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Jordan Tourism Development Project (Siyaha)



Project Interim Report
October 2008 - June 2011



Spring in Irbid, in the north of Jordan.



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The Roman theatre built out of black basalt rock in Um Qais.

Overview

Tourism is a sector of growing importance for Jordan. Tourism is Jordan's leading industry and overtook textiles to become the first earner of foreign exchange, generating JD2.4 billion in revenues and contributing one eighth of GDP in 2010.

With long-term forecasts of annual growth rates of 15 per cent during the next five years to exceed \$6 billion, the perceptions of tourism have changed from a field of recreation to a national industry, requiring clear measures to maximize local development and preserve and enhance tourist products for visitors and future generations alike.

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is a five-year project (2008-2013) that works with government, private sector, civil society and local communities to support the development and increase competitiveness of Jordan's tourism sector as a driver of economic growth. Our work is in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and a host of other public and private sector partners.

Since its start and up to June 2011, the Jordan Tourism Development Project worked on several fronts to build on the successes of previous efforts to enhance site presentation and management, set industry standards, market Jordan as a top destination abroad, support a conducive legal and institutional environment for tourism growth and raise awareness on the ways tourism enriches the lives of Jordanians.

Extensive efforts were made in Petra, which is not only the lead site in Jordan, but a major source of income for the country, in order to boost tourist spending, extend visitor stays and strike a balance between development and conservation. The project worked closely with the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA) to support its role as a policymaker and driver of development in the region. The project created a new visitor center design for the Petra Archaeological Park, a park management plan and helped launch new trails.

With ASEZA, the USAID tourism project helped achieve UNESCO World Heritage status for Wadi Rum as a natural and cultural

site of distinction, and is now updating the protected area's management plan.

The USAID tourism project launched initiatives to revolutionize the handicraft sector to expand availability of authentic products made in Jordan to tourists and support local artisans and women cooperatives to generate income for households across the country.

Progress was made in the field of vocational training, with hundreds of young Jordanians signing up to take their first steps in hospitality careers with a marked success rate of 70% of graduates ending up with jobs. 2010 also saw the introduction of a new hotel classification system based on clear standards, with preparations in place for new nationwide restaurant classifications.

During the period, the USAID tourism project worked with the Jordan Tourism Board and industry leaders to better assess target markets for Jordan and promote the country as a top travel destination abroad. Other milestones included the development of an e-payment gateway to allow potential visitors from across the world to book reservations with the click of a mouse.

With the accomplishments made to date, the USAID project has continued to strengthen the foundation for tourism in Jordan to stand as a sustainable, growing sector providing career opportunities for Jordanians and once-in-a-lifetime experiences for visitors from around the globe.

All of this work is in line with USAID's objective of the American people helping to improve economic opportunities for Jordanians by supporting Government of Jordan and local partners through the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project.



Ibrahim Osta

Chief of Party

USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project



A tourist enjoys a view of the magnificent Monastery in Petra.



I. Petra

The rose-red city, half as old as time itself, is reviving its historical role in the 21st century as an important economic centre. Instead of spices, dyes or textiles, people are pouring into the stone monuments of the ancient Nabataean city for its history. With its heightened profile as a destination after being labeled a New 7 World Wonder, Petra has witnessed a surge in visitors, from 359,000 in 2006 to 728,000 in 2009. In conjunction with the recently-formed Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA), the Jordan Tourism Development Project worked on several fronts to improve services, enhance safety, encourage conservation, extend stays and maximize resources to ensure that the country's leading archaeological tourist site continues to be a draw for generations to come.

Capacity Building of the Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project worked intensively with the newly-created Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority to help empower it to undertake its mandate of managing the Petra Archaeological Park per international best practices and develop the Petra region and its communities.

Reorganization and Capacity Building

The USAID project helped the authority reorganize its institutional structure and develop detailed departmental functions and staff job descriptions. This was followed by building capacity of PDTRA staff through a series of workshops held throughout 2010. These workshops covered a range of areas, and training was held for PDTRA commissioners, directors, heads of divisions and staff. In total 65 people were trained extensively, including 13 women. The training included customer service, which focused on the importance of providing quality service and customer care to investors and international and local visitors at international standards. Also, leadership and communication

skills were enhanced with a focus on how to effectively lead and motivate large teams, maximize resources and handle change in order to deliver on organizational objectives, as well as the ability to effectively communicate to the public.

In addition, the project set up the IT infrastructure for the authority's main offices, including computer networking, computer systems, servers and desktop computers and other office equipment.

Support master planning and investment promotion

During the authority's founding stages the USAID project helped it put in place needed frameworks, plans and strategies to guide its work and ensure that the Petra Archaeological Park is managed effectively, that conservation is prioritized and that the local communities benefit. To this effect, support was provided to establish a strategic direction for the Petra region through the development of a master plan. Also, a public relations and communication plan framework and a draft communications strategy was developed.

Petra Region Master Plan

Terms of Reference for a master plan for the Petra region were developed and advertised internationally by the project. As a result, over 30 companies from Jordan, Europe, Australia and the US made bids. The USAID project also served on the selection committee and provided legal support in developing the contract with the Austrian-led consortium that won the bid with US and Jordanian partners.

Support enabling legal instruments for PDTRA

Upon the creation of the Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority, the project provided swift support in the creation of key bylaws allowing the authority to function per its mandate. Bylaws developed and submitted by the authority to the Cabinet of Ministers for adoption included Administrative Affairs, Fiscal, Supply and Works, Disposition of Petra Authority's Lands, and Petra Archaeological Park Management.

Planning for development

The USAID tourism project developed a three-year business plan that focuses on core functional areas of the Petra Archaeological Park (PAP). These include the protection and conservation of park resources, the visitor experience, services and amenities, facility operations, maintenance, management and marketing. The plan also included a list of parallel early action projects to attain "quick fixes" among the core functional areas, which are being implemented by PDTRA. In addition, the USAID project developed site use instructions for the Park to ensure sustainable use of the park and equip PAP management

with the tools to monitor site use practices. The instructions cover retail activities; horses, carriages and camels, filming, events, guides and camping.

Improved Interpretation and Signage

Despite being Jordan's main tourist site for decades, Petra has lacked signage to guide visitors along major paths and identify and explain its impressive stone-carved monuments and tombs. The USAID project developed and installed 44 interpretive signs in English and Arabic along the main trail running through the Siq to Qasr Al Bint in addition to site orientation, warning and directional signs. This has greatly improved interpretation at the site and helps visitors orient themselves inside the ancient city. The second phase of this effort has begun, and the USAID project is developing interpretation signage for a further 45 monuments within the park, including Beidha and the ten-millennia-old Neolithic site.

Trails

For years, Petra's hiking trails have been limited to vague references in guidebooks or the memories of tour guides. From 2009 the project has worked to identify and develop trails in order to enhance safety and provide new Petra experiences to extend tourist stays in the rose-red city and the wider southern region. The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project drafted a Trail Development Plan to improve the main trail and key secondary trails within the Petra Archaeological Park, in coordination with PAP. Twelve different trails throughout the park were proposed to help diversify the Petra experience, extend length of stay and increase spending and opportunities for guides. Implementation of the plan began, and based on its

recommendations, the USAID project supported execution of physical works for Al-Khubtha, High Place of Sacrifice and Ad Deir trails, three major yet under-serviced paths in the park.

Development and Conservation of the Neolithic Site

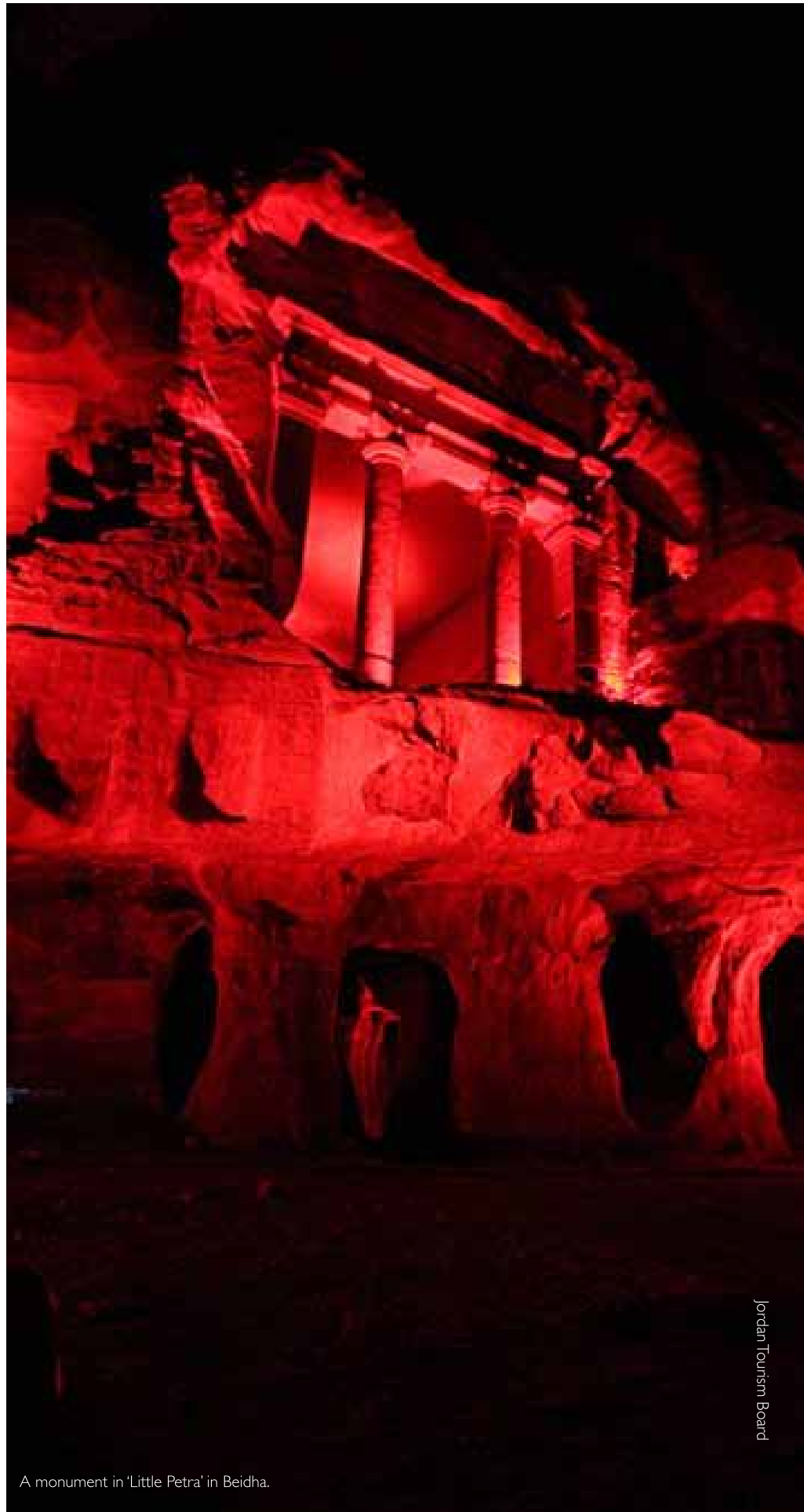
The Neolithic site in Petra is known to have been the site where humans first moved from being hunters and gatherers to settle in communities and domesticate animals and crops. To capitalize on the Neolithic site's global significance in terms of human development and to add an additional niche destination to the Petra visit, USAID is developing a site improvement plan that sets the framework and roadmap for the development of the site including conservation, restoration, physical upgrades and interpretation. Implementation works will be conducted in partnership with the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL) and DoA to transform the Neolithic site at Beidha into a 'must see' destination.

