



***Shared Life Education in Israel's Public  
Education System  
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. SLE Objectives and Guiding Principles .....</b>	<b>4</b>
A. Objectives .....	4
B. Guiding Principles .....	6
<b>III. SLE in the Ministry of Education .....</b>	<b>7</b>
A. Minister of Education’s Office .....	7
B. Headquarters for Civics Education and Shared Life (HQ) .....	8
C. Current Forms of MOE / Civil Society Collaboration .....	9
<b>IV. SLE Program Models and Methods .....</b>	<b>10</b>
A. Encounters.....	10
B. Language studies & the cross-integration of teachers.....	12
C. Professional development of educational staff .....	14
D. Educational-content development.....	14
E. Bilingual schools .....	15
F. Strategies for systemic change.....	15
<b>V. Central Challenges in the SLE Field.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>VI. APPENDIX – PROGRAM MAPPING .....</b>	<b>17</b>
A. Encounter Programs by Model.....	17
B. Language Studies and the Cross-Integration of Teachers .....	22
C. Professional Development of Educational Staff.....	23
D. Educational Content Development .....	26
E. Bilingual Schools.....	27
F. Strategies for Systemic Change .....	28

## I. Introduction

Education in general and Israel's public education system in particular, are increasingly recognized as crucial to fostering stronger relations between Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel. In recent years, as concepts of shared society have become more deeply rooted in organizations working across societal divisions,<sup>2</sup> and as efforts toward social cohesion and the economic integration of Israel's Arab population have multiplied, the educational sphere has seen an upsurge of programs that incorporate shared life principles, and greater diversity and professionalism in their activity.<sup>3</sup>

This growing body of programs, now comprising the field of 'Shared Life Education' (SLE),<sup>4</sup> aims to provide the next generation of Jewish and Arab Israelis with tools, experience, and awareness for cultivating a shared society in a diverse and multicultural country. Generally, these programs advance concepts of equality and mutual respect, prevent and repair stereotypes, foster partnerships, increase cultural and linguistic familiarity, and promote the socio-economic integration of the Arab community in Israel.

Civil society and government leaders have long acknowledged that Israel's separated public education system,<sup>5</sup> while enabling Arab and Jewish students to preserve their respective culture, language, and identity, is also a primary contributor to lacking familiarity between the two communities,<sup>6</sup> and a challenge to equal opportunity. For over three decades, numerous civil society organizations have applied different forms of SLE in efforts to bridge this separation, in both formal and informal educational settings.<sup>7</sup> The past few years have seen SLE getting more attention from the Ministry of Education (MOE) as well, and more cooperation between civil society and the MOE in this field – as both entities increasingly acknowledge the value of SLE implementation in public schools, and its potential to systemically prevent and address inter-communal tensions and incitement. As a result, more civil society SLE programs and models have been scaled-up, adopted, and supported by the Ministry over the past few years, in conjunction with institutional programs and strategies developed within the MOE.

The amount of SLE programs in public schools has particularly increased in the two years since Operation Protective Edge in Gaza (2014) and the rise in tensions between Jews and Arabs within Israel – youth included – that followed.<sup>8</sup> The Ministry utilized SLE in response to these escalations, and has

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<sup>2</sup> See Task Force briefing paper on [Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#).

<sup>3</sup> Although shared life education occurs outside of schools as well (e.g. informal education programs, afterschool activities, and community-based initiatives), this paper focuses on implementation within the public school system, a priority for most civil society organizations in the field. Additionally, the current report maps programs operating in 1<sup>st</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade only, and does not cover pre-school SLE programs, of which there is a considerable amount. Programs focused on economic integration and skill-acquisition in the Arab community are also out of scope for the current paper, which maps SLE programs centered directly on relationship-building and mutual exposure between Arab and Jewish students and educators.

<sup>4</sup> Also known as Education for 'Shared Living' or 'Shared Society'.

<sup>5</sup> The education system is legally and formally divided into four separate 'streams' – state (*mamlachti*), state-religious (*mamlachti-dati*), Arab, and independent (*Haredi*, Christian, and other state-recognized private schools).

<sup>6</sup> A 2015 Raffi Smith survey among 400 12-18 year-old Israeli Arabs and Jews found 35% of Jews ages 12-18 had never spoken to an Arab youth, while 27% of Arab participants had not spoken with a Jewish counterpart.

<sup>7</sup> Efforts to engage Arab and Jewish youngsters in 'coexistence programs' to bridge and compensate for this separation have existed since the 1980s and 90s, and after a several-year hiatus in the early 2000s, resurfaced as Shared Life Education in the past decade, as detailed in the following section. See Task Force briefing paper on [Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#), p. 10-13.

<sup>8</sup> See Task Force briefing paper [Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel and the Summer of 2014: Assessments and Insights](#).

since employed it consistently in light of violent outbreaks in the West Bank and Gaza. Publicly acknowledging the role of education in rectifying societal rifts, Ministry of Education Director General Michal Cohen announced the following upon opening the 2015 school-year with a week dedicated to ‘tolerance education’, “*The education system is responsible for acting to correct these social ailments,<sup>9</sup> and for instilling our sacred values – the preservation of human dignity and liberty, morality and justice, love of humanity and mutual responsibility.*”<sup>10</sup>

In light of developments in the Ministry of Education’s approach to SLE, its increased cooperation with civil society bodies, and the significant growth in civil society SLE programs in the public education system at large, the current paper will provide an overview of the SLE field, including its objectives and guiding principles; opportunities and barriers to system-wide implementation; SLE models and methods; and a discussion of central challenges in the field as a whole. The Appendix presents a representative mapping of SLE programs in public schools by models and methods. Throughout the paper are internal hyperlinks connecting concepts to concrete examples.

## II. SLE Objectives and Guiding Principles

Two milestones bracket the pivotal shift between the educational programs of the 80s and 90s and the emergence of Shared Life Education as it exists today. The Events of October 2000—in which clashes with Israeli police resulted in the death of 13 Arab citizens—led to disillusionment with the efficacy of widely practiced ‘coexistence encounters’ and initiated a reevaluation of the field.<sup>11</sup> The term ‘coexistence’ itself came to be associated with pretense and futility and the field took a relative hiatus – in the public school system and at large.<sup>12</sup>

Gradually, guiding principles for more thorough educational initiatives were established, drawing on advances in the field of shared society. A notable stepping-stone and recognition of these developments was the Salomon-Issawi report, officially titled ‘*Education for Shared Life between Arabs and Jews,*’<sup>13</sup> which was commissioned in 2008 by then-Minister of Education Prof. Yuli Tamir, and continues to serve as a foundational theoretical framework for the field.

Today, the SLE field is characterized by a more sophisticated approach, that despite remaining informal, can be summarized with the following overarching objectives and principles, which respond to the societal dynamics and realities of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

### A. Objectives

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<sup>9</sup> Tolerance week was announced in light of [the deadly arson attack on the Dawabshe family](#) in the town of Duma and the [fatal stabbing of teenager Shira Banki](#) at the Jerusalem Pride Parade in summer 2015.

<sup>10</sup> [Official Ministry of Education Announcement](#) (Hebrew).

“[School Year to Open with Classes Teaching Tolerance.](#)” Times of Israel, August 2015.

<sup>11</sup> The dominant contact-theory method of the 1980s, involving facilitated encounters aimed to cultivate feelings of ‘togetherness’, made way for wide-spread ‘conflict resolution’ encounters in the 1990’s – after many Arab practitioners felt the previous formula did not address the acute challenges of their minority experience. The ‘theoretical model’, ‘narratives model’, and ‘shared projects’ models were also developed before 2000. [Report of the Public Committee to Formulate National Policies Regarding Shared Life Education between Jews and Arabs in Israel](#), Presented to Minister of Education Prof. Yuli Tamir, January 2009. (Hebrew/Executive Summary in English).

<sup>12</sup> See Task Force briefing paper [Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#), p. 10-13.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

- **Preventing & Addressing Stereotypes** – The Jewish and Arab communities in Israel are distinct in terms of religion, language, socio-economic status, national identity, and residence – with 90% of Arab citizens currently living in Arab towns and villages, and the Arab neighborhoods of Jewish towns.<sup>14</sup> Outside of few exceptions,<sup>15</sup> the education system reflects this division from the Ministry to the classroom – each community with its own educational leadership, principals, teachers, and language. Arab and Jewish youngsters therefore have few opportunities to meet or meaningfully engage with each other, which contributes to mutual ignorance, stereotyping, and fear, especially when coupled with escalated Jewish-Arab tensions.<sup>16</sup>

Recent studies and polls have found that many Jewish and Arab youths are unwilling to study in the same class, that a large portion of Jewish citizens are afraid to enter Arab villages, and that many Jewish parents do not want their child to share a school with Arab students.<sup>17</sup> Additional studies among school principals and teachers indicate that both Jewish and Arab youth frequently express prejudice toward the other community – often leaving educational staff confounded about how to address the situation.<sup>18</sup> However, one poll also found that 52% of Jews want to know Arabs better, and that 66% of Jews and 90% of Arabs believe coexistence is possible.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, a primary objective of SLE programs is to provide opportunities for meaningful engagement, which are structured to overcome or address prejudice as well as build on mutual curiosity and interest.

- **Sustainable Equality and Mutual Respect** – SLE practitioners believe that in order to ensure the efficacy, legitimacy, and long-term impact of their programs, they must acknowledge the needs, culture, and day-to-day realities of both communities. This includes addressing the different footing with which students enter SLE programs in terms of socio-economic status, access to education budgets, and academic achievement.

In terms of input, a recent report by the Knesset Research and Information Center has revealed an acute gap in budget allocation for the two streams to the benefit of Jewish

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<sup>14</sup> Shwed, Uri; Shavit, Yossi; Dellashi, Maisalon; Ofek, Moran, [Integration of Arab Israelis and Jews in Schools in Israel](#), Taub Center Policy Paper No. 2014.12, 2014, p. 325.

<sup>15</sup> See [Bilingual Schools](#) section.

<sup>16</sup> In the words of Israel Democracy Institute Vice President of Research Prof. Mordechai Kremnitzer, “...the fact that Israel has separate education systems is the primary catalyst for rooted prejudice toward the ‘other’... and a central cause of hostility between different population groups and trends of societal fragmentation.” Kremnitzer, Mordechai, ‘13 years to Kremnitzer Report’ in Avnon, Dan (ed.), *Civic Education in Israel*, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup> [A 2015 Raffi Smith survey](#) found that 45% of Jewish participants were unwilling to study in the same class with Arab counterparts – 39% of which shared the sentiment. [A comprehensive 2015 poll](#) among 800 participants by Raffi Smith on behalf of Achva College, found 54% of Jews are afraid to enter Arab villages and 36% of Jewish parents do not want their child to attend school with Arabs (85% of Jewish religious participants and 65% of Jewish right wing participants).

<sup>18</sup> A qualitative 2015 study among 50 *mamlachati*, *mamlachti-dati*, and Arab principals indicates principals frequently encounter prejudice among Arab & Jewish students, and feel torn between allowing self-expression and abating hostilities. Spiegel-Cohen, Gali, [Democracy Education, Israel 2015: Current Status](#), p. 9.

