Progress Report

I. Executive Summary
II. Background Story
III. Goals and Objectives
IV. Renovating the Building – the State of Progress
V. Activating the Cinema – Opening in August 2010
VI. Sustainability Strategy and Follow Up Projects
VII. Budget and Call for Donations
VIII. Plan of Action
IX. Testimonials
X. Contact
I. Executive Summary

Cinema Jenin is a cultural peace project in Palestine that aims at reopening Jenin's old cinema. It is supported by prominent figures such as the Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, the former German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and Roger Waters, founder of Pink Floyd. Through its different activities Cinema Jenin will promote culture and social integration, foster peace and intercultural dialogue and strengthen education as well as the local economy.

“We will not only create jobs through the renovation of the cinema in Jenin but will first of all give young people a space for their talents and open a window to the world for them.”

(Frank-Walter Steinmeier, former German Foreign Minister)

About Jenin

Location: West Bank, occupied Palestinian territories
Population (city / governorate): 50.000 / 230.000
Unemployment: ~ 80 %
Other: Lack of public spaces; Very limited cultural services; Internally divided between city and refugee camp; Site of fiercest fighting during Second Intifada

Project data

Implementation timeframe: November 2008 – July 2010
Total budget: 1 Mio. EUR
Funding status: 76 %
Financial sustainability: 2011 (mainly through advertisement)
Environmental sustainability: Carbon neutrality from August 2010 on (major photovoltaic cells sponsored)

Capacity (movie theatre / open-air): 400 / 1.200
Additional service range: Conference venue, theatre stage, educational screenings, film workshops, guest house, cafeteria and public garden
Estimated beneficiaries (annually): > 200.000

Jobs created (current): 10
Workers and craftsmen employed: 21
Prospective job creation: > 100

Follow up projects: Jenin International Film Festival
Cinema Jenin Production & Distribution
Cinema Jenin Film School

Possible replication tools: “Cinema Jenin” documentary movie (release 2011)
Book “How to build a cinema” (working title, release 2011)
II. Background Story

Built in the early 60’s, Cinema Jenin (West Bank, Palestine) was considered to be one of the largest and most impressive cinemas in Palestine. Hundreds of people attended it daily to watch films from the Arab world. Later, it started presenting action films and American B movies until it was closed as a movie theatre with the outbreak of the first Intifada in 1987. Now, Fakhri Hammad, a citizen of Jenin, Ismael Khateeb from the city’s refugee camp and Marcus Vetter, a renowned German documentary film maker are bringing the old cinema back to life together with a group of enthusiastic locals and foreigners!

The story behind this ambitious plan began, when in 2005 Ishmael Khateeb decided to donate the organs of his 11 year old son Ahmed, who was shot dead by the Israeli army. Despite his grief, Ishmael decided that Israeli children should receive these organs, thus saving their lives. A year later, still deeply affected by his son’s death, he opened a culture centre for the children of the camp as an alternative for their street life. Thanks to foreign donations the centre started providing many activities among which film courses were given. The story of Ishmael’s gesture of greatness and peace captured the world’s media attention and is told in Marcus Vetter’s ward winning documentary “The Heart of Jenin”.

But while the movie was celebrated internationally, Jenin was lacking a place where its very own story could be told. Parallel, the children from Ishmael’s culture centre want to produce their first short film, only to realize that they had no place to show it in. The idea to rebuild the cinema was born! This resurrection of Cinema Jenin has enormous dramatic potential. Its story is being told in the form of a documentary which follows a parallel process where the children of the camp make a film about their lives. At the same time they are taking part in reopening what would become their future stage as well as the place where through “The Heart of Jenin” they will be able to tell the story about how it all began to the next generation.

