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Compete Project Annual Report

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COMPETE PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT

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DAI

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AHA	Arab Hotels Association
B2B	Business to Business
CIBER	Competitiveness Impact of Business Environment Reform
COP	Chief of Party
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EU	European Union
FY1	Fiscal Year One of USAID's Compete Project
Geo-MIS	Geographical Management Information System
GLOBALGAP	Global Good Agricultural Practice
HLITOA	Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IOS	Internet Operating System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NSFT	National Association for the Specialty Food Trade
PCARD	Palestinian Center for Agricultural Research & Development
PITA	Palestine Information Technology Association
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
PPIS	Plant Protection Inspection Service
PPSQ	Plant Protection safety and Quality
PSI	Palestine Standards Institute
RFQ	Request for Quotations
SME's	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOW	Scope of Work
TAMIS	Technical and Administrative Management Information System
USAID	United States Agency For International Development
USDA	U.S. Department for Agriculture

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the work of the Compete Project (October 2012 to Sept 2013) , which is a major economic and business development initiative of USAID in the Palestinian Territories. In the following pages the reader will find evidence of major accomplishments in Compete supported activities with beneficiaries, firms and business groups in Agriculture, Tourism, Information Technology, and the Stone & Marble sectors, which are the foundations of the Palestinian economy.

Project activities are highlighted and specific details of each of the supported initiatives and their impact to date are explained. The role and successes of the project’s communications and public outreach team are showcased; and the vital role of a pro-active monitoring and evaluation effort is recorded in detail. Unfortunately, the successful and unstinting efforts of the Compete Project finance, compliance and procurement staff, who ensure funds are well spent with the right beneficiaries, are given scant mention in the structure of annual reports.

Lastly, the reader should note that the Compete team met or exceeded 30 of the 36 program and management indicators set by USAID/WBG Mission. All of this effort, while a cause of celebration, barely begins the story of development.

A key ingredient of the development process is change management; and the overarching accomplishment of Compete to date has been the initiation of a changing mentality toward *confidence* of Palestinian producers and buyers of Palestinian products in their future.

This confidence can be measured by the willingness of producers and buyers to invest in time, effort, and especially finance to build businesses that create jobs in a competitive market. During the year 2013–2014, Compete with the support of USAID will begin tracking and measuring additional investments undertaken as a result of the project’s successful engagements with the Palestinian private sector and their partners.

Some of the standout Compete initiatives that are sparking confidence to invest include:

Agriculture – the introduction and rapid expansion of “forward contracting” that provides price and volume predictability (aka confidence) to producers and buyers of Palestinian high value agricultural products;

Tourism – the rapid adoption of a hotel classification system where over 35% of hotels have committed to the “star system” and begun to invest in accredited staff training and infrastructure improvements;

ICT – the investment of regional and international firms in seed funds, accelerators to tap into the young Palestinian technical talent that is being constantly nurtured within the growing contracting between Palestinian ICT firms and international/regional players often based in Israel;

Stone and Marble - where Compete introduced the concept of “group marketing,” which has enhanced the image and presence of Palestinian dimension stone on the world stage leading to firm-level investments in plant, machinery, and marketing know-how.

Although the environment or neighborhood where Palestinian business must operate is fraught with challenges, it is the job of the Compete team to help protect and sustain the confidence of its partners in the Agriculture, Tourism, ICT and Stone and Marble sectors to move forward and grow. We hope the reader will share in our confidence in the future.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR USAID'S COMPETE PROJECT

USAID'S COMPETE PROJECT WORKPLAN FY2

Description

The Palestinian private sector faces a major window of opportunity. Significant reductions in Israeli security and trade barriers, a more stable political and security situation, and a clear commitment by the Palestinian Authority to undertake critical trade reforms have created an improved business environment where the private sector can assume its place as the primary driver for growth. Empowered business leaders have a newfound ability to influence the future of individual enterprises, industries, and the overall economy; and the conditions they need to contribute to and participate in a significant economic expansion.

While the preconditions have now emerged to rapidly accelerate economic expansion in critical sectors of the economy, a wider circle of the economy must be mobilized for inclusive economic growth to be realized. Lacking appropriate technology, information, and access to lucrative international markets, many Palestinian firms currently focus on selling to a small domestic market and on providing raw materials or products with limited value added to Israeli buyers. While the Palestinian private sector faces a tremendous opportunity for rapid growth, enterprises must become active participants in the development of their industries for Palestinians to achieve global competitiveness leading to sustainable, broad-based economic growth. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has recognized that by investing in key industries, the Palestinian private sector has great potential to meet expanding demand in both domestic and export markets. The Compete Project plays a catalytic role in making this happen.

