniques were successful. This points to the need to continue to ensure that training in this area is provided on the programme before supervision groups are established and this is supported in the supervision of the trainee supervisors.

**Table 18b: Undertaking the practicum –Working with counsellors in group supervision**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. I was able to help the counsellors I was supervising make an assessment of needs in their schools and draw up plans of work	40 (91%)	3 (7%)	1 (2%)
2. I felt that I was helping the counsellors learn new skills about how to plan their work and set objectives for work	44 (100%)		
3. It was hard for me to keep the group working on tasks.	7 (16%)	35 (80%)	2 (4%)
4. Working in a group was very motivating for counsellors. It seemed to make them more enthusiastic about their work	40 (92%)	2 (4%)	2 (4%)
5. Group supervision was helpful in enabling people to share ideas and come up with new approaches to the work	41 (94%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)
6. I was able to help the counsellors share the problems they were experiencing in the group, and find solutions together	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	
7. In my group, people did not really open up about their personal feelings about the work	5 (12%)	37 (84%)	2 (4%)
8. One or more counsellors in the group challenged me a lot.	18 (42%)	23 (54%)	2 (4%)
9. I needed support from the CCE supervisor to deal with issues and problems in the group	37 (84%)	6 (14%)	1 (2%)
10. By the end of the group supervision process, I felt the group was working well together. I was pleased with the outcome of their work	43 (98%)		1 (2%)

Key N=44 Missing answers omitted

## **2. Approaches and Issues which arise when working with counsellors in a group**

- a) **Help counsellors manage their work – develop a clear focus on a task.** One of the skills that trainee supervisors learn on the programme is how to help counsellors plan and organise work in schools, set objectives for each year and draw up a plan of work for the year and for particular group/ class based interventions. This should be based on an assessment of needs in the school and informed by and aligned with strategic objectives set by the Ministry of Education. On the Diploma in Supervision practicum, trainee supervisors are required to enable all those they supervise plan and implement a sequenced intervention with a class (normally 8 to 10 sessions) and observe them carrying out this task. It is clear from the responses to the survey (Table 11b, questions 1 and 2) that almost all trainees felt able to do this. Perhaps what is important here is that having a clear focus and task for a group to be working on is important and this should be an issue which the supervisor feels confident in being able to develop others to achieve. The response to question 3 which are almost all positive, suggest that this may lead to enhanced motivation. If counsellors are able to see clear outcomes to their participation in group supervision, they may be more likely to commit to the process.
- b) **Enable the group to share experiences and ideas.** One of the important skills of a group supervisor is being able to facilitate a process in which group members act supportively towards each other by promoting sharing of experiences and ideas. This requires the supervisor to be able to step back from “controlling” the process and create an environment in which group members can feel safe in sharing problems and difficulties they may encounter in their work, without incurring the judgement of their peers. The supervisor should also identify and promote learning from these accounts for all group members. Enabling group members to learn from others’ experiences and supporting sharing of ideas in order to develop innovative approaches to the work is also a key skill.

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The responses to questions 6 and 7 above indicate that trainee supervisors felt that they had been able to develop this in their practice. This is supported by limited evidence from interviews with school counsellors and from the positive feedback given by counsellors to the supervisors in the their training log-books. It is important to be aware that there is a strong potential for bias in these accounts. This is an area to keep under review in the ongoing supervision and support of supervisors

- c) **Expect challenges from the group members and access support.** Perhaps in most groups in any setting there will be those who challenge the leader. Responses to question 8 indicate that a significant proportion of trainees experienced challenge from a group member. Almost all respondents (question 9), pointed to the fact that they needed support from the CCE supervisor to deal with issues and problems in the group. This highlights the need for these supervisors to be provided with on-going support and supervision when they are in post as supervisors to enable them to deal positively with problems which perhaps will inevitably arise.
- d) **Anticipate positive outcomes of group supervision.** When things are going wrong, or when one is challenged, it can be easy for some people to get disheartened. The results for question 10 show that almost all trainee supervisors felt that by the end of the group supervision process that their group was working well together and felt pleased with the outcome of their work. This is an important message for trainee supervisors and may help to promote motivation and endurance in difficult times and inspire them to promote confidence in the process amongst group members.

**Table 18c: Undertaking the practicum –Trainee Supervisors' Personal and Professional Learning from group supervision**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. I felt I developed my skills in facilitating others learning	44 (100%)		
2. I learned how to challenge others in a positive way	41 (94%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)
3. I felt that I learned new things about myself from the experience of running a supervision group	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	
4. I learned to be more patient and calm	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	
5. I was surprised and pleased about how I worked with the group	41 (96%)	2 (4%)	
6. At the end of the group supervision process, I felt I would like to work in this way again.	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	

### 3. Trainee Supervisors' Personal and Professional Learning from group supervision

- a) **Be prepared to learn new skills** Respondents to the survey identified that in particular they had developed their skills in facilitating others' learning and how to challenge in a positive way. These may be important elements to continue to address on Diploma in Supervision programmes
- b) **Be committed to ongoing personal development.** It is important for supervisors to be self aware and to be open to learning about themselves and make any necessary changes. The findings shown in Table 11c, questions 3,4,and 5 triangulates with the results of individual evaluation interviews of the Diploma in Supervision. Again this points to the need for ongoing support of those trained as supervisors.

- c) **Expect positive outcomes.** The majority of survey respondents were surprised and pleased about how they worked with the group and, at the end of the group supervision process, felt they would like to work in this way again. (Table 11c, questions 5 and 6)

<b>Summary of Findings</b> <b><u>Key Messages for Trainee Supervisors Providing Group Supervision</u></b>
<p><b><u>Starting the group supervision process.</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Institutional support for the programme is important</li><li>• Some degree of reluctance and suspicion of the supervision process from those supervised may be expected.</li><li>• It is important to spend sufficient time to draw up clear group supervision agreements .</li><li>• It is normal for some supervisors to feel nervous and unsure at the start of the supervision process. They will need support at this time.</li><li>• Planned deployment of team building skills will help.</li></ul>
<p><b><u>Approaches and Issues which arise when working with counsellors in a supervision group</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help counsellors manage their work – develop a clear focus on a task.</li><li>• Enable the group to share experiences and ideas.</li><li>• Expect challenges from the group members and access support.</li><li>• Anticipate positive outcomes of group supervision.</li></ul>
<p><b><u>Personal and Professional Learning will result from providing group supervision</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be prepared to learn new skills</li><li>• Be committed to ongoing personal development and own supervision</li><li>• Expect positive outcomes.</li></ul>

### **Providing field supervision**

One of the aims of the Diploma in Supervision programme is to promote more standardised practice in school counselling. It is believed that by making counsellors' work more visible, through repeated observation of practice and the provision of feedback using standardised approaches, more consistency in the standard of service will be achieved. On the Diploma in School Counselling and the Diploma in Supervision, the focus at present is driving up the standards of group guidance sessions provided by school counsellors. Trainee supervisors visit and observe each of their eight supervisees twice in their school setting undertaking group guidance sessions.