Cinema Jenin is located in city centre of Jenin, next to the old church, the market and the main transportation routes. The Jenin governorate has roughly 230,000 inhabitants. Having been the site of fierce fighting in the Second Intifada, the city suffers from isolation on all levels – economic, social and cultural – ever since. Once a centre of commerce its unemployment has risen to nearly 80%. Options for leisure time and cultural activities are severely limited. And while the nearest cinema in Nablus city is only 40 km away, movement restrictions due to the occupation render it a place practically out of reach for many of Jenin’s inhabitants, leading to a situation where most citizens under the age of 20 have never seen a movie on a cinema screen. Thus, the only window to the world is television and, for those who have access to a computer, the internet. In this environment the cinema reborn will serve as a beacon of hope fostering the social and cultural reintegration and economic rehabilitation of Jenin.
III. Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of Cinema Jenin is to break the situation of isolation and lack of perspective in Jenin through creating sustainable change and improved living conditions. This aim encompasses a multitude of objectives in three core areas:

Promoting Culture and Social Integration:
- Re-establishing a culture of cinema-going
- Integrating Jenin city and the refugee camp
- Promoting culture in all its forms and providing a venue for artists
- Raising awareness for women’s and children’s rights

Fostering Peace and Intercultural Dialogue:
- Opening a window to the outside world in times of occupation and siege
- Providing the means for cultural self expression towards the world
- Reintegrating Jenin into a regional and international cultural exchange
- Fostering principles of dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution, co-existence and acceptance of others

Strengthening Education and Economy:
- Providing technical education and educational screenings for school classes
- Creating sustainable jobs for the people of Jenin
- Increasing the attractiveness of Jenin as a place to visit and do business
- Setting the seed for a local film industry
The cinema resides in a large building surrounded by a vast garden. It has 200 seats on the first floor and another 200 on a balcony in which there are also private booths. However, having been closed more than 20 years ago, it had been used as a dump and was in a deplorable condition. The wooden chairs were in a state of advanced decay, the old 35mm projectors were out of service and the screen had been torn up. The building itself and all pieces of equipment were in need of repair or replacement.

The story behind this ambitious plan began, when in 2005 Ishmael Khateeb decided to donate the organs of his 11 year old son Ahmed who was shot dead by the Israeli army. Keeping its original design, local professionals supported by a team of international volunteers started clearing out the building, restoring the chairs, rebuilding the stage, renewing the toilets, repairing the roof, and fixing the air conditioning and the electrical system in summer 2009. Also, the garden surrounding the cinema is planned to be transformed into an outdoor cinema and a cafeteria and will provide the only public outdoor space in Jenin. As of February 2010, most of the main works are completed. Though more work still needs to be done, for instance regarding the careful restoration of the chairs and a new sound insulation, the building is now almost ready for the technical equipment to be installed.

This incredible progress has been made possible by the generous support of numerous supporters and sponsors, among the foremost the German Foreign Ministry and Roger Waters from Pink Floyd. The cinema projection, the light and the sound systems - by enlarge donated by specialized equipment suppliers - will be installed under the supervision of two German production companies, guaranteeing high quality digital cinematic standards. Due to the outstanding commitment of all parties involved, the vision of Cinema Jenin is now closer to be reached than anybody would have thought possible within less than a years' time.

Despite this success the project ran into a severe financial crisis in the beginning of this year. Construction works were halted and the opening in August seemed endangered. While it was possible to avoid a prolonged delay of works due to some immediate freehanded contributions there are still parts of the project that need funding (comp. VII.).
V. Activating the Cinema – Opening in August 2010

The cinema is scheduled to open its doors to the public in August 2010 in a glamorous event. The attendance of local and international public figures, the prior outdoor screenings of the Football World Championship and a local poster campaign will be used to create awareness and excitement. Also, there will be an exclusive concert by a world-renowned musician whose name is to announced soon as well as other events that will ensure an intensive media coverage in Palestine, Israel and around the world.

The local team currently involved in the renovation process will act as the core management team. Together with a group of young and old people from Jenin, parts of whom are already receiving technical training, they will be running the cinema. The cinemas programming will be supervised by a board of directors that consists of local dignitaries, Palestinian and international film makers. It is planned to have six screenings along with other activities every day. In each section the audience can vote for the films they liked most. These films will be shown on weekends.

