



USAID | JORDAN

Economic Growth Sector PROJECT PROFILE

May 2012

Jordan Tourism Development Project

BACKGROUND

A key driver of Jordan's economy, tourism accounts for 14% of GDP, is Jordan's largest productive sector and largest private sector employer. Despite these facts tourism in Jordan has been under-valued and its full contributing potential to the economy not fully realized. The Government of Jordan is committed to more private investment in tourism, while ensuring the protection of national historical and environmental treasures.

USAID has long supported tourism development in Jordan, working with such key entities as the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Department of Antiquities and Jordan Tourism Board. Support helped develop Jordan's National Tourism Strategy, a private sector-focused document that spells out Jordan's commitment to investing responsibly in its historic and natural heritage. USAID also has contributed to restoration and preservation of Jordan's historical sites, collaborating with the American Center for Oriental Research to excavate and preserve archeological sites in Aqaba, Kerak, Petra, Jerash, Madaba and Amman. Assistance to the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature supports protection of Jordan's unique natural treasures, making them available to visitors.

The USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project seeks to improve Jordan's competitiveness as an international tourism destination. The project works in partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities on such initiatives as developing a new national hotel classification system, improving tourism research and destination marketing, enhancing ecotourism, developing better handicrafts and upgrading vocational training. The project helps to develop tourist sites by upgrading archaeological site management, interpretation and investment promotion at key sites, currently focusing on Petra and the Amman Citadel. This project builds on the accomplishments of the first USAID tourism project (2005-2008), which supported development in Madaba, Wadi Rum and Amman, and is also expanding into new technical and geographical areas.

ACTIVITIES

- Providing expertise to establish a stronger policy, institutional and regulatory foundation for greater private sector involvement in tourism
- Enabling responsible private sector management of tourism sites and development of effective and attractive tourism products
- Increasing the capability of Jordanians to manage a profitable hospitality sector



In the Middle East region, Jordan ranks second to Egypt in total number of tourists. This project aims to upgrade Jordan's tourism-related service industries, which had been lagging behind regional competitors.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Implemented by: Chemonics International

Duration: 2008 – 2013

Total Funding: \$28 million

Beneficiaries: All Jordanians, especially youth

Geographic Coverage: Nationwide

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A challenge for the tourism project is to alter the negative perceptions held by many Jordanians towards tourism and careers in hospitality. By 2010, positive messages about the benefits of tourism to Jordan and to individuals reached 3 million Jordanians, including students, workers and media.

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- Increasing community involvement in tourist site management and spurring growth of community-based tourism enterprises

PROGRESS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Developed the National Tourism Strategy 2011-2015, which was published and launched to the sector in July 2011.
- Developing and upgrading services and facilities in Petra, Jordan's largest tourist attraction, including installation of 40 new interpretation signs
- Improved the experience at major sites, such as the Amman Citadel, to enhance the visitor experience, and supported the process of getting Wadi Rum listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2011.
- Improved tourism education programs and curricula throughout Jordan at various levels: revamped the Level 1 program at tourism vocational training centers from which more than 2500 students have graduated with a 70% employment rate, developed a Level 2 program and enhanced hospitality and tourism curricula at Jordanian universities
- Introduced specialized tourism vocational training for youth through new centers for baking and confectionary (Marka), and restaurant training (Abu Nseir)
- Enhanced specialized training in mosaic art through support to establish the Institute of Mosaic Art and Restoration in Madaba; established new specialist centers for handicrafts and jewelry making in Salt and Wadi Mousa
- Trained nearly 9,000 Jordanians working in the tourism sector to upgrade skills, capacities and service standards
- Trained more than 1,000 artisans across Jordan, who developed 700 new designs geared towards the tourism sector
- Created greater awareness among 3 million Jordanians of the importance of tourism to the country's economy and how they can contribute to its development

PARTNERS

- Chemonics International
- Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Department of Antiquities
- Jordan Tourism Board
- Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority
- Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
- Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature
- Ministries of Labor, Education and Higher Education