
Report on Activities of the Jerusalem Intercultural Center

2015 – 2016 Activity Year

January 2017



In 2015 – 2016, the Jerusalem Intercultural Center (JICC) has continued to establish itself as a leading institution in the advancement of shared living and community empowerment in Jerusalem. Thanks to the continued support of the Jerusalem Foundation and its partners from around the world – especially the USA, the UK and Germany – the JICC is implementing key aspects of the Jerusalem Foundation’s strategy on the ground. This joint international effort, coupled with the Jerusalem Foundation’s own sources, has successfully placed the JICC at the forefront of cross-cultural activities and community development in Jerusalem.

2015 – 2016 was a year of many firsts. Below is a summary of some of those milestones. Further details are also included:

Cultural Competence

- The *Jerusalem as a Culturally Competent City* conference in May 2016, organized jointly by the JICC and the Jerusalem Foundation as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations, was a turning point for the JICC. Attended by hundreds of professionals, from Jerusalem and throughout Israel, the conference presented strides that have been made over the past 10 years, and set the stage for the next step of meeting diverse residents’ diverse needs, in all fields of life.
- Continued work in the *health care system*, in Jerusalem and as a model throughout Israel, training in-house coordinators and facilitators *to increase sustainability and adaptability* within individual institutions. *For the first time*, work included a national network of hospitals and clinics.
- Expansive work in the *Israel Police Force*, reaching most police stations and present and future commanding officials, and continuing to expand training in 2017.
- Groundbreaking work with the *National Insurance Institute (NII), East Jerusalem branch*, the first NII branch in the country to undergo a process of cultural competence. Activities included involving workers in how to best implement cultural competency principles.
- In the *Jerusalem Municipality*, the entire *Community Services Administration*, which includes welfare, public health, immigrant absorption, and more, is undergoing training, as well as the *Auditor’s Office* which will be able to look at the entire Municipality’s operations through the prism of cultural competency and sensitivity.
- *Santé Israël*, the first web site to make Israel’s health care system accessible to French speakers, celebrated its first birthday.

Paramedical Professionals - Making healthcare practitioner exams accessible to Arab residents of east Jerusalem

As a result of the past four years of the program:

- The number of certified Arab paramedical professionals in East Jerusalem has *grown exponentially*.

- The program has enabled the JICC to more clearly map the situation of different paramedical professions in east Jerusalem, *contributing to the knowledge of training in the Jerusalem area.*
- The *awareness* both among Palestinian institutes of higher education and health care institutions in east Jerusalem as well as Israeli Ministry of Health has been *raised significantly.*
- *A large window of opportunity* for Arab women paramedical professionals to improve economic opportunities has been opened.

Talking Coexistence – Arabic Language Instruction

- Both 2015 – 2016 and 2016 – 2017 broke enrollment records. In 2015-16 there were 180 students in 12 classes, over 5 levels. In 2016-2017, there are 240 students in 16 classes, also over 5 levels.
- Cultural evenings provide students with an opportunity to practice their Arabic and gain deeper insights into Arab culture.

Asylum Seekers

The JICC is part of a consortium of organizations and agencies that seek to meet the needs of asylum seekers living in the city. Needs range in individual assistance to programs for families and children, assistance with education, health and other issues. Activities also include a range of community events.

Atta'a Assistance Center for the Rights of East Jerusalem Residents

First year that Atta'a is under the aegis of the JICC, the initiative has seen:

- 50% growth in number of requests
- Ballooning of its Facebook page to over 7,100 'likes,' and launching of its web site.
- Publication of a widely-referenced booklet on the Ministry of Interior
- Expansion of network of partners in action, both from NGO's and advocacy groups as well as municipal and government agencies.

MiniActive for Arab Residents of East Jerusalem

- *For the first time ever*, MiniActive activities led to a change in policy. After months of campaigning, MiniActive led the way toward the addition of 3 million NIS to the annual municipal sanitation budget for east Jerusalem, and 16 million NIS for the purchase of additional equipment for sanitation. As a result of this work, the *entire Municipality* is focusing their attention on garbage collection *throughout* Jerusalem.
- In January 2016, MiniActive organized the *first ever Arabic language Horticulture Therapy course* in Jerusalem for special education teachers, in cooperation with the David Yellin Academic College of Education.
- Bus stops in *entire neighborhoods* were repaired and replaced, thanks to MiniActive.
- *210 women – including 50 youth* – are studying Hebrew through a volunteer NGO to improve the effectivity of their activism. This is a *record-breaking number*, which broke last year's record of 150 women.

- In *MiniActive Youth for the Environment*, teenage girls learn leadership skills while participating in major environment-improving public art and other projects in neighborhoods throughout east Jerusalem.
- MiniActive became a *model for international work*, hosting a delegation that works with the Roma population in the Czech Republic in November 2016.

Emergency Readiness Networks

- Expansion to include 14 networks throughout Jerusalem
- Training of existing networks to maintain ability to respond and increase sustainability.

Multicultural Participatory Democracy

- JICC mentored community center staffs in Gilo, Kiryat Menachem, Givat Messuah, Baka'a and south Talpiot.
- For the first time, residents – especially the Ethiopian community in Kiryat Menachem and the highly diverse community of south Talpiot – felt that they were able to influence issues that affected their everyday lives.
- Training in using Facebook as a community-building tool key to increasing residents' engagement in community processes.