The official ticket price will be 5 NIS (1 EUR). It is hard to estimate the number of daily visitors to the cinema. Yet, the combined offering of screenings and performances inside the cinema and in its open-air part as well as the garden with its cafeteria are believed to attract a lot of people also from outside Jenin. The business plan calculations are based upon a conservative minimum of 300 visitors a day, a number which should increase through the offering of additional activities such as educational film screenings in cooperation with schools, the short films created by local youths, international and local music concerts, theatre plays, literature, poetry etc.
VI. Sustainability Strategy and Follow up Projects

From the very beginning of Cinema Jenin, it was clear that only an organization which can sustain itself would be able to originate the lasting change for the city of Jenin that the project is aiming to create. Consequently, all efforts were conceived such as to enable the project to arrive at this state. A threefold approach has been followed continuously to achieve sustainability in the economic, personnel and social area.

**ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY** will be reached through income generating activities in several fields since ticket sales will are not meant to suffice. After the opening, there will be revenues from commercials shown in the film screenings and on a huge LED screen (3x4 m) on the cinema’s roof. Not only this advertising space but also its content will be produced and sold by Cinema Jenin. Given the fact that few local companies have professional advertisement material, “Cinema Jenin Designs” is currently being founded to fill this market niche and produce ads, shoot commercial films and create corporate designs. The necessary technical equipment is already being shipped to Jenin and staff trainings by volunteering German experts will be held in order to produce quality results. Other income sources include the Cinema Jenin Guest House which is already operational and an outdoor cafeteria. These activities will enable the project to achieve financial sustainability by 2011 as well as to further expand its range of cultural services. A detailed business plan will be supplied upon request.

**THE INTERTWINED ASPECTS OF PERSONNEL AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY** are even more important to unfold the project’s full potential. Though having the advantage of rebuilding an old structure rather than implementing something totally alien, Cinema Jenin still needs to be accepted and in the end run by the people of Jenin. In order to make sure that the project is shaped by the needs of the local population Cinema Jenin was consequentially conceived and carried out as a German-Palestinian joint venture. Also, the project already employs more than 30 people, thus giving them the chance to provide for their families. But creating acceptance and building up local capacities to run the cinema through the direct involvement of people in the project is just one step. For the cinema to be truly sustainable on a social level, it needs to reach out to the entire population. On the one hand, this is being done through intensive networking efforts with other local organizations, an advisory board consisting of representatives from different groups and extensive consultation with the local and national authorities. On the other, the educational activities such as special screenings for schools, film workshops and technical trainings will increase the number of people benefitting from the project.

This is also why it is a long-term vision to use the capacities built through the Cinema Jenin project as a seed for a several **FOLLOW UP PROJECTS**. First, the Jenin International Film Festival scheduled for April 2011 will see the release of the “Cinema Jenin” documentary as well as of the first blockbuster movie which will not only be dubbed into Arabic but also exclusively distributed in the Arab world by Cinema Jenin. The media attention and reputation created by the festival and the two movies will subsequently be used to kick off a local film production and distribution company. Also, the expertise created by this company is planned to lay the foundation of Palestine’s first film school. Finally, the documentary made about the cinemas reconstruction and its accompanying book can serve as first tools for a replication of the project. Developing a replication strategy is among Cinema Jenin’s long-term goals.
VII. Budget and Call for Donations

The Cinema Jenin Project has an overall budget of roughly 1,000,000 EUR. In order to raise these funds, various donors have been approached over the past year. As of February 2010 the generous donations received amount to 612,000 EUR:

- Private donations: 65,000 EUR
- German Foreign Ministry: 320,000 EUR
- Roger Waters: 50,000 EUR
- Online platform for social projects: betterplace.org: 23,500 EUR
- MAN Ferrostal: 20,000 EUR
- Hasso Plattner Ventures: 7,000 EUR
- Chack Clark Trust: 6,500 EUR
- Cinema chair sponsorship programme: 20,000 EUR
- Contributions in kind Screen, Curtains, 3-D-cinema, 35mm etc.: roughly 100,000 EUR

Originally, it was assumed that the cinema chair sponsorship program would contribute 400,000 EUR to the overall budget by having all 400 seats “adopted” by private and organizational donors for the symbolic price of 1,000 EUR per chair. However, only 20,000 EUR have been obtained through the program so far, thus leading to the financial crisis described above. In order to cover this funding gap and to finish the works an additional 380,000 EUR were needed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renovation of the cinema building:</th>
<th>97,000 EUR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. air-condition and wiring</td>
<td>21,000 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. emergency exit system</td>
<td>25,000 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g. facade works and painting</td>
<td>13,000 EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rest</td>
<td>38,000 EUR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Missing technical equipment for the cinema: 52.000 EUR