The post-project survey (n=44) found that this was **a new experience** for the majority of those in training. Only 13 respondents out of 44 had previously observed another counsellor's work. Only 14 of the 44 respondents had themselves been observed by a field supervisor in their own practice as a school counsellor and been provided with feedback. It is likely that this profile will change in future as more school counsellors undertake the Diploma in School Counselling and more receive professional supervision from employed Ministry of Education supervisors. In the development of a new service this is to be expected. The CCE has developed the Diploma in Supervision to take account of this profile of entrants to the programme. All but two of the respondents to the post-project survey (42 positive responses) stated that they felt **well prepared by the CCE** to undertake direct observation on field visits,

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with 41 out of 44 also confirming that they understood what they were meant to be doing on field visits. Changes in the pre-programme experience of entrants to the programme are likely in future and the programme may need to be adapted to take this into account.

The survey posed a number of statements to respondents about the process of field supervision. These questions were identified from themes which seemed to be emerging from the on-going evaluation of the programme. The survey sought to confirm if these impressions were accurate. Some additional statements were included which were framed as reverse questions to prompt respondents to think carefully about the statements. The results of these questions are shown in Tables 19 a and b below.

**Table 19a: Field Supervision and feedback processes.**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. When I observed the counsellors for the first time in guidance sessions, I felt that most of the counsellors were “talking at” the students rather than enabling the students to discuss issues and discover new ideas	26 (59%)	16 (37%)	2 (4%)
2. When I observed the counsellors for the first time in guidance sessions, I noticed that most of the counsellors used very interactive methods with students, such as small group work and role plays.	16 (37%)	27 (63%)	
3. The forms given to me by the CCE were useful in thinking about how to provide feedback to the counsellor	41 (96%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
4. When I gave feedback to the counsellors, I felt that most of them accepted this is a good way and were not defensive	27 (64%)	15 (36%)	
5. Some of the counsellors I worked with did not accept my feedback	17 (40%)	24 (66%)	2 (4%)
6. When I visited the counsellors for a second time, I felt that most of them had made changes in the way they worked, and that they had acted on my feedback	44 (100%)		
7. Most of the counsellors I observed take the same approach in guidance sessions	10 (23%)	32 (73%)	2 (4%)
8. When I observed the counsellors, I learned new ways of doing guidance sessions which I had not thought about before	37 (84%)	6 (14%)	1 (2%)

**N=44 Missing cases omitted**

One of the common findings from the evaluation process has been that on the first field visit, supervisors observe that school counsellors in providing guidance classes do not use participatory methods,. Instead they use a more didactic style. Statements 1 and 2 in Table 19a investigate this. As can be seen, two-thirds of respondents felt that this was still the case. It is good to note though that a significant number reported (16) that counsellors are using more varied approaches. This may be a result of these counsellors having been exposed to supervision from others taking the CCE Diploma in Supervision, or having taken the CCE Diploma in School Counselling. It appears that the culture in terms of providing guidance sessions is changing. This is suggested in the response to question 6 in Table 19a. All respondents felt they could detect changes in the way the counsellor worked in group guidance. This of course may be a biased response, as respondents may wish to be optimistic about the effects of their supervisory intervention.

Providing structured feedback to counsellors is a key learning topic on the Diploma in School Counselling programme. Statements 3-6 in Table 19a address this issue. Almost all respondents considered that the forms given to them by the CCE were useful in thinking about how to provide feedback to the counsellor. The CCE’s feedback forms set out clear behavioural criteria for observation and it would appear that this enables supervisors to be clear and focussed in their approach to feedback, dealing with issues which

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are open to being changed. Over half of respondents felt that when they gave feedback to the counsellors, most of the counsellors accepted this is a good way and were not defensive (*Statement 4*). A significant number noted though that counsellors were defensive (15 out of 42 responses) and did not accept their feedback (*Statement 5*; 17 out of 44 responses). This is probably a part of a normal process in learning to accept feedback and evaluate it for worth. On a positive note (*Statement 6*) all respondents felt that they could detect change when they observed the counsellors for a second time, with all considering that most of those they supervised had made changes in the way they worked, and that they had acted on their feedback

### Providing individual supervision

Trainees on the Diploma in Supervision programme required as part of their practicum to provide two individual supervision sessions per month for each of the eight counsellors they supervise over a four month period. Table 19b below shows that the majority of trainee supervisors considered that in individual supervision, a supervisor should be able to help the counsellor talk about their feelings and find solutions to their problems (*Statement 1*). Three-quarters felt that most counsellors would welcome such supervision (*Statement 2*) and virtually all felt that counsellors would prefer support from a supervisor as opposed to another source (*Statement 3*). In providing individual supervision, the large majority of respondents felt that that they have been able to help those they supervised plan their work (*Statement 4*) and that they had been able to offer new ideas to those they worked with (*Statement 5*). Three quarters of respondents considered that counsellors had been able to open up and talk about their feelings in supervision (*Statement 6*). All respondents thought that supervision might lead to better standards of practice in school counselling (*Statement 7*). This shows their confidence and belief in the process.

**Table 19b: Field Supervision and feedback processes.**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. Counsellors have a difficult job to do. A supervisor should be able to help the counsellor talk about their feelings and find solutions to their problems	39 (93%)	2 (5%)	1 (2%)
2. I think most counsellors would be pleased to have supervision and would welcome it	33 (75%)	9 (20%)	2 (5%)
3. I think that counsellors do not really want support from a supervisor. They prefer to get support from someone else	1 (2%)	40 (93%)	2 (5%)
4. As a trainee supervisor, I was able to help the counsellors develop their plans and written work	42 (98%)	1 (2%)	
5. I felt that I was able to offer new ideas about how to work to the counsellors	44 (100%)		
6. In individual sessions, I felt that it was difficult for counsellors to open up and talk about their feelings.	9 (20%)	34 (78%)	1 (2%)
7. I think that supervision might lead to better standards of practice in school counselling	44 (100%)		

**N=44 Missing cases omitted**

4.4.4 **Trainee Supervisors' experience of their own field supervision on the Diploma Programme**

Most respondents to the post-project survey confirmed that they received helpful feedback from their own field supervisor (40 out of 43 responses). They agreed that their field supervisor gave them good ideas about how to develop their practice which they were able to apply in their work (43 out of 44 positive responses). These results are shown in Table 12c.

**Table 19c: Trainee Supervisors own experience of Supervision and feedback processes.**

Statements	Full Survey: No= 44		
	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
My field supervisor did not really give me helpful feedback. I did not learn much from him and did not agree with what he said.	3 (7%)	40 (93%)	
When I was observed acting as a supervisor, my field supervisor gave me good ideas about how to develop my practice and I was able to apply these ideas in my work	43 (98%)	1 (2%)	

Respondents were an open-ended question about **what they felt they gained from their own experience of receiving field supervision as a trainee supervisor**. 40 of the 44 respondents replied and their responses were grouped into key themes as follows:

- **Learning new skills and practising them:** including feedback skills communication, listening and outreach skills, planning and implementation, team building, group leadership and organization of work, documenting work. (18 responses)

*“I have gained skills that allow me to cooperate with counsellors professionally and administratively”*
- **Benefitting from feedback provided by the supervisor** and finding this supportive and to accept others' opposing points of views (14 responses)
- **Being assisted in personal and professional development** (7 responses)

*“The benefit was on the personal level. The professional supervision has helped me develop my professional character, be more active in the presence of others, boost my confidence in my professional skills”*