Fighting Racism and Xenophobia in the Public Sphere

Since the summer of 2014 the JICC have been at the forefront of promoting tolerance in Jerusalem. 2016 accomplishments include:

- *A Different Day in Jerusalem* celebrated Jerusalem's diversity through 50 coordinated events, affecting tens of thousands of people on Jerusalem Day. It was the *first time* such a broad effort has been made to celebrate Jerusalem's diversity.
- JICC-mentored Speaking in the Square and other tolerance initiatives that came in their wake led to the *redesigning of Zion Square, to be called Tolerance Square*. The initiative's Effective Dialogue methodology spread, and is now *being presented in national frameworks*.
- *0202-Points of View from Jerusalem* are now liked by nearly *80,000 people* and reach some 150,000 people weekly on Facebook and the Internet. The network now includes pages that translate from Arabic to Hebrew, from Arabic to English and one which brings news from the Ultra-Orthodox world to the awareness of the general population.
- The JICC was asked to be one of the leading organizations in the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations to Promote Tolerance, formed by the Center for Young Adults and the Municipality's Young Authority.
- The JICC is continuing to develop *Tolerance Network Teams (TNT's)*, a series of neighborhood-based and theme-based *grassroots initiatives* that seek to advance tolerance in Jerusalem.

Window to Mount Zion

Since October 2015, Window to Mount Zion has bridged inter-religious and inter-community gaps that have festered between Jewish, Christian and Muslim groups for centuries. As a result of its activity over the past year:

- In *unheard-of cooperation*, religious Jewish and Christian groups have issued joint statements condemning hate crimes on Mount Zion.
- Christian ceremonies, which in the past have caused inter-religious tension, proceeded *without incident*.
- The celebration of Christian and Jewish holidays that coincided simultaneously, which in the past had been the source of conflict and tension, also *proceeded smoothly*.

Table of Contents

Program	More on Page
Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All	
Cultural Competence in Jerusalem	6
Cultural Competence on a National Level	9
Paramedical Professionals - Making Healthcare Practitioner Exams Accessible to Arab Residents of East Jerusalem	11
Talking Coexistence – Arabic Language Instruction	12
Asylum Seekers	13
Atta'a Assistance Center for the Rights of East Jerusalem Residents	14
Cross-Cultural Community Engagement	
MiniActive for Arab Residents of East Jerusalem	15
Emergency Readiness Networks	17
Multicultural Participatory Democracy	18
Fighting Racism and Xenophobia in the Public Sphere	21
Window to Mount Zion	24

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

The JICC focuses its activities in *increasing access to all rights and services through cultural competence* training and sensitivity, and *empowering residents* to improve their everyday lives and connections with the 'other' through *cross-cultural community engagement*. Below is a summary of the JICC's activities in Cultural Competence; Cross-Cultural Community Engagement follows.

Cultural Competence in Jerusalem

Jerusalem as a Culturally Competent City

The "Jerusalem as a Culturally Competent City" Conference, planned and organized by the JICC and the Jerusalem Foundation, took place at the Jerusalem Cinematheque on Tuesday, May 17. It was the culmination of 10 years of working to advance cultural competence, and a turning point in the approach of the JICC's work in Jerusalem.



Ms. Uzma Shakir, Keynote Speaker

Throughout the day over 300 people listened to dozens of speakers and panelists who came from all walks of life, and different fields. There were professionals from the municipality, senior officials in planning, education, welfare, health, and community life. There were researchers and leaders from colleges, universities and think tanks. There were active community residents. There were NGO professionals, as well as representatives from the Israel Police and the IDF. There were Christian and Muslim Arabs, some residents of East Jerusalem, some not. There were secular, traditional, religious and ultra-Orthodox Jews. The entire day was conducted in Arabic, Hebrew and English, all on equal footing. It was all there, Jerusalem in all its complex diversity.

Throughout the day, discussions focused on how service providers, in all fields, can make their services equally accessible to all Jerusalem populations, making them culturally competent. And on the residents' side, discussions focused on ways that they can work to improve their own access to these rights and services, many of which are guaranteed them by law. We discussed strategies and challenges, and the process in between.

Uzma Shakir, Director of the Office of Equity, Diversity and Human Rights, City of Toronto, was the keynote speaker. She described the processes taking place in Toronto and throughout Canada regarding multiculturalism and cultural competence, which include developing approaches appropriate to the vastly different population groups in Canada, from the native populations to the Francophone community of Quebec to recent immigrants from south Asia and elsewhere.

"Cultural Competency...can mean empowering marginalized people to take control over their own destiny and to change the conditions in society to produce equitable and just outcomes for all". Uzma Shakir, Keynote Speaker

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

Health Care

Training the Trainers Courses for Cultural Competence in Health Care Institutions.

In order to facilitate sustainability of cultural competence training and assimilation in health care institutions, the JICC operated two Training the Trainers workshops, one toward the end of 2015, and a second toward the end of 2016, for a total of 40 staff. Participants came from around the country, and a significant portion came from Jerusalem. Based on the short training videos and instruction handbook that the JICC recently produced in cooperation with Bar Ilan University, the courses included skills on how to integrate and facilitate training workshops on cultural competence. Participants then were able to implement cultural competence training in their home institutions.

Follow-up Peer learning seminars for:

- *Cultural Competence Coordinators from throughout Jerusalem* on challenges and strategies of cultural competence into health care institutions.
- *Medical interpreters continued training on genetic counseling.* The lectures and discussions dealt with specific challenges and sensitivities related to medical interpreting during genetic counseling.



National Insurance Institute (NII), East Jerusalem Branch

Since 2015 the JICC has been working with the senior management of the National Insurance Institute, East Jerusalem Branch, to develop a system to implement cultural competence principles. This is the first cultural competence work that has been done *in any NII branch* throughout Israel. During 2016 the JICC held training sessions with the workers, and is working with the branch's "Excellence Team," a dedicated group of professionals who volunteered to improve the level of service given at the branch. They are exploring different models and helping to design principles for action at the branch.



Exercises in Cultural Competence by the Excellence Team

Jerusalem Municipality

Over the year the JICC worked with a number of different municipal departments. This included:

- The *Community Services Administration*, which includes the Welfare Department, the Employment Authority, the Absorption Authority and the Public Health. About 80 senior officials from all the different Departments participated in the initial workshops that were held in July. The first



Learning about Mt. Zion from a Window to Mt. Zion perspective

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

facilitators course, who will be responsible for training within the Administration, took place in November-December 2016.