A 2015 research evaluation by the Center for Education Technology (CET) among 200 teachers found 71% of participating teachers encounter expressions of prejudice among students ‘sometimes’, 20% in ‘half of their classes’, and 9% in ‘most of their classes’. 47% stated these are influenced by current events. 48% avoid discussing ‘racism’ to a moderate or high degree, 35% feel ‘helpless’ when faced with racism in class. ‘Addressing Radicalism and Racism in the Classroom,’ Myriam Darmoni-Sharvit – Research Evaluation Findings, 2015.

Kashti, Or, “[The Education System’s Solution to Racism in the Classroom: Ignore It.](#)” Ha’aretz, October 2015 (Hebrew).

<sup>19</sup> See [Comprehensive 2015 poll](#) among 800 participants by Raffi Smith on behalf of Achva College (footnote 17).

students at every grade level, which escalates as students' age progresses, reaching a 68% gap by high school.<sup>20</sup> In terms of output, compared to their Jewish counterparts, Arab students score lower on standardized tests in most subjects,<sup>21</sup> are less eligible for higher education institutions,<sup>22</sup> and have a much higher percentage of dropout rates.<sup>23</sup> SLE programs therefore strive to address these disparities while simultaneously inhibiting them from sabotaging relationships. They do so partly by utilizing certain methods to establish an equal setting for SLE activities, as noted below.

- **Fostering Partnerships** – Today, SLE work strives to not only create encounter opportunities for students, but also to facilitate cooperation between Arab and Jewish educators, parent communities, regional authorities, and municipalities in conceptualizing, executing, and participating in SLE programs. Such joint processes, which would not occur without deliberate initiative, have been found more likely to produce sustainable contact and impact on students, schools, and the wider communities surrounding them.
- **Increasing the cultural and linguistic visibility of the Arab minority** – As previously mentioned, Jewish students hardly encounter Arab peers or educational figures. Moreover, outside of schools – in the Israeli public sphere – Arabic language and culture are largely absent<sup>24</sup> (e.g. on Israeli campuses,<sup>25</sup> Israeli media,<sup>26</sup> and the labor market<sup>27</sup>). SLE programs therefore seek to educate Jewish students about Arab culture in different ways, including language studies and direct exposure.

## B. Guiding Principles

There are four dominant guiding parameters aimed to fulfill SLE objectives, followed by both civil society organizations and the Ministry of Education:

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<sup>20</sup> Gap applicable to the lowest socio-economic cluster, which includes 65% of Arab students and 7% of Jewish students in Israeli high schools. In elementary school, there is a 24% budget gap between weakest Arab and weakest Jewish students, in middle school, a 48% gap. Winner, Assaf, [Data on Ministry of Education Budget Allocation for Schools by Sector](#), Knesset Research and Information Center, December 2015.

<sup>21</sup> 2013 Meitzav exams (elementary/middle school national exams by National Authority for Measurement and Evaluation in Education [RAMA]) indicate significant gaps between Jewish/Arab 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade students in science & technology studies, English, and math. 2012 PISA tests by OECD indicate significant gaps between Arab/Jewish 9<sup>th</sup> grade students in every socio-economic cluster. 2015 report by the Finance Ministry, Authority for the Economic Development of the Arab, Druze, and Circassian Sectors, and the Prime Minister's Office: A Systemic Program for the Economic Integration of Arab Society by Repairing Distortions in Governmental Budgeting Practices, 2015, pp. 38. See Arlozorov, Meirav ["Those who want to be Israeli, Have to be Israeli All the Way": How Arabs are Kept Poor and Disenfranchised.](#) The Marker, April 1, 2016 (Hebrew).

<sup>22</sup> About 23% of 17-18 year-old Arab students comply with minimum requirements for university admission, versus 47% of the general population. Shaviv, Merav; Binstein, Noa; Stone, Ari; Fudem, Ornan, [Pluralism and Equal Opportunity in Higher Education: Expanding Access for Arabs, Druze and Circassians in Israel](#), 2013, p. 28. Arab students comprise 13% of BA students in universities, 10% of MA students, 5% of PhD students, and 2% of faculty. Finance Ministry Report, 2015 (footnote 21), p. 37.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 46.

<sup>24</sup> Ak-Ghubari, Umar, ["How Israel Erases Arabic from the Public Landscape."](#) 972 Magazine, November 2015.

Cohen, Moshe, ["Poll: Israeli Jews not Interested, Comfortable with Arabic."](#) Israel National News, June 2015.

<sup>25</sup> Abu-Ras, Thair; Maayan, Yael, [Arabic and Arab Culture on Israeli Campuses: An Updated Look](#), Dirasat, Sikkuy, and The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, December 2014.

<sup>26</sup> Ring, Edan, ["Israeli Media Must Ensure Equal Representation for All."](#) Globes, December 2015.

<sup>27</sup> See Task Force briefing paper [Arab Citizen Employment in Israel – Critical Concern and Great Potential](#).

- **Long-term processes:** While previous ‘coexistence’ encounters were often sporadic and short-lived, SLE implementers now emphasize the importance of consistent, structured activity over a substantial period. For instance, nearly every encounter program in the current mapping has a minimum duration of one year and incorporates multiple stakeholders in the community to enhance sustainability.
- **Uni-national and binational activities:** The vast majority of SLE programs engage Jewish and Arab participants in both separate and joint activities – with the belief that in order to recognize and accept the ‘other’s’ narrative and culture, one must first reflect on and engage with their own.
- **Equal inclusion and representation of both communities:** SLE programs strive to engage an equal amount of educational staff and students from each community in both planning and implementation of programs, conduct activities in both Arabic and Hebrew, visit both Jewish and Arab towns and schools, and use pedagogic materials that represent and respect both cultures.
- **Systemic implementation & institutionalization:** The public education system not only includes nearly every Israeli student, but also sets the tone in terms of educational content, staff, and curricula for every school and classroom. Moreover, every civil society program must now gain the MOE’s approval in order to operate in schools. Civil society SLE programs, seeking to engage as many students as possible and integrate SLE values and content into the educational process, recognize the Ministry’s authority and tremendous reach via the public education system, which incentives most to work with and within the formal system, as opposed to launching informal after-school programs. Many SLE programs are developed with the education system’s structure and resources in mind from inception, with the belief that the more institutionally compatible their program is, the more likely for it to scale-up or even be systemically implemented. On the Ministry’s part, civil society organizations are valuable for their knowledge of the field, experience in piloting programs on the ground, skill, and innovation.

### III. SLE in the Ministry of Education

Currently, the vast majority of SLE programs in the public school system are initiated and implemented by civil society organizations that work with various Ministry departments in different capacities. In the past two years, most SLE programs initiated by the MOE have come from the Minister of Education’s office directly or from certain departments largely within the Pedagogic Administration, most notably – the *Headquarters for Civics Education and Shared Life* (HQ),<sup>28</sup> a body designated to implement SLE programs and provide professional development, pedagogic counsel, and materials on the subject.

#### A. Minister of Education’s Office

Programs advanced by the office of the Minister of Education have the advantage of being implemented system-wide and often with significant public awareness, but also risk being altered or discontinued with change in elected leadership.<sup>29</sup> In the 2013-2014 school year, former Minister of Education Shai Piron developed a program titled *‘The Other Is Me’*, designed to promote universal, tolerant values among

<sup>28</sup> For more on the HQ see Task Force briefing paper [Shared Society Between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel](#), p. 15-16.

<sup>29</sup> E.g. [6 different education ministers served between 2006-2015](#).

Israel's students via pedagogic materials, school events, designated coordinators, and a website stocked with activity resources in Hebrew and Arabic, among other initiatives.<sup>30</sup> Israel's subsequent Minister of Education Naftali Bennett, appointed in 2015, has acknowledged the central role of the education system in strengthening Jewish-Arab relations,<sup>31</sup> and while not formally discontinuing the program, has publicly emphasized the importance of preserving and studying one's own culture in order to recognize and respect the 'other's', declaring: "The other is not me, everyone is different."<sup>32</sup>

In 2015 Minister Bennett's office launched a \$7.9 million initiative, '**Continuous Hebrew**,'<sup>33</sup> to teach Hebrew to Arab students as a compulsory subject from kindergarten through high school—vital for cultural and economic integration of Arab citizens—but whether additional system-wide programs that directly advance SLE will be implemented is yet to be seen as of the writing of this paper.

## **B. Headquarters for Civics Education and Shared Life (HQ)**

The HQ is a department within the Ministry whose mission is to promote the fundamental values of mutual awareness and respect, and the prevention of incitement and intolerance among Israel's students. Although it is a small and financially limited body, over the past two years the HQ has worked to broaden the implementation of SLE by developing conceptual frameworks, language, and initiatives to make it more accessible to schools system-wide, and by improving methods of cooperation with civil society partners in the following ways:

- '**From Tolerance to Racism Prevention and Shared Life**' – This inter-departmental committee for addressing SLE was formed as a follow-up to former minister Piron's 'The Other Is Me' strategy, when the HQ partnered with several MOE bodies<sup>34</sup> to work toward systemic implementation of SLE programs and events in public schools. Examples of the Committee's activity thus far are the jointly released materials on tolerance education offered to schools at the beginning of the current school year, and the observance of annual events that promote social tolerance and equality in all Israeli schools, which were not previously compulsory.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the HQ is designing a structured assessment that will

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<sup>30</sup> 'The Other is Me' was designed to address multiculturalism and diversity at large, and the Arab-Jewish rift was one of many focal points. See Task Force briefing paper [Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel: Visions, Realities and Practices](#), p. 12-16.

See [Program Website](#): 'Sometimes I am Similar, Sometimes I am Different, but I am Always Equal' (Hebrew).

<sup>31</sup> Bennet, Naftali, "[Naftali Bennet on Israel's Jewish Terrorists.](#)" New York Times, August 7, 2015.

<sup>32</sup> Skop, Yarden, "[Bennet Slams Key Educational Program, Vows to Expand Heritage Studies.](#)" Ha'aretz, August 25, 2015.

<sup>33</sup> "[Arab Students Will Learn Hebrew from Kindergarten, Bennet announces.](#)" Jerusalem Post, August 14, 2015.

Ben-Porat, Ido, "[Bennet's Initiative: Teach Arabs Hebrew in Kindergarten.](#)" Arutz Sheva, August 13, 2015. [Official MOE Directorial Circular \(Hebrew\)](#).

<sup>34</sup> Including reps. of MOE Pedagogic Administration departments such as the Society and Youth Administration and SHEFI (consultative psychological service), reps. of each school stream, and the Training and Professional Development Administration.

<sup>35</sup> For two consecutive years (2014/2015), the MOE has dedicated a week of the school year to 'tolerance education' system-wide.

See Grave-Lazi, Lidar, "[Ministries to Launch Tolerance Week in Schools for Prevention of Racism.](#)" Jerusalem Post, November 13, 2014.