Toilets

An extensive exercise was carried out to identify suitable locations for toilet units along the main trail. This was coupled with a complete sustainable design solution and tender documents for the production of eco-friendly/light weight toilets. However the PDTRA opted to adopt another design and material instead.

Promoting Services and Information

As of January 1, 2010 the PDTRA introduced new services to visitors to the park and a service ticket was introduced as part of the entry fee. The USAID project designed and produced the new services tickets that are being used by PDTRA. The first Petra Archaeological Park



A monument in 'Little Petra' in Beidha.

brochure was also produced by the USAID project, and it highlights the main attractions in the Nabataean city, giving visitors an overview of the history and what they are seeing. In addition, flyers, banners and large signs were developed, distributed and installed at the Petra visitor center to inform tourists about the new tickets, services and trails. This support enabled the PDTRA to introduce and promote its new services to visitors.

Improved Visitor Center

At the request of the Petra Authority, the USAID tourism project created the conceptual design and interpretation themes for the new visitor center, currently under construction. The USAID tourism project continued to supervise the process of detailed design development for a new visitor centre at Petra, with Maysam Architects, and also supported tendering and evaluating bids for construction work. Construction started in early 2011 and support is ongoing. In parallel, the USAID tourism project developed a concept and architectural guidelines for the visitor centre interior, including the interpretation program and exhibits. The USAID project also helped PDTRA solicit and evaluate bids for the detailed design phase, and support will continue throughout the implementation phase.

PAP Back Exit Road

Support provided to PDTRA's initiative to open up the PAP back road as an alternate exit point from the park continued. This will help defuse the pressure on the main trail and thus improve site protection, as visitors will not walk along the main spine twice, and this will also serve to enhance the visitor experience. The

USAID tourism project identified appropriate vehicles to be deployed and facilitated all relevant studies for this initiative. These included an environmental and social impact assessment, road engineering studies, and a comprehensive report on the proposed shuttle that is to be shared with UNESCO. The project also facilitated commitment from Jordan Petroleum Company to produce clean fuel for the shuttle.

Electronic Ticketing System

A new electronic ticketing system was developed and introduced in Petra in order to manage and control the carrying capacity of PAP through more accurate information on the number of visitors entering the park each day and ensuring that everyone has exited by sunset. The onsite e-ticketing system enables PAP to price and produce different tickets for entry and packaged PAP experiences, which include tickets for tour guides, carriage transport and horse rides. In addition to providing data on the number and timing of visitors for financial and operational statistics, the system can facilitate timed interval entries in order to manage visitor flow, the purchase of tickets from locations across the country and payment options other than cash. The USAID tourism project facilitated the deployment of this system, drawing on the experience of the US National Park Service; the hardware and software were developed, delivered and installed through PDTRA and MoTA financing, and IT staff was trained on software dynamics and troubleshooting. Due to the topography of PAP, a microwave communication network was also installed to facilitate proper wireless communication between PDTRA, PAP, and park officials at entrance and exit gates.

Petra Cultural Experiences

The USAID tourism project helped PDTRA attract local investors to develop the nearby village of Elgee as a tourist destination. A plan was created to attract investments that will offer tourists a variety of activities, such as restaurants, coffee shops, an interpretation center and handicraft outlets. A bid was tendered to select an operator. In addition, the USAID project worked with the Jordan Heritage Reenactment Company to develop concepts for themed night activities in Petra, Wadi Rum and Amman. The goal is to increase tourist spending, prolong their stay, and address the lack of cultural activities for visitors to these areas.

Increase investment in Petra

A strategy to develop Petra as a destination and increase visitation and length of stay to maximize spending in the local and national economy was delivered to PDTRA. The strategy is designed to help the authority begin developing authentic, quality experiences and products that fit within the local environment, meet the demand of international visitors, address the gap in quality experiences within Petra, provide evening activities, extend length of stay, attract new markets, impact poverty and create employment. The plan has been developed to maximize investment both locally and internationally and to ensure implementation and sustainability.



The Treasury in Petra.



The Petra Park Rangers being trained by the U.S. National Park Service.





The Petra Park Rangers receive first aid training from the Jordan Civil Defence.

The magnificent remains of the ancient Nabataean city of Petra lie within the Petra Archaeological Park (PAP), and they constitute Jordan's most popular tourism attraction. Since the site's listing as a New World Wonder in 2007, visitor numbers have increased, and while this is good for the local economy, it has put a strain

on the site and existing services, which were not ready for the sudden growth in numbers. Since 2008 the USAID/Jordan Tourism Development Project has been working closely with PAP management to address these and other issues.





Tourists walk through the Siq leading into the ancient city of Petra



Petra Park Rangers

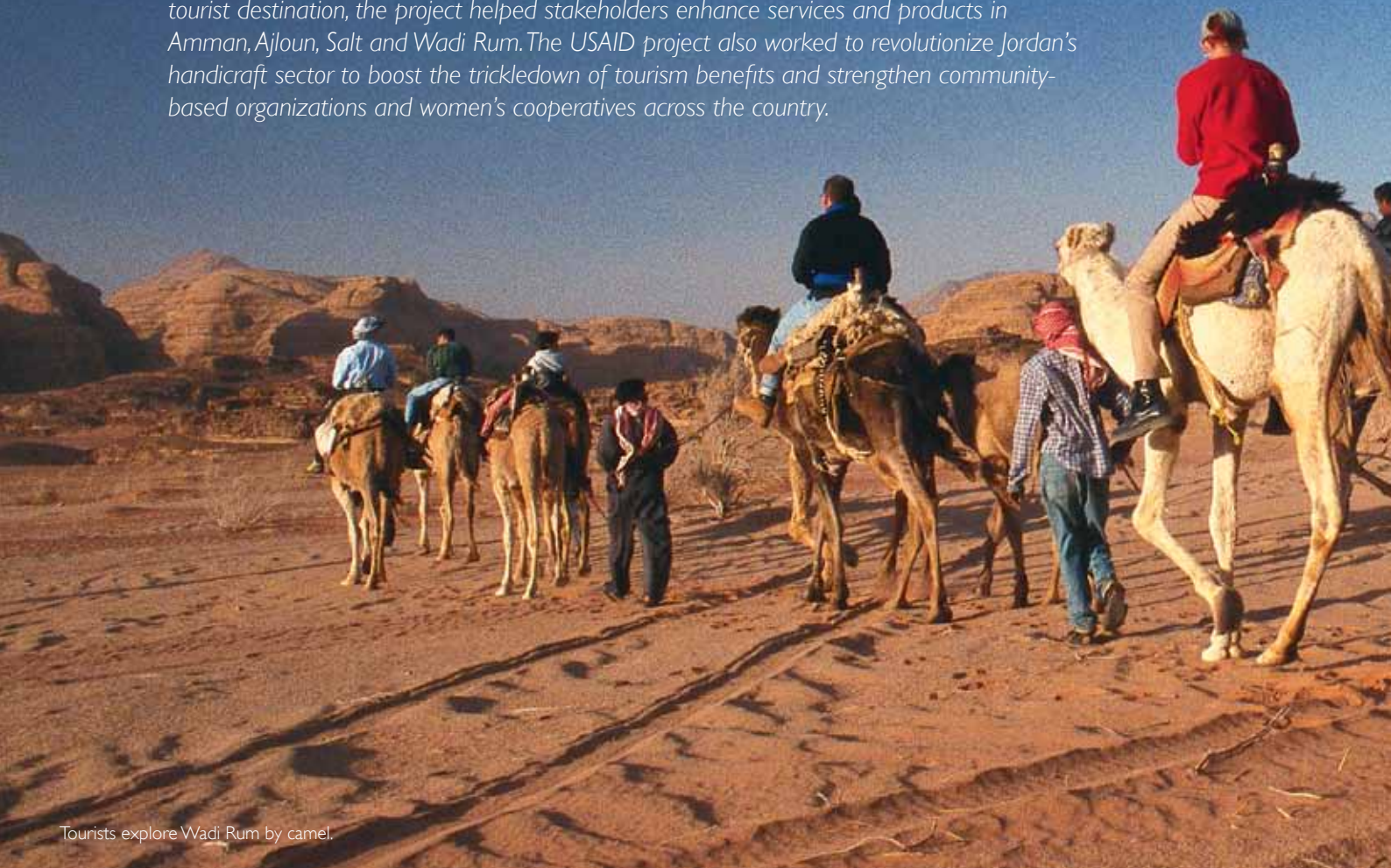
Monitoring and assisting tourists in the 264 square-kilometer Petra Archaeological Park is no easy task. In order to boost these efforts, a six-day training program was held for 48 Petra park rangers and guards by the USAID tourism project in partnership with PDTRA and the US National Park Service. The Petra rangers gained the knowledge and skills needed to protect the park's archaeological and natural resources and ensure safe and enjoyable visits. The program also covered first aid skills and the basics of food safety and hygiene. With the new training, rangers are now qualified to recognize the signs of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, cardiac problems and leg injuries. As part of the training, rangers will inform the newly established onsite park clinic of any health emergency as well as coordinate with and assist the Jordanian Civil Defense Department to stabilize and evacuate injured visitors. The program addressed the need for qualified staff who can protect the site, guide tourists and respond to their needs and inquiries, regulate the flow of visitors and welcome them in a hospitable and friendly manner, rescue and protect tourists, and ensure their safety, along with other duties related to dealing with rule violations inside the park and regulating animal shuttle and transport. In May 2011, a comprehensive four-week upgrade training and mentorship program was organized in partnership with US National Park Rangers through the US National Park Services. A further specialized program was conducted by the US National Park Services for Petra Horse Guides with emphasises on animal welfare and horse guiding.

Petra Park Clinic

To improve safety and provide first-rate medical services for visitors to the ancient city of Petra, a fully-equipped clinic was opened inside the Petra Park in December 2010. The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project partnered with PDTRA to equip the clinic, which is located at the basin at the end of the main trail. The USAID tourism project purchased a range of high-end medical equipment for the clinic, from stretchers, examinations beds and wheelchairs to an oxygen cylinder and ECG monitor. The clinic will ensure that visitors to Petra have access to superior medical facilities and emergency medical care should the need arise, thus enhancing safety at the site. This is an important safety measure and a significant element in offering comprehensive visitor services.

2. Other Tourism Attractions

To best maximize Jordan's diverse historical and cultural treasures, the USAID tourism project worked to improve site management and presentation from Ajloun all the way to Aqaba. The project particularly focused on involving local communities, NGOs, the government and the private sector in maximizing the economic opportunities from tourism and ensuring full and enriching experiences for visitors. In addition to Petra, Jordan's top tourist destination, the project helped stakeholders enhance services and products in Amman, Ajloun, Salt and Wadi Rum. The USAID project also worked to revolutionize Jordan's handicraft sector to boost the trickledown of tourism benefits and strengthen community-based organizations and women's cooperatives across the country.



Tourists explore Wadi Rum by camel.

Wadi Rum

Another major pillar of the project's efforts to enhance tourism and encourage local development is the transformation of Wadi Rum into a leading eco-tourism and heritage site as part of a golden triangle of tourism that includes nearby Petra and Aqaba. The forefront of these efforts is having Wadi Rum inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Following consultation with experts, it was decided that Wadi Rum should be submitted for consideration as a mixed cultural and natural site due to its unique topography, desert wildlife, prehistoric archaeology, Nabataean and Thamodic inscriptions and Bedouin culture.

The USAID tourism project helped compile and submit a final dossier with a supporting video for Wadi Rum's candidacy in January



2010 and facilitated the visit of a UNESCO evaluation mission to Jordan to assess the viability of enlisting Wadi Rum as a mixed cultural and natural site. In its annual session in Paris in June 2011, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee declared Wadi Rum as a World Heritage site. The USAID tourism project presented during the session and provided technical assistance and advocacy support to the Jordanian delegation until inscription was achieved.