- e.g. lighting equipment 23.000 EUR
- e.g. stage lifting device 14.000 EUR
- rest 15.000 EUR

Outdoor area: 100.000 EUR

- e.g. building and equipping cafeteria 30.000 EUR
- e.g. leveling and concreting incl. special surface 24.000 EUR
- e.g. gardening works 10.000 EUR
- rest 36.000 EUR

Missing event technology for cinema and open air: 81.000 EUR

- e.g. microphone equipment 16.000 EUR
- e.g. outdoor sound system 10.000 EUR
- e.g. outdoor stage 21.000 EUR
- rest 34.000 EUR

Opening ceremony: 50.000 EUR

We are honored to announce that the above sum has already been reduced substantially due to the renewed commitment of two of our main donors. Still, in order to open in August CINEMA JENIN NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT TO COVER THE REMAINING FUNDING GAP OF 240.000 EUR!
VIII. Plan of Action

The local team in Jenin is working hard together with its international supporters to open the cinema in August this year. In order to do so, a tight schedule has to be adhered to. It includes the following steps:

March – April 2010

- Finishing the construction works in the cinema and the restoration of the old chairs
- Installation of the photovoltaic cells on the roof
  (inaugurated by The Prime Ministers of Brandenburg and Palestine)
- Completion of the cafeteria and open air cinema
- Conceiving the organizational structure for running the cinema
- First film workshop with 10 young Palestinian filmmakers preparing short-movies for the opening event under the theme “One day in the Westbank”

Mai – July 2010

- Facade works on the cinema
- Wiring and installation of the technical equipment of the cinema
- Goethe-Institute moves into Cinema Jenin and opens the media library
- Installation of event technology
- Getting the LED-screen and advertisement company operational
- Selecting and training the staff to run the cinema
- Launch of the international poster campaign “Cinema Jenin coming soon”
- Open-air broadcasting of Football World Cup 2010 and launch of the local poster campaign
- Events in Ramallah, Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv to advertise the project

August 2010

- Opening Event with first public screening of “The Heart of Jenin” in Jenin
- Launch of the preparations for the Cinema Jenin International Film Festival in April 2011
- Acquiring seed funding for the follow up projects
IX. Testimonials

“I am deeply committed to Cinema Jenin.”
(Roger Waters, founder of Pink Floyd)

“It is very clear that this [Jenin] is the place where dialogue and cultural exchange has to start if the terror shall ever end in the Middle East!”
(Jaka Bizilj, founder of the CINEMA FOR PEACE FOUNDATION)

“We will not only create jobs through the renovation of the cinema in Jenin but will first of all give young people a space for their talents and open a window to the world for them.”
(Frank-Walter Steinmeier, former German Foreign Minister)

“The cinema can help reviving the cultural life of the northern West Bank and counterbalancing the growing influence of political and religious radicalism and intolerance.”
(Fareed Majari, former head of the Goethe-Institute in Palestine)

“Ce projet a vu le jour pour donner la chance à la population de Jenin de s’ouvrir vers l’extérieur grâce aux rencontres que cela va engendrer et aux diffusions de films étrangers.”
(Florence Massena, PPN news, 11.02.2010)

“...a film [produced by Cinema Jenin] is telling an unbelievable story: a Israeli who lost her husband in a suicide bombing...will come to Jenin and will meet the family [of the assassin]...with a message: let all the bad of the past be and forgive to reach peace.”

““Children can’t be enemies, they are not carrying any guilt’, this courageous statement by Ismael Khatib stands for a vision of a better world.”
(Sharon Adler, Aviva Berlin.de, 15.04.2009)

“The whole project is a real positive change for Jenin...Also its fun. People here need something to enjoy.”
(Ma’amun Kanan, local team member, cited in BBC News, 28.01.2010)

“We got a clear American message that the Palestinian state will start from Jenin!”

“Jenin is a laboratory test for a future Palestinian state.”
(Thorsten Schmitz, Süddeutsche Zeitung, 20.02.2009)
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