See "[School Year to Open with Classes Teaching Tolerance.](#)" Times of Israel, August 20, 2015.

As of Sept. 2015, Israeli schools are required to observe the National Day of Tolerance, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and Human Rights Day. The Pedagogic Administration provides general guidelines, activities, and pedagogic materials for these occasions [Official MOE Director-General Circular](#) (Hebrew).



help schools nationwide evaluate their individual capacity for implementing SLE, and tailor pedagogic intervention accordingly with the guidance of HQ staff.<sup>36</sup>

- **Hope for Partnership Education in Israel** – Under the leadership of President Reuven Rivlin, the HQ is collaborating with the President’s Office and the [Dov Lautman Forum](#) for Educational Policy to form a network of schools that promote ‘partnership education’. Schools that meet initial criteria are evaluated for their ability to implement professional development, joint learning with students from other sectors, and curricular integration of related subjects, among many additional parameters aimed to enhance dialogue and respect between diverse sectors. Select schools receive a presidential award for outstanding achievement.<sup>37</sup>
- **Improving Cooperation with Civil-Society Organizations** – As part of its holistic strategy for SLE implementation, the HQ brought together over 20 civil-society organizations in the SLE field this year, many of which have cooperated with it in the past, in order to assess their quantitative reach, stimulate collaborations, and map which schools are receiving which programs to distribute services more strategically. Participating organizations have since grown in number and continue to cooperate with the HQ and engage in follow-up meetings to remain informed on the progress of the department’s strategy and the optimal channels of SLE implementation in the public school system.

### C. Current Forms of MOE / Civil Society Collaboration

Civil society organizations and the MOE rely on one another in executing SLE programs; the MOE utilizes organizations as implementation vehicles, and organizations receive vital resources and reach by cooperating. The following are the primary forms of collaboration between the Ministry and civil society organizations.

- **Approval, supervision, and support with program and/or content development** – HQ staff and other MOE departments provide pedagogic counsel and supervision to numerous civil-society programs. As aforementioned, any program operating in public schools must be approved by the MOE.
- **Social Matriculation Diploma** – High schools participating in this [program](#) obligate their students to invest a certain amount of volunteering hours and community service toward a ‘social and community engagement’ certificate, in addition to their academic matriculation diploma. Numerous SLE programs now offer credit toward the diploma with the Ministry’s approval, which incentivizes student participation.
- **‘Gmul’ (remuneration) points** – These refer to 60 obligatory hours of professional development that teachers must fulfill annually. By crediting participation in SLE

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<sup>36</sup> For instance, some schools are not ready to conduct encounters, and would be better suited for professional development and/or uni-national programs. Assessment is conducted in cooperation with the [Sikkuy Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality](#).

<sup>37</sup> See [Hope for Partnership Education in Israel](#) online (Hebrew).

The Presidential Award Program for Partnership Education was implemented in the 2014-2015 school year, and awarded four Israeli schools from the Arab, *mamlachti-dati*, and *mamlachti* streams for their participation in SLE. Program implemented in collaboration with the [Lautman Fund](#).

professional development with *gmul*, the Ministry offers teachers monetary compensation for their engagement in the field.

**Funding** – While independent principals and schools may use a portion of their general budget for these activities, the MOE has three main funding channels explicitly for SLE activities: (i) The HQ funds encounter programs specifically, under the title of ‘Joint Initiative’, meaning the department matches civil-society organizations’ financial input. (ii) The HQ finances approved SLE-related professional development programs for teachers through civil-society organizations, which are often matched by philanthropic contributions. (iii) The Society and Youth Administration supports SLE projects that meet set criteria under the Encounters Regulation.<sup>38</sup>

- **Structural Implementation** – In rare cases, the Ministry does systemically adopt civil-society programs. Two examples are an Arabic studies program, [Ya-Salam](#), developed by the Abraham Fund Initiatives (TAFI), and a [program for integrating Arab teachers](#) into Jewish schools developed by the Merchavim Institute for the Advancement of Shared Citizenship in Israel. Both programs are now run by the MOE.<sup>39</sup>

Generally, civil-society programs seek close collaboration with the MOE for both the benefit and sustainability of their respective programs, and as part of rooting SLE into the public school system. All SLE programs included in the mapping below engage in at least one type of collaboration with the MOE and follow one of several SLE methods, which are detailed and mapped below.

#### IV. SLE Program Models and Methods

Today, a number of program models largely characterize the SLE field. Their descriptions and methods are listed below. Representative examples are included in the Appendix to this paper, which comprises a mapping of SLE programs by model. Click on the link at the end of each section for a list of programs in the Appendix.

##### A. [Encounters](#)

A program model that has been used for decades, student encounters include various frameworks that enable Jewish and Arab students to meet and undergo a constructive educational process through different forms of shared experience. Jewish-Arab encounter methods have undergone several transitions over the years.<sup>40</sup> Schools’ participation in encounters has gradually increased in the past decade; and although the quantitative reach of encounters in public schools remains somewhat limited,<sup>41</sup> the vast majority of experts in the field attest to a rising demand for such programs. In fact, as the mapping below reveals, encounters are now the most widely practiced method of SLE. Most

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<sup>38</sup> The total Encounters Regulation budget is NIS 2.5 million annually (recognized as modest by the MOE) for both Jewish-Arab and religious-secular encounters. See Task Force briefing paper [Shared Society between Jewish and Arab Citizens of Israel](#), p. 18.

<sup>39</sup> See [MOE’s 500 Teacher Program](#), and [Ya-Salam](#).

<sup>40</sup> See [SLE Objectives & Guiding Principles](#) section.

<sup>41</sup> Mainly due to budget constraints and the fact that such programs are not obligatory. School principals and parent communities may choose from a myriad of extracurricular programs within the scope of limited budgets allocated for these purposes.

encounter programs combine several methodological approaches,<sup>42</sup> and use one of the three program types below:

- **School twinning** – A group of students (usually one or two grades/age groups) are selected from respective Jewish and Arab schools to engage in a long-term (1-3 year) structured encounter program guided by outside program staff and/or instructors from each school. Many of these partnerships are formed between schools in common or adjacent regions, most of which engage in consecutive twinning, year after year.

For a list of programs [click here](#)

- **Common interest activities** – These encounters center on the joint engagement of Arab and Jewish students in enrichment or extracurricular activities related to arts, the environment, technology, sports, etc. Implementers of this model utilize joint interest activities as a vehicle for bridging cultural barriers, underscoring commonalities, and building relationships.

For a list of programs [click here](#)

- **Joint learning** – These encounters merge Jewish and Arab students (either physically or virtually) to engage in the joint study of an academic subject or a project inside the classroom. Instructors from each school lead the class together, in both languages.

For a list of programs [click here](#)

In addition to the primary methodological emphases of SLE programs described earlier,<sup>43</sup> program implementers named the following as methods specific to encounter models, aimed to yield more sustainable, far-reaching results and community-wide legitimacy for Jewish-Arab encounters:

- **Common incentives** – One of the primary conclusions of SLE practitioners over the years, is that engaging students and schools is more feasible when some form of ‘added value’ is included in the encounters, such as sports or arts, educational resources, language exposure, points toward a [social matriculation diploma](#), or other attractive motivators. As aforementioned, on the Arab side this is often a pragmatic advantage, as these programs provide economically limited Arab schools with resources and informal education opportunities that would otherwise be inaccessible.<sup>44</sup>
- **Region and Community** – Even in mixed towns and regions in which Jews and Arabs live alongside one another, homogenous neighborhoods/towns and limited contact means students are often unaware of the most basic facts about their neighbors, down to the location and proximity of their town or village. To extend the impact of SLE beyond encounters and into the home and community, many programs work to foster a common ‘regional identity’, and prioritize parent involvement by inviting families to encounters and

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<sup>42</sup> While previous ‘coexistence’ encounter programs more strictly followed specific models, most current encounters combine methods such as contact theory, shared projects, conflict theory, etc. For more on different encounter models, see [Report of the Public Committee to Formulate National Policies Regarding Shared Life Education between Jews and Arabs in Israel](#), Presented to Minister of Education Prof. Yuli Tamir, January 2009. Full report (Hebrew with Executive Summary in English), p. 50-53.

<sup>43</sup> See [SLE Objectives & Guiding Principles](#) section.

<sup>44</sup> See [SLE in the Ministry of Education](#) section.

joint community events. This is often true for school-twinning programs that pair nearby schools.

- **Educational staff and school-wide impact** – Nearly all encounter programs included in the current mapping involve a professional-development aspect, training teachers to facilitate encounters without the aid of outside program-staff, and transforming them into long-term agents of change within the school. Many implementers also work to ‘embed’ programs into schools by involving principals, initiating school-wide events, or displaying joint projects in shared school space. Engaging the school at large and generating long-term impact is often a challenge, as budget limitations mean only a single class or group from each school get to participate.

For a list of Encounter Programs [click here](#)

## B. [Language studies & the cross-integration of teachers](#)

Hebrew and Arabic are both official languages in Israel and policy dictates that both be taught in schools, albeit to varying degrees. Jewish and Arab students each study in their respective language, and research indicates that neither Jews nor Arabs graduate with the optimal level of proficiency in the language of their counterparts.<sup>45</sup> SLE practitioners therefore view Hebrew/Arabic studies as necessary for improving communication and linguistic skill, but also regard language as a "cultural bridge" – a transmitter of cultural history, narrative, and lifestyle.<sup>46</sup> Thus, SLE programs under this category offer Arab/Jewish students spoken Hebrew/Arabic classes that incorporate both skill acquisition and content about the respective lifestyle and culture of each community, and are taught by native speakers.

Among Jewish students, Arabic is only compulsory between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade – a requirement that is not predominantly enforced.<sup>47</sup> The results of a recent study published by the Van-Leer Jerusalem Institute suggest that historically, Arabic has either been taught or perceived primarily as a security or military-related skill.<sup>48</sup> While it is indeed valuable in terms of Israeli security, many educators believe this approach negates the study of Arabic for the purposes of societal cohesion. Most Jewish students do not take the Arabic matriculation exam<sup>49</sup> nor graduate with functional knowledge of the language.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, the absence of Arab teachers from the Jewish educational stream means Jewish students

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<sup>45</sup> For more on the current status of Arabic in Israel and its history, see Task Force webinar [Language as a Bridge: Arabic Studies in Israel and Prevalence on Campus](#).

<sup>46</sup> See Lichtenstein, Josh, "[Language as a Cultural Bridge](#)." Ynet News, April 2009.

<sup>47</sup> Only 40 Jewish high-schools enforce compulsory Arabic in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and 200 offer it as optional in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. The *mamlachti-dati* (religious) stream, special education schools, and technological schools are exempt from Arabic studies. Barack, Ya'ara, "[Education Minister Shai Piron Cuts Back Arabic Studies](#)." Galatz (Army Radio), January 2014 (Hebrew). [According to MOE data](#) (Hebrew), in 2013 140,000 Jewish students studied Arabic, and about 100,000 studied it as a compulsory subject in middle school.