Update Wadi Rum conservation and management plan

Responding to UNESCO recommendations during the evaluation of the Wadi Rum nomination dossier, the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project began a review and update of the existing but outdated site management plan. A multi-disciplinary team was formed with background in ecology, geology, natural resource management to assess and update the site

management plan, per international standards in conservation and tourism management. The plan is expected to be finalized in the fall of 2011.



USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project helps Government of Jordan achieve UNESCO World Heritage status for Wadi Rum





On 25th June, 2011 Wadi Rum was inscribed as a new UNESCO World Heritage Site, making it Jordan's fourth World Heritage site after Petra, Qusayr Amra and Um Ar-Rassas. The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is pleased to have partnered with the Government of Jordan to reach this internationally-acclaimed recognition, which is a great honor for Jordan and all Jordanians.

"This win is considered a recognition for Jordan and its heritage, and will have a great impact on the country's tourism sector," said Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, H.E. Dr. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh.

"We are pleased and honored by the UNESCO inscription. Wadi Rum is unique in the world in terms of its geological morphology and the rock art inscriptions that can be found through the area," said H.E. Issa Ayoub, Chief Commissioner of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), the custodian of the site. He added, "Now that the Wadi Rum Protect Area has been inscribed, our duty is to present it to the world in a manner fit for its special global status."

The road to UNESCO inscription was not easy, and many institutions and individuals played key roles in achieving this success. Work began in 2009, starting with a memorandum of understanding signed in May 2009 between the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project and ASEZA; the Ministry of Environment supported the UNESCO nomination as well as the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, Department of Antiquities and the Jordan World Heritage National Committee. A team of international and Jordanian experts engaged by the USAID tourism project developed a superb winning file. As a result, Wadi Rum has been

inscribed as a mixed value site, which is unique in both its natural beauty and cultural significance.

"We were proud to have worked with the Government of Jordan and the Wadi Rum community leaders on developing this nomination. This will further raise the profile of Wadi Rum globally which will attract higher value visitors and improve livelihoods of local residents," said Ibrahim Osta, Chief of Party of the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project.

To win the prestigious accolade Jordan needed to demonstrate outstanding universal value for the site of Wadi Rum. "This means that Wadi Rum is important to all of humanity and this is another responsibility for Jordan to be the custodian of another world Heritage site," said Senator Akel Biltaji.

Dr. Moawiyah Ibrahim, head of the Jordan National World Heritage Committee Representative said, "This is an important step toward protecting the site and putting the site on the road to sustainable development."

The total area of WRPA is 74,200ha. The property extends approximately 42km from north to south and approximately 33km from east to west. A buffer zone of c.5km in width, with some excepted areas, surrounds the nominated area and is stated as having a total area of 60,000ha. Wadi Rum is a major feature within the Hisma desert lying to the East of the Jordan Rift Valley and south of the steep escarpment of the central Jordanian plateau. Wadi Rum was made famous in the West by the movie Lawrence of Arabia. It was also an important station in the Great Arab Revolt of 1916, lead by Sharif Hussein bin Ali, great grandfather of His Majesty King Abdullah II.



Jordan Tourism Board



Forested hills in Ajloun.

Improve Visitor Center

To enhance the Wadi Rum Visitor Center in order to attract more tourists to the center's underutilized facilities, lengthen tourist stay, and organize tourist flow and jeep traffic, the USAID tourism project developed a conceptual design for upgrading the center and visitor flow. In addition, ASEZA donated a new showroom in the Plaza area to the Burda Women Cooperative and enlisted the USAID project to develop and upgrade it to improve handicraft sales and help the cooperative achieve economic sustainability.

Tourism Trails

In order to diversify Jordan's tourism products and reach out to cultural and eco-tourism markets, the USAID project supported MoTA to develop two distinct tourism trails. The new trails aim to give visitors a chance to discover the rolling millennial olive groves of Ajloun and the Ottoman architecture of Salt, and along the way have meaningful interactions and cultural exchanges with everyday Jordanians, a personal and cultural touch that is limited in other tourist experiences.



Ajloun Nature Reserve

Ajloun Nature Tourism Trail

With the presence of the Ajloun nature reserve, a 1,000 year old castle built by the camp of Salaheddin, millennial olive groves and a host of rural heritage and traditions, Ajloun is a natural location for a tourism trail. In conjunction with the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), designs for potential businesses along the trail were finalized in order to support facilities, accommodation and food options and handicrafts for future visitors.

The RSCN was awarded a grant by the USAID tourism project to manage an enterprise development project along the Ajloun trail and work began in March 2010 with a series of awareness sessions along the trail with the participation of 80 community members. As a result, grant applications were received from around 100 potential tourism business ventures in Rasoun, Orjan and Ba'oun, towns and villages along the trail. These were shortlisted, and around 25 applicants will receive USAID grant support to develop tourism-related businesses along the Ajloun trail. The business owners were given business planning training and

support to finalize their plans.

Throughout the year, several workshops and awareness sessions were also held for the communities living near the trail in preparation for its launch. These covered hospitality skills, safe food handling, menu design, pricing and cooking skills. In addition, awareness sessions were conducted in the villages of Orjan and Rasoun to involve communities in the project and raise their understanding of tourism and the ways they can benefit from increased visitors to the area. Directional and interpretation signs for the trail were also developed.



A view of Salt from the Abu Jaber Museum, which is the starting point for the Salt Heritage Trail.

Salt Heritage Trail

Jordan's first capital, with its rolling hills crowded with yellow limestone buildings dating back to the late 19th century, stands as a unique living museum of Jordan's urban heritage. The USAID tourism project worked closely with the local community to showcase the unique architecture and history of Salt along a heritage trail to offer a new experience to visitors and extend overall stays in the country.

Building on work by MoTA and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), a local non-profit entity, Salt Development Corporation

(Emar), won a competition to work with businesses along the trail and manage Salt enterprise development grants funded by the USAID project. In preparation, the USAID project built Emar's capacity to implement the project through grant and financial management training and work planning training. Tourism and grant awareness sessions were held in Salt for local business owners, in coordination with Emar and MoTA, to familiarize the community with the program and how they can get involved. More than 100 people from Salt attended, including representatives of businesses, NGOs, and government organizations.

Three grant and tourism awareness workshops were then implemented for more than 160 Salt shop owners and NGOs in August 2010, after which more than 150 grant applications were received and narrowed down. Several training sessions were also implemented for Salt businesses, which helped improve safe food handling, hospitality skills, first aid, and English language skills. In June 2011, 16 businesses ranging from restaurants, coffee shops, and handcraft production and retail outlets, and which had received grants, were completed and became fully operational.

Amman Citadel Site Improvement

After witnessing 10,000 years worth of civilizations, the Amman Citadel can finally be presented to visitors in a modern way thanks to the efforts of the Greater Amman Municipality and MoTA with the support of the USAID tourism project. With the assistance of the USAID project, work was completed on the site's visitor gateway, pathways, landscaping and beautification, lighting, bus parking and events area. His Majesty the King visited the Citadel accompanied by officials from GAM, MoTA and DoA to inaugurate the site in December 2009. Full interpretive signs, along with four panoramic signs, were finalized and installed onsite by the project. A site brochure was developed and produced and the USAID tourism project supported the printing of the first batch of 50,000 for free distribution to tourists.



Reception area at the Amman Citadel.



The Temple of Zeus in Jarash.

Jordan Tourism Board

Jarash Site Improvement Plan

A comprehensive site improvement plan for Jarash was finalized, providing recommendations on access and circulation; beautification and landscaping; orientation and interpretation; site conservation and safety; services and products; buildings and facilities and urban context. With the concurrence of both DoA and MoTA, a committee was formed in May 2011 with USAID facilitation, to begin implementation as per the plan.

As part of implementation, USAID developed a complete architectural design solution for renovation and optimal utilization of the existing visitor center facility in Jarash. This solution introduces a second storey that will be dedicated to exhibiting and interpretation. Schematic designs were developed along with tender documents for MoTA to solicit proposals for the detailed design phase.



HM Queen Rania attends the opening of the Fuheis Christmas Festival in 2009.

Additionally the USAID tourism project prepared architectural guidelines for upgrading the Jarash souk facades and general presentation of shops, along with recommendations to transform the souk into a hub for recreational tourism activities, experiences and products. This will help increase economic opportunities for locals and souk retail shop owners.

Fuheis as a Holiday Destination

The USAID project worked with the Fuheis Municipality, local NGOs and the community to enhance the Fuheis Christmas Festival. The overall purpose is to eventually transform the town of Fuheis, which lies 15 kilometers outside Amman, into a holiday destination for expatriates residing in nearby Gulf countries as well as regional visitors, locals and expats living in Jordan. The inaugural event in 2008 boasted the largest Christmas tree in the region and was opened by Her Majesty Queen Rania. A grant was awarded to the Fuheis Heritage Preservation Society to oversee the 2009 event, held under the patronage of H.R.H Prince Raed Bin Zeid, which ran from 17th December for one month, and had the region's largest nativity scene as well as more city decorations and activities targeting families and youth.

Museums

The Jordan Tourism Development Project continued its ongoing support for Jordan's museums as a valuable aspect of the country's tourism experience. A grant was signed with the Jordan Museum to assist the participation of museum staff at Deaf Nation World Expo in the US in July 2010. The Jordan Museum employees staffed a booth at the expo in Las Vegas, which attracted around 57,000 visitors, showcasing Jordanian attractions through a series of videos with sign language as well as Jordanian handicrafts. A second grant supported a private sector participation model for the museum's restaurant.

The USAID project also provided a grant and technical support to the Arab Heritage Center (Daret Widad Kawar) to develop an interior design, interpretation plan and an operational plan for a future museum of traditional costumes and jewelry. Interior works for the Children's Museum of Jordan restaurant were supported and implemented, along with audio-visual equipment for special events. In addition, the USAID projected funded the design and installation of an internal dispensing kiosk as an extension to the museum's restaurant which will be a profit-generating outlet.

Niche tourism products

Supporting Jordan Motorcycle Association

Tourism officials are turning to motorcycle tourism with the aim of transforming one of the world's largest outdoor museums into a top destination for motorcycle enthusiasts and amateurs alike, who are looking to indulge their passion and experience a new destination. As part of its efforts to tap into this growing niche market, the Jordan Tourism Development Project extended a grant to the Royal Motorcycle Club (RMC), a group of enthusiasts who explore the country's back-roads on weekly motorcycle tours. With the grant the club set road safety standards and entry regulations with the Public Security Department, the Ministry of Interior and the Civil Defense Department, making it easier for visitors to enter the Kingdom on their very own ride. The USAID tourism project supported the process of developing a website for the association, which is due to be launched soon.

Citadel Nights

At the request of MoTA, a concept, theme, budget, management plan and sponsorship strategy was developed for a themed activity to be held over a period of five weeks during the summer months in Amman. The MoTA-led evening attraction will take place at the Amman Citadel starting Ramadan 2011 and aims to attract more

visitors to Jordan and provide night-time themed activities to existing visitors and locals alike while promoting responsible use of archaeological sites for events. The event is being executed through a public-private partnership between MoTA and Jabal Amman Residents Association (JARA) with support and funding from MoTA, the USAID tourism project and other private and public entities.

AgriTourism Seminar

A seminar entitled *Agritourism in Jordan: An Interactive Seminar for Growth - Sowing the Seeds to Harvest the Business* took place in June 2011. The seminar highlighted the international demand for this niche as a stand-alone market and as a component to existing itineraries in order to ensure local community engagement and increase the value to tourism directly to local communities. It also explored the opportunities for Jordan and regions within Jordan to develop and market agritourism products and experiences. The seminar was attended by more than 100 key representatives from the Senate, the development zones, JTB, tourism operators, NGOs and community projects. The feedback and interaction was extremely positive and requests were made and being followed up to hold a series of community workshops in key areas to support project development.