To strengthen the competitiveness and export potential of key sectors in the Palestinian economy, the Compete Project works sector-wide to upgrade the individual and collective performance of enterprises in targeted sectors by maximizing local value addition and helping to calibrate needed changes throughout key value chains to accelerate growth. Compete is systematically providing stakeholders with key tools for performance —business linkages, networks, and information systems, coaching sector participants on how to use them, and ensure their broad-based, commercially sustainable availability. We strengthen vertical linkages and inter-firm cooperation by forging connections between microenterprises and SMEs and larger firms, which have direct and more efficient access to markets and a better understanding of market requirements. This sector-wide approach leverages USAID's current and previous investments and expands the radius of benefits, accelerating the development of a prosperous Palestinian economy.

TAKING A SECTOR APPROACH

COMPONENT A: Assistance to Palestinian Enterprises to Compete in Global Markets

Agribusiness

Agriculture remains a dominant sector of the Palestinian economy. It represents a major component of the economy's GDP (5.9%¹) and employs a large percentage of the population. Furthermore, the agricultural sector is a major earner of foreign exchange and supplies the basic needs of the majority of the local population. In times of difficulty, the agricultural sector has acted as a buffer that absorbs large scores of unemployed people who lost their jobs in Israel or other local sectors of the economy.

To transform the Palestinian agribusiness sector into a globally competitive industry, the Compete Project works across the sector with stakeholders, local authorities, and key actors to help them access and maximize resources and technologies to increase and sustain competitiveness. Compete and its stakeholder partners are working intensively to embed modern technologies, such as: new grafting and seedling techniques to increase production and limit infestation in fresh herbs and fresh vegetables; innovative technologies to improve irrigation and increase the quality and volume of productivity in arid areas such as the Jordan Valley; production practices based on internationally recognized standards to gain recognition as a reliable and safe source within global markets; and increased product diversification and added value to expand domestic and international market penetration

Tourism

Although the contribution of tourism to the Palestinian economy has rebounded in recent years, the opportunity to increase the overall value of tourism in the national economy—and especially in local communities—has not yet been fully realized. As one of the largest industries in the global economy, deeper integration of Palestinian tourism goods and services in the global tourism industry has the potential to make a significant impact on overall job creation and increase investment.

Leveraging work previously undertaken by USAID, the Compete Project is implementing a series of strategic interventions in three key areas that will develop a strong platform to support growth in Palestinian tourism in the medium- and long-term:

- Supporting target market development of the most lucrative target segments in the Palestinian Territory;
- Expanding product offerings to respond to the demand of customer-centric, customized authentic experiences; and
- Increasing service standards across the sector through the development of vital skills and upgrading and implementing quality service standards that are in line with

¹ Source PCBS 2011: http://82.213.38.42/Portals/_pcbs/PressRelease/EcoEstimate2012E.pdf

international best practice is a priority to support tourism development

Supporting tourism stakeholders to develop a unified industry-wide approach targeting market niches that increase destination demand will lead to a globally competitive tourism sector. Facilitating Palestinian engagement to rapidly grow on-line “digital” tourism platforms is critical to this effort. These platforms enable Palestinian tourism professionals to benefit from the growing numbers of tourists that rely on digital mediums not only to research and book travel online, but also to share content with their personal networks through social media.

ICT

Talented skilled human resources are at the core of the global ICT industry; Palestinians are well known for their significant population of highly educated individuals. The Compete project works to create sustained growth in the local market by providing better tailored solutions and increasing exports through the expansion of the direct presence of ICT multinational companies in the Palestinian Territories.

To facilitate faster growth in jobs and investment, talented and experienced human resources are critical. It is imperative for the Compete Project to focus on developing Palestinian human resources not only from the skills perspective but also from the ability to think creatively, to innovate and to deliver world-class technologies to the global market.

The Compete Project focuses on scalable interventions that help create talented pools of young Palestinians capable of providing world class technological solutions. With the active engagement of key international ICT companies such as CISCO, Intel, Google and Microsoft, the Compete Project delivers highly practical training programs where the trainees –after being carefully selected by local companies gain valuable experience. The existence of talented skilled human resources encourages ICT multinational companies to open research and development centers in the Palestinian Territories.

Another strategic thrust of the Compete Project focuses on on-the-job training to expand work with multinational companies on specific technologies that are currently in high demand, such as mobile applications or specific R&D projects. The ability of multinational companies to provide live testimony on the capabilities of Palestinian IT professionals will enable Palestinian companies to gain greater exposure and better positioning in the e-sourcing market.

The third element of the Compete Project’s IT strategy is to enable a healthy and open ICT environment capable of providing strong motivation and support for entrepreneurship activities, leading to more startup projects and more investment in the sector. It is imperative for the Compete Project to actively engage all ICT stakeholders—particularly the educational institutions, representatives of the private sector, and IT social groups.