<sup>48</sup> 57.8% of Jewish Israelis believe that knowledge of Arabic is important, but a larger majority, 65.4%, believe it is important for 'security related reasons'. Shenhav, Yehouda; Dallashi, Maisalon; Avnimelech, Rami; Mizrachi, Nissim; and Mendel, Yonatan, [Command of Arabic among Israeli Jews](#). Van Leer Publishing, 2015 (study facilitated by Manarat: Van Leer Center for Jewish-Arab Relations and the Sociology & Anthropology Department of TA University in cooperation with the Dirasat Arab Center for Law and Policy, and [Sikkuy](#)). For more see Kashti, Or, "[Know Your Enemy: How Arabic is Taught in Israel's Jewish High Schools](#)." Ha'aretz, September 2008.

<sup>49</sup> In 2014, only 10,000 Jewish students took the Arabic matriculation exam each year versus 150,000 who took the English matriculation. "[Education Minister Shai Piron Cuts Back Arabic Studies](#)." (footnote 47).

<sup>50</sup> Based on a 500-person sample group, 10% of Israeli Jews claim to speak or know Arabic 'well'; 2.6% can read a newspaper in Arabic; and only 1% can read Arabic literature. Shenhav, Yehouda; Dallashi, Maisalon; Avnimelech, Rami; Mizrachi, Nissim; and Mendel, Yonatan, [Command of Arabic among Israeli Jews](#). Van Leer Publishing, 2015 (footnote 48).

learn Arabic with teachers who do not speak it as a mother tongue and rarely, if ever, encounter an Arab authority figure.<sup>51</sup>

Arab students on the other hand, are obligated to study Hebrew from 3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade and to complete a matriculation exam on the subject. In light of Minister Bennet's '[Continuous Hebrew Initiative](#)', they will now begin learning Hebrew as early as pre-school. Although Hebrew proficiency is stronger among Arabs relative to their Jewish counterparts' Arabic, their exposure to the language outside of school is quite limited,<sup>52</sup> and their scores on standardized Hebrew tests often fail to meet the demands of higher education institutions.<sup>53</sup> Research indicates a recent regression in Arabs' level of conversational Hebrew as well, which is due to several factors both inside and outside of the education system.<sup>54</sup> As is the case in the Jewish stream, Arabs are taught Hebrew by instructors from their community,<sup>55</sup> which limits their exposure to native Hebrew speakers as well as content that introduces job-market relevant professions and the lifestyle and culture of Israel's Jewish majority.

The following programs were developed in order to address these challenges by using language studies as a form of SLE – with the belief that language is a vehicle of communication as well as mutual recognition, legitimization, and access to the 'other's' culture and lifestyle. They do so in several ways:

- **Cross-integrating teachers** – These programs place Jewish teachers in Arab schools and Arab teachers in Jewish schools to teach their native language. Program implementers strive to expose not only students, but also school at large to the integrated member of the other culture, including fellow teachers and administrators. Following the success of teacher integration through language programs, the Merchavim Institute initiated a cross-integration program for Arab teachers of math, science, and English as well as Arabic, which was adopted by the MOE in 2013 as the '[500 teacher integration program](#)'.
- **Speaking skills and cultural exposure** – Instructors teach the spoken, contemporary language used by each community rather than the grammar-focused versions usually taught in schools according to formal MOE curricula. The content incorporates subjects such as holidays, food, family, songs, and favorite pastimes and activities – intended to enhance students' sensitivity to the lifestyle, culture, and religion of their peers.
- **Incorporating shared life education** – Beyond language instruction, teachers receive pedagogic materials and training to address questions about their culture, and manage instances of prejudice in the classroom. Essentially, program implementers view these language classes as a type of 'encounter'– students are exposed to their teachers' culture and vice versa. Some organizations also offer actual encounter programs to accompany the language courses, in order to deepen and extend their impact.

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<sup>51</sup> According to MOE data, in 2013 there were 1,300 Arabic teachers in the Jewish public education system, and only 13% (170) were Arab. Skop, Yarden, "[Why there is No Chance Your Children Will Learn Arabic](#)." Ha'aretz, April 16, 2014.

<sup>52</sup> A 2015 RAMA evaluation among 5,000 Arab, Bedouin, and Druze students indicated overall 'medium' exposure (47%) to Hebrew outside of schools. Task Force webinar [Spoken Hebrew Proficiency in the Arab Public Schools](#).

<sup>53</sup> For instance, 32% of Arabs pass the Hebrew matriculation exam as opposed to nearly 60% of Jewish peers. [Ibid](#).

<sup>54</sup> Central causes include enhanced availability of Arabic media sources, the industrial development of Arab towns, and strengthened national Palestinian identity among Arab citizens in Israel. Abu-Ras, Thabet & Be'eri -Sulitzeanu, Amnon, "[The Path to Minimizing Gaps Extends into Hebrew Studies](#)." The Marker Magazine, September 2015 (Hebrew).

<sup>55</sup> Aside from Jewish Hebrew teachers deliberately integrated into Arab schools by [Yihiyeh Beseder](#) or [Hebrew Ba'salam](#), Hebrew is mostly taught by Arab teachers in the Arab stream.

For a list of Language Studies & Teacher Integration Programs [click here](#)

### C. [Professional development of educational staff](#)

Program directors and educators interviewed for the current paper consistently stressed the importance of SLE professional development for educators in general and teachers in particular, for two primary reasons:

- Many teachers and educators have stated they are missing the tools and materials necessary for addressing prejudiced comments among students following Arab-Jewish escalations and incitement, and are unsure as to the MOE's policy on the matter.<sup>56</sup>
- Teachers are widely recognized as potential long-term agents of change within their schools who can influence hundreds of students and fellow educators overtime.

Studies suggest that many teachers receive very little professional training in SLE if at all,<sup>57</sup> and professional development MOE programs on the subject are one option of many and are not compulsory.<sup>58</sup>

Most SLE training for teachers is provided by civil society organizations in collaboration with the MOE, and teaching colleges that advance SLE through various programs. The former targets teachers in the public education system, while the latter incorporates SLE into teacher training prior to their entry into public schools.

For a list of Professional Development Programs [click here](#)

### D. [Educational-content development](#)

Content development to accompany SLE work has become a focal point in the past few years, and serves a multitude of purposes. Teachers have reported a lack of educational resources on SLE, as well as insufficient academic materials on communities that carry negative labels in Israel.<sup>59</sup> Along with manuals and lesson plans developed to accompany certain organizations' encounter and/or language programs,<sup>60</sup> certain SLE programs focus on the direct or indirect integration of SLE into the pedagogic materials used in schools. Direct integration involves manuals, lesson plans, and media that accompany SLE activities, and indirect refers to incorporating SLE concepts into texts on core academic subjects, in

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<sup>56</sup> 'Addressing Radicalism and Racism in the Classroom – Research Evaluation by Center for Education Technology', Darmoni-Sharvit, Myriam, 2015 (see data in footnote 18); Kashti, Or, "[The Education System's Solution to Racism in the Classroom: Ignore It.](#)" Ha'aretz, October 2015 (Hebrew source); Skop, Yarden, "[Jerusalem Teachers Warn of Increase in Racism after Gaza War.](#)" Ha'aretz, August 2014; Hasson, Nir, "[Workplaces Discipline Israeli Arabs for Facebook Posts against Gaza Incursion.](#)" Ha'aretz, July 23, 2014; Gerlitz, Ron, "[Not Just Escalation: A Frightening New Era of Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel.](#)" +972 Magazine, July 12, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> [IDI's Guttman Center for Surveys](#) found 82% of high school principals say 'few' teachers in their schools participate in prof. development on democracy education; 52% of elementary school principals do not conduct prof. development programs on tolerance, democracy, or civics; 33% of participants in such programs cooperate with civil society or municipal organizations outside MOE. Cohen, Hanan (under the guidance of Prof. Tamar Hermann), [Survey Among School Principals: Addressing Democracy Content in Schools](#). IDI, 2015 (Hebrew).

Cohen, Adar, [What More Must We Do to Fight against Radicalism and Racism in the Education System?](#), 2015, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup> Teachers may choose from a variety of prof. development programs to fulfill annual [gmul](#) requirements.

<sup>59</sup> CET survey (footnote 18) showed 40% of teachers report insufficient educational resources for addressing incitement in the classroom; 43% report insufficient materials concerning "negatively stigmatized social groups".

<sup>60</sup> Such as encounter and language programs [by The Abraham Fund Initiatives and Merchavim](#).

order to eschew stereotypes and represent the diverse cultures of Israeli society within the general curriculum.

**For a list of Educational Content Initiatives [click here](#)**

#### **E. [Bilingual schools](#)**

Bilingual schools provide an alternative to the separate education streams, and are a rare exception in the public school system.<sup>61</sup> Recognized by the Ministry of Education as public schools, they merge an equal (or close to equal) amount of Jewish and Arab students and educational staff, equally incorporating both communities' language and culture into pedagogic content, instruction, and school activities.

Common to educators in every bilingual school, is the belief that students must understand and accept their unique cultural identity in order to respect the 'other's'. Despite various differences in curricula, methods, and focus areas, the schools abide by the following parameters in order to ensure both cultures are respected and represented despite the demographic merge:

- Maintaining a ratio of Jewish and Arab students that is as close to 50/50 as possible, and having two teachers, one from each community, instruct many if not all classes in both Hebrew and Arabic.
- Giving both cultures and narratives equal recognition and visibility through pedagogic approach and materials, school events, and structural regulations.<sup>62</sup>
- These public schools are part of the *mamlachti* (Jewish-secular) stream, and are prescribed educational materials accordingly. Therefore, each develops additional educational resources and programs on subjects such as history, geography, and religion to suit their multicultural school environment. All schools address and emphasize cultural distinctions and commonalities using a variety of pedagogic and experiential methods.
- All schools share the goal of fostering bilingual students with equal mastery of Arabic and Hebrew as a vital component of a more shared and tolerant Israeli society.

The schools also share common challenges, the most significant of which is the need to employ a double amount of educational staff and pedagogic resources that are not funded by the MOE. An additional challenge is cultivating Arabic fluency among Jewish students, and the schools continue to adjust their models in order to achieve more uniform results.

**For a list of Bilingual Schools [click here](#)**

#### **F. [Strategies for systemic change](#)**

While most SLE organizations apply their programs within schools, a number of initiatives target policy change exclusively and work with government and/or institutional leadership. They do this by advising or assisting the Ministry of Education in the development of systemic strategies, conducting relevant research, or convening SLE advocates in active forums and conferences in order to enhance impact and collaboration.

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<sup>61</sup> There are currently 8 bilingual schools in Israel run by three different organizations.

<sup>62</sup> For instance, Jewish, Christian, and Muslim holiday vacations are all observed in the annual school calendar, which is adjusted to include the compulsory amount of school days by reducing other 'secular' vacations.