*“It allowed me to draw my attention towards the tone of my voice for instance, quick temper and the way it shows in my features, and many other behaviours which I never noticed. Moreover, I would like to add that if it weren't for the field supervisor's support, I would have definitely failed.”*
- **Being helped to apply theory to practice,** (4 responses)
- **Being helped to manage difficulties in the supervisory process** understanding of the group dynamics, coping with reactions of the targeted counsellors, understanding “the games” played by counsellors and the significance of examining feelings within the relationship of supervision (7 responses)

*“All expectations of the counsellors' behaviour in the supervisory relationship during the training were confronted; we were aware of them. This, in fact, has strengthened the supervisory relationship“*

*“Field supervision has in fact empowered me and gave me the motivation to work”*

*“It boosted my confidence in my performance”*

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Respondents offered a number of **suggestions about how field supervision might be improved**, in responding to an open ended question. These suggestions clustered around the following themes

- **More than two field visits** in order to improve the supervisor's performance (6responses)
- **Allocating more time** to the enhancement of and practice of skills including feedback skills (3 responses)
- **Earlier provision of emotional support to the trainee** (2 responses)
- **A smaller size of supervision group** Cutting down the number of group members from twelve to eight (2 responses)

Other individual suggestions included:

- **More supervision trainers** in order to present a variety of models of supervision to the supervisor trainees
- **Field supervision be on a wider scale** to include almost all areas of the counsellor's work in school
- **Holding more frequent individual supervision**
- **The ministry should seek to introduce the professional role and responsibilities of the supervisors in schools in a formal manner**, in order to create greater positive understanding between supervisors and department heads which shall promote counselling performance in schools
- **Enabling graduates of the Centre for Continuing Education to supervise the new supervisor trainees** to enhance their skills

### **Suggestions about how the Diploma in Supervision might be developed or improved**

Respondents to the survey were posed an open-ended question asking for additional suggestions about how the Diploma in Supervision might be improved or developed. 37 of the 44 respondents offered a number of suggestions and their responses were grouped into key themes as follows:

- **Institutional support and advocacy is needed about the role of the school counsellor and the counsellor supervisor** in order to create a positive environment for both professional groups. This includes influencing the school administration, parents, students and school administration about the role and purpose of school counselling and counselling supervision; ensuring counsellors have rooms to work in. (4 responses)
- The CCE should have a role in the **selection of the supervisor trainees and counsellors** ( 2 responses)
- The CCE should reconsider the **timetable of the programme**. Some elements might be considered prior to the practicum (preparation for counsellors' responses to supervision). Group supervision should be started earlier in the course (5 responses)

*"In the first quarter of the diploma, I had no worries concerning time. Yet I gradually started to worry as I became aware of the amount of tasks and responsibilities that lay ahead of us, and wished that we started working at an earlier stage of the year. For example, I felt pressured during field work. It affected my job as a counsellor and consumed the time of students. In the last several months, I was present in my school for few hours only; this was a source of stress".*

- **Suggestions about the curriculum content:** More skills practice and training on intervention, feedback, support, team building and documentation. Documentation might be simplified. It would be helpful to present successful previous experiences on the diploma programme to the

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new students and a graduate supervisor might be asked to share their experience (11 responses). One respondent raised the issue of gender. She noted

*“ I always wonder why the diploma organisers at the CCE do not include the concept of gender in the material; this drives me to question the mental health department's sensitivity to the concept of gender and its impact on the interaction with supervisors”*

- **Suggestions about focus of the curriculum:** There should be consideration of all areas of professional supervision and a variety of field practice activities, such as group counselling, individual counselling, interviews with parents and not merely group guidance (4 responses)
- **Ongoing support and follow-up of supervisors is needed.** This might include a supervisor be trained by CCE to become the supervisor over the professional supervisors; holding regular meetings with supervisors at the CCE to discuss issues pertaining to supervision; establishing a “supervisors’ club” (a supervisors’ committee for supervision development) and providing refresher courses (6 responses)
- **Ongoing professional development should be offered:** suggestions included training in child protection and working with difficult cases; working with those with special needs; training coping with sexual-harassment and the development of the diploma to become a Masters’ program (6 responses)

### Do those who took the Diploma in Supervision consider that they are working in a different way as a result of taking programme?

Respondents were asked for their views about whether they felt the way they worked changed as a result of taking the programme. They were asked to comment on the key elements the Diploma programme seeks to address. The results are shown in the table below. The results are overwhelming positive. Respondents showed that they were completing the questionnaire thoughtfully in their identification of “/ disagree” for the reverse question (statement 5). Respondents felt that they had changed as a direct result of completing the programme.

**Table 20: Are you working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in Supervision course?**

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
1. The Diploma course helped me to have a better understanding of the role and work of a school counsellor and a supervisor	43 (98%)	1 (2%)	
2. I am now able to plan my work better and set goals and objectives for my work	43 (98%)	1 (2%)	
3. The personal development sessions and field supervision on the Diploma helped me learn more about myself and make changes.	42 (96%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)
4. I have changed the way I relate to colleagues. I am better able to give feedback to others and accept feedback on my work	40 (92%)	4 (8%)	
5. I <b>cannot</b> really put into practice what I learned on the Diploma course.	2 (4%)	42 (6%)	
6. I now know when I need to get support for myself and who I should go to for help	43 (98%)	1 (2%)	
7. I have learned about how to access materials I can use in my work and I regularly research and find new materials to use in my work	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	
8. I feel that all counsellors should have professional supervision. It is an important role that can make a real difference for counsellors, children and schools	42 (96%)	2 (4%)	

**Key** N.= 44. Missing cases omitted

## Future plans of those who took the Diploma in Supervision programme

The Ministry of Education intends to appoint all those of their employees who successfully completed the Diploma in Supervision programme as supervisors. Those who took the programme were asked if the programme had confirmed them in their motivation to be employed as a supervisor or helped them to make a decision that this was not something they wish to pursue. Given the time given to this programme and the expense incurred, it was good to find that the majority of respondents hoped to proceed to take up a supervisor post or were already newly employed as supervisors. This is shown in Table 21 below. The Ministry of Education has confirmed that it will be appointing all those who completed the programme successfully in 2008-9 as supervisors. It was interesting to note that five respondents expressed ambivalence, two indicating that they were sure that this was not an option for them.

**Table 21: Future aspirations of those who took the Diploma in supervision programme**

<b>Respondents were asked to read the following statements carefully and tick <u>one</u> statement which they feel best applied to them</b>	<b>N=43 Missing case omitted</b>
a) Having taken the Diploma course, I would now like to be a professional supervisor	17 (39%)
b) I do not think the job of a professional supervisor would really suit me. I would prefer to be a counsellor/ social worker	2 (4%)
c) I am not sure if I want to be a supervisor or not.	3 (7%)
d) I am now employed as a professional supervisor	21 (48%)

## What supervisors feel they now need to develop themselves in the role.

The post-project survey asked respondents to consider what they thought they now needed to develop in the role, through both a set of statements (Table 22 below) and an open-ended question. It was interesting to note that a quarter to respondents did not consider regular supervision was a priority, though this was the aspect which was most frequently suggested.