Stone & Marble

As a leading industrial sector that relies on natural resources, the stone and marble sector remains an important contributor to exports, job creation and contribution to government revenues in the Palestinian economy. The transformation of this sector into a vital growth industry requires unified efforts by all stakeholders and a dynamically genuine engagement, including that of private sector firms, educational institutions, relevant public entities, producer unions and associations.

The Compete Project's intervention with the Stone & Marble sector addresses the major sector challenges and creates business opportunities that will become the driving forces to develop a globally competitive industry. Interventions take into consideration the environmental concerns that present both major business challenges and business opportunities to be addressed with new investment and new technology and recycling techniques. Compete works with Palestinian stakeholders to prioritize new investment opportunities.

Palestinian manufacturers embracing changes through technology and specialized marketing is essential for facilitating new market entries. We believe that specialized marketing firms assisting Palestinian companies to reach global markets, develop promotional material, and gain access to market information and intelligence are critical for transformational growth. Linking current manufacturers with international buyers, investors and equipment manufacturers are essential interventions that the Compete Project is focusing on to achieve results.

The introduction of new technology provides the current and future workforce with the opportunity to build their capacities and skills. Through the assistance of specialized marketing firms and the introduction of new technologies and training grounded in Palestinian institutions such as the Polytechnic University at Hebron, the sector will be enabled to reach new markets, create higher value products, and offer more highly skilled jobs.

Component B: Assistance in the Development of Palestinian Business Support Organizations (BSOs) –Cross Cutting activities

The Palestinian business environment has a strong presence of business, industry and professional associations that not only work as lobbyists to the government to protect the interest of their members, but also as platforms on which to organize market access initiatives for their members. The Compete project is working with dynamic and representative BSOs to enhance their current direct market opening activities in the four priority sectors Agribusiness, Tourism, ICT, and Marble and Stone.

Compete has identified local BSOs to work with based on their ability to build linkages that

encourage investments and identify and penetrate export markets. Business associations that can address specific constraints to global competitiveness and provide commercially viable methods to deliver those services are encouraged to submit grant proposals for developing and strengthening member services that advance sector strategies as agreed with Compete technical teams.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AGRIBUSINESS

COOPERATION WITH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

In October 2012, USAID signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture outlining areas of cooperation to ensure the best chance of success for activities implemented through the Compete Project in the West Bank, with the ultimate goal of enabling the Palestinian agriculture sector to compete in global markets.



USAID's Michael Harvey and MofA's H.E. Eng. Waleed Assaf signing the MOU

INCREASING OLIVE OIL PRODUCTIVITY

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, aims to increase the value and volume of Palestinian products, enabling them to better compete in world markets. As a flagship Palestinian product, increasing the yield of olive oil could have significant impact on the Palestinian economy. Through a grant from USAID, the Palestinian Center for Agricultural Research and Development (PCARD) established demonstration plots using supplementary irrigation and improved harvesting and maintenance techniques to increase the



Olive Oil rollout workshops and training across the West Bank

yield of olive oil. PCARD then organized 25 workshops to share the results with Palestinian olive growers. The workshops served as a forum to share the positive results of the rollout and transfer knowledge about supplementary irrigation and the skills required to implement the new techniques. Findings showed that using water and humic acid together resulted in a 60% increase in olive oil production – that is 120L more olive oil per acre.

DRIVING EXPORT GROWTH IN AGRIBUSINESS

USAID, through the Compete Project, is undertaking several activities to increase the volume and value of agricultural exports. Early in the first quarter of the year, through the Compete Project, USAID brought in local experts build export expertise; workshops were held

covering import licenses, specific country quotas, and issues related to managing perishable produce, ensuring the industry is equipped with the key requirements for success and long-term sustainability aimed at building export expertise among Palestinian agriculture stakeholders. In addition to building technical knowledge, the project continues to ensure Palestinian companies are equipped to enter broader export markets. Other efforts, address specific gaps in the value chain and aim to increase the volume, and/or improve the value of exports, some of these efforts are described below:

An economic analysis shows that using insect nets increased fresh herb production by 30 %, and olive oil production increased by 60 % as a result of irrigation.

Meeting International Standards – USAID, through the Compete Project, is assisting Palestinian companies to obtain international standard certification such as Global Good Agricultural Products (GLOBALGAP) and ISO 22000 Food Safety by supporting the companies with required infrastructure and/or trainings. This year, two companies were certified with both GLOBALGAP and ISO 22000, while two more are in the process of being certified. USAID also provided assistance to two nurseries, to a food processing laboratory and to eight meat and dairy companies to upgