

# Service Learning Conference

## "Current Status and Future Prospects of Service Learning"

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### Promotion of cultural and Natural Heritage via Living Museums

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Palestine is the Western Part of the Fertile Crescent where humans first domesticated plants and animals. Thus, it is rich both in natural heritage (rich biodiversity in both fauna and flora) and cultural heritage (the site of earliest civilizations and cradle of monotheistic religions). Yet this amazing heritage is threatened by a number of factors some now global (climate change, overexploitation, pollution, habitat destruction) and some more specific to our country (political turmoil and colonization).

Understanding the problems led us to design solution based in a center, which is named Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability. PIBS includes both a natural history museum, and ethnography exhibit (focused on agricultural history and cultural heritage), and a botanic garden. However, these three areas are not merely to show our rich history.

Here we introduce concepts of living museum and institutions that interact with the environment (in this case with society) and thus are influenced and influence change in societal ecosystems. This happens through interactive programs designed for children, women, and other marginalized communities (like remote villages). Here we explain the nature of these interactions and how they lead to constraint evolution of both the institute and society.

We site example including designing the new exhibit areas, the mobile educational unit (mobile museum), and national work to bridge the science-policy-practice gaps.