**Table 22: What supervisors feel they now need to develop themselves in the role**

<b>Statements</b>			
	<b>A priority. I need this to do my work</b>	<b>This could be useful</b>	<b>Not needed</b>
1 Regular supervision and observation of my practice	33 (77%)	9 (21%)	1 (2%)
2. The opportunity to attend workshops and training events	27 (68%)	11 (28%)	2 (4%)
3. The opportunity to attend conferences on school counselling and supervision	22 (50%)	13 (30%)	4 (10%)
4. The opportunity to take a Masters degree	14 (37%)	14 (37%)	10 (26%)
5. Access to on-line learning courses and professional reading materials	20 (53%)	16 (42%)	2 (5%)

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The open ended question which asked respondents for their other ideas for their professional development produced more interesting results. There was a high level of response to this question with 32 respondents providing detailed ideas of what they felt would be helpful and needed. The clustering of results is shown below.

- a. **Ongoing supervision, support and follow-up** (14 responses): suggestions included obtaining support from the CCE, holding periodic meetings to examine progress in the field and receive more training in supervision of individual cases; workshops on the latest developments of the profession of supervision in Palestine and to exchange experiences with supervisors; regular practice of supervision in order not to lose the skills and information; follow-up courses or any other supervision activities
- b. **Exchanges** (11 responses): suggestions included the exchange of experiences amongst other areas and between supervisors in Palestine on the latest developments in supervision; interacting with other colleagues of this profession in neighbouring areas, with the purpose of exchanging experiences and observing their professional level and sharing their experience and keeping *“abreast of the latest developments in the civilized world”*, holding courses and conferences; *“presenting our professional supervision experience on the Arab world level as an outstanding experience that could help enhance educational counselling in Palestine”*; *“becoming members in associations and committees involved in mental health and participating in local, regional and international events such as conferences and symposia”* and *“attending a group supervision trip”*.
- c. **Self Development** (4 responses) Ideas outlined included obtaining visual and taped resources of supervision skills and training on applying psychological testing pertaining to counselling and supervision
- d. **Taking on new work** (4 responses) Some indicated that they hoped to develop by providing individual and group supervision with other organisations, develop their experience by seeking related job opportunities, looking for new work and seeking to supervise the educational counsellors in other fields
- e. **Advocating for improved working conditions and qualifications** (3 responses) Ideas included discussing the Diploma of School Counselling with the Ministry of Education; working along with other supervisors to examine the entire process of supervision; advocating for the same working hours and vacations for supervisors as counsellors instead of involving supervisors in the administrative work in the educational directorates. It was suggested that the *“CCE should act as an intermediary between the Ministry and departments heads to introduce the roles and responsibilities of supervisors, especially at the beginning of the supervision experience”*
- f. **Research on Supervision in Palestine** (2 responses): suggestions included a field study on a national level and *“accreditation of educational and scientific material to form a reference for counselling”*
- g. **Training others** (2 responses) Ideas included designing counselling programmes with the cooperation of the supervised counsellors to be implemented in schools and *“an intensive training symposium to plan for professional supervision, especially after the professional application of supervision in the field”*

#### 4.9 Diploma in Supervision holders' perceptions of their greatest achievement since taking the programme

In the post-project survey respondents were asked to indicate what their greatest achievement has been since taking the Diploma course. 40 people responded to this open-ended question. Their responses, which are provided in full in Table 16, indicate many perceived benefits, including an enhanced sense of professionalism, self-development and commitment to the development of others.

**Table 16: Diploma in Supervision holders' perceptions of their greatest achievement since taking the programme**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My diploma in professional supervision is a great achievement on my personal level; however, my greater achievement was the acceptance of my performance as a supervisor trainee by all counsellors. I appreciate the fact that professional supervision helps counsellors give value to themselves and to the fact there is a clear goal for their work that could be measured professionally through supervision. Furthermore, counsellors should enjoy the process of supervision as a mean of entertainment rather than considering it a burden. If counsellors are trained to believe that supervision is a blessing and not a curse, the outcome of the programme would be highly successful</li> <li>2. An increased self-awareness. It provided me with an opportunity to be more committed to my profession, with the aim of developing myself in the future. The biggest professional challenge in my life was the diploma experience, despite the fact that I have earned a Master's degree in psychological and educational counselling</li> <li>3. Self development, putting effort into overcoming my weaknesses, getting closer to people, working in a professional and authentic manner, being listened to by as a professional person. For the first time in my life, I met someone who shook off the dust from my true character and helped me to reveal the real one as a professional supervisor. Major achievements: the participation of the majority of governorates helped in the exchange of experiences has helped in the spread of "counselling and supervision" activities across the country. "Working with us and for us" was greatly significant and a fantastic achievement</li> <li>4. I believe that I have advanced in self-understanding since the completion of the diploma. I have developed my communication skills and become familiar with supervision processes, including the "games" supervisees can play</li> <li>5. Acting as an outstanding professional supervisor within the organization which I work for. Development and self-awareness. Developing my career.</li> <li>6. My support to the recently-experienced colleagues; I have offered my support to them in order to help the newly employed overcome feelings of confusion which they usually go through for a period of time</li> <li>7. Obtaining diploma in professional supervision has been a good source of help in many of my professional and personal aspects. It boosted my self-confidence and enhancing my confidence in my skills and abilities in performing professional supervision duties. Working within a proficient team that has a healthy relationship within its members who respects each other's views in comparison to other groups. On a personal level, the development of my skills makes me more determined to reach the goals I pursue and was much more challenging</li> <li>8. Building a professional relationship with counsellors and helping to develop the counsellors professionally in the field</li> <li>9. Confidence in expressing my feelings and thoughts. Learning from my mistakes and looking upon them as part of my professional development. Respecting my colleagues' experiences and what they have to offer. The Ministry of Education has formally incorporated professional supervision and assigned me as a professional supervisor</li> <li>10. Feelings of success in my work with the supervision group, through helping counsellors develop counselling plans professionally and providing assistance to them in the development of their professional performance in schools</li> <li>11. Becoming a professional supervisor. Improving management in counselling</li> </ol>
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Table 16:	Diploma in Supervision holders' perceptions of their greatest achievement since taking the programme
12.	Acquiring skills of supervision from the right sources. Being assigned to the task of professional supervision and being part of the practical aspect of supervision. Engaging in the field practical experience with follow up by the ministry. Significant and clear work-achievements. Collaboration across group members is clear and group members share a unified vision. Counsellors were creative and revealed hidden potentials
13.	Actual application of supervision
14.	As a supervisor trainee, I served as the contact person in the relationship between the CCE and counsellors and have managed to successfully communicate the programme skills and activities. The outcome of my field visits was satisfactory; this positive change has reflected a positive impact on the team
15.	Counsellors' acceptance of professional supervision, and their belief that they are in need of it, and that support and development are its objectives.
16.	Development and planning
17.	Having a deeper self-understanding, self development, providing feedback, being aware of the importance of supervision and its goals which help in the professional progress, developing supervisory and counselling skills and finally the ability to use responsive skills with the supervision group.
18.	I have developed my abilities in providing a direct and genuine feedback. I have improved my skills in positively coping with others' reactions. I have more patience and the capacity to formulate objectives and goals
19.	I have succeeded in influencing my colleagues' perception towards the concept of supervision. They become more accepting of the concept and less resistant
20.	The Ministry of Education has formally incorporated supervision and assigned me as a professional supervisor
21.	My capacity in managing the group professionally was a major achievement plus counsellors' acceptance of the professional supervision process
22.	My participation in the professional supervision programme was a major achievement; it helped me achieve self-development
23.	My participation in the programme where I managed to work based on a clear vision of professional supervision, given that it is a training stage. Building professional relationships amongst the supervisors trainees group, CCE\Birzeit University
24.	My self image, particularly the hidden area. I learnt about the different types of personalities and the games practiced by counsellors with supervisors.
25.	On the personal level, I became more self-aware and recognized the importance of separating emotions from work. On a professional level, however, the ability to manage supervision and apply it on counselling
26.	Personal development, professional development, and practicing professional supervision
27.	Professional supervision. Defining principles and theme of supervision will help define an approach for future work
28.	Self development, a deeper self-image;\supervision skills and group management
29.	Self development, and making a positive change in the counsellor group
30.	Self development - my ability to impart the knowledge to counsellors according to a plan
31.	Team building and providing feedback
32.	The ability to cope with others in a professional manner; the benefit will be reflected on the group and on me as well
33.	The ability to do sound professional planning. Sound professional counselling documentation. The ability to provide feedback professionally
34.	The ability to form a supervision group to improve the counsellors professional performance in one aspect of counselling
35.	The ability to positively work with counsellors and encourage team spirit
36.	The capacity to assist counsellors in defining needs and formulating counselling plans. Helping

**Table 16: Diploma in Supervision holders' perceptions of their greatest achievement since taking the programme**

- counsellors change their negative outlook towards themselves and towards counselling as well
37. This programme has restored my energy and added to my experience in counselling
  38. Through my experience in supervision, I became more self-aware and conscious of my emotions. I had my own fears of leading a group of counsellors as I have always believed that a counsellor leader should be perfectionist. I only learnt the opposite in this diploma programme
  39. To be assigned for supervision along with twelve counsellors in the field is a great opportunity to enrich my experience and be confronted with the actual challenges of this profession, which only makes me more determined to challenge myself and reach the desired standard of work
  40. Volunteering in supervision was a major accomplishment as it hugely contributed in developing my professional personality in addition to allowing me to use my skills in my profession work.

## Conclusions and Recommendations – Diploma in Supervision

The CCE's Diploma in Supervision is a trail-blazer, the first of its kind, it is believed, in the Arab world. The results of the CCE's survey of those who have taken the programme are extremely positive, showing that respondents consider that they have substantively gained from this course. A major development has been the decision by the Ministry of Education to establish posts for professional supervisors of school counsellors. In July 2008, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched its *Education and Development Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Towards Quality Education for Development*. In the plan, the appointment of professional supervisors of school counsellors is set out under Educational Policies: Quality Education Component as follows:

“Adopting a professional supervision system in guidance and special education” (p105)

In Annex 4 of this document, (page 145), a plan is indicated “to train 77 educational counsellors in the skills of vocational supervision”. To date 35 supervisors who have graduated from the CCE's Diploma in Supervision course have been appointed, drawn from those who have successfully completed the Diploma in Supervision programme, with at least one supervisor in each district office. They will each be supervising 12 counsellors following the format developed on the Diploma in Supervision programme. They will eventually move to supervising 18 counsellors. These new appointees have been offered support and supervision from the CCE in their initial period of work, with the core trainer volunteering to provide this service. This is greatly valued by the Ministry and is a measure of his commitment to the programme. The Ministry has undertaken to appoint all those who successfully completed the programme in 2008-9 as supervisors, from September 2009. The Ministry hopes to appoint 77 supervisors in the period by 2011, in both the West Bank and Gaza. A new professional group has been established.

The development of field supervision of practice was a new initiative in the OPT in 2004, developed to support the Diploma in School Counselling and then extended to develop a professional supervision qualification process for school counsellors, acting as trainee supervisors with volunteer “supervisees” whilst on the Diploma in Supervision programme. The development of employed posts within the Ministry of Education for supervisors and the inclusion of these posts in the National Strategic Plan is a major achievement.

The survey of those who have taken the Diploma in Supervision programme has pointed to some areas that the CCE might wish to consider in future. These include

- Reviewing the curriculum and its timetabling in the light of suggestions made by those who have taken the programme

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- Preparing to modifying the supervision practicum to take into account the deployment of employed supervisors in all areas and possibly working in partnership with these supervisors to enhance the number of field visits
- Develop its approach to supervision in relation to individual case work, and maintain the focus on group guidance..
- Developing in-service training to train new supervisors to act as field supervisors for those taking the Diploma in Supervision
- Facilitate and mobilise a supervisor support network
- Advocate for the development of a structure within the Ministry of Education to support supervisors in their work
- Facilitate the participation of trained supervisors in dissemination activities, including conferences and exchanges.

## 5. Summary and conclusion

### **Overall impressions**

Participants' perspectives of both the Diploma in School Counselling and the Diploma in Supervision are, for the most part, extremely positive. The respondents to both surveys are able to chart their professional growth and development and it is clear that completion of their programmes of study has been a professional and personal achievement. Participants are confident in offering suggestions about how the courses might be developed further and in identifying their own professional development needs. A sense is derived of an increased sense of professional identity amongst both schools counsellors and those working as their supervisors. There is also a sense of increased standardisation in the approach to school counselling and the management of the work.

### **Do the CCE courses meet professionals' needs?**

The overall conclusions of the surveys is that for the most part, the Diploma programmes meet professional school counsellors' current needs. In relation to school counselling, participants consider that the Diploma course has offered them professional support and enabled them to develop both personally and professionally, particularly in their self awareness. They feel that they have developed their skills in providing group guidance in particular and that they are better able to plan and organise their work. An ongoing concern and development need expressed is the need to develop skills in the provision of individual counselling to school students. In relation to supervision, the main issue appears to be post-programme support of these workers as they move into their supervisory posts.

### **Lessons for the CCE**

Those who responded to both surveys have offered suggestions for the development of the programmes. In particular they have drawn attention to elements of the curricula which they consider need adjustment. They have also offered suggestions about the content of the programme. These are issues that the CCE may wish to keep under review in developing the programme in future. Participants also ask for increased field visits to support them in the application of learning to practice. This is an area which may be supported in future with the development of the supervision system. The CCE may wish to liaise with the Ministry of Education in relation to how employed supervisors might contribute to the learning of those taking the Diploma in School Counselling.

### **Institutional issues**

Participants draw attention to a number of institutional issues which they perceive impede their work as school counsellors. These issues include issues with their school administration, mostly in relation to a lack of understanding of their role and remit within their school setting. They also draw attention to conditions of service and the pressures some encounter due to having to work in two schools. The recognition of completion of a professional diploma in terms of progression in employment and salary scales is also an issue. These issues are not within the remit of the CCE to resolve. However it may be that some degree of public education on the role of school counsellors may be helpful.