For a list of Strategies for Systemic Change [click here](#)

## V. Central Challenges in the SLE Field

In recent years, the growing amount and diversity of SLE in the public education system reflects a rise in both recognition and demand for these programs, and the concerted efforts of SLE practitioners to work effectively with the Ministry of Education. The enhanced professionalism and sophistication of SLE today, especially when compared to earlier encounter-based models, have made it attractive to educators and have enhanced its legitimacy as an important avenue for addressing fluctuations in Jewish-Arab relations in Israel – especially in light of inter-communal escalations over the past two years and as of the writing of this paper. The field has established a relatively cohesive set of methodological and educational practices, which also means such programs are now more labor intensive and require extensive coordination, skilled educators, and MOE-compatible programs for the purposes of achieving scale. The human and financial resources necessary for effective implementation are therefore the foremost pragmatic challenge of the field today.

For civil society bodies, partnering with the Ministry is highly advantageous in terms of enhanced access to schools and government resources, but can also be quite challenging considering vast competition among different programs in the field, limited government budgets for such purposes, and bureaucratic processes that sometimes hinder implementation. Additionally, fund-matching frameworks with the MOE are often out of scope for both large and small civil society organizations, which are unable to meet the MOE's financial capacity.

An additional challenge in working within the public education system, common to both MOE and civil society bodies, is motivating schools to use their own budget and credit with the community toward implementing SLE programs, due to limited school funds for informal education and occasionally, resistance from parents. Schools are most often 'recruited' for SLE programs via school principals, who are the ultimate decision-makers in selecting enrichment programs, and usually trusted by parents such that even the reluctant tend to heed their decision. On one hand, this is beneficial to SLE operators as it creates a 'ground-level' channel into schools in addition to top-down implementation through Ministry representatives. On the other, it leaves implementation dependent on individual choice, as SLE programs are not yet compulsory.

Another byproduct of case-by-case implementation is that there is far more demand for programs in the Arab stream than the Jewish stream, partly stemming from the pragmatic objective of the former to access rare enrichment opportunities – which often leaves professional development, encounter programs, and school-twinning initiatives without a Jewish group to parallel Arab participants. As there is no policy currently enforcing SLE in every Israeli school, lack of Jewish participation in certain regions sometimes prevents programs from being developed or realized.

Despite the optional status of SLE in public schools and limited resources, which are significant challengers and mobilizers of the SLE field, forms of cooperation between civil society organizations and the Ministry of Education continue to grow, diversify, and prove their efficacy. The governmental and social incentive to better integrate Israel's Arab community into the economy and at large, coupled with persisting Arab-Jewish tension and lack of contact, continue to underscore the need for SLE as a way to



mend and prevent escalation among Israel's younger generations, and better equip its population of educators.

## VI. APPENDIX – PROGRAM MAPPING

### A. [Encounter Programs by Model](#)

#### [School - Twinning](#)

##### **CTC – Children Teaching Children, Givat Haviva**

CTC is a two-year civics studies and dialogue program, designed to help Arab/Jewish 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students and educators in the Wadi-Ara region cope with issues of national identity, shared citizenship, and conflicting narratives among themselves and with one another. Currently operating in 7 pairs of Jewish and Arab schools in the Wadi-Ara region, CTC is one of the most veteran encounter programs in Israel, and has reached over 30,000 teachers and students in its 27 years of operation.. The program is partly funded by the MOE.

##### **Shared Life Project, [AJEEC - NISPED](#)**

The program began approximately five years ago when no other systematic shared life program was operating in the Negev, and now engages groups of 15-20 high-school students from 8 pairs of Bedouin and Jewish schools in the region. The Shared Life Project emphasizes Negev-related issues (such as unrecognized villages and local identities) and works to promote shared life values and mutual familiarity among its Bedouin and Jewish participants – who plan tours of their town or village for the twin group. The three-year program was developed with the full participation of MOE staff (Youth and Society Administration), and is structured to earn participants points toward a [Social Matriculation Diploma](#). AJEEC trains teachers in the school rather than insert its own staff – with the school and MOE's independent implementation as its ultimate goal.

##### [A New Way](#)

The program currently twins over 20 schools nation-wide, engaging Arab/Jewish students from pre-school through high school in 1-2 year encounter programs involving drama, music, and outdoor activities (uni-national and binational). Driven by a community focus, A New Way works to involve parents, teachers, principals, and key figures in local councils. An extensive research evaluation on the program by Tel-Aviv University indicates that participating students respond more favorably post-program when asked, for instance, if they would invite students from the other school to their home or live with them in the same neighborhood, and several participating communities have initiated joint projects following the program. In its 17 years of activity, A New Way has worked with 50 schools in 32 communities. In the 2014-2015 school year, two schools participating in A New Way programs were among the recipients of the [Presidential Distinction for Partnership Education](#).<sup>63</sup>

##### [Ya-Salam Encounters – The Abraham Fund Initiatives \(TAFI\)](#)

For the past 7 years, this program has twinned pairs of Jewish and Arab schools that share geographic or municipal proximity. The three-year program includes uni-national and binational activities for both teachers and students (respectively), with the goal of cultivating partnerships between schools through

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<sup>63</sup> The Amal Multidisciplinary School for Science and Art - Hadera won the Presidential Award for Partnership Education. Ort-Salame won a mark of distinction.

both students and educational staff. Adult participants discuss cultural and national issues more directly, while students address these subjects through interactive activities that reveal common interests as well as cultural singularity (music, favorite past-times, and traditions). Ya-Salam encounters are currently implemented in 16 pairs of schools, many of which also integrate the [Ya-Salam language program](#). The program operates in full collaboration with the MOE (HQ), which funds [gmul](#) points for professional-development seminars involving principals and education coordinators.<sup>64</sup>

#### **Encounter Program – [Israel Sci-Tech Schools](#) (ISTS)**

As part of its overall strategy to infuse shared life education into its diverse, nation-wide school network, ISTS currently twins 15 Jewish and Arab schools, engaging students (mostly 10<sup>th</sup> graders) in uni-national and bi-national activities over the course of a full year. ISTS offers professional support to participating teachers and principals, as well as resources to enable related activities (such as field trips). The network believes in providing educational staff with the tools to form relationships with other schools and implement shared life programs independently.

#### **Encounter Program – [AMAL School Network](#)**

The diversity of schools included in the AMAL school network lends itself to cross-sectoral education, which the network's pedagogic administration has made an overarching institutional goal. By partnering with civil society organizations such as [AJEEC-NISPED](#), [A New Way](#), and the [Jacobs International Teen Leadership \(JITLI\)](#),<sup>65</sup> AMAL has twinned Arab and Jewish schools within its network, engaging them in various forms of SLE, such as arts activities, contact and dialogue groups, and a combination of uni-national and binational activities. In the current year, 8 AMAL schools are engaged in AJEEC's twinning program, and 4 in JITLI's 'Together Toward Tomorrow' program.

#### **Bridges for Peace – [ISTS](#)**

In partnership with the Peres Peace Center and Google, 10<sup>th</sup> grade students from 14 pairs of Arab and Jewish ISTS schools participate in a 1-2 year structured program in which they conduct a series of virtual (via Google hangouts) or physical encounters, working together toward a joint product that will influence their community in the spirit of shared life education.<sup>66</sup> The program has been operating for three years and includes a teacher-training component as well.

#### **[Youth Parliament](#) – Citizens Accord Forum (CAF)**

For four consecutive years, CAF has twinned Arab and Jewish schools in the mixed cities of Akko, Tel-Aviv, Lod, and Haifa. Groups of 15 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> graders are chosen from each school to engage in a leadership program and jointly initiate and execute shared life projects in the cities, accompanied by a Jewish and an Arab teacher from each group. Meetings are bilingual, and participants engage in both uni-national and binational activities that include shared dialogue and personal introductions, discourse on the reality of both communities, and the selection of a joint project.<sup>67</sup> CAF's Youth Parliament is supported

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<sup>64</sup> Teachers are not given [gmul](#) points for encounters themselves. In fact, TAFI considers their participation despite lack of monetary incentive one of the program's successes.

<sup>65</sup> JITLI is a youth leadership program founded by Gary and Jerri-Ann Jacobs with the assistance of the San-Diego UJF, dedicated to developing leadership skills through cross-cultural activity between American-Jewish, Arab/Bedouin-Israeli, and Jewish Israeli youth.

<sup>66</sup> Such as a joint Jewish-Arab *moreshet* (heritage) website, a jointly composed song or play, a joint field trip through Akko planned by the students, and more.

<sup>67</sup> Such as initiating the cleanup of an Akko beach, annual events for Arab and Jewish youth, and dialogue circles.

by educational departments in the local municipalities and/or school principals, who compensate teachers for their time.

### **Common Interest Activities**

#### **Class Exchange Program – Arab-Jewish Community Center, Jaffa (AJCC)**

With the goal of facilitating early exposure among students from the Arab and Jewish communities of Jaffa, the program engages 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders from 4 local Jewish and Arab schools (80 students a year) in weekly bi-lingual dance, art, theater, and music activities with professional AJCC staff, joint field-trips, and discussions on diversity and multi-culturalism. The program was initiated approximately 5 years ago, and recently received the Intercultural Achievement Award in Innovation from the Austrian Embassy. A consistent evaluation has indicated significant improvement in students' acceptance of one another and reduced prejudice.<sup>68</sup>

#### **Encounter Program – Ein-Dor Museum**

The Kibbutz Ein-Dor Museum is located in a multicultural environment in which Arabs, Jews, Druze, and Circassians live in close proximity. The museum engages participating schools in a yearlong encounter program involving heritage-centered activities through which students explore the human experience and customs of the pre-historic societies that once inhabited their shared region, using the exhibited archaeological artifacts in the museum. Ein-Dor Museum currently runs 2 twinning programs between 4 local pairs of Jewish and Arab middle schools and one pair of 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes (approximately 600 students).

#### **Let's Meet Through Art – MITVEH Center for Promoting Art in Education**

Operating for the past 6 years, MITVEH currently engages 5<sup>th</sup> graders from 3 Negev schools: 2 Bedouin and 1 Jewish, in a year-long program of joint art workshops at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, the Joe Alon Bedouin Heritage Museum in Be'er Sheva, and within their respective communities. The program uses art and creativity as 'infrastructure' for cross-sectoral communication and mutual respect, and presents an annual exhibition of participants' artwork at the Rahat Community Center, attended by the communities, parents, and families.<sup>69</sup>

#### **Youth-Club – Beit-Hagefen Arab Jewish Culture Center, Haifa**

As part of its programming to promote shared life in the mixed city of Haifa, Beit Hagefen Culture Center formed the Youth Club three years ago for students in grades 8-12. Jewish and Arab participants engage in joint music, photography and arts activities, aimed to create a social bridge between the groups, and contribute to the community by planning and executing volunteering initiatives such as food delivery on Passover, elderly home visits, recycling projects, and photography exhibitions. The youth club is an afterschool program, offered in regional schools by informal education coordinators as a [social matriculation diploma](#) credit opportunity – which requires weekly participation over the course of three years. Last year (following Operation Protective Edge), the number of graduating students grew from 30 to 250.