A photograph showing four motorcyclists on a paved area, possibly a parking lot or a track. They are wearing helmets and riding gear. The motorcycles are yellow and blue. The background shows a fence and some trees in the distance.

Jordan revs up for motorcycle tourism

Tourists have long experienced Jordan's historical and natural treasures on a variety of transport options, from the back of a camel to the basket of a hot-air balloon. Now tourism officials are revving up efforts to offer a new take on the Kingdom's tourism treasures: a two wheel tour. Tourism officials are turning to motorcycle tourism in hopes of transforming one of the world's largest outdoor museums into a top destination for motorcycle enthusiasts and amateurs alike.

As part of its efforts to tap into the growing niche market, in October 2009, the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project extended a grant to the Royal Motorcycle Club (RMC), a group of biking enthusiasts who explore the country's back-roads on weekly motorcycle tours. With the grant, the club set road safety standards and entry regulations with the Public Security Department, the Ministry of Interior and the Civil Defence Department, making it easier for visitors to enter the Kingdom on their very own ride.

"This was a huge step forward," said RMC General Manager Omar Zarour.

According to die-hard bikers, the Kingdom offers itineraries that are not short on scenery; the rolling olive groves of Ajloun, rocky cliff-sides overlooking the Dead Sea, the shifting

desert landscapes of Wadi Rum. The club, which now boasts some 400 members, provides potential tourists with information ranging from entry requirements to the best routes to take in such treasured sites. In little over a year, the club has fielded requests from Estonia all the way to South Africa, providing foreign bikers with tips on all that there is to know of the Kingdom's road wonders, Zarour said. As the word gets out, the RMC believes more bikers will be drawn by Jordan's allure as a small country boasting a diverse geographic landscape that sometimes leads visitors to unexpected places. "One guy said he felt he was in Japan. Maybe it was the trees and the quiet, but he was reminded of Japan," Zarour said with a laugh.

According to RMC Board Member Raja Gargour, the enthusiasm is contagious: many RMC members insist on joining international bikers on their tours of the country, guiding them through the winding hills of Ajloun and the back-roads to Petra.

Zarour believes that such unique scenic routes and Jordanian roadside hospitality are a winning combination that will have many riders coming back for repeat visits. The increased number of foreign riders will make their presence known beyond the villages and towns they rumble past.

Despite their passion for the open road, motorcycle tourists don't restrict themselves to touring; many two-wheeled tourists sample other activities ranging from micro-flights to scuba-diving, providing an additional boost to adventure-tourism service providers.

"Bikers are a friendly, outgoing bunch, and they aren't looking for luxury, they're looking to explore something new," Gargour said.

With motorcycle tourism heating up, work on targeting the market is ongoing; USAID-Siyaha has assisted in designing the RMC's website to serve as a window to Jordan for the online biker community. On the new site the RMC is posting GPS coordinates so that any rider can navigate the rolling pastures of Wadi Seer or the crumbling Ottoman chalets of northern Jordan.

With the number of groups slated to tour the Kingdom this year expected to triple and the Club to introduce motorcycle riding courses at its new headquarters near the Dead Sea highway, Gargour said the drive to open the country's lanes to visitors is just rewinding up. "We appreciate the support from USAID and we hope that for the club, this is just the beginning."

Handicrafts

In recognition of the power of locally produced crafts to boost tourism's contribution to communities, the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is working to revamp and organize Jordan's handicrafts sector.

To guide efforts, the USAID project worked with stakeholders to develop a National Handcraft Strategy for Jordan. The strategy calls for a demand-driven production process to ensure that crafts are made in Jordan, directly benefit Jordanian artisans and reflect the country's cultural heritage. The National Handcraft Strategy was published and distributed among handicraft producers and retailers.

Training was held for handicraft producers across the Kingdom with the assistance of the US-based Aid to Artisans (ATA). The courses assisted artisans in design and development, packaging, retailing, sales and marketing, and quality assurance. More than 100 artisans from Ajoun, Jerash, Salt, Amman, Wadi Mousa, and Wadi Rum took part in the trainings, which resulted in 70 new product lines and designs to help artisans and cooperatives reach new markets. During the year, cooperatives and CBOs that participated in previous trainings were also visited for quality control follow-ups on assignments and new design lines.

Sales trips were also arranged for artisans to special handcraft shops, bazaars, and hotels to introduce and open new markets for their products.

The USAID tourism project awarded grants to several handcraft producing community-based organizations, including Nashmiyyat Al Balqa Cooperative in Salt, the Jordanian Women's Development Association of the Deaf in Amman, the Nabataean Ladies Cooperative Society and Bait Al Anbat in Wadi Musa, the Taybeh Ladies Cooperative in Taybeh, the Baidah Tourism and Archaeological Cooperative, the Burda Women's Cooperative and Productive Village Cooperative in Wadi Rum. Grant trainings and awareness workshops were conducted for all these cooperatives. These cooperatives have used their grants to purchase needed equipment and materials, upgrade their facilities and improve member skills; they have also taken part in the many training initiatives that the USAID tourism project has implemented. Overall, this has helped the cooperatives enhance quality, develop designs and create new products.

The Jordan Tourism Development Project is providing further support for handicraft production in Jordan through the Salt Vocational Training Center for handicrafts, which is being transformed into a model center of excellence for handicraft training.



Aladdin Qattouri

A ceramic coffee cup made by the Saltus workshop in Salt.



Tourism opens doors in Salt

Salt artisan prepares to target the tourism market

Ruba Al-Hiary is an artisan and trainer at the Salt Handicraft Training Center, which both teaches handicraft production and produces items for sale. In July 2009 Ruba attended a handicraft training workshop at the center, which was organized by the USAID/Jordan Tourism Development Project II as part of a series of workshops to build the capacities of Jordanian artisans. The training has not only helped Ruba to improve her skills, but it has also inspired her to take inspiration from her historic city and target the tourism market.

The 27-year lady from Salt is a skillful artisan. Believing in her talent, her father encouraged her to study at the Salt Handicraft Training Center nine years ago. After graduating from the center, she worked for several years at private workshops and then returned to the training center as both an artisan and a trainer.

Besides her apparent skills in pottery work, Ruba's creativity also shows up in her drawings and photography, which she uses a lot as a base for her designs. However, when it comes to selling her products, Ruba says that markets are limited to Salt, Amman, and a few handicraft exhibits, which means that those products do not reach to tourism markets.

Despite this, Ruba hopes that tourism will soon offer a good market for her work and she is optimistic about the Salt Tourism Trail being developed, as it will help Salt's artisans to reach the tourism market. She met the Minister of Tourism & Antiquities during one of her visits to Salt recently, and has since realized the significance

of developing handicrafts as part of developing the Salt Tourism Trail, and shifting towards designs and styles that reflect Salt's heritage. This includes olive branches, stairways, and yellow buildings.

Ruba says, "Since then I began working on products inspired by Salt and within only three weeks the products were all sold out. This has encouraged us to increase production as we're doing now."

For Ruba, the training workshop she attended taught her many new things, including how to develop the quality of products and improve on designs, costing and pricing products, as well as getting an insight into trends that affect consumer purchases, particularly in tourism markets. She also got an idea so to how to use focus on and use styles and designs from Salt. According to Ruba the training helped improve her skills and learn from past mistakes to avoid in the future.

One day Ruba wants to open a pottery workshop of her own to serve the tourism market, and her thirst for learning and improving on her skills is vast. She plans on studying graphic design soon to help her incorporate technology into her method and so improve her products.

"I encourage everyone who finds talent and passion inside them to join the handicraft industry as it can offer a good income, especially if you target tourism markets," advises Ruba.



3. Tourism Sector Capacity Building

The Jordan Tourism Development Project worked to boost education, set new standards in the hotel and restaurant industries and improve the competencies of industry workers. Due to the project's efforts with various stakeholders, clear standards were put into place and Jordan's tourism industry is witnessing an increase in a more experienced workforce, which helps to ensure safe and quality experiences for visitors.



Senator Akel Biltaji contributes during the National Conference on Innovation and Reform of Tourism & Hospitality Programs in Jordan, which took place in February 2011.

Jordan Tourism Development Project

Universities and Colleges

Build Industry-Academia Partnership to Reform Tourism and Hospitality Curriculum at University and College Level

Reform of the university and college level programs will result in an increased output of better educated industry-focused graduates who will opt for careers in tourism by choice. It is expected that a more career-focused industry-based program will improve the intake and graduation from university programs by 20%, raising the number to 2,000 graduates per year. Facilitated by the USAID tourism project, the initial meetings in 2010 opened a new dialogue with key decision makers at the Ministry of Higher Education, Higher Education Accreditation Commission and

Al Balqa University to reform the hospitality and tourism curriculum at university and community college level and develop accreditation criteria. USAID tourism project working with a Tourism Industry Academic Steering Committee (TIASC), conducted a national assessment of Higher Education in hospitality and tourism programs, prepared and published a reform strategy for higher education in tourism, established an Academic Technical Working Committee (ATWC) for reform implementation, conducted a national conference to disseminate a reform action plan and agenda, and developed a best practice framework for hospitality and tourism institutional accreditation.

Designed and constructing a new Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration at Madaba (MIMAR)

With support from the USAID tourism project, in 2010 the Higher Committee for MIMAR awarded a contract for the preparation of the architectural and engineering plans for the construction and renovation of MIMAR. The construction and renovation of MIMAR will increase its capacity to accept additional students at the school and improve the schools capacity and capability in mosaic restoration and conservation. Construction of the new institute building commenced in January 2011 with completion expected to be in December 2011.

Vocational Training

Over the past two years, the USAID tourism project continued its support for the Vocational Training Corporation's (VTC) hospitality program in order to help generate a qualified workforce for the growing hospitality industry and create economic opportunities for young men and women across the country.

VTC Centers

In line with the hospitality program's goal of creating a professional training environment that matches industry standards, renovations were carried out on VTC hospitality centers in Ein Al Basha, Petra and Ajloun. With USAID technical assistance, plans were also developed to transform the Madaba VTC center into a center of excellence to pilot an Advanced Level in Hospitality Skills (Level II) certificate program.

A 12th VTC hospitality centre will be established at the Theodore Schneller School in Marka in East Amman. Under an agreement signed in April 2010, the hotel and tourism vocational training

center will be located at the school, which hosts orphans and underprivileged students. The center's presence in Marka will help provide job opportunities in the sector for residents of the densely-populated, economically challenged neighborhood.

In Salt, the USAID project is working to upgrade the vocational center for handicraft training into a specialized center of excellence. This comes as part of overall plans to utilize the center to encourage more area residents to enhance their handicraft skills and take advantage of Salt's position as an emerging tourism destination. A three-year business and operation plan was put together and a new handicraft program and curriculum were developed for the production of ceramics, weaving, sewing and silk screening, along with an operations manual, practical training internship guidelines, student textbooks and a teacher resource manual.

It was also agreed to establish a tourism handicraft skills center in Wadi Musa (Petra) that is specialized in jewelry design and production, and will be the first such training center. In its pilot phase, 30 students will be registered to train in jewelry design, production and marketing. The center will begin recruiting students in the summer of 2011.

Open Days

Throughout the year, the VTC with the USAID tourism project held open house days, inviting parents and prospective students to visit the 11 hospitality VTC centers to learn first-hand about the program and meet with instructors and current students. Around 2,000 potential students and their parents attended the events and heard about career opportunities in the hospitality industry.