### **The potential of the supervision system**

One of the strongest impressions is how professional supervision has gained acceptance amongst participants as a necessity for professional development. The full potential for the professional supervision system has yet to be fully tapped, however it is clear that the Diploma in Supervision has created a structure through which the ongoing development of the school counselling service can be realised. When the full complement of school counsellor supervisors are appointed by the Ministry of Education, these workers will be able to cascade new learning and development opportunities to those they supervise, and through field visits of observation ensure that new learning is applied in practice in working with school students. School supervisors have particular skills learned on the programme in relation to group guidance. It may be that in future this aspect of school counselling professional development could be supported through the supervision system, with the CCE providing more focus on individual work with school students. There is also a potential for developing those trained as

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supervisors to act as field supervisors for those on the Diploma in School Counselling and as trainers in specialist subjects.

### **Developing the system**

Given the strength of the positive findings from this study, the question must be asked as to how to enable other school counsellors in the OPT to have access to professional development programmes such as the Diploma in School Counselling. The Ministry of Education has strongly indicated its support of these programmes and its intention to all of its school counsellors to this standard. A shortfall also exists in the numbers of trained supervisors needed to implement fully the professional supervision system. The participants who responded to these surveys clearly indicate the value of these programmes. It is hoped that sufficient funding will be secured in the future to ensure the development and further implementation of these programmes to ensure that all school counsellors and their supervisors are able to access these or similar programmes.

## Appendix 1

### Survey for School Counsellors who have taken the Diploma in School Counselling programme at the CCE

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire because you have completed the Diploma in School Counselling at the CCE, Birzeit University. The questionnaire is part of the evaluation of the course. We want to find out what you think you have gained and learned from taking the programme and whether you think it has made any difference to the way you work as a school counsellor. We would also like to learn from you what you liked about the programme and what changes you would suggest. The questionnaire is anonymous. The results of this survey will be reported in a way which does not identify any individual.

#### **A: Demographics & personal characteristics**

Questions		Write your answer here
A1: What year did you complete the Diploma in School Counselling at the CCE?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2005</li> <li>2. 2006</li> <li>3. 2007</li> <li>4. 2008</li> <li>5. 2009</li> <li>6. Other – please state year</li> </ol>	
A2: Sex	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Male</li> <li>2. Female</li> </ol>	
A3: Age	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 20-29</li> <li>2. 30-39</li> <li>3. 40-49</li> <li>4. 50 - 65</li> </ol>	
A4: BA degree subject		
A5: Do you have a Masters degree?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes (<i>state date completed</i>)</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. Currently taking Masters course</li> </ol>	
A6: How many years have you been employed as a school counselor?		.....years
A7: Who do you work for?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ministry of Education</li> <li>2. UNRWA</li> <li>3. Private school</li> </ol>	
A8: District in which you work		

**B: Your decision to take Diploma in School Counselling course**

<b>B1: Please read the following statements carefully and tick one statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
d) I was sent on the Diploma course by my work. I did not choose to take the course	
e) It was suggested that I apply for the course. I was pleased to have this opportunity.	
f) I asked to take this course. I wanted to take it.	

<b>B2: Please read the following statements carefully and tick one statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
d) I had heard about the course from other school counsellors who had taken it. I knew a bit about the course before I applied.	
e) I did not know anything about the course before I applied. I did not know what to expect	

<b>B3: Please read the following statements carefully and tick one statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
d) Before I started the course, I felt I knew a lot about school counselling practice. I did not think I would learn anything new on the course	
e) Before I started the course, I felt that there were things about school counselling I needed to learn more about. I felt I was good at my job, but I still needed to develop my skills and knowledge	
f) Before I started the course, I felt a bit unsure of my work as a school counsellor. I was not sure if I was doing my job correctly. I knew I needed to learn more.	

**C: Was what you learned on the Diploma course useful to your work as a schools counsellor?**

The table below shows a list of the topics covered on the Diploma course. Please consider each of the topics and consider if the topic was directly useful to your work as a school counsellor.

		<i>Please tick one column only</i>		
	<b>Topics covered on the course</b>	<b>Useful – I have been able to apply what I learned on this topic in my work</b>	<b>Interesting – but not really useful to my work. I have not been able to apply this topic in my work</b>	<b>Not useful or relevant to my work as a school counsellor</b>
C.1	What is counselling. Counselling in Palestine. The Difference between counselling and guidance			
C.2	Personal development			
C.3	Group supervision			
C.4	Main theories of counselling (Behavioural/ Egan)			
C.5	Ethics and principles of counselling			
C.6	Group activities – group work and guidance classes			
C.7	Career counselling			
C.8	Using Drama			
C.9	Counselling skills (Egan)			
C.10	Child and adolescent development			
C.11	Group counselling			
C.12	Referral and networking			
C.13	Child rights and Child law			
C.14	Cognitive and behavioural problems			
C.15	Graduation project			

C:16 Please complete this sentence

For me, the most important topic on the programme was

.....  
 .....

**D. Consider the amount of time spent on the course on each topic. Do you think the time spent was about right, too much or too little?**

		<i>Please tick one column only</i>		
	<b>Topics covered on the course</b>	<b>The time spent on this topic was about right</b>	<b>Too much time was spent on this topic</b>	<b>Too little time was spent on this topic</b>
D.1	What is counselling. Counselling in Palestine. The Difference between counselling and guidance			
D.2	Personal development			
D.3	Group supervision			
D.4	Main theories of counselling (Behavioural/ Egan)			
D.5	Ethics and principles of counselling			
D.6	Group activities – group work and guidance classes			
D.7	Career counselling			
D.8	Using Drama			
D.9	Counselling skills (Egan)			
D.10	Child and adolescent development			
D.11	Group counselling			
D.12	Referral and networking			
D.13	Child rights and Child law			
D.14	Cognitive and behavioural problems			
D.15	Graduation project			

**D.16. Were there any topics or subjects missing from the course?**

**What other topics or subjects do you think should be covered on the course?**

 Write your ideas here

**E: Workshops for students and teachers and Head teachers**

This question is for those who completed the Diploma in School Counselling from 2007 onwards. If you completed the Diploma in 2005 or 2006, please skip this question and go to question F.

Since 2006, the CCE has hosted workshops with students, teachers and head teachers to hear their views about the school counselling service.

*Please tick in one column only*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Not Sure</b>
E:1 I heard about the views expressed by students and teachers at the workshops			
E:2 I thought the teachers and head teachers became more interested in working with me after attending the workshops			
E:3 I thought the students became more interested in working with me after attending the workshops			
E:4 I thought that the teachers and head teachers had a better understanding of my role after they attended the workshops			
E:5 I thought that the students had a better understanding of my role after they attended the workshops			



### G: Your graduation project

G:1 What was the subject of your graduation project?

 **Write here**

G:2 Was this the first time you had provided a planned sequence of sessions with a class?

**YES / NO** (*Please circle your answer*)

G:3 This question is for those who completed the Diploma course in 2007 and 2008 only

Since completing the Diploma programme have you been able to provide another sequence of planned sessions with a class?