- In October 2016 the JICC also worked with the *Comptroller's Office*, providing them with an intensive learning experience in cultural competence, with Mount Zion as a case study. They first had a tour of Mount Zion that emphasized some of the many stories of cultural competence that the project has facilitated over the past year. They also received a general overview of the principles of cultural competence.

Optometry Students at Hadassah Academic College

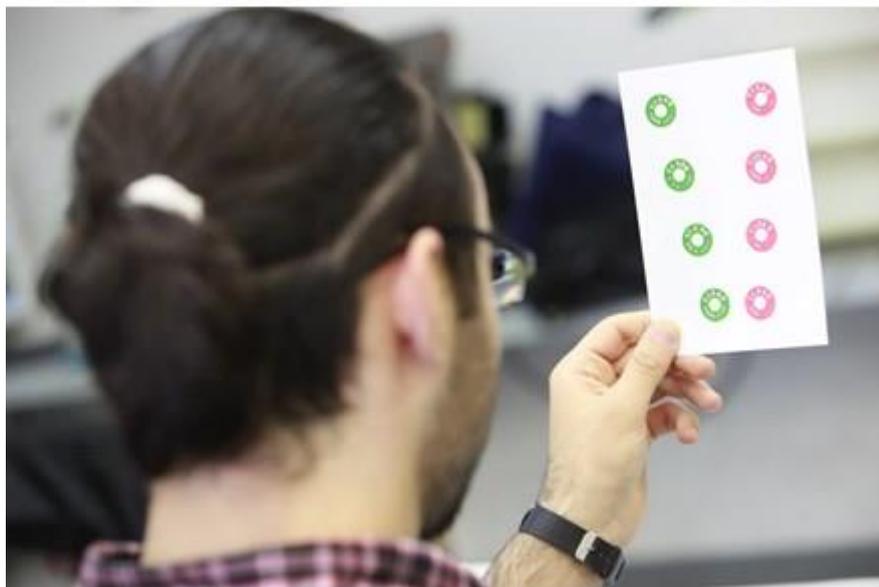
On June 1, 2016 the JICC held its first workshops with 33 students of optometry who are in their fourth and last year of training. This group in and of itself was one of many cultures – Jews, Muslims Christians, religious and secular, new immigrants and veterans. Students learned how to provide culturally competent services, as they drew upon their own experiences at the college.

Medical Students at the Hadassah-Hebrew University School of Medicine

Students received an introductory lecture to cultural competence as part of the “Man and Medicine” course that is required by all students at the Hadassah – Hebrew University Medical School.

Nursing Students at the Machon Tal, Jerusalem College of Technology

Nursing students at the Machon Tal Nursing School at the Jerusalem College of Technology also received a lecture on cultural competence as part of a course on ‘Advancing Health.’



Optometry Student at Hadassah College

Improving Cultural Competence Nationally

Israel Police Force

In what is probably its largest scope of activity, in 2016 the JICC's cooperation with the Israel Police Force developed in two main directions: training at the National Police Academy; and training in most of the precinct stations throughout the country.

At the National Police Academy, the 50 course graduates and Superintendents, represent the next generation of commanding officers in the Israel Police. The JICC mentored the 6-month course, during which participants wrote a module in the unit commander's file on how to operate a culturally competent unit, which was presented in the summary meeting of the course that was held with the national Police Commissioner.



In September 2016, the JICC, together with Mosaica – The Center for Conflict Resolution by Agreement, were tasked – by the Police Force Education Unit, under directive from the Minister of Internal Security and the national Police Commissioner – with providing 200 cultural competence training workshops in most of the police stations around Israel. As a first step, they trained 30 professional facilitators: social workers, community mediators, and others, who ran the training workshops in police stations throughout the country. Much of the 5-hour introductory training is taught through case studies in dealing with different issues in different communities. In addition, expert lecturers were invited to provide a more in-depth understanding of issues affecting the particular precincts. When finished, the project **will reach most of the tens of thousands of police officers and commanders throughout the country.** As a result of this work, training has been expanded even further, to include Border Police and special forces.



How will this training affect police officers' responses to everyday incidents? One officer noted: *"The training opened my eyes to the different populations we serve. That, when we're called to an incident, I might need to act a little differently, try to respect the people's particular customs. Our main goal is to try to ensure that the incident is over as quickly as possible, that it's been dealt with in the most professional manner as possible, in the calmest way possible, so that we can do our jobs as best as possible."*

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

Assuta Medical Center Network

For the first time ever, the JICC began working with Assuta, a network of four hospitals and six medical centers throughout Israel. The workshop included 60 facilitators, from all disciplines at Assuta, who will lead cultural competence workshops for all Assuta employees. It took place in Assuta's School of Professionalism, which opened two years ago. The next step was for the facilitators to hold cultural competence workshops for all of Assuta's 2,800 employees, using the instruction package prepared during the training workshops.



Employment Counselors

On November 10, 2015 the [Be-Atzmi](#) organization, which assists thousands of unemployed and underprivileged men and women every year to gain employment, dedicated its annual professional development seminar to cultural competence, which was led by the JICC. Since Be-Atzmi often works with populations on the geographic and socio-economic periphery – including Israelis of Ethiopian descent, the Ultra-Orthodox and Arab populations – a culturally competent approach to employment training and placement can be critically important for the program's successes.

Immigration Authority vis a vis Asylum Seekers

The JICC held a series of training workshops, as well as helped to write a training handbook about Cultural Competence for those coming from Eritrea and Sudan in Israel, together with the Center for International Migration and Integration (CIMI). This was the *first time ever* that such a comprehensive document was written and published.