In order to boost community involvement in the VTC hospitality program, a 'Cook for your Parents' day was held throughout the 11 centers. VTC students were able to show off their new skills in food production and service to their family and friends. Around 700 students prepared and served a three-course lunch to 1,500 guests including parents, local community leaders and tourism industry representatives.

All these awareness and community outreach efforts had a visible effect; in October 2009, 729 students registered for the Hospitality Skills Level I Program, including 129 who had to be waitlisted to the following semester due to the high demand. Enrollment increased yet again in October 2010, with 860 students registering for the Level I Program, and in 2011 registration will reach over 1,000 students with a retention of 72% in jobs following completion of the program.

Industry-based Hospitality Skills Advanced Level (Level II)

In order to provide an opportunity for industry professionals to improve their skills and advance their careers, the project developed an Advanced Level in Hospitality Skills (Level II) certificate program for those already working in the industry. The new certificate program was designed with a focus on specializations within food production, food and beverage services and front office as well as additional courses in English for hospitality and business communication skills.



A student at the Madaba vocational training center for tourism and hospitality sets a table in the training restaurant.



In close cooperation with industry leaders, the USAID tourism project developed student textbooks and a teacher resource manual, all translated into Arabic for the VTC Level II certificate. Meanwhile, train-the-trainer programs were held in order to acquaint VTC staff with the new program. The Hospitality Skills Level II program was launched at the Madaba VTC Center and registered students in October 2010. In 2011 the Advanced Level will be offered at Sahab VTC Center. These programs are implemented in partnership with Jordan Hotel Association and Jordan Restaurant Association.

Upgrade the VTC Center at Madaba as a Center for Tourism Training

Based on proposals presented to VTC it was approved to upgrade the Madaba center into a designated center of excellence in tourism training and construction plans were prepared for this. The USAID tourism project will also support the development of a new program in hotel and restaurant equipment engineering and maintenance and IT systems for hotel and front office.

Establish the first Bakery, Pastry and Confectionary Institute at VTC Marka

A project is in the pipeline to transform the Marka VTC center into a model training and research institute for bakery, pastry and confectionary. The USAID tourism project agreed to support this transformation of the Marka center and in April 2011 an MoU was signed between the Vocational Training Corporation, Employment - Technical and Vocational Education and Training Fund, Syndicate of Bakery Owners Syndicate of Restaurant and Confectionery Shop Owners, Jordan Restaurant Association,

Jordan Hotels Association, and the USAID tourism project to work together to establish the specialized institute. An advisory committee with representatives from industry, chambers and government has been formed, and it is responsible for developing and implementing the program. A technical steering committee was formed with representatives from the public and private sector to provide knowledge and expertise in developing the training material.

Pioneering training in traditional Arabic food production and service

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project in partnership with VTC have designed the framework and outlined a curriculum for a pilot short term training program specifically designed to provide training in basic Arabic food production and service. The training program will accommodate students, both male and female, with a public school educational background and above. Sufficient space for adequate training facilities was made available at the Marka VTC.

Comprehensive Secondary School Vocational Stream – Fundukia Stream

With the aim of introducing hospitality careers to Jordanians at an earlier age, the USAID tourism project worked with the Ministry of Education and industry stakeholders to revive the comprehensive secondary school vocational stream – the Fundukia program. The USAID project drafted a reform strategy and an implementation plan with the Ministry of Education to modernize the program and more effectively reach Grade 10 secondary schools. In developing the strategy, a survey was carried out

to obtain feedback on the Fundukia program at 15 schools across Jordan, polling 300 students in addition to 20 hotel and restaurant human resources directors and managers. The revamped program is expected to be introduced at schools in Jordan in 2011.

Enhancing skills and service within industry

Over the period, the USAID tourism project implemented industry trainings and developed guidelines to improve the skills of professionals and enhance industry standards across the board. Several trainings were held for sector workers across the country in hazard analysis critical control points (HACCP), safe food handling, basic first aid training, hospitality skills and guest courtesy as well as hotel concierge skills. Seminars on 'achieving tourism destination excellence' were also conducted for 90 tourism business leaders and university professors, highlighting the need to develop destination clusters to increase length of stays and encourage small businesses to provide more tourism activities.

The USAID project also supported the development of concierge booklets and first aid training guides, with 1000 copies printed, and a food inspection manual.

Workshops were conducted in cooperation with the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association (JITOA) on hospitality and guest courtesy for drivers and operations staff at tour operators, car rental agencies and tourist bus companies to ensure quality customer service.

Over the period between 2010 and 2011 the USAID tourism project facilitated over 30 courses, training over 750 professionals in hospitality skills, safe food handling, first aid and guest courtesy.



First Aid trainings bring safety culture to tourism industry

The sight of blood was the first sign of trouble. Ahmad Salem's co-worker had sliced his himself, and in the Papa John's kitchen amongst a flurry of orders he had not noticed how long the gash in his hand had been bleeding. Were it a few months ago, Salem, the restaurant's assistant manager, would not have known how to react. But having recently received First Aid training, he instantly applied pressure to the cut to stop the bleeding and rolled strips of plaster to cover the wound. Salem then took his colleague to the hospital, who was treated and released.

"I didn't have to think or worry, I just acted, and thank God everything worked out fine," Salem said.

When his six-year old daughter started choking and gasping for air at the dinner table, Bassam Hosseney's First Aid instincts kicked in. "She has a small stomach, so I knew I should apply pressure with only one hand and place her head to the side," said Hosseney, who serves as manager at La Mirabelle. Carefully following Heimlich basics, Hosseney was able to calmly dislodge the culprit from her air passage: a piece of chicken. "The family was pretty happy."

Hosseney and Salem's were just few of several breaths of relief made possible by nationwide First Aid trainings organized by the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project. The trainings, held throughout 2010, targeted 200 hotel employees, restaurant workers and park rangers to bring workers in the tourism sector up to speed on how to stay calm and act when things take a turn for the

worse. In five courses held in Amman, Petra and Aqaba, tourism industry workers were introduced to the basics of First Aid by Jordan's Civil Defence Department (CDD), including CPR and the correct response to a range of injuries including cuts, fractures, or animal or insect bites and poisoning.

Abdullah Abu Ain, director of the CDD's Training Department, one of the first lessons given to participants is that First Aid is no laughing matter. "The wrong response can be very dangerous, sometimes acting hurts more than it helps," Abu Ain said. Having a fully prepared "first line of defence" to respond to any potential visitor mishap improves not only industry safety standards, he says, but ensures a safer tourism experience, extending world-famous Jordanian hospitality to the realm of emergency care. According to Abu Ain, each year dozens of tourists are injured in areas where CDD teams or tourist police are nowhere around. These are the instances where he believes tour guides and hotel workers can step up and play a large role in saving lives. "They can stop bleeding, prevent someone from choking and calm down victims, which can really have an impact on the recovery process," Abu Ain said.

Despite working years in the sector, for many of the some 200 participants, the trainings marked their first time to be up and close with emergency scenarios. "It was a real experience. We learned all the ins and outs of first aid," Salem said.

Participants held several common misconceptions, according to Abu Ain.

Many were unaware that humans exhale oxygen, and that CPR breaths help, rather than harm, victims. "Once they got confidence and believed in themselves that they can really help people, it made a huge difference," Abu Ain said.

The specially tailored course, which included guidebooks designed by USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project in conjunction with the CDD, also promoted a trickle-down to workplace etiquette so that all staff are aware on appropriate responses should an accident occur.

Waleed Ahmad Al-Othman, staff supervisor at Regency Palace Hotel, was one of several participants who took cues from the training to share First Aid techniques with his staff. "We have been improving the communication methods with the staff in terms of the way of understanding the problems and dealing with it correctly."

Mohamad Rafiq Abu Sa'deh, manager at Zalatimo, was also inspired by the course and now organises staff trainings in emergency response. "If they know first aid methods they can be calmer and more helpful," Sa'deh said.

Since the courses, participants said they now have a renewed focus on safety both in the workplace and at home.

"I hope we can have more training and practice more first aid," Salem said. "Because one can never be too prepared."



Khaled, the concierge at the Sheraton in Amman, greets visitors arriving at the hotel.

4. Improving standards

In 2010 new classifications for restaurants and hotels were developed and implemented to enable tourism establishments to meet the increased expectations of the modern tourist and allow tourists to choose places to eat and stay according to their requirements and budget needs. Once the classifications are fully implemented nationwide, customers can feel more confident about the level of services and cleanliness to expect when entering a hotel or a restaurant.

Hotel Classification

As a culmination of three years of work, Jordan received a new, modern hotel classification system in January 2010. Under this new system, which was designed by the USAID tourism project, MoTA and the Jordan Hotel Association, hotel classifications are now based on quality and services rather than hotel size and other factors that did not accurately reflect on customer services.

According to the new system, hotels must meet 140 basic criteria in order to receive a 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5-star rating, and 250 optional

standards that will determine ranking for hotels that wish to customize services to a target market. The new classification system also included boutique hotels and rented apartments, setting clear guidelines and best practice standards for each type of accommodation.

The new classification system was officially launched at a ceremony in January 2010 that was attended by around 400 hoteliers, tour operators and industry stakeholders. The Hotel Classification Manual was distributed to all existing hotels,

apartment hotels and suite hotels across the country.

To carry out assessments, a fully-automated ICT classification system with handheld assessment devices were developed and activated and over the year 22 assessors from ASEZA, JHA, MoTA and the PDTRA were certified to assess hotels according to the new system.

By June 2011 all five-star and four-star hotels were classified under the new standards and by January 2012, all hotels in Jordan are planned to be assessed in line with the new standards.



A guest enjoys a fresh dessert at a restaurant in Amman.

Restaurant Classification

Restaurants have long been a cornerstone of the social and economic fabric of Jordan and are important contributors to the tourism sector. However, despite their large role in everyday life, Jordan's eateries were not under a comprehensive classification system based on quality, cleanliness and service. A major pillar of the USAID tourism project's efforts to improve industry standards was developing and implementing a new nationwide restaurant classification system to rank eateries all the way from formal restaurants down to deli and argeeleh (water-pipe) cafes.

With industry stakeholders, the USAID project helped prepare a National Restaurant Classification

System based on mandatory quality and service standards for formal, casual, quick service, deli cafes and argeeleh cafe restaurants based on food and beverage quality, facility cleanliness, service efficiency and welcoming atmosphere. A Restaurant Classification Steering committee comprising USAID tourism project, MoTA, the Jordan Restaurants Association (JRA) and industry representatives tested, reviewed and approved all mandatory and quality standards for formal, casual, quick service, cafes and argeeleh restaurant categories. As a first step for licensing and classification all restaurant categories have to meet 80 mandatory standards that deal in order to be 'Tourism Approved'.

In developing the new system, JRA in cooperation with the USAID project and MoTA launched a restaurant classification symbol voting campaign. Restaurant owners, managers, tourism professionals and consumers all cast their votes and selected the new restaurant classification symbol: the fork. Restaurants will now be awarded one, two, or three forks based on their evaluation. The restaurant with three forks will then be able to apply to receive a star, and this will be awarded based on a mystery shopper assessment of taste, originality and other elements. The restaurant classification will be launched around late-2011, with plans in place to apply the standards nationwide by January 2012.



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5. Marketing Jordan

To help Jordan stand out in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, the USAID tourism project placed particular focus on marketing in order for Jordanian tourist service providers to effectively reach their target audiences, and convert business to bookings by distinguishing themselves against competing destinations and exploring emerging niche markets for continued growth. In coordination with the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) and the involvement of international experts, the USAID tourism project implemented several initiatives to help the industry raise Jordan's competitiveness internationally as a tourism destination of choice.