**YES / NO** (*Please circle your answer*)

**If yes**, was this because you were part of a supervision group? **YES / NO** (*Please circle*)

**H: Have you any other suggestions about how the Diploma in School Counsellor course might be developed or improved?**

 **Write your ideas here**

### I. Are you working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in School Counselling?

Statements	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
I:1 The Diploma course helped me to have a better understanding of the role and work of a school counsellor	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:2 I am now able to plan my work better and set goals and objectives for my work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:3 I have a better relationship with my head teacher and teaching colleagues. They understand my role better than they did before and I work more with them.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:4 I have changed the way that I provide class guidance sessions. I am using more interactive methods in working with students	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:5 I am really doing the same in my work as I did before taking the Diploma programme	I agree	I disagree	I do not know

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<b>Statements</b>	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
I:6 I have developed and changed the way I provide counselling and support to groups of students. I have been able to use group work skills.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:7 I have developed and changed the way I work with individual students referred to me. I am using new skills learned on the programme	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:8 I think that children and young people should be consulted about my plan of work for the year.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:9 Supervision and personal development sessions helped me learn more about myself and make changes.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:10 I <b>do not</b> know what specialist services I should use for referral – such as child protection services	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:11 I do <b>not</b> think I need supervision of my work now. I know what to do and I do it.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:12 I valued professional supervision on the programme and feel that it is important for all professionals to have regular supervision	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:13 I learned a lot on the programme from other counsellors. I think helps my practice to have group supervision	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:14 I can <b>not</b> really put into practice what I learned on the Diploma course.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:15 As a school counsellor, I can help the school become a safer place for students. I can help to change things at school to help stop violence and abuse.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:16 It is hard for me to carry out my plans. I do not have regular guidance sessions timetabled	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:17 As a school counsellor, I am able to support students getting involved in decision making and developing their self confidence	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:18 It is easy for me now to put forward new ideas for working with teachers and students in my school.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:19 I now know when I need to get support for myself and who I should go to for help	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:20 I have learned about how to access materials I can use in my work and I regularly research and find new materials to use with students	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:21 The head teacher supports and understands my work in the school	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:22 It is important for me to work with parents and help them understand my work with their child	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:23 I am proud to be a school counsellor and feel that it is an important role that can make a real difference for children and schools	I agree	I disagree	I do not know

**J: What do you think you now need to develop yourself as a school counsellor?**

Statements	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
	A priority. I need this to do my work	This could be useful	Not needed
J.1 Regular supervision and observation of my practice			
J.2 The opportunity to meet regularly to develop ideas with other school counsellors in my area			
J.3 The opportunity to observe other school counsellors working with guidance classes			
J.4 The opportunity to attend workshops and training events			
J.5. The opportunity to attend conferences on school counselling			
J.6 The opportunity to take a Masters degree			
J.7 The opportunity to learn how to be a supervisor by taking a Diploma in Supervision course			
J.8 Access to on-line learning courses and professional reading materials			
J. 9 Other ideas for your professional development	 <b>Write your ideas here</b>		
J:10 Since finishing the course have you had field supervision for your work?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	
J:11 If <b>Yes to J:10</b> – who provides/ provided you with field supervision?	Ministry of Education new Supervisor	Trainee supervisor on the Diploma in Supervision course	
J:12 Do you currently have field supervision in your work?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	

**K: What do you think are the most difficult things a school counsellor has to deal with in their work?**

 **Write your views here**

**L: What other support do you think schools counsellors need?**

 **Write your views here**

**M:** What do you think has been your greatest achievement as a school counsellor?

 Write your views here

**N:** Would you be interested in attending a conference to hear the results of this survey ?

**YES / NO** (*Please circle your answer*)

**O:** Would you be interested in presenting an example of good practice in school counselling at this conference?

**YES / NO** (*Please circle your answer*)

**If yes,** please indicate what you would like to present

 Write briefly about your example here

**Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.  
Please return this to**

**CCE - email**

**Survey for those who have taken the Diploma in Supervision programme at the CCE**

You are being asked to complete this questionnaire because you have completed the Diploma in Supervision course at the CCE, Birzeit University. The questionnaire is part of the evaluation of the course. We want to find out what you think you have gained and learned from taking the programme. We would also like to learn from you what you liked about the programme and what changes you would suggest. The questionnaire is anonymous. The results of this survey will be reported in a way which does not identify any individual.

**A: Demographics & personal characteristics**

Questions		Write your answer here
A1: What year did you complete the Diploma in Supervision at the CCE?	7. 2007 8. 2008 9. 2009 10. Other – please state year	
A2: Sex	1. Male 3. Female	
A3: Age	5. 20-29 6. 30-39 7. 40-49 8. 50 - 65	
A4: BA degree subject		
A5: Do you have a Masters degree?	4. Yes ( <i>state date completed</i> ) 5. No 6. Currently taking Masters course	
A6: How many years have you been employed as a school counselor?		.....years
A7: Are you currently employed as a supervisor of counsellors/ social workers?	4. Yes 5. No <b>If yes</b> – in what year did you start this job?	
A8: Who do you work for?	6. Ministry of Education 7. UNRWA 8. Private school	
A8: District in which you work		

**B: Your decision to take Diploma in Supervision course**

<b>B1: Please read the following statements carefully and tick <u>one</u> statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
g) I was sent on the Diploma course by my work. I did not choose to take the course	
h) It was suggested that I apply for the course. I was pleased to have this opportunity.	
i) I asked to take this course. I wanted to take it.	

<b>B2: Please read the following statements carefully and tick <u>one</u> statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
f) I had never had professional supervision ( <i>translate as technical supervision</i> ) myself before taking this course	
g) Before taking the course, I had been in a supervision group with someone who was taking the Supervision Diploma at the CCE	
h) I had had professional supervision in my work before starting the course	

<b>B3: Please read the following statements carefully and tick <u>one</u> statement which you feel best applies to you</b>	<b><i>Please tick one statement only</i></b>
g) Before I started the course, I was working as a professional supervisor. I wanted to do this course to support me in my work.	
h) Before I started the course, I was working as a counsellor. I wanted to progress in my career to be a supervisor and I thought this course would help me achieve this goal	
i) Before I started the course, I just felt I wanted to learn more. I was not sure if I wanted to be a supervisor.	

**C: What is your opinion of the subjects covered on the Diploma in Supervision course?**

The table below shows a list of the topics covered on the Diploma course. Please consider each of the topics and indicate the statement you agree with

		<i>Please tick one column only</i>			
	<b>Topics covered on the course</b>	<b>Positively changed the way I see myself and my work</b>	<b>Useful to some extent</b>	<b>I knew this all already</b>	<b>Not relevant to me at all.</b>
C.1	Introduction to programme and role and responsibilities of the supervisor				
C.2	Counselling skills				
C.3	Review of counselling theories				
C.4	Behaviour problems and violence				
C.5	Theory and approaches to supervision				
C.6	Management of Supervision				
C.7	Supporting and helping supervisees				
C.8	Supervision Planning				
C.9	Appraisal and providing feedback				
C.11	Personal development				
C.12	Group supervision				

C:16 Please complete this sentence  
For me, the most important topic on the programme was

.....  
.....

**D. Consider the amount of time spent on the course on each topic. Do you think the time spent was about right, too much or too little?**

		<i>Please tick one column only</i>		
	<b>Topics covered on the course</b>	<b>The time spent on this topic was about right</b>	<b>Too much time was spent on this topic</b>	<b>Too little time was spent on this topic</b>
D.1	Introduction to programme and role and responsibilities of the supervisor			
D.2	Counselling skills			
D.3	Review of counselling theories			
D.4	Behaviour problems and violence			
D.5	Theory and approaches to supervision			
D.6	Management of Supervision			
D.7	Supporting and helping supervisees			
D.8	Supervision Planning			
D.9	Appraisal and providing feedback			
D.10	Personal development			
D.11	Group supervision			

**D.16. Were there any topics or subjects missing from the course?  
What other topics or subjects do you think should be covered on the course?**

 Write your ideas here

**E: Undertaking the practicum – group supervision**

On the Diploma in Supervision course, students are required to work with a group of up to 8 fellow counsellors in a supervision role. Please consider the following statements and indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement

*Please tick in one column only*

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
E:1 It was easy for me to set up a supervision group according to the criteria			
E:2 At the beginning, all my colleagues were pleased and enthusiastic about being part of my supervision group			
E:3 Spending time at the beginning drawing up group and individual agreements was important. It helped us all be clear about our roles			
E:4 At the beginning, I was nervous about working with a supervision group. I was not confident in my ability to manage the group			
E:5 At the beginning, I thought those I was supervising might not accept me in the role and that they might know more than me			
E:6 At the start, some people in my supervision group were suspicious about the supervision process and were defensive			
E:7 I found that I was able to use the skills I learned on the course to help the group start to work together			
E:8 I was able to help the counsellors I was supervising make an assessment of needs in their schools and draw up plans of work			
E:8 I felt that I was helping the counsellors learn new skills about how to plan their work and set objectives for work			
E:9 It was hard for me to keep the group working on tasks.			
E:10 In my group, people did not really open up about their personal feelings about the work			
E:11 Group supervision was helpful in enabling people to share ideas and come up with new approaches to the work			
E:12 Working in a group was very motivating for counsellors. It seemed to make them more enthusiastic about their work			
E:13 I was able to help the counsellors share the problems they were experiencing in the group, and find solutions together			
E:14 One or more counsellors in the group challenged me a lot.			
E:15 I needed support from the CCE supervisor to deal with issues and problems in the group			
E:16 By the end of the group supervision process, I felt the group was working well together. I was pleased with the outcome of their work			
E:17 I felt that I learned new things about myself from the experience of running a supervision group			
E:18 I learned to be more patient and calm			
E:19 I felt I developed my skills in facilitating others learning			

## School Counselling in Palestine: The development of the profession

Statements	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
E:20 I learned how to challenge others in a positive way			
E:21 I was surprised and pleased about how I worked with the group			
E:22 At the end of the group supervision process, I felt I would like to work in this way again.			

**F. Field Supervision and Individual Supervision.** These questions ask you about your experience of field supervision and individual supervision of counsellors.

Statements	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
F:1 Before I took this programme I had never observed another counsellor's work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:2 Before I took this programme, a field supervisor had observed my work as a school counsellor and given me feedback	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:3 I felt well prepared by the CCE to undertake field visits of observation	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:4 I understood what I was meant to be doing on field visits.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:5 The forms given to me by the CCE were useful in thinking about how to provide feedback to the counsellor	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:6 When I observed the counsellors, I learned new ways of doing guidance sessions which I had not thought about before	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:7 When I observed the counsellors for the first time in guidance sessions, I felt that most of the counsellors were talking at the students rather than enabling the students to discuss issues and discover new ideas	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:8 When I observed the counsellors for the first time in guidance sessions, I noticed that most of the counsellors used very interactive methods with students, such as small group work and role plays.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:9 Most of the counsellors I observed take the same approach in guidance sessions	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:10 When I gave feedback to the counsellors, I felt that most of them accepted this is a good way and were not defensive	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:11 Some of the counsellors I worked with did not accept my feedback	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:12 When I visited the counsellors for a second time, I felt that most of them had made changes in the way they worked, and that they had acted on my feedback	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:13 In individual sessions, I felt that it was difficult for counsellors to open up and talk about their feelings.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know

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Statements	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
F:14 I felt that I was able to offer new ideas about how to work to the counsellors	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:15 I think that counsellors do not really want support from a supervisor. They prefer to get support from someone else	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:16 I think most counsellors would be pleased to have supervision and would welcome it	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:17 I think that supervision might lead to better standards of practice in school counselling	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:18 Counsellors have a difficult job to do. A supervisor should be able to help the counsellor talk about their feelings and find solutions to their problems	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:19 As a trainee supervisor, I was able to help the counsellors develop their plans and written work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:20 My field supervisor did not really give me helpful feedback. I did not learn much from him and did not agree with what he said.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
F:21 When I was observed acting as a supervisor, my field supervisor gave me good ideas about how to develop my practice and I was able to apply these ideas in my work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know

**F:22** Thinking about your own experience of receiving field supervision as a trainee supervisor, what do you think you gained from this process ? Have you any suggestions about how field supervision might be improved?

 Write your views here

**H:** Have you any other suggestions about how the Diploma in Supervision might be developed or improved?

 Write your ideas here

**I. Are you working in a different way as a result of taking the Diploma in Supervision course?**

Statements	<i>Please tick in only one column for each statement</i>		
I:1 The Diploma course helped me to have a better understanding of the role and work of a school counsellor and a supervisor	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:2 I am now able to plan my work better and set goals and objectives for my work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:3 The personal development sessions and field supervision on the Diploma helped me learn more about myself and make changes.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:4 I have changed the way I relate to colleagues. I am better able to give feedback to others and accept feedback on my work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:5 I can <b>not</b> really put into practice what I learned on the Diploma course.	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:6 I now know when I need to get support for myself and who I should go to for help	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:7 I have learned about how to access materials I can use in my work and I regularly research and find new materials to use in my work	I agree	I disagree	I do not know
I:8 I feel that all counsellors should have professional supervision. It is an important role that can make a real difference for counsellors, children and schools	I agree	I disagree	I do not know

**J: What are your future plans?**

J:1 Please read the following statements carefully and tick <u>one</u> statement which you feel best applies to you	<i>Please tick one statement only</i>
e) Having taken the Diploma course, I would now like to be a professional supervisor	
f) I do not think the job of a professional supervisor would really suit me. I would prefer to be a counsellor/ social worker	
g) I am not sure if I want to be a supervisor or not.	
h) I am now employed as a professional supervisor	

**J. What do you think you now need to develop yourself?**

Statements	Please tick in only one column for each statement		
	A priority. I need this to do my work	This could be useful	Not needed
J.2 Regular supervision and observation of my practice			
J.3 The opportunity to attend workshops and training events			
J.4. The opportunity to attend conferences on school counselling and supervision			
J.5 The opportunity to take a Masters degree			
J.6 Access to on-line learning courses and professional reading materials			
J. 7 Other ideas for your professional development	 Write your ideas here		

**K: What do you think has been your greatest achievement since taking the Diploma in Supervision?**

 Write your views here

**L: Would you be interested in attending a conference to hear the results of this survey ?**

**YES / NO** (Please circle your answer)

**M: Would you be interested in presenting an example of your experiences as a supervisor at this conference?**

**YES / NO** (Please circle your answer)

If yes, please indicate what you would like to present

 Write briefly about your example here

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.  
Please return this to

CCE - email