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<sup>68</sup> Evaluation conducted by Dr. Rony Berger, clinical psychologist and child therapist, an expert in psychological preparation/response to terrorism and major disasters. Dr. Berger evaluated the program over the course of three consecutive years, and found a 72% increase in positive feelings toward group peers, and a 75% reduction in aptitude for stereotyping and discrimination against group peers.

<sup>69</sup> Educational departments of the Bnei Shimon Regional Council and Rahat Municipality support the program directly.

### **Shared Space – [Umm al-Fahm Art Gallery](#)**

Following Operation Protective Edge in 2014, the gallery formed a partnership with the [Wilfrid Israel Museum of Asian Art & Studies](#) to create a long-term encounter program in addition to periodic student encounters and seminars held at the art gallery (which features both Arab and Jewish artists). Piloting last year with 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from an Arab Umm al-Fahm school and a Jewish school from the Menashe Regional Council, the program overcomes the linguistic barrier between the groups by focusing on non-verbal arts activities, and exposes students to diverse art from the Gallery and Museum, which addresses subjects such as borders, shared space, collaboration, and multiculturalism. Participants also engage in outdoor activities and jointly visit other art exhibitions.

### **[Know Your Neighbor](#) – Mifalot**

Founded 18 years ago by Ha'poel Tel Aviv Soccer Club with the objective of using soccer as a vehicle of social change, Mifalot engages thousands of students and adults nationwide in a variety of educational sports programs (mostly soccer and cachibol).<sup>70</sup> Know Your Neighbor is a yearly program designed to facilitate leadership, communication, and teamwork skills among Jewish and Arab students through soccer and outdoor training, and is currently operating in 53 public schools across Israel. Mifalot instructors, both Jewish and Arab (members of participating communities) infuse SLE into the rules of the game and the training sessions, which are both uni-national and binational. Groups also engage in at least three joint soccer tournaments every year with other schools and teams. A thorough evaluation indicates significant improvement in participants' attitudes toward one another post-program.<sup>71</sup>

### **[Active Education for the Environment](#) – Givat Haviva**

Designed for 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, the Wadi Ara program combines environmental and shared society education by facilitating joint projects in adjacent or shared physical areas between two Arab and Jewish communities (such as a stream, park, field, or forest). The students create usable art with recyclable materials found at the site, which are then re-positioned in the shared space as educational tools that can be used by both communities.

### **[Joint-Learning Encounters](#)**

#### **Hangout Negotiations for Peace – [ISTS](#)**

Piloting this year, the US-embassy funded program takes place in English high-school classes at the 4-5 matriculation-unit level.<sup>72</sup> Students from paired Jewish and Arab schools jointly learn debate and conflict resolution skills, among other subjects, in the English language – meant to neutralize the linguistic and cultural divide. Students 'meet' virtually via Google Hangouts, as well as in physical encounters, some of which include parents. The program is currently implemented in 6 schools,<sup>73</sup> and guides participants in discussing Jewish and Arab issues among others, with the philosophy that each culture is entitled to its

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<sup>70</sup> Of over 26,000 youth, adult, and children participants per year, 35% are Jewish, 30% are Bedouin, 26% are Muslim, 5% are Christian, and 4% are Druze.

<sup>71</sup> Conducted by Prof. Michael Leitner of Tel-Aviv University (2015). 'Willingness to host' – Jewish participants: from 25% (pre-program) to 30%, (post-program), Arab participants: from 35% to 80%; 'readiness to have the other as a friend' – Jewish participants: from 20% to 26%, Arab participants: 37% to 71%; 'trust' – Jewish participants: 18% to 25%, Arab participants: 34% to 70%.

<sup>72</sup> Students may choose the level of difficulty at which they study matriculation subjects on a scale of 1-5 'units', 4 and 5 being the most advanced.

<sup>73</sup> Engaging 24 students per school and 6 teacher-coordinators.

own narrative, and that cooperation and shared life are the ultimate objective. ISTS aims to implement this method in other academic classes in schools throughout its network.

#### [Joint Learning in Ramleh – Center for Education Technology \(CET\)](#)

As part of a large-scale twinning project in the mixed city of Ramleh led by the local MOE Municipal Supervisor, 8 pairs of Jewish and Arab schools (mostly 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade) began ‘joint learning’ last year – an SLE program based on the North Ireland Model<sup>74</sup> that entails studying various subjects (currently math, Arabic, Hebrew, English, and social education)<sup>75</sup> in shared classrooms, with Arab and Jewish instructors from each school. The respective school principals select academic subjects in coordination with CET professionals, to create an advantageous joint learning framework that caters to common incentives. The twinned schools also share annual ceremonies and holidays, and all participating Jewish schools integrate Merchavim’s ‘Let’s Talk’ program for spoken Arabic studies. This program is enabled by a three-year-old collaboration between the Ramleh Municipality,<sup>76</sup> the MOE (HQ),<sup>77</sup> CET, and Merchavim, and a thorough professional evaluation has indicated its significant success.<sup>78</sup>

#### [Technology Education and Cultural Diversity \(TEC\) – Mofet Institute](#)

Bypassing the expense and logistics of physical encounters, TEC4Schools operates in 120 classrooms (mostly 5<sup>th</sup> grades) via ‘virtual encounters’ between groups of 6 students – 3 pairs from 3 different communities (always a Jewish and Arab encounter with various combinations of religious/secular Jews, Druze, Bedouin, and Christian Arabs) who work together for a full year to complete joint projects. The program has been operating in schools for 6 years and is comprised of several phases: dialogue, peer review (photo/video sharing), joint project, and face-to-face encounter to conclude the process. TEC also created a social network for engaged participants,<sup>79</sup> and last year, developed a virtual ‘island’ where students can ‘meet’ and interact.<sup>80</sup> TEC4Schools was adopted by the MOE last year, which partly funds the program.<sup>81</sup> The TEC model has been discussed in numerous scientific journals and has received several awards and marks of distinction.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> [The North Ireland Sharing Education Programme](#) (SEP) was established in 2007, as a way to bridge between Protestant and Roman Catholic students, which also study in almost entirely separate school streams. The cross-sectoral educational model has [drawn the attention of educational experts from around the world](#) including Israel, as has since been adopted by North Ireland’s Ministry of Education. The model was introduced to these organizations mainly by Dr. [Shany Payes](#), social entrepreneur and researcher at the Mandel Institute.

<sup>75</sup> [Mafteach Ha’lev](#) (‘Key to the Heart’) – An MOE program for the development of social skills and values among students in the public school system.

<sup>76</sup> Which also contributed funds as of his year.

<sup>77</sup> Which funds professional development.

<sup>78</sup> Dr. Shany Payes (see footnote 74) accompanied the program from inception, and her thorough qualitative evaluation indicates the program’s success in decreasing Jewish-Arab tension in Ramleh, particularly in high-tension areas/neighborhoods, in promoting joint staff work and sustained friendships between Jewish and Arab educators, and in providing unique educational resources that benefit all participants. Dr. Shany Payes, *From a Disjoined Society to Shared Citizenship: Shared Education as a Road to Change – On the Joint Learning Project between Arab and Jewish Schools in Ramleh*. Berl Katanelson Fund, May 2014.

<sup>79</sup> See [TEC’s menu of social networks](#) that correspond with its educational programs.

<sup>80</sup> The island features a synagogue/Mosque, restaurants serving Halal/Kosher foods, and information in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. Students can interact and teach one another about their culture.

<sup>81</sup> Technological resources, professional TEC-staff support, and [gmul](#) points for professional development.

<sup>82</sup> [Among the many publications and accolades TEC has received](#), are the Sachnin-Oranim Prize for Tolerance and Co-Existence in Education, 2010; and the Fulbright Scholarship for excellence in Teaching - granted to Dr. Elaine Hoter in 2009, Vanderbilt University.

## **B. Language Studies and the Cross-Integration of Teachers**

### **Arabic Studies in Jewish Schools**

#### **Ya-Salam – The Abraham Fund Initiatives (TAFI)**

Ya-Salam was established 10 years ago as an ‘advocacy through action’ initiative; aimed to urge the MOE to institutionalize the program and make communicative Arabic studies (a combination of urban Palestinian dialect and standard Arabic) compulsory for Jewish students in every grade. Its objective is to promote interpersonal communication and familiarity with contemporary Arab culture as a vehicle of shared society. The program has been partially adopted by the MOE, which currently implements it in 200 Jewish elementary schools at the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade levels, integrating 100 Arab teachers into the Jewish education stream. Ya-Salam is fully funded by the MOE, and compulsory in the Haifa and Northern Regions.<sup>83</sup> Arabic teachers receive both pedagogic training from the MOE, and preparation for the integration process specifically from TAFI professionals. An extensive evaluation<sup>84</sup> has found the program successful in integrating teachers, improving Arabic skills among Jewish students, and abating their prejudice toward the Arab community.<sup>85</sup> Many schools that incorporate Ya-Salam also engage students in [TAFI’s encounter program](#).

#### **Let’s Talk – Merchavim: The Institute for the Advancement of Shared Citizenship in Israel**

Adopted and endorsed by the MOE,<sup>86</sup> the program is currently implemented in 39 schools in Israel’s Central District, and teaches approximately 9,000 Jewish elementary school students communicative Arabic and shared citizenship with Arab instructors. Studies have indicated the program’s success in cultivating positive attitudes among participants with regards to Arabic language and society, among other parameters.<sup>87</sup> Let’s Talk is accompanied by a training kit for the study of Arabic and the Arab and Islamic world in middle schools, titled ‘Let’s Get Acquainted’. Merchavim also offers a student encounter program called ‘Let’s Meet’.

#### **A.M.A.L – The Association for the Promotion of Spoken Arabic**

A.M.A.L’s instructors are Arab university students majoring in a variety of subjects, who teach Arabic in 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades for one hour a week over the course of a full year, in return for a scholarship. A.M.A.L has reached over 6,000 Jewish students in 5 years of operation, and currently runs in 5 Tel-Aviv and Ramat-Gan schools. The program’s focus is making spoken Arabic fun and accessible, and cultivating positive associations with the language. Program professionals report very little resistance among schools and students and a considerable amount of demand.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Under the directive of MOE Regional Supervisor Dr. Orna Simchon. Technically, regional supervisors have the capacity to make programs compulsory in every region.

<sup>84</sup> See [TAFI: Evaluation Findings on ‘Ya Salam’ Educational Program for Arabic Lingual and Cultural Education](#), September 2013.

<sup>85</sup> About two thirds of principals felt Arab teachers integrated ‘very well’ or ‘extremely well’; 91% of principals were satisfied and recommended system-wide implementation; almost all teachers were accepted by staff/students to a ‘great’ or ‘very great’ degree; 84% understood Jewish society better post-program; 40% of students achieved medium/high grades in written exams; 60% achieved medium/high grades in oral exams.

<sup>86</sup> The MOE allocates resources for the program to specific schools, not district-wide. School principals participate in funding teaching hours as well.