Santé Israël

This year, Santé Israël, the **first web site** (www.sante.org.il) to make Israel's health care system accessible to French speakers, celebrated its first birthday. Over the year some 10,000 people visited the site, most from Israel but also 2,000 from France. In addition to developing the content of the web site and its accompanying Facebook page, Santé also held a number of community meetings throughout Jerusalem. In addition, Sante participated in the "[Olimpiada](#)" information fair for French-speaking new immigrants, and began a partnership with [AMI Israel](#), which helps French-speaking immigrants in Israel.



Holiday Information Sheets

The JICC continued to distribute one-page **Holiday Information sheets** to a broad range of health and welfare professionals throughout the country. The project began in 2013, and in 2016, 50 information sheets on a wide range of holidays, were distributed.

Paramedical Professionals – Improving Health Care for Arab Residents of East Jerusalem

The year 2015-16 marked the fourth year of this program. As 2016 winds down, the JICC is proud of its accomplishments over the past four years:

- **The program has increased the number of certified Arab paramedical professionals in East Jerusalem exponentially.** Since it began in 2012, nearly 70 nurses, occupational therapists, and physical therapists have passed their Israeli certification exams. This includes 37 nurses, 24 occupational therapists and 6 physical therapists. Beforehand, only 1-2 would pass each year in each discipline. *It would have taken many years to achieve these results otherwise.*
- **The program has enabled the JICC to more clearly map the situation of different paramedical professions in east Jerusalem,** contributing to the knowledge of training in the Jerusalem area. The knowledge base increased as courses were developed. *This is the first time ever that any type of mapping has been done, and this information is now available for the first time to health care and educational institutions, as well as the Israel Ministry of Health.*
- **The program has raised awareness both among Palestinian institutes of higher education and health care institutions in east Jerusalem as well as Israeli Ministry of Health.** When the program began, there was little compliance and even less awareness about the need and benefits of having staff that passed the certification exam in their fields, and the improvement this could have on the quality of health care. Today, all major health care institutions in east Jerusalem, Palestinian universities, as well as Israel Ministry of Health, better understand this need.
- **The program has opened a large window of opportunity for Arab women paramedical professionals to improve economic opportunities.** Passing the certification exams improves Arab women's access to employment rights, which includes an increase in pay and employment conditions.
- **As a result of the program, the JICC has earned a prestigious reputation for offering high-quality courses.** Graduates of the physical therapy and occupational therapy courses have had high rates of success. *As a result of this success, graduates, and even expectant graduates, of the different Palestinian universities have requested to register for courses well in advance.*

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

Arabic Language Instruction

In 2015 – 2016 the JICC’s Arabic Instruction program taught 180 people in students in 12 classes, over 5 levels, with classes going mornings and afternoons, most days of the week. In addition to the weekly classes, the program featured a number of cultural events, that brought Arabic language and culture to life. These included:

- An encounter with author *Sheikha Haliwa*, who read from her poems and stories. She told her life story – about growing up in an unrecognized Bedouin village near Tivon that was destroyed by the government in 1991, her studies at a Christian junior / senior high school in Haifa, and about her marriage to her cousin in Jaffa, where she currently lives.
- An encounter with *Afnan Abu Taha and Bilal Arshid*, speaking in Arabic, who describe the book, *Sweet Tea with Mint and Other Stories*. The book features six stories, three written originally in Hebrew by [Ronit Chacham](#) and three originally written in Arabic by Hadeel Nashef, [Al-Tayeb Ghanayem](#), and Sheikha Hussain Haliwa. These stories were then translated into Arabic and Hebrew, respectively.
- A fascinating lecture by *Mr. Omar Othman*, renowned teacher of Arabic and well-



Sweet Tea with Mint and Other Stories



Omar Othman

known author Arabic-language books. Mr. Othman has been teaching Arabic for some 40 years to non-Arabic and non-Hebrew speakers. He told about his childhood in Beit Safafa, and how his family moved to Bethlehem as a result of the 1948 war, and then back to Beit Safafa a few months afterward. Omar eventually returned to teach in Beit Safafa and became the principal of its high school. In 1991 he retired and began teaching Arabic and writing Arabic language instruction books.

In the 2016 – 2017 school year, the JICC broke the previous year’s record - 16 classes over 5 levels – some 240 people registered.

In gearing up for the year, the JICC’s long-time teachers were in contact with some of their veteran students. One student, Anat, had begun in level 1 and studied through level 4, but who hadn’t signed up for level 5 this year. “Because of the Arabic I studied...at the JICC, I’m in Greece for the year, helping Syrian refugees” she said. “I’m actually able to communicate with them, and help them. Thank you for opening up this opportunity.”

Cultural Competence: Increasing Access for All

Asylum Seekers

This year the JICC continued to work with a range of partners to help African asylum seekers and migrant workers in Jerusalem, including the [Jerusalem Municipality](#), the [Jerusalem Foundation](#), [Jerusalem African Community Center](#) (JACC), and others. All partners work in tandem with a part-time coordinator from the Hotline for Rights Realization, which works to ensure that a range of asylum seekers rights – education, employment, health, community. 2016 activities included:



Rights Realization

The municipal hotline, which works together with the JICC, dealt with over 100 individual requests for assistance, some 20 of them that needed extended care.

Parents and Children

Parents and children took part in a **Family Program**. Parents learned about and enjoyed a range of subjects that pertain to parenting in Israel, often through fun meetings and events. Children participated in activities that helped them to improve their personal and social skills. There were 12 families in the first year (2015 – 2016), and 16 families in the second year, which began in the fall of 2016.

The **Transitions** program, operated in cooperation with local NGO's and municipal agencies, strives to ensure that the children are ready for first grade. In 2016 it was expanded to include children entering public kindergartens. There were some 20 children and their parents in each of the sections (kindergarten, first grade).

The program coordinator is in constant contact with the full range of formal and informal education frameworks - from private daycare to public kindergarten to church-run afternoon programs to high schools. She works to ensure that the needs of these children and youth are being taken care of as well as possible.

