

# The Salem Music Center, West Bank

A proposal from the Villages Group

September 2010

*"Perhaps we cannot bring about a general peace, but we can perform deeds of peace"*

<http://villagesgroup.wordpress.com>

The Villages Group aims to improve understanding between Palestinians and Israelis, and to deepen human relationships between us. We believe that patience and maintaining personal relationships is an essential building block for peace between the two peoples.

**Main contact for inquiries about this proposal:**

Ehud Krinis, [ksehud@gmail.com](mailto:ksehud@gmail.com)

# The Salem Music Center, West Bank

**Aim:** To improve relations between Israelis and Palestinians by jointly creating a music center in the West Bank

## Objectives

1. Build a lasting cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians at the community level.
2. Jointly establish a music center for cultural, intellectual and spiritual progress.
3. Contribute to the personal development of Palestinian youths living under strain and in high conflict areas.
4. Create awareness of music in Palestinian villages.
5. Discover and foster musical talent among Palestinian village youth.
6. Create an orchestra of musicians to perform in Israel, the Palestinian territories and internationally.

## Background

In 2002, a group of Israelis made contact with Palestinians from villages in the West Bank, including Salem and Deir al-Hattab. Weekly visits to the villages evolved into friendships and partnerships. With mutual responsibility and dedication they work together to create a better future for everyone. The Israelis provide support to help the local people develop their communities, particularly at times of physical and emotional difficulties.

The Palestinian villages of Salem (population 6,000) and Deir al-Hattab (population 3,500) are located on the eastern outskirts of Nablus, between the refugee camps Askar and Balata and the Israeli settlements of Elon More and Itamar. The villages are dependent upon Nablus for social services, economic relations and cultural activities. But, since 2000, they have also been subject to varying degrees of Israeli military blockade and economic suffocation. As a result, the villages are isolated and lack many basic services for all spheres of daily life. Culture is one of the areas in which this isolation is severely felt.

Salem and Deir al-Hattab do not have a cultural center where residents can learn and develop their intellectual, artistic and spiritual abilities. Children and teenagers are especially at risk. They live under extreme stress and pressure and desperately need a productive and constructive outlet to channel their energy.

To address this problem, a group of Israelis and Palestinians, led by Jubier Ishtayya, a Palestinian musician and music teacher, and Erella Dunayevsky, an Israeli therapist and mentor, started a pilot programme in January 2010 to

establish a music center. Music, being a universal language, is an important tool for healing and empowerment as well as an educational device that can teach life skills. The initiative is the product of a fruitful and ongoing cooperation, lasting more than eight years. The project has also received the full cooperation from the local municipality.

## **Results of the pilot project**

The pilot project was a huge success. After conducting entrance exams for more than 300 Palestinian children, 18 were selected, including 11 girls and 7 boys.

The children gather three times a week, for three hours each time, in the rooms provided by the local municipality. In the beginning, the children learned the basics of music: how to read music and how to tune and test different instruments. Next they each chose their personal instruments among the piano, violin, guitar, organ, drum and the Oud (a traditional Middle Eastern musical instrument).

The children have shown a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment. Many more children and families from the village are interested to participate.

## **Description of the project**

Every six months, a new class of 15 students will start a program of music training. The project aims to reach 90 pupils from the two villages, who will be chosen according to their performance through an examination of their basic musical potential.

The center will hire three specialized music teachers in order to increase the diversity and level of the students, and to enable them to use a variety of musical instruments. We will create different musical ensembles from the 90 students.

The center will also be open to expand activities to other forms of art (including painting and sculpture). The plan is for the music center to become a cultural and leisure center for the two villages.

**Length of the project:** 36 months

**Target group:** Boys and girls, 8-16 years old.

**Place:** A rented house in the village of Salem.

## Budget

The following table lists the needed items and their cost in Israeli Shekels (US \$1 = 3.7 Shekels and AUS \$1 = 3.4 Shekels):

	Item	Number of needed items	Price in Shekels per Item	Total Cost in Shekels (and US \$)
<b>Administration</b>				
1	Project Coordinator	1	1,000 * 36 months	36,000 (\$9,730)
2	Music trainers	3	2,000*3*36 months	216,000 (\$58,400)
3	Center rent	1	3 yrs * 10,000 per year	30,000 (\$8,100)
<b>Musical Instruments</b>				
4	Oud	12	500	6,000 (\$1,620)
5	Violin	18	400	7,200 (\$1,950)
6	Drum	24	150	3,600 (\$970)
7	Organ	12	1,000	12,000 (\$3,250)
8	Guitar	18	450	8,100 (\$2,200)
<b>Sound System</b>				
9	12 inch speakers	2	1,500	3,000 (\$810)
10	Sound mixer	1	3,000	3,000 (\$810)
11	Speaker stands	2	300	600 (\$160)
12	Electrical cables	7	50	350 (\$95)
13	Microphones	5	300	1,500 (\$405)
<b>Furniture</b>				
14	Chairs	20	100	2,000 (\$540)
15	An office desk	1	800	800 (\$220)
16	Shelves	2	500	1,000 (\$270)
17	Computer	1	4,000	4,000 (\$1080)
18	Curtains	3	400	1,200 (\$325)
19	Fan	2	200	400 (\$110)
20	Paint			1,500 (\$405)
21	Teaching boards	3	200	600 (\$160)
22	Tables	3	400	1,200 (\$325)
23	Stationery			4,000 (\$1080)
24	Misc. administrative costs			8,000 (\$2,060)
<b>TOTAL in Shekels</b>				<b>NIS 352,050 .00</b>
<b>TOTAL in USD</b>				<b>US \$ 95,245.00</b>
<b>TOTAL in AUS \$</b>				<b>AUS \$ 103,737.00</b>