<sup>87</sup> A comparative evaluation by Dr. Dvora Dubiner (2008) indicates that 97% of participants felt it is ‘important to study Arabic’ versus 50% in the control group. Achva College evaluation (2006-2007) across 11 elementary schools found ‘significant change’ in students’ attitudes toward Arab citizens and Arab society. Principals ‘viewed the program as important and favored its continuation’. Students and principals ‘reported positive responses from parents.’

<sup>88</sup> Program implemented in cooperation with [PERACH](#) and the Tel-Aviv regional supervisor.

## **Hebrew Studies in Arab Schools**

### **Hebrew Ba'salam – TAFI**

The conversational-Hebrew studies program piloted in 9 Arab schools last year with the full funding and support of the MOE is now being implemented in 30 schools nationwide this year, as part of Minister Bennet's '[Continuous Hebrew](#)' program. With pedagogic content developed by CET, the program is taught one hour a week by Jewish teachers to 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders. The classes add to the three hours of Hebrew studies taught weekly by Arab teachers in the respective schools.

### **Yehiyeh Beseder – Givat Haviva**

Aimed to promote professional as well as academic and cultural integration of Arab students, the content of this spoken-Hebrew program incorporates job-market relevant information in addition to contemporary cultural references. The fully computerized program piloted last year in 83 classrooms, and has expanded this year in light of Minister Bennet's '[Continuous Hebrew program](#)'<sup>89</sup> to include 300 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes in 27 schools, over 10,000 students, and 19 teachers.<sup>90</sup> The program is fully funded by the MOE, which is also financing a professional evaluation of its long-term impact on students' attitudes toward Hebrew and Jewish culture.

### **The Ministry of Education's '500 Teachers' Integration Program**

Following the success of language programs with the cross-integration of Arabic teachers, the Merchavim Institute resolved to also integrate Arab math and science teachers into Jewish schools. After Merchavim's independent implementation for several years, the program was adopted by the MOE in 2013, which launched a five-year plan for the eventual integration of 500 Arab teachers into Jewish schools. The program is the first of its kind in Israel's school system, and beyond advancing shared life values also provides high quality education in subjects that lack teachers in Jewish schools (math and science),<sup>91</sup> while creating much-needed employment opportunities for Arab teachers.<sup>92</sup> In its two years of operation, the program has integrated 90 teachers into Jewish schools nationwide. Merchavim continues to accompany the program by handpicking excelling Arab teachers who are also active in their communities and can serve as 'cultural ambassadors' in a Jewish environment. The organization has compiled a teacher/principals' manual in Arabic/Hebrew that includes tools, suggestions, and 'lessons learned' by program participants – set to come out in the current school year.

## **C. Professional Development of Educational Staff**

### **Civil Society Programs**

The vast majority of professional development programs for public school teachers below have been recognized by the MOE as [qmul](#)-worthy modules that can earn teachers credit towards their obligatory annual professional development hours.

### **Center for Education Technology (CET) – Professional Development Programs**

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<sup>89</sup> "[Yehiyeh Beseder](#)" – [Enhancing Arabic Language Proficiency](#), MOE website (Hebrew).

<sup>90</sup> In Umm Al-Fahm, Musmus (in Ma'ale Iron), Ar'ara, Kafr Qara, Barta'a, Jatt, and Baqa al-Gharbiyye.

See Zieve, Tamara "[Jewish Teachers Enter Arab Classroom in Bid to Break Down Barriers](#)." Jerusalem Post, September 2015.

<sup>91</sup> Kashti, Or, "[Jewish Schools Beg for Teachers, While 8,000 Arab teachers Beg for Jobs](#)." Ha'aretz, May 21, 2009; Grave-Lazi, Lidar, "[Only 30% of Arab Teachers Able to Find Work, Education Ministry Tells Knesset Panel](#)." Jerusalem Post, January 20, 2016.

[‘Teachers Lead Shared Life Education’](#) – CET offers a ‘teacher encounter’ series every year in various locations nationwide, which enables Jewish and Arab teachers to meet, connect, and acquire knowledge and pedagogic tools for teaching civics classes and various subjects relevant to Jewish-Arab relations in Israel.

[‘Youth for Shared Life Education’](#) – CET

Graduating teachers of the previous program who wish to implement their training form pairs (one Arab and one Jewish participant), and jointly guide their students in planning and executing shared life initiatives together and in their respective schools. CET staff helps participating teachers and youth tailor programs to suit their particular school. The program brought 12 pairs of Jewish and Arab schools together over the course of 2014-2015.

‘School Principals Lead Together’ –

This year CET has launched a new program for 10 Arab and 10 Jewish Jerusalem school principals, in partnership with Manchi<sup>93</sup> and the [HQ](#). The principals will undergo an intensive training seminar following the North Ireland model<sup>94</sup>. Upon completing the process, principals will select several teachers from their respective schools to establish a 3-year SLE strategy that incorporates different academic subjects and methods, such as experiential learning, science, or art. CET will guide participants in building programs that play to the strengths of their school.

**Merchavim** – [Shared Citizenship Teacher Enrichment Seminars](#)

The organization offers multiple experiential workshops and seminars each year to academic staff and teachers at every grade level, intended to provide tools for advancing tolerance and pluralism in their respective schools, either directly or in various academic classes. Groups of educators from diverse backgrounds (including Jews and Arabs) jointly address subjects such as personal and collective identity, active citizenship, and promoting ‘fairness’ in the school and classroom. In the past year, Merchavim has focused on seminars for teachers of various subjects such as civics, arts, English, Arabic, physical education, and more. The courses are facilitated with the full collaboration and subsidy of the MOE.

[Min HaBe’erot – Shalom Hartman Institute](#)

This MOE-supported program for Jewish-Arab partnership in the education system is a new initiative of the Be’eri Program for Pluralistic Identity Education, which piloted in the 2014-2015 school year with 31 Jewish and Arab (Muslim & Christian) school principals from Israel’s northern region. The program draws upon the communities’ respective religious texts, with the belief that cultural and religious uniqueness is a common denominator and foundation for humanistic values, rather than the cause of social rifts. Engaged principals meet once a week over the course of a year and use religious texts to discuss issues of shared citizenship in Israel, while engaging educational faculty in their respective schools and infusing shared life education into school-culture and curricula with the help of Be’eri professionals. In the 2015-2016 school year, the first cycle of participating Jewish-Arab teachers has opened with 35 participants.

**Teacher Colleges**<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> The Jerusalem Education Administration, which oversees over 200 schools and 1,500 kindergartens within the Jerusalem municipality.

<sup>94</sup> See footnote 74.

<sup>95</sup> The colleges included in the mapping offer academic degrees and training in other subject areas as well, but their primary focus and bulk of student body are concentrated in education degree programs.



The education field is one of the most accessible professional tracks for Arab citizens, who comprise 25% of the student population in Israel's teacher colleges,<sup>96</sup> only three of which are exclusively Arab.<sup>97</sup> This ratio means teacher training usually occurs in mixed campuses, even though the vast majority of teachers eventually work within their respective community's educational stream – making academia a rare sphere of intercommunal encounters.

Diversity on Israeli academic campuses has become a central issue in recent years – especially in terms of including and catering to Arab students, and fostering Jewish-Arab dialogue on campus.<sup>98</sup> In teaching colleges specifically, the diversity of the student population is widely recognized as an opportunity to prepare future teachers for working in a multicultural society, impart pluralistic values, and address issues of prejudice and incitement. Many of Israel's teaching colleges promote these objectives to varying degrees with various social and academic initiatives. The following are select examples of models and methods that multicultural teaching colleges currently use to promote SLE.

### [Beit Berl College](#)

Beit Berl College, with a 26% Arab student body and 17% Arab faculty, educates teachers in both Arabic and Hebrew for the Arab/Jewish streams. Over the past year, the College has strengthened its long-standing commitment to promoting shared society on campus, making it a systemic institutional strategy. This includes initiatives to further recognize and legitimize the Arab community, such as incorporating more Arab scholars into every department, adding Arabic to campus signs, developing the Arabic website, recognizing Muslim holidays in the academic calendar, and assisting Arab students in mastering academic Hebrew. In 2015, the College launched the Center for Education for Shared Society, which is currently developing a cross-cultural competence-training curriculum for students and teachers, creating a roundtable on SLE, and sponsoring a spoken Arabic course for academic faculty and administrative staff, among other initiatives. Additionally, the Arab Academic Institute of Education at the College has begun preparing Arab teachers to work in Jewish as well as Arab schools. The College is also expanding its [Time Tunnel Program](#), in which students collect and analyze contemporary historical narratives of Arabs and Jews based on the realities of everyday life; and learn to implement this format in schools.<sup>99</sup>

### [Oranim Academic College of Education](#)

Oranim has recently established a 'Unit for Civic Action,' dedicated to promoting equality and inclusion at the College. Oranim's strategy addresses multiculturalism and minority issues with an emphasis on Arab students, which comprise 15% of its BA students and 40% of its M.Ed students. Some initiatives the Unit has begun implementing include enhancing the integration of administrative faculty from diverse backgrounds, using Arabic on campus signs, advertisements, and the college website, and incorporating training for addressing incitement in the teachers' lounge and classroom into teacher seminars and

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<sup>96</sup> See Task Force webinar [Shared Society on Campus: Inclusivity in the classroom to leadership in the community](#).

<sup>97</sup> The three Arab teaching colleges are located in northern Israel and include Sakhnin Academic College for Teacher Education, the Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education, and the Haifa Arab Academic College for Education in Israel.

<sup>98</sup> See Task Force briefing paper [Higher Education for Arab Citizens of Israel: Realities, Challenges, and New Opportunities](#), p. 11-14; [Pluralism and Equal Opportunity in Higher Education: Expanding Access for Arabs, Druze, and Circassians in Israel](#), report by the Planning and Budgeting Committee of the Council for Higher Education, 2013; Task Force webinar [The Development of Arabic Language Studies in Israel](#); Abu-Ras, Thair & Maayan, Yael, [Arabic and Arab Culture on Israeli Campuses: An Updated Look](#), Dirasat, Sikkuy, and The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, 2014.

<sup>99</sup> For more on Beit Berl and SLE see Kaplan, "[Beit Berl College: Changing Israeli Society from the Inside Out](#)." Ha'aretz, 2015.

relevant courses. Additionally, Oranim offers dialogue groups on campus for facilitated inter-communal discourse among students, and numerous courses that address the Arab-Jewish conflict and discuss models for conflict resolution and peace and democracy education.<sup>100</sup>

#### [Achva Academic College](#)

With a student body that is 20% Arab (90% of which are Bedouin women), Achva leadership considers pluralism and tolerance on campus a priority, and offers several programs on SLE and multiculturalism (open to all students but targeted to future educators): ‘Creating a Reality Together’ – a yearlong dialogue seminar led by Jewish and Arab instructors, which gives participants tools to advance Arab-Jewish relations in and out of campus; ‘Finger Print Encounters’ – a semester long multicultural communication seminar that addresses identity, diversity, and tolerance with the joint creation of an interactive art installation;<sup>101</sup> ‘Respect through Understanding’ – a two-week seminar in Israel and Germany, intended to provide Arab and Jewish participants with tools for coping with diversity in Israel through the study of the Shoah.