Community Activities

- Joint Purim party, in cooperation with the Lev Ha'ir Community Council in the city center, JACC, and the Anti-Defamation League.
- Three Eritrean cooking workshops, led by 2 active members of the community. These workshops were especially tasty and well-attended.
- Dozens of children from the community participated in the neighborhood's Garden Melodies festival in the community garden.
- Participation of community representatives in the Emergency Forum, led by the Lev Ha'ir Community Council.
- Musical encounter in the Lev Ha'ir Community Council.

Atta'a Center for the Rights of Arab Residents of East Jerusalem

The Atta'a, the Center for Rights Realization for Arab residents of east Jerusalem was founded in 2005, and came under the JICC aegis in late 2015. It offers:

- **Ongoing One-on-One Work with Residents:** Information and assistance with forms, correspondence and official documents when dealing with institutions such as the National Insurance Institute (NII), Interior Ministry, healthcare organizations and the Jerusalem Municipality. In 2016, Atta'a took care of 859 cases, 70% than in 2015. Many of these came from Facebook (232), and the remainder came from visits to the 3 drop-in stations throughout east Jerusalem. These cases are taken care of by the 14 volunteers (up from 7 in 2015), overseen by the Project Coordinator and Rights Consultant.
- **Mass Awareness Raising** through community meetings throughout east Jerusalem, at different community centers such as Issawiya, Wadi Joz and Abna al-Quds in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City. They also distributed printed thousands of flyers and distributed them at key locations - the different community centers, National Insurance Institute and Ministry of Interior, East Jerusalem Branches, and more. This year the Atta'a Internet presence has grown considerably, with over 7,100 'likes' on its Facebook page, and over 500 entrances into its new web site (www.attaacenter.org), 400 of which led to the booklet on explanations about Ministry of Interior regulations. This booklet was also published and distributed throughout east Jerusalem.
- **Networking and Partnerships:** Atta'a is unique in that it is considered completely independent, yet it works with everyone in an attempt to improve everyday lives for residents: municipal agencies; Israeli government agencies, such as the Ministry of the Interior, National Insurance Institute, HMO's, Ministry of Health; non-profit advocacy/human rights organizations, some of which have difficulty in contacting the 'establishment.' Thus, Atta'a is critical in building necessary relationships.



At a workshop in Sur Baher

An example of Atta'a's work: *During the summer months, an Arab woman approached [Atta'a](#) with a problem. She was divorced, and had a very sick child who had been given medication that cost 1,200 NIS per month. With assistance from Atta'a volunteers, she submitted a special form available from the Ministry of Health that asked for a special discount on the medication. Her request was approved – now she receives an 80% (!) discount on this child's medication.*

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

MiniActive and Effective Activism

MiniActive, the 1,000-strong network of Arab women, has created effective processes of activism for the environment and community, which have instilled a sense that positive change is possible, and most importantly, that there is hope. This hope and the expectation of success continues to feed the positive momentum created by these projects that enables work to be done on the ground, despite difficult and complex political realities. Special successes in 2015 -2016 include:

Taking Care of the Residents' Immediate Environment

- MiniActive was born out of a necessity to improve residents' immediate environment. Continuing this trend, in 2015 – 2016, there were **6,000** requests to fix things, and a total of **2,300** total requests taken care of.
- The “*We Won't Live in Filth!*” Facebook campaign began in October 2015 and continues to this day. When it began, the security situation was tense, and municipal garbage collection had all but stopped. MiniActive then began the campaign, in which they photographed overflowing garbage receptacles daily and uploaded to the MiniActive Facebook page (with almost 18,000 likes). These posts were also shared by the 0202 English and Hebrew Facebook pages (total reach of 100,000 weekly, including Jerusalem City Council members). As a result, **3 million shekels** was added to the annual sanitation budget for east Jerusalem, as well as an additional 16 million shekels to purchase needed equipment.
- In the spring of 2016, and as a result of MiniActive requests, all bus stops in Beit Hanina and Shuafat were replaced, after years of disrepair and neglect.
- Several *community clean-ups were held*, including with high school groups of boys as well as girls.
- As a result of demand from MiniActive participants, the program organized the **first-ever** Arabic-language Horticultural Therapy in Jerusalem, in cooperation with the David Yellin Academic College of Education, which took place between January – May 2016.

MiniActive Youth – Continuing on to the Next Generation

Between 2015 and 2016 the participation in MiniActive Youth grew from 30 teenage girls to 50. They take part in leadership training courses, workshops on the environment and recycling; they help to establish gardens at Abna al-Quds Community Center in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City; they have decorated schools and an organization to help children with cancer.



Decorating the wall of a school

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

Throughout the summer of 2016 and into the fall the girls performed a number of public art projects in Silwan, Issawiya, Wadi Joz, and Umm Tuba. The girls also learned how to make art projects out of recycled paper, gardening, and more.

Hebrew Communication to Improve Effectiveness

In 2015-16, over 150 women studied Hebrew in order to be able to communicate with service providers. Taught by volunteer teachers through the Speaking Hebrew organization, classes took place at the Hebrew University and included a group of 30 women from Sur Baher, 25 teenage girls from the MiniActive Youth program, and 100 women from all over Jerusalem. In 2016-2017 enrollment grew to **210** women, including 50 youth from MiniActive Youth.



Enrichment to Build Community

MiniActive does not just work, they also enjoy a range of activities that build community, including: a baking classes with 25 participants, trips (often to the north) with 50 – 100 participants, tours around the Old City of Jerusalem (also 100 participants); cosmetics, crochet, 4 exercise classes (with 100 participants total), and a drama class with 25 participants. On March 29, 2016 there was a community event with 300 women and their families, which included recognition of the regional cluster coordinators, a Debka dance by participants, a lectures on rights and on the importance of women and the environment in the Quran.