Growing Business from Key International Source Markets

A series of *Know your Market to Grow Your Market* seminars were held for Jordan's tourism industry on the 10 markets where the JTB currently has offices. The first seminar, which looked at the UK, took place in October 2010, followed by seminars that focused on Germany, Spain, Italy, Netherlands and the United States held during the first half of 2011. International experts from each of the source markets, along with JTB market-based representatives, presented on the size and potential of each market and market segments, trends and insights, potential growth opportunities, media opportunities and how to boost growth from those markets. Speakers provided first-hand information to aid in better penetration of the target market and highest potential market segments, highlighting enhanced tour itineraries that will appeal specifically to these markets and segments and in turn increase sales and tourism arrivals.

Underpinning this initiative is joint research conducted with JTB leading to a boxed set of market

profiles for each of the ten markets providing in-depth information on planning and booking cycles, access and transport, media, images and perceptions of Jordan, route to market, prospects and development opportunities. An eBook version of each market profile was also launched and distributed to the sector. These can be found at www.siyaha.org/countryprofiles

Reaching Markets Online

In 2009, online tourism bookings reached \$153 billion from the US and Europe alone. The average global growth rate in travel bookings made online is 34.6% per annum. So by following this global trend, it is anticipated that Jordan's tourism sector will access new markets leading to an increase in tourist influx to Jordan and enhancing marketing and promotion of Jordan as a global destination.

Digital and Social Media Marketing

The tourism project held a series of training workshops for industry representatives to help them promote their services to defined markets of travelers. A conference and follow-up workshops on

digital and social media marketing were conducted in Amman, Petra and Aqaba over a two-week period in July 2010, attended by more than 800 participants from throughout the industry, all eager to learn how to market and promote their services online. All participants were offered the opportunity to have their websites reviewed with recommendations for improvements to enhance productivity and visibility.

As a result of these efforts, more in Jordan's tourism and hospitality sector are now applying effective digital techniques to help increase sales and revenues. A significant number of the participants developed or made a change to online marketing and business tools. From redesigning their websites, increasing online marketing budgets, creating or updating Facebook profiles and Twitter accounts, and utilizing YouTube, the effect was widespread. Around 75% of the participants witnessed an increase in web visitors and more than 75% increased their Facebook friends and fans within three months of applying the new methods they learned. Also, more than half of the attendees increased their Twitter followers and video or multimedia content online.

Web Clinics

As part of the Digital and Social Media Marketing Conference the Jordan Tourism Development Project offered participating organizations and companies the opportunity to have a professional and comprehensive assessment of their websites, as a marketing tool, and provide feedback, through a diagnostic report, on recommended

revisions and/or updates required for their websites to comply with international best practices and to enhance productivity and visibility. Many participating companies took up this opportunity and reviews helped them to improve or better utilize their websites.

E-Business

An e-Business conference and workshop was conducted in October 2010 and attended by over 700 industry professionals from throughout the Kingdom. Addressing managers, decision makers, and marketers the opportunity was provided to offer insights and paths on converting demand to actual business and was delivered by expert speakers representing major digital and online businesses such as Booking.com, Expedia, Microsoft, Nightsbridge, SADDA, Clicks2Customers, Mobiguides, Souq.com, STS, and VISA discussing topics that included an E-Business Overview, Converting Social Media into Business, Destination Management, Reservation Solutions, E-Payment Platforms, Business Platforms Reservations, Channel and Revenue Management, Mobile Marketing and Business, and Online Advertising and Conversion. A follow-up workshop provided focused training on implementation and support in marketing and selling online, online sales tools, advertising and managing a campaign, and integrating sales into social media

'How to' Guide

A 'How to Guide' to Digital, Social Media Marketing and E-Business was developed, launched and



Attendees at the e-business conference held in October 2010.

distributed to industry to provide ongoing advice and support in the development of Jordan's tourism industry into the Digital Age. Topics include the Digital Traveler; Challenges in Emerging Markets; eMarketing Strategies for Tourism Businesses; Your Website; Search Engines – Being Found; Online Advertising; eBusiness for Tourism; Social Media and Tourism; Other Online Tools; Managing Your Social Profile; Growing Digitally.

Introducing E-Payment and Online Booking Systems

In order to bring Jordan's tourism sector into the digital age, the USAID tourism project worked with a local e-payment provider

and in partnership with Jordanian tour operators to develop an online payment services for the tourism industry while providing Internet security for both tourists and merchants. The Jordan Tourism Development Project worked with the Visa joint venture and Specialized Technical Services (STS) to adapt the electronic payment gateway, PAYNET, to the local tourism sector and the tourism industry is being offered the PAYNET service at reduced rates. This new system will ensure that all potential visitors to Jordan can make their bookings online.

What about Aqual



A speaker from WildEarth.tv addresses attendees at a conference on digital and social media marketing.



Taking Jordan's tourism industry into the digital age

Global travel trends are changing rapidly and more and more travelers are going online to plan, book and even review their holidays. In order to remain globally competitive it is therefore vital for Jordan's tourism industry to reach international visitors online at every touch point in the purchase cycle and convert potential visitors into bookings. To introduce digital and social media network opportunities to Jordan's tourism sector as a tool to market and sell a variety of tourism products and services and increase online bookings, the USAID/Jordan Tourism Development Project organized a conference and workshops on digital and social media marketing in partnership with the Jordan Tourism Board, Jordan Hotel Association and JITO. The event took place in July 2010 and was very successful, attracting more than 800 representatives from the tourism sector who benefitted greatly from the conference and workshops.

Nabil Tarazi, Managing Director of Eco Hotels, which runs the Feynan Eco Lodge, said, "It's been an excellent conference to see a number of tools we can use to better promote our property, using everything from TripAdvisor to YouTube to Facebook to other social networks and it has been extremely useful. There are a number of these tools we have already started working with at Feynan and we are going to be using many more, which we are going to start working with, over the next couple of months."

The conference hosted expert speakers from E-Tourism Frontiers, TripAdvisor, Expedia, WAYN, Wildearth.tv, and Seismonaut who discussed topics related to global online travel trends, travel distribution trends and opportunities for the Middle East, social media and

networking in tourism, and e-marketing for tourism. Attendees represented tourism and hospitality professionals who plan, develop, implement and evaluate marketing strategies, along with IT and advertising industry professionals working with the tourism and hospitality industry sector.

The conference was followed by nine days of specialized workshops in Amman, Aqaba and Petra for hotel and accommodation service providers, trade associations, tour operators, destination management organizations and tourism service providers. These meetings and workshops helped participants gain maximum benefit from the conference and provided step-by-step guidance on using social media to promote tourism products and services.

Awni Abu Ghosh, a marketing consultant who took part was impressed by what he saw, and commented, "The conference was very good and gave companies in Jordan the opportunity to share Jordan's tourism experience with the world through social media, as we have learned from the workshop which is excellent."

In 2009, online tourism bookings reached \$153 billion from the US and Europe alone. The average global growth rate in travel bookings made online is 34.6% per annum. So by following this global trend, it is anticipated that Jordan's tourism sector will access new markets leading to an increase in tourist influx to Jordan and enhancing marketing and promotion of Jordan as a global destination.

Keeping Up with New Trends in the International Tourism Industry

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development project hosted a special dinner, attended by around 300 tourism stakeholders, with internationally-acclaimed, award-winning TV producer and travel show host Peter Greenberg. Mr. Greenberg is well-known around the world for having helped create various leading television series and productions. In travel, his Royal Tour with heads of states, including His Majesty King Abdullah II, has won awards and captured millions of audiences worldwide. Peter Greenberg discussed international trends impacting people's impressions of countries, psyche on the new traveler, how the media influences and is influenced by changing visitor preferences.

Boosting Results from Trade Shows

Boosting industry success from participation in tradeshow and forums was singled out as a priority. In light of this push for greater Jordanian presence abroad, a two-day workshop was conducted in July 2010 for local tourism professionals to strengthen participation in tradeshow, road shows and business development. Approximately 50 industry representatives attended and were trained on how to maximize their financial returns and business-to-business deals.

Marketing Aqaba

Responding to an ASEZA request to strengthen its position as a second specialized gateway to the Kingdom, the USAID project paid particular attention to supporting the Red Sea port city as an integral part of Jordan's golden tourism triangle and the larger Jordan destination.

Jordan Tourism Development Project

Developing new airline routes into Aqaba

A major portion of the project's efforts in this area centered on transforming the King Hussein International Airport (KHIA) into a hub for charter flights and other low cost carriers. The tourism project developed an incentive plan for KHIA, including a strategy to attract low cost carriers and charter airlines to KHIA as well as a plan for tour operators to ensure demand for services. The plan targeted priority markets offering the best return and Aqaba's potential to adopt a diminishing incentive and cooperative marketing approach.

To increase Aqaba's target marketing capacity of Low Cost Carriers, the USAID project hosted an international aviation consultant who developed an airline briefing and a route proposal presentation, coordinated meetings with target market representatives and lead presentations at each of the airline meetings at the World Routes Forums in Beijing in 2009

and Vancouver in 2010. This participation generated interest in Aqaba from a number of airlines and operators.

Preparing for Aqaba 2011 Arab Tourism Capital

Support was also provided to ASEZA to prepare for the celebrations of Aqaba as the Arab Tourism Capital 2011, including developing concepts, budgets and a suggested program for celebrations. The project proposed events that leverage Aqaba's unique selling points, maximize sponsorship, engage the local and business communities and ensure coverage of Aqaba 2011 and Aqaba as a destination.

Marketing Petra

Efforts were carried out to boost Petra's presence online. The USAID project lent its support to the development of two websites, the first being a destination website to immerse visitors and potential visitors in all the products and experiences Petra has to offer.

The objective of the website is to increase length of stays and boost tourist expenditure in the Petra region. Financed by PDTRA, the USAID tourism project developed the design architecture and tenders for delivery of a destination website that immerses visitors and potential visitors in Petra and the products and experiences Petra has to offer. The objective is to increase length of stay and increase spending in the Petra region.

Support for JTB

The USAID tourism project continued its support to the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) as an effective marketing arm for the Kingdom through various programs implemented in partnership. Following are some of these initiatives.

Expanding Travel Agent Network Selling Jordan in the United States

The project worked with the JTB to develop and launch an academy to increase the number of international travel agents



promoting and selling Jordan. Specifically, the project is working with JTB and its North America office to develop a specialized academy geared towards US travel agents with the aim of producing more than 1,000 graduates over two years.

Market Research

To enable the JTB and its members to best reach its target travel audiences, the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project partnered with JTB to research sector needs and develop market profiles for the 10 main target source markets where the JTB is represented, as was discussed above.

Also, under a grant the USAID tourism project supported JTB's effort to survey prospective visitors in the U.K. The market-based qualitative research project entailed surveying the British public and gleaned their travel motivations vis-à-vis Jordan. A component of the research focused specifically on Aqaba with separate results provided for ASEZA and JTB. The findings were delivered and presented at a tourism industry event to immerse the sector in the key findings and opportunities for market development.

Jordan Travel Mart

The Jordan Travel Mart (JTM) is instrumental in developing and growing visitor numbers from the lucrative US market. For the 2010 event, the USAID project supported JTB to attract around 45 international trade press participants from North and South America to take part and sponsored their stay and familiarization trips in Jordan. The members of the press thus toured

the Kingdom's diverse tourist sites and reported to audiences back home. Media coverage of Jordan and the products and experiences that Jordan has to offer is imperative to keep this market informed and maximize visitation to Jordan.

Jordan Tourism Stand

Jordan takes part in several international trade shows and the Jordan tourism stand contributes to the country's tourism image that is reflected at these events. The USAID tourism project was asked to help develop a new design for a Jordan stand that effectively and creatively represents the brand and experiences of Jordan. A conceptual design and schematic drawings for the stand were developed for review by JTB.