#### **D. [Educational Content Development](#)**

##### [Center for Education Technology \(CET\)](#)

CET is one of the main providers of pedagogic content to the MOE, and many of the textbooks used in public schools are developed by the organization. CET includes a ‘civics education and shared life’ department that produces a prolific array of educational resources, including interactive online activities and games, lesson plans, presentations, academic articles, movies, and TV shows on subjects such as democracy, human rights, and shared citizenship in Israel. For instance, CET has developed an [educational kit](#) around the popular TV series ‘Arab Labor’, offering lesson plans that correspond with clips from episodes that address issues of Arab identity and culture in Israel. Additionally, CET has launched a website called “[Shared Life](#),” which includes a television series titled ‘Switch’ that tells the story of two Arab and Jewish teenagers who ‘switch places’ and get to (literally) walk in one another’s shoes.

##### [The Association for Civil Rights in Israel \(ACRI\)](#)

ACRI’s educational department has developed a manual titled ‘[Life Lessons: Anti-Racism Education from Pre-school to High School](#)’,<sup>102</sup> available both in print and on its [website](#). The manual offers practical and theoretical materials concerning educational approaches to incitement and prejudice in the classroom, written by a variety of academic and civil society experts in the field. Additionally, the comprehensive manual includes handbooks that incorporate ‘anti-racism instruction’ into academic subjects such as [math](#), [English](#), and [Arabic](#).<sup>103</sup> ACRI also offers workshops and lectures for educators on how to use the manual and approach its content. The organization has offered the manual to the MOE with the hopes of making it available to schools nationwide.

##### [Midreshet Adam](#)

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<sup>100</sup> See Task Force webinar [Shared Society on Campus: Inclusivity in the classroom to leadership in the community](#).

<sup>101</sup> Last year the [Finger Print exhibition](#) included framed barcodes that represented each group member, which the audience scanned to find out about the people behind the image.

<sup>102</sup> See [English article on ‘Life Lessons’](#).

<sup>103</sup> Dr. Zalmanson, Galia, Math Instruction as an Opportunity for Egalitarian Education; Awayed-Bishara, Muzna , Integrating the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and Anti-racist Instruction; Zilber, Roi & Ben-Israel, Ishmael, Ana Min Al Yahud: Arabic Instruction in Jewish Schools as a Tool Against Racism.

Since its establishment in 1987, Midreshet Adam has produced numerous books and educational resources on democracy, pluralism, and civic studies, nearly all of which have been translated into Arabic, among other languages such as German and Polish. The MOE-approved materials have accompanied the organization's educational activities in public schools since the 1980's, and also serve as resources in their own right. In the past four years, Midreshet Adam has published three MOE recommended books that offer schools various activities, projects, and materials to help address prejudice among students, and lesson plans for the study of democracy and active citizenship in a multicultural society.<sup>104</sup>

#### Hagar – 'Sweet Tea with Nana (Mint) and Other Stories'

This Hebrew-Arabic anthology of children's holiday stories was produced and published by the [Hagar Association](#)<sup>105</sup> and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev<sup>106</sup> as the center of an educational curriculum for shared life education, which was certified by the MOE in 2015. The book was authored by both Arab and Jewish writers<sup>107</sup> and provides a glimpse into the joint and singular cultural life and history of both communities. Six Negev schools (3 Jewish and 3 Arab) are piloting the program in 2016 with the guidance of Hagar staff. Additionally, in the 2015-2016 school year, the Kibbutzim College Department of Primary Education will teach the curriculum to its first year cohort as a tool for addressing incitement among students.

The [Abraham Fund Initiatives \(TAFI\)](#) and the [Merchavim Institute of Shared Citizenship in Israel](#) have both published manuals complete with pedagogic materials and lesson plans to accompany their large-scale encounter and language programs, which are also available to schools and educators online: '[Ya-Salam Encounters](#)' & '[Language as a Cultural Bridge – Ya Salam: Shared Life Education Model](#)' (TAFI); '[Let's Meet](#)' & '[Let's Talk](#)' (Merchavim).

### **E. Bilingual Schools**

#### Hand in Hand

Hand in Hand currently operates three bilingual schools and three bilingual pre-schools.<sup>108</sup> The schools were established gradually between 1998 and 2015, each as the result of Arab and Jewish parents' initiative to establish a bilingual, multicultural school for their children. Jewish and Arab teachers jointly instruct classes in their native tongue without translation, in order to immerse students in both languages. The Hand in Hand network also includes a pedagogic department, which produces educational content on subjects such as identity, culture and religion studies, and history. Educational content in each school is also tailored to its respective region. Hand in Hand has a strong community focus, and works to broaden its impact by involving parents and teachers outside of the schools themselves.<sup>109</sup> The schools currently include over 1,350 students and approximately 250 teachers, and the organization intends to open additional schools in mixed towns and regions across Israel.

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<sup>104</sup> In the Path of Dialogue (2014); "No Such Thing as a Little Democracy – Cultivating Democratic Culture and Active Citizenship (2013); "Yes to Human Dignity – No to Racism" (2011).

<sup>105</sup> The Hagar Association also operates the [Hagar bilingual school in Be'er Sheva](#).

<sup>106</sup> Project funded by the European Union.

<sup>107</sup> Ronit Chacham, Sheikha Haliwa, Al-Tayeb Ghanayem, and Hadil Nashif.

<sup>108</sup> the 'Max Rayne' k-12 school in Jerusalem; 'Galilee' school on the outskirts of Kibbutz Eshbal; 'Bridge on the Wadi' k-6 school in Wadi-Ara; pre-school in Haifa; pre-school in Jaffa; pre-school in the Beit-Berl campus near Kfar Saba.

<sup>109</sup> For instance, by establishing a joint soccer team for parents, a Beit-Midrash/Madrasah for the joint study of Jewish and Arab religious texts, joint annual community events, and more.

### [Neve Shalom \(Wahat al-Salam\)](#)

The Neve Shalom k-6 bilingual school is located in the Neve Shalom cooperative village, founded by Jewish and Arab families who came together to lead a joint life of equality. Established 30 years ago, the school absorbs students from nearly 5 municipalities in the surrounding area, and includes almost 200 students in total. Teachers are both Jewish and Arab, and while only some classes are taught in pairs, Jewish and Arab students always study jointly. According to education professionals at the school, the students' young age lends itself to learning about new cultures and accepting the 'other' with relative ease, while professional staff engages in frequent meetings and activities in order to discuss challenges and maintain fluent collaboration.

### [Hagar](#)

Hagar is the only bilingual school in Israel's southern region. It was founded 8 years ago by a group of Jewish and Bedouin parents living in Be'er Sheva and the surrounding area, who sought a joint educational framework for their children. Hagar currently includes two pre-schools and an elementary school, which accommodate 240 students. Jewish and Arab teachers instruct classes as a pair in both languages. The school employs its own director of pedagogy, who develops a unique educational program centered on problem-based and project-based learning, and ensures that compulsory MOE content is sufficiently included in the curriculum. Each year, students engage in a three-month 'identity project' in which they research a subject relating to their life or environment (region, family, tradition, etc.), and create a group exhibition for the entire community. Educational content taught at Hagar addresses regional issues and realities, and the school conducts community events that include parents, volunteers, and educational staff involved with the school. Hagar is currently working to establish a middle school.

## **F. [Strategies for Systemic Change](#)**

### [The Dov Lautman Conference on Educational Policy](#)

The 2015 Dov Lautman Conference was the product of a joint initiative between the Lautman Foundation, the Israeli Democracy Institute, and the Open University, to drive resource development and partnerships for the advancement of policy and strategies for shared life and democracy education in the MOE. The information and partnerships developed in light of the conference serve as a platform for systemic strategy proposals to the Minister of Education and relevant MOE departments. The conference convened numerous MOE officials, politicians, educators and academics, local municipality heads, and civil society organizations, partly as a response to somewhat troubling Israeli Democracy Index<sup>110</sup> results – which indicate that Israeli youth questions democratic values more than any other demographic sector. The conference commissioned numerous experts from the field to collect data, conduct research and mapping, and propose policy changes that address intolerance and lacking democratic values among Israel's students. Leading up to the Conference in 2014, the Lautman Fund joined forces with the President's Office to form the [Presidential Award for Partnership Education](#) program.

### [Sikkuy: The Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality](#)

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<sup>110</sup> See [The Israeli Democracy Index 2014](#), published by The Israel Democracy Institute.

In light of the incitement that followed Operation Protective Edge, Sikkuy has developed a strategy for engaging the MOE in a process of SLE implementation across all streams and age groups, and has begun cooperating with the [HQ](#). The organization aims to address the inclusion of SLE in professional development for all public education teachers, the development of pedagogic materials that promote pluralism, the removal of harmful content from existing materials, enhanced recognition of Arab thinkers and scholars in schools' curricula, and the acknowledgement of Arab culture and Arabic in shared school space and events. Sikkuy has begun advancing these goals by forming relationships with relevant Ministry departments in order to develop existing programs, and by conducting relevant research on existing SLE work in the field.

### [The Organizations for Shared Life Education Forum](#)

The Forum currently includes over twenty civil society organizations working in SLE in cooperation with the Ministry. This group of organizations joined forces in the months following the Gaza conflict in summer of 2014, under the coordination of Shatil,<sup>111</sup> to advance the systemic implementation of SLE in the public education system. One of the Forum's first initiatives was drafting a [letter](#) to Minister Naftali Bennet following the attack on the Dawabshe family in summer of 2015, urging him to budget and implement a systemic policy for SLE, delineating immediate actions that should be taken, and requesting that materials produced by the organizations be dispersed to schools. The Forum has since launched a [website](#) that makes SLE programs and organizations accessible to schools, educators, and parents. Leading up to the National Day of Tolerance on November 15, the Forum launched a media campaign through which participating SLE experts shared their knowledge and explained the significance of SLE on the radio, television, and in print.<sup>112</sup> The Forum has recently met with the advisor to the Minister of Education, and continues to absorb a growing number of organizations.

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<sup>111</sup> [Shatil](#) was established by the New Israel Fund 30 years ago as an initiative to promote democracy, tolerance, and social justice in Israel.

<sup>112</sup> Including an item on 'Ha'boker Ha'zeh' on Reshet Bet with Sahmer Atmana of Givat Haviva & Noel Halimi, Kfar Kara Middle School principal (starting at 42:58); Interviews on Kol Ha'shalom Radio with [Hazar Masri-Hussein](#) of TAFI, [Myriam Darmoni-Sharvit](#) of CET, and [Omer Cohen](#) of Shatil; Interview with Sahmer Atmana on Kol Israel in Arabic; Interview on the Gal Gabai Show on Channel 2 with Petach Tikva and Kfar Kassem school principals and Myriam Darmoni-Sharvit of CET.