Advancing Health and Safety

- *First aid classes* for 25 women in April 2016, and a second in October – November 2016 for 15 women. These courses are especially important for young mothers, who often have little knowledge of basic first aid.
- *Fitness and Nutrition Course at the Abna al-Quds Community Center*, developed out of a need in the field, due to a rise in diabetes, obesity and other chronic illnesses associated with lifestyle. Over 50 participants are taking part in the 4-month program.



Emergency Readiness Networks (ERN)

The project came about in response to tragedies that occurred in east Jerusalem that stemmed from an inability to respond to emergencies effectively. Begun in 2012, the JICC is supervising the establishment of similar local emergency networks in East Jerusalem neighborhoods, together with a local, well-established Arab organization that specializes in a range of emergency care, as well as a dedicated NGO of the ERNs.

In 2016 another 3 ERN's were formed – in Abu Tor, Ras el-Amud and in the Christian Quarter in the Old City. This brings the total number of operating ERNs to 14, encompassing some 400 volunteers, who are creating a life-saving network and infrastructure of human and other resources. The ultimate goal is to open another 6, to have a total of 20 ERNs, covering the entire area of east Jerusalem.

The ERN organization continues to offer training to the different sub-teams in the ERNs. Sub-teams include: rescue, first aid, communication, and logistics. Another important part of its ongoing training is maintenance and follow-up for existing teams, offering refresher workshops and simulations and other practical exercises ensure that the ERNs are ready throughout the year.

In the spring of 2016 the ERN network took a terrible blow. One of the leaders, from the Shuafat Refugee Camp, killed. Ironically, he was in the middle of paving a road at time. He had been the head of the ERN in the Shuafat Refugee Camp, and his death actually served to encourage all the ERNs throughout East Jerusalem to increase their involvement and activities in the upcoming



Baha during a recent winter storm, working to help his community. He was killed in the spring of 2016 while paving a road.

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The East Jerusalem Bottom-Up Model: One to Be Copied

Feedback from the field has shown its successes at saving lives and in handling emergency situations exceedingly well. One of Israel's experts in establishing emergency teams, has noted: *This model is much more successful than other models, and it enables better activity in the first 72 hours of an emergency situation. Through proper networking, the teams are able to function, and enable emergency professionals to work in the most professional manner as possible. The ERNs are able to best assess the situation, be in contact with all the relevant first responder personnel, define what needs to be done, define the community's needs, and refer the neighborhood's resources toward initial response to those needs.*

Multicultural Participatory Democracy

Jerusalem's Jewish population is highly diverse, and in order for residents to feel connected to their neighborhood and their city it is important to foster community building processes. The JICC has developed a number of unique tools that enable each resident to influence his or her immediate surroundings, called participatory democracy, that enable people to take responsibility for – and ownership of - their communities, and their city. In 2015 – 2016 the JICC used these tools to help community professionals in the neighborhoods of Gilo, Kiryat Menachem, Baka'a and Talpiot.

Kiryat Menachem

The JICC is helping the Ethiopian community in Kiryat Menachem to respond to their most urgent needs. They mentored the newly-elected community leadership throughout the summer and fall of 2016, culminating in a peak event – community round tables - inviting community input, together with community professionals, on September 27. The leadership expected up to 50; instead 90 came! With members of the community leading the round tables, they discussed issues relating to the community's relationship with the police, health care, education, culture, youth and young people, and their spiritual center. Work on specific initiatives will begin in 2017.

“There was an amazing atmosphere [at the Ethiopian community round table event in Kiryat Menachem],” said Aliza Shabo-Hayut, Project Director for the JICC. “Everyone respected each other’s right to express their points of view. We dealt with some pretty sensitive issues, but the atmosphere in the room stayed calm and constructive.”

The JICC also started working in **Givat Messuah**, which is part of the Kiryat Menachem Community Council. There, the JICC is working with the local community center annex and its youth coordinator, to determine the needs of the youth and how to respond to those needs, together with representatives of the youth and the different organizations that work there. The goal is to strive for cooperation between the groups and organizations, which has never been seen before. The JICC is also assisting regarding transportation and traffic issues.

Gilo

The JICC helped the staff from the Gilo Community Council lead the process of informing residents about the new **light rail lines**. Residents first learned how the new lines will affect their everyday lives. They also met with staff from the transportation master plan, and presented their questions and concerns. The JICC also helped residents submit their objections, which are suggestions on how to improve the way the line is built. As a result, Gilo residents felt they had



Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

the power to influence the construction of the light rail line, and, by extension, the power to influence other areas of their lives.

Other planning issues, together with the Jerusalem Municipality, that included resident participation:

- *Planning of a new playground* in which the initiative and many design elements came from residents.
- *Planning of a new dog park* that also included the input of local resident dog owners. Work has already begun on this park.

Facebook workshop. Today, one of the most important forms of community building with through Facebook and other social media. In July 2016, the JICC held workshops with the staff at the Gilo Community Council on how to use Facebook to foster community dialogue. In November 2016 they held an additional workshop on dilemmas and challenges – are workers expected to respond immediately



to posts uploaded on the weekends? What happens if an argument gets out of hand? The successes of the JICC's workshop in Gilo have informed their work in other areas of Jerusalem as well. After the success of this workshop, the JICC was asked to provide training to Community Council staffs in Baka'a and Kiryat Menachem.

Greater Baka'a Community Council

In March the JICC held an **Open Space Town Meeting in Baka'a**, which aimed to give residents an opportunity to initiate projects that will improve their everyday lives. Some 30 residents – young and old, immigrants from the US and France, religious and secular, as well as a group of youth in wheelchairs from the [“Step Forward” organization – took part.](#)



Working in small groups

In 2016 the JICC also began working with the area of **south Talpiot**, which is part of the Greater Baka'a Community Council. South Talpiot has a very interesting mix of populations. There are many veteran immigrants from Middle Eastern countries. There is a large contingent from Ethiopia. There are those who are a bit better off who have moved into recently-built hi-rise apartments, and more. There are those who are recognized by the local welfare office and are used to receiving services. Very few are used to having a say in determining what kind of services they will receive. Very few are used to being active and having a voice in the future of their neighborhood.

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

In February 2016, together with the local welfare municipality branch and with the JICC assistance, a first social entrepreneurship meeting was held. The meeting drew 80 participants, many more than were expected, and included the entire spectrum of diversity. The issues ranged from physical and environmental development of the area, neighborhood approach to urban renewal, finding solutions to parking issues, activities for children, and much more, all pertaining to everyday life in the neighborhood.



As a result of this meeting, further meetings and discussions (face-to-face as well as via Facebook) with residents were held on the parking situation in the area. This was an important process, and it enabled the Municipality to show transparency in its processes. It also enabled residents to influence the final result.

Reactions of residents as a result of the processes to ease the parking situation:

-Congratulations, it's about time!

-Hats off!

-It's about time, it's unheard of that we residents can't find parking, morning, noon or night...

-Congratulations, supporting you, from across the street.

Fighting Racism and Xenophobia in West Jerusalem

Together with a wide range of partners, 2016 was the year the JICC helped to bring “tolerance” into the mainstream discourse in Jerusalem. The JICC has been central in putting tolerance on the map – not only in downtown Jerusalem, but in a number of neighborhoods, and in a number of citywide initiatives. These initiatives have encompassed all of Jerusalem's populations – Jews, Arabs, religious, secular, Ultra-Orthodox, right-wing, left-wing and center. All of them are driven by grassroots activists, ensuring that the model is sustainable. As a result, the JICC is viewed as one of the major factors in this field, and has become one of the first organizations approached when major bodies in Jerusalem seek to advance tolerance. In this way the JICC and its partners in action are changing the face – and approach - of Jerusalem and Jerusalemites in fighting racism and xenophobia. Below are highlights from 2016:

A Different Day in Jerusalem

The day, held on the traditional Jerusalem Day in June 2016, sought to celebrate Jerusalem through its diversity. The day was produced together with the Jerusalem Foundation, Center for Young Adults and the This is Jerusalem initiative. The day featured 50 different activities that sought to advance tolerance, which ran from Saturday afternoon June 4 through the evening of Sunday June 5. These ranged from tours of different neighborhoods, discussions, lectures, family day and flower parades, activities on the light rail, art exhibits, yoga, ju jitsu, tolerant signs along Jaffa Road during the traditional Flag Parade, learning Hebrew and Arabic sign language, tours by Ultra-Orthodox leaders along the Meah Shearim seam line, collaborations with think tanks and much, much more. Speaking in the Square, O202 and the Tolerance Network all had prominent events throughout the day. The dedicated [web site](#) presented the entire list. There was extensive press coverage of the event, from articles in the *Jerusalem Post*, *Ha'aretz* to appearances on Israel's Educational Television, Channel 10, and an extensive radio interview on Israel Radio Bet.



Speaking tolerance in downtown Jerusalem

Public figures and Jerusalemites who attended the events hailed the day, saying that it is “an extremely important message that needs to be spoken,” and that the JICC “helped us to begin changing the way we talk about the Jerusalemite narrative.” Jerusalem Post’s Peggy Cidor ([link to an article she published about the day](#)) publicly and personally told the JICC that “there was definitely a change in the air. I felt that something changed in relation to Jerusalem, and it is not to be taken for granted. It was clear that the Jerusalemites were just waiting for this message to be spread across the city – thank you!”

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

Speaking in the Square

The Speaking in the Square initiative has been mentored by the JICC since the summer of 2014. Its core of 5-10 activists affect hundreds of people each Thursday or Saturday night in Zion Square. On the Debate Night held on June 4 there was a constantly-changing audience of least 30 – 50 people throughout the night, reaching several hundred by evening's end. The debate nights held both before and after the Gay Pride Parade in Jerusalem (July 14 and July 21 respectively) were also very successful. Additional 2016 highlights include:

- *Partners in the Square* included visits by City Council members and Jerusalem's chief rabbi; regular discussion circles spearheaded by the Yerushalimim Movement organization; joint events with a Jewish religious youth movement; and events together with the Street Study Circle (Beit Midrash Rehov). These joint efforts have significantly enhanced a tolerant presence in Zion Square.
- *Redesign of Zion Square to be Tolerance Square.* -As a result of the joint work, the Municipality redesigned Zion Square, including elements to encourage discussion and tolerance. The Municipality invited Speaking in the Square and other initiatives that work to further tolerance to participate in the planning.
- *Effective Dialogue Workshops.* Utilizing their unique methodology for dialogue with a non-cooperative other, Speaking in the Square held a number of workshops (13) for the general public, at the Gishurim conference, in local high schools, and more. Elements of Effective Dialogue have also been incorporated into Cultural Competence trainings.



Debate night in Zion Square

0202 – Points of View Jerusalem

0202 is a network of Facebook pages / Internet site, also mentored by the JICC, that makes points of view of Jerusalem's vastly different populations accessible to each other. The network has a page that translate Arabic-language news sites and Facebook pages read by east Jerusalem residents into Hebrew and English (total of 75,000 'likes'), and in September 2016 it opened a third page that brings news items from the Ultra-Orthodox media into a more widespread audience. After only 3 1/2 months, this page already has over 3,200 likes. Together, it is estimated that the network reaches 100,000 people each week. Included among followers are prominent journalists, members of Jerusalem City Council, municipal and social service professionals, and many more. It has influenced public policy and informed journalists and researchers.



0202 Beyond the Screen- diverse panel

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

0202 Beyond the Screen. Over the past year there have been 4 “0202 Beyond the Screen” events, in which different posts were explained within the context of the Jerusalem reality today. Each event has had over 100 people attending, often needing to turn people away at the door. The latest event in November 2016 was a fascinating encounter between Arab east Jerusalem and Ultra-Orthodox Jerusalem, and a number of posts examined the Arab and Ultra-Orthodox media’s coverage of the same news events.

Coalition of Civil Society Organizations to Promote Tolerance

This Coalition was formed by the Center for Young Adults and the Municipality’s Young Authority, and we are major members of the coalition. On June 8 the coalition held a one-day conference for a wide range of civil society organizations to discuss practical ways to move the discussion of tolerance forward in the city, in a number of avenues – education, public space, arts and culture, and more. As one of the leaders in the city in this field, we were asked to be on the selection committee for Coalition grants to initiatives to promote tolerance.

Tolerance Network Teams (TNT's)

The JICC is working with a number of initiatives to create a varied network. Some operate in neighborhoods to promote tolerance on the most local level – between neighbors, between those who you see in the supermarket, at the post office – in 7 neighborhoods. Other initiatives cross neighborhood borders but bond on different levels. Examples include Neighbors Tell their Stories in Katamon, or the Abu Tor / Al-Thori group of Jews and Arabs. Others include Jerusalem Art, an eclectic mix of dozens of Jews and Arabs who re-claimed a deserted rooftop in the Old City; or the Monstor Pub, a community-based initiative in the Kiryat Hayovel area.



From the Katamon Tolerance Team

Tolerance Week – Focusing Activity around Peak Times

Leading up to the week of 2016 International Tolerance Day (November 16) the JICC became a platform to publicize and raise awareness about special activities that advance tolerance. Activities ranged from dance performances and spoken word events to a tour of Katamon to the Growing Up in a Mixed Cities Conference (which was organized by the Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace and the Jerusalem Foundation, thanks to the support of Prof. Dr. Jan Philipp Reemtsma and the Hamburg Foundation for the Advancement of Research and Culture). In all there were 15 events, and this number is expected to grow in future years.

Window to Mount Zion

Mt. Zion is home to a highly diverse range of people and institutions, from the Dormition Abbey, the Diaspora Yeshiva, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Muslim cemeteries, and David's Tomb and the room of the last supper, situated one on top of the other- ***the only site in the world that is holy to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.***

This diversity has also been the source of tension, some of it violent. It has often been said that Mt. Zion is a microcosm of all the issues of tension in Jerusalem, and even throughout the world. For this reason the Window to Mount Zion project was formed in 2015. The project has a few main components:

- **Regular meetings for the resident institutions of Mt. Zion**, including the many Jewish, Christian and Muslim stakeholders, as well as municipality and government officials. These meetings improve connections between these stakeholders, and help to advance year-round cooperation.
- **Platform for joint actions** and creating space to convene both for reactive and preventive action. For example, when the walls of the Dormition Abbey were painted with hateful graffiti in January 2016, the Forum released a joint statement condemning the action – the first such statement in over 1,000 years (or, in fact, ever...)! In addition, during the annual interdenominational prayer service held at the Room of the Last Supper in January 2016, project volunteers provided welcome assistance (and an added feeling of safety) for this extraordinary service. Similarly, based on request of the Jewish religious groups on Mount Zion, a list of important and urgent repairs was formulated and negotiated with the relevant maintenance organizations in the spring of 2016.
- **Mount Zion Watch**, volunteers who patrol Mount Zion looking for issues to take care of, including incidents of hateful speech and vandalism. More than 20 volunteers were trained to provide ongoing surveillance of Mt. Zion in order to protect people and holy sites and deter potential abusers. Mt. Zion volunteers documented a range of events, from the joint Christian prayer in the Room of the Last Supper at the end of January (which included Catholic, Protestant and eastern Churches) to the placing of a new Torah school in David's Tomb in March, to the opera singers as part of the Municipality's Festival of Lights in December 2015.

"We, the institutions, organizations and individuals residing on Mount Zion, harshly condemn the writing of anti-Christian hate slogans on and around Christian sites on Mount Zion – Jerusalem, which took place tonight, January 17th 2016.

The vandalism included curses and violent threats. We, residents of Mount Zion, call on the public to preserve the security and mutual respect of the Holy Places to all religions on Mount Zion. When one of these places is desecrated, it affects not only the site itself, but also all other holy sites on Mount Zion. In addition, these repeated acts of desecration undermine the delicate fabric of coexistence in the Holy Land in general and in the Holy City of Jerusalem in particular.

On behalf of:

** The Diaspora Yeshiva on Mount Zion*

** The Armenian Patriarchate, Armenian Cemetery on Mount Zion*

** World Benei-Akiva on Mount Zion*

** The Christian Department, the Ministry of Interior Affairs, the Room of the Last Supper on Mount Zion*

** Arik Pelzig – Harp of David on Mount Zion*

** The Dormition Abbey on Mount Zion*

** Dr. Zigmund Zigler Cohen, Mount Zion resident*

** The Jerusalem University College on Mount Zion*

** Custodia Terra Sancta, Ed-Cenaculum Franciscan Monastery on Mount Zion*

** The Jerusalem Intercultural Center on Mount Zion*

Rare-joint statement of condemnation of hate act, January, 2016

Cross-Cultural Community Engagement

- **Partnership with the police.** The project has developed a close relationship with the police, especially revolving around expected activities that could cause inter-religious tension. Examples included:
 - The Jewish Purim festival, which coincided with Easter celebrations in the Room of the Last Supper.
 - During the Jewish Shavuot festival and Christian Pentecost celebrations;
 - The Greek and Armenian Pentacost celebrations, which were in late June.
- **Raising awareness among the general public.** Pre-army groups from all around Israel are receiving a full day workshop about the issues of Mount Zion, in an effort to improve values of inter-religious tolerance in Israel. Project volunteers are also providing tours on different aspects of Mt. Zion to tour guides.



Armenian and Greek Orthodox Pentacost ceremony