Tourist information

Thematic Guides

To ensure that visitors are aware of the full range of tourism experiences in Amman from the moment they step off the plane or into a hotel, a suite of printed guides and brochures started being developed with different thematic areas of interest. Brochures will focus on art galleries in Amman, museums in Jordan, Jordanian restaurants and food outlets, as well as a downtown Amman walking trail.

JARA Information Centre and Walking Trail

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is working with JARA to deliver a Visitor Information Center in Jabal Amman to provide visitors with up-to-date information on the range of experiences and attractions in Jabal Amman, Amman and Jordan

and include information, where relevant, on where and how to book. A grant was awarded to JARA for this project, and it also supports the launch of the Jabal Amman Photographic Gallery within the Visitor Information Centre. The grant will also support the center tell the story and the rich culture and history of Jabal Amman through engaging and well-presented documentation and interpretation of available materials and photos.

This initiative also entails developing and marketing a Jabal Amman walking trail that immerses the visitor in the great history and culture of the area and the community past and present; and encompasses key attractions in Jabal Amman that will serve as an engaging and attractive visitor activity in Jabal Amman

Support Domestic Tourism

The USAID tourism project worked with MoTA, associations, and tour operators to design and launch itineraries and programs marketed toward the domestic market, including multi-day programs, to stem outbound tourism. The project supported a MoTA-led campaign that aims to encourage Jordanians to embark on packaged tours to different destinations around Jordan at attainable prices. The campaign was launched in partnership with other key industry stakeholders that included JHA, JRA, Jordan Society of Tourism and Travel Agents, Jordan Tour Guides Association, and the Tourism Police. It was sponsored by Rotana Radio, Waseet Newspaper and Al Ghad Newspaper as well as Royal Jordanian. It was launched in April 2011.

KNOW

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YOUR MARKET

TO GROW YOUR MAR



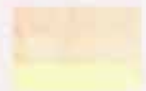
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Aladdin Qatouri

6. Enabling Environment for Tourism Growth

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is supporting a public-private partnership in tourism planning and policymaking, chiefly developing a competitiveness-based five-year national tourism strategy (2011-2015). To help meet strategy goals, the project is also supporting institutional reform at key government bodies concerned with the tourism sector. The forefront of these efforts is enhancing the organizational capacity of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the Department of Antiquities, as well as business and local community organizations. Immediately upon its creation, the project helped develop the institutional capacity and operational infrastructure of the new Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA) to fulfill its mandate of preserving, promoting and enhancing the Petra region.



Jordan Tourism Development Project

A New Competitiveness-Based National Tourism Strategy

The USAID tourism project worked with MoTA to forge a public-private partnership to develop a five-year competitiveness-based national tourism strategy for 2011-2015. This builds on the original strategy (2005-2010) developed with USAID support, which helped guide the coordinated development and growth of Jordan's tourism sector since its launch. The new strategy was developed by the private sector through a participatory process that engaged all facets of the industry with MoTA and other key public sector organizations in a series of workshops and meetings along the four strategy pillars (marketing, human resources, product development and enabling environment). Targets were set to enhance the visitor experience and attract higher yield tourists to double tourism receipts (an increase of more than JD2 billion) and increase sector employment. This strategy is being launched in July 2011.

Capacity Building of the Ministry of Tourism

The USAID tourism project supported organizational reform and institutional capacity building at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. A suggested new organizational structure for MoTA that helps strengthen its ability to deliver on its mandate as sector leader and regulator was presented and adopted. Special attention was placed on the functions regulating the tourism professions identified in the tourism law (registering, licensing, classification and control) and on product development and site management. A model for streamlining site planning and

management with the Department of Antiquities has been proposed to better fuse the two institutions in a joint approach to site management while maintaining clear divisions of roles and responsibilities. Several training programs for ministry personnel were implemented, including specialized support to management and staff of the World Bank-financed Cultural, Heritage, Urban and Tourism Development Project. The USAID tourism project has also started working with MoTA staff from the directorates across Jordan on skills required to develop a tourism investment map.

A New Tourism Law & Updated Bylaws

The USAID tourism project is also working with MoTA on developing a new tourism law that updates the existing law of 1988. Development of the new law went through an extensive participatory approach with the participants of the National Tourism Strategy working groups as well as members of industry associations, under MoTA leadership. In addition, support has been provided to updating several bylaws, namely handicrafts, hotels, restaurants and tour operators, all of which are due to be completed following adoption of the new law. Support was also extended to the Petra Authority in developing key bylaws and regulations necessary for its operation.



Spring in the north of Jordan.

7. Promoting Good Environmental Practices within Industry

Supporting RJ Reduce Carbon Footprint

To help reduce its carbon footprint, the USAID tourism project developed an environmental management framework for the national airline Royal Jordanian (RJ). This outlined the framework RJ needs to plan its environmental control and management practices, and identified the main environmental issues that should be addressed, which were prioritized based on their environmental impacts.

Infusing Environmental Sustainability in Higher Education Curricula

Environmental considerations are also being made at the level of tourism education. In 2010 the USAID tourism project worked closely with the Higher Education Accreditation Commission to develop accreditation criteria for colleges and universities in Jordan that offer hospitality and tourism programs. These criteria include prioritizing environmental protection as part of hospitality and tourism, and specify sustainable tourism as a compulsory basic area of knowledge for all hospitality management programs. This is an important step towards

establishing the right national mindset to develop a sustainable and environmentally-conscious sector. The criteria have been approved by the Ministry of Higher Education and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission and have come into force in 2011.

Promoting Good Environmental Practices within Industry

The USAID tourism project also began working with the hotel sector to introduce Best Environmental Practices. Beginning with the Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG), training on environmental practices was provided in the first quarter of 2011. The main objectives of the training course were to promote integration of the environment as a component of day-to-day hotel management planning and activities, to promote a rational, practical and eco-efficient use of resources, and help hotels take the first steps towards an integrated environmental management system. IHG includes the Crown Plaza Amman, Crown Plaza Petra, Holiday Inn Amman, Holiday Inn Dead Sea, Intercontinental Amman and Intercontinental Aqaba.

8. Enhancing Tourism Awareness



The winners of the 2010 tourism awareness painting competition for school students in Jordan.

Working with MoTA, ASEZA and the Petra Authority, the USAID tourism project built on the inroads made in changing Jordanians' misconceptions about the tourism sector through awareness campaigns. Once a job of last resort, positions in the tourism and hospitality industry are slowly starting to be considered as a career of choice, with more positive views on the local benefits of tourism. However, overall perception of the industry, even among policymakers, still faces several obstacles. In order to continue its successes, the USAID tourism project embarked on a National Tourism Awareness Plan to reach millions of Jordanians, both young and old.



Nationwide Campaigns

In November 2009 the results of the national tourism awareness survey (which polled thousands of Jordanians from school students to policy makers) were published and promoted to stakeholders. The study, which served as the foundation of a nationwide awareness campaign, showed a challenging environment for the growth of tourism-related employment and even policymaker support for the industry. To counter this, a national tourism awareness plan was launched with the aim of reaching three million Jordanians from academia, the vocational training sector, the media, investors, policymakers and others.

Industry workers

A series of tourism awareness sessions targeting industry workers were implemented in Amman, Aqaba, Ajloun, Salt, Jerash and Petra. The sessions highlighted the importance of tourism to Jordanians and the national economy and reached more than 330 industry workers. A tourism awareness video featuring success stories of industry students and workers was also developed to promote the value of tourism and position the sector as a career of choice to be used for various tourism awareness initiatives.

Youth Awareness

The project reached out to youths across Jordan during International Youth Days, organized by USAID to promote the value of tourism and position the sector as an employer of first choice in partnership with both tourism businesses and education institutions, including Movenpick Petra, Crowne Plaza Petra, King Hussein bin Tala University, Royal Academy of Culinary Arts, Vocational Training Center Petra, and Jordan Applied University College of Hospitality and Tourism Education.



Tourism awareness workshops give industry a boost

After three decades in the hospitality industry, this was the training Mohammad Daqqaq was waiting for. Daqqaq, the development and training director at the Kempinski hotel in Amman, said it was time to highlight the career opportunities in the hospitality industry and the importance of Jordan's tourism sector as a whole. He was finally able to get the lesson across in workshops organized by USAID/Jordan Tourism Development Project for hospitality workers as part of its nationwide tourism awareness initiative 'Tourism enriches our lives.'

Daqqaq, who attended several training sessions, praised the workshops for instilling the importance of tourism in hospitality employees, noting that the sector witnesses a high turnover in staff. "Jumping from hotel to hotel, many hospitality workers in Jordan fail to see it as a career, let alone a career of choice," he pointed out.



Mohammad Daqqaq, Development and training director at the Kempinski hotel, Amman

"By 2013 we (hotels) need at least 10,000 workers, an average of 2,500 each year. By highlighting that number, these workshops really show that it is a very promising sector. Many fail to realize that," he said. Daqqaq noted that he sent "dozens" of his staff to the free-of-charge trainings, which began in May, and also provided hotel workers with tips on customer service and an overview of Jordan's historical sites.

"They don't know the sites, the basic geography of Jordan and even Amman. This is a large concern and it was about time that we addressed it."

The USAID tourism project and Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities-supported sessions that showcased how tourism workers can become role models for younger Jordanians by showing that with a little hard work anyone can reach the highest levels in the industry.

"I worked with many GMs in 5-star hotels when they started out as junior employees, some of them as busboys. These examples are important to show," Daqqaq said.

Some HR and training department heads, such as Rania Meelad, in her capacity as Training Manager at the Regency Palace Hotel, have incorporated many of the key lessons from the training in their hotel's in-house orientation and training.

"The trainings are really useful to us. Not only does it give us a chance to show our staff why it is important to treat guests well, but why the tourism industry is important to the country as a whole," she said. "We are now speaking as tourism establishments that seek to develop tourism in Jordan; not only as hotels that aim to increase profits."

The first workshops, which started in Amman, were held for hotel and restaurant managers, supervisors, human resources and marketing specialists, concierges, cooks, waiters, housekeeping staff and guest relations employees. According to participants, the trainings have already had a direct impact.

Khalil Abu Al Ata, a waiter at the Kempinski hotel in Amman said the training encouraged him to learn more about Jordan's history. "In my daily dealings with guests I often answer their questions about Jordan's tourism sites. After what I learnt in the awareness session about the importance of Petra I decided to take a trip there, and I came back with more information and photographs, which I will show to guests," he said.

Ayman Hussein, a health club receptionist at Le Meridien hotel, said he relied on the skills he learned in the workshop in dealing with an angry customer who was turned away after his membership expired. "I used the skills I learned to show him kindness and exercise patience and self-control, and eventually he dropped his complaint and was satisfied in the end," he said.

The USAID tourism awareness workshops will continue across the Kingdom throughout the year, reaching over 700 hotel and restaurant workers, as well as campsite owners and tourist bus drivers. The success of the awareness campaign will be critical for the industry's long-term outlook, according to Daqqaq. "We must improve ourselves. This is the only way Jordan's tourism can compete," Daqqaq said.



Jordan Tourism Development Project

The 12 winning photos from the tourism awareness photo competition held in 2010 for college and university students in Jordan.

Awareness Competitions

The second tourism awareness painting competition was held in October 2009, with 2,000 school children submitting drawings representing how tourism enriches their lives. A panel of judges comprising representatives from the ministries of education, tourism and antiquities, and culture, along with the USAID tourism project and the Artists Union selected the 12 top paintings. These were announced at an event on December 16 under the patronage of H.E. the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities. More than 1,300 people, mostly school children participants, attended. The 12 winning paintings were then published in a 2010 calendar.

The third annual painting competition for school students took place between October and December 2010. The USAID tourism project collaborated with MoTA and the Ministry of Education to hold the competition, with sponsorship from mobile operator Umniah. The 12 winners were awarded at a large ceremony in December, also attended by around 1,200 students.

A similar competition targeted university and college students, and sought to increase their interest in and awareness of tourism through photography. The tourism photography competition was held in cooperation with MoTA and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

It was launched in October 2010 and ran for a month to enhance awareness among students of the importance of tourism and the careers and opportunities that it offers. Sponsorship was secured from Ahli Bank and Royal Jordanian, with media sponsorship from Spin FM and Ayyam FM. A site was set up for the competition (www.tourismawareness.com) to allow students to upload their photos. The students who took the 20 winning photographs were awarded at a ceremony in December and the photographs were used to create a mobile exhibit to tour Jordan and reach out to more students and communities to boost tourism awareness. The first exhibit took place in Aqaba in December, and two others are planned in 2011.

Activity	Direct reach	Publicity reach	Total reach
Awareness reach in 2009			
Tourism awareness survey and plan announced	4,000	300,000	304,000
Awareness training for school teachers and curriculum presented to students	50,300	200,000	250,300
Career day for school students at International Amman Academy	200	100,000	100,200
2009 national tourism awareness painting competition and ceremony for school students	602,200	500,000	1,102,200
Total number of Jordanians reached through tourism awareness activities in 2009			1,452,700
Awareness reach in 2010			
Training tourism workers in Amman, Aqaba and Petra	3,000	200,000	203,000
Community-based awareness training in Salt and Ajloun	1,500	200,000	201,500
Tourism workers in Petra educated on sustainable practices to protect heritage	1,200	200,000	201,200
2010 national tourism awareness painting competition and ceremony for school students	513,700	500,000	1,013,700
National tourism awareness photo competition for university and college students launched	211,600	500,000	711,600
Tourism photo exhibition in Aqaba	500	100,000	100,500
Tourism career exhibition and competition at International Academy Amman	900	100,000	100,900
Tourism career exhibition and awareness sessions at International Youth Day	1,500	200,000	201,500
Total number of Jordanians reached through tourism awareness activities in 2010			2,532,700

Preserving Cultural Heritage

In light of the growth in Jordan's tourism industry, the USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project is advocating for communities to embrace tourism while preserving Jordan's unique cultural heritage and historical sites. As part of these efforts, the USAID project developed and launched an

awareness campaign in coordination with PDTRA that highlighted the need to preserve Petra. A brochure with practical tips on how to protect Petra was developed and 100,000 copies were printed and distributed at the visitor center and the Petra gate.

Also, ten awareness workshops to promote the protection of Petra were held for rangers, guards, restaurants, hotels, horse guides, tour guides, tour operators, and visitor center staff through six sessions that took place in Petra in July and August 2010. Around 300 people from Petra's local communities attended.

Grants awarded in 2009, 2010 and 2011

Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)

To improve the level and quality of service provided by RSCN's eco-tourism facilities, enhance employee motivation, create a more rewarding experience for tourists and encourage longer stays and repeat visits. The grant supported RSCN develop standard operating procedures for eco-lodges and deliver a wide range of training courses, including safe food handling, HACCP, event management and hospitality. Also, state-of-the-art first aid kits were procured for RSCN guides and 10 mountain bikes were purchased for the Azraq Wetland Reserve to provide cycling tours for visitors.

Jabal Amman Resident Association (JARA)

Create more income generating opportunities for JARA and support a concentrated marketing campaign to help them turn Jabal Amman into a starting point for a unique and authentic cultural experience and increasing the number of expats and local visitors.

Orthodox Charitable Society - Fheis Festival

This grant supported the 2009 Christmas festival in the city of Fheis.

Children's Museum Jordan

Enhance the fundraising capacity through building a dynamic and loyal base of support for the museum from the private sector as well as the government, international community and NGOs, build museum's capacity for exhibit design and interactive programming through a US study tour, develop and support revenue generating enterprises, improve and maintain excellence in customer services standards, and promote the museum as a tourist attraction.

Jordan Applied University

Improve operations and train specialized tour guides to enhance the tourist experience at heritage sites in Jordan.

Petra hotels and restaurants

Grants were given to several hotels and restaurants in Wadi Mousa – Petra to support various renovations, upgrades and purchase of needed equipment. This was mainly to improve kitchens and thus upgrade food safety and hygiene, and also involved upgrading restaurants, rooms, establishing a laundry and dry clean facility at one of the hotels and generally improving standards to achieve better hotel classifications. The hotels and restaurants that received a grant are:

- Al-Hidab Hotel
- Al-Rasheed Hotel
- Amra Palace Hotel
- Petra Palace Hotel
- Silk Road Hotel
- Candles Hotel
- Sela Hotel
- Edom Hotel
- Al-Qantara Restaurant
- Doshara Restaurant
- Sand Stone Restaurant
- Petra Magic Restaurant
- Oriental Restaurant
- Sun City Restaurant

Jordan Inbound Tour Operators

Enhance human resource capacity, improve tourism marketing, strengthen private associations working in tourism, help the association offer a variety of services and products, assist the association in raising tourism awareness among students.

Jordan Tourism Board

Support focus Group Research in the UK to better understand Jordan's tourism markets.

Jordan Restaurant Association (JRA)

Strengthen outreach to engage members, respond to their needs and expand membership.

Bait Al Anbat

Develop and implement activities promoting local tourism awareness

Jordan Motorcycle Association

Fund the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) of USA

Déjà vu

Support production, launch and distribution of a promotional video on Jordan and provide the industry with this content to help increase awareness of Jordan as a tourism destination.

I Jordan

Support marketing activities for the Amman parade, which was implemented by I Jordan.

Royal Academy for Culinary Art

Support their marketing activities through online networking, TV and radio shows and better deployment of print media

Heritage Company for Embroidery

Establish a new Museum of Arab Heritage Center.

Institute of Mosaic Art and Restoration - Madaba

Support outreach and communications efforts through designing awareness programs, creating a website and producing necessary publications

Society for Development and Rehabilitation of Rural Women

Support the society's marketing activities, development of product design and packaging and opening a new show room on Rainbow Street in Jabal Amman.

Royal Society for Conservation of Nature for Ajloun Nature Trail

A grant to the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature to manage the Ajloun Tourism Nature Trail by supporting local businesses along the trail.

Salt Development Corporation (Emar)

The local non-profit entity Emar was awarded a grant to implement the Salt Heritage Trail Enterprise Development program, which includes grants to support tourism businesses along the trail that will engage the local community in tourism and enhance the visitor experience. A total of 21 businesses were identified for development, and these include four restaurants, three coffee and juice shops, one sweet shop, ten handicraft producers and three spice and herbs shops.

Arab Forum for Cultural Interaction (Bait Al-Anbat), Petra

Build the capacity of the cooperative and help develop their products, in addition to improving marketing techniques to reach a bigger market segment. Support focused on developing marketing materials and introducing new marketable embroidered and stitched product designs, along with providing needed new equipment to diversify the handcraft range.

Nabataean Ladies Cooperative Society, Wadi Mousa

Upgrade the cooperative's silver workshop to help them produce unique silver products in a safer and environment-friendly atmosphere and with needed new equipment and tools in addition to producing new materials to better market their products and increase sales. The upgrade will also ensure the safety and comfort of the women working there and their children by providing a children's crèche.

Taybeh Ladies Cooperative, Taybeh

Upgrade the cooperative's pottery workshop and provide it with new equipment and a storage area. Also help the cooperative produce a new line of pottery stoneware, which better meets market needs for hotels and restaurants, and build management and marketing capacity.

Productive Village Cooperative, Wadi Rum

Improve sustainability of the cooperative by building its capacity and developing handicraft production. Through the grant a designer and marketing specialist were hired to develop and improve jewelry produced there and a new leather handicraft unit is being built.

Aqaba Maritime Tourism Society

Help the society improve communication, first aid, and guiding skills of glass boat drivers and also upgrade and remodel the glass boats and equip them with necessary safety equipment. Through the grant an electronic accounting and storage system was provided to ensure proper financial management of the society. Also new marketing collaterals were developed and office equipment was procured.

Nashmiyat Al Balqa Cooperative, Salt

Support to the cooperative to improve its production unit and promote handicraft production for the tourism sector in Jordan. The grant also provides the cooperative with needed equipment including new sewing machines and electric scissors.

Jordan Hotel Association

Build capacity to become a system and policy-driven organization, enhance its marketing activities, provide customer relations, communication skills, English language, and leadership training to JHA members, improve hotel services through getting the sector workers trained on a work related skills, and set up a quality assurance unit.

Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration, Madaba

Support business plans, marketing and scholarships. The grant funded full scholarships for the Diploma Program in Mosaics for 13 students and is helping the institute attract more students and raise awareness among the community about its programs through brochures, a website, signs, open days, and internship opportunities.

Jordan Museum

Support participation in the Deaf Nation World Expo, and support development and implementation of a café concept to generate revenues for the museum.

Expand Jordan's travel agent network in the US

To support JTB's efforts in enhancing the promotion and selling of Jordan in the US, this grant, awarded to the US-based Performance Media Group for the benefit of and in partnership with JTB, is helping establish an institute to train around 1,000 travel agents specialized in Jordan, thus improving key messages and information about Jordan and its tourism offerings conveyed to potential tourists in order to better sell Jordan and give accurate info about this destination.

Jordanian Women's Development Association of the Deaf

Develop business plan for the association and train handcraft producers to build capacity, as well as supporting a pilot silk screening project to develop a new product line.

Burda Women Cooperative, Wadi Rum

Improve handicrafts sales through developing new sellable designs and adopting a marketing strategy to increase tourist spending. Also, the weaving and soap production workshops will be furnished, equipped and stocked with raw materials. The grant also covers salaries for some of the staff to help sustain it.

Eco Hotels-Feynan

Build the capacity of EcoHotels staff to provide Feynan's guests with a higher level of service by supporting development of standard operation procedures and an enhanced experience through star-gazing activities and adventure tour equipment. The grant thus supports procurement of mountain bikes, astronomy equipment and first aid kits in addition to training staff on mountaineering, flora and fauna, astronomy/stargazing, room cleaning, environmental best practices and waste compost training.

Royal Academy for Culinary Art

Through the grant 10 scholarships for female students were offered to offset tuition fees for the Diploma in Culinary Art program, and RACA promotional activities to raise awareness of available career opportunities were supported. This included marketing activities through online networking, TV and radio shows and better deployment of print media and an awareness brochure.

Jordan Federation of Tourism Association

Support renovation of the first floor of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to enhance client servicing through improved premises and equipment for public services.

Enhancing client servicing by the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities

Support renovation of the first floor of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities to enhance client servicing through improved premises and equipment for public services in partnership with the Jordan Federation of Tourism Associations.

Jabal Amman Residents Association (JARA)

Establish a Visitor Information Center in Jabal Amman to provide visitors with up-to-date information on the range of experiences and attractions available in the area, launch a photographic gallery and develop and market a walking trail.

Jordanian Handicraft Producers and traders Association

Convert the JHPTA showroom into a unit for exhibition and sales of Jordanian-made handcraft.

Jordan Restaurant Association

Strengthen the association operationally and financially, to boost outreach to engage members, respond to their needs and expand membership and upgrade the quality of services in the restaurant sector. New issues of JRA's newsletter were distributed and two JRA staff members were trained on events management to build the association's capacity and improve services to members.

Citadel Nights

Support the development, launch and sustainability of an annual, themed summer activity at the Citadel Amman. The first in the series of this annual event will launch in Ramadan 2011 and include a range of performances and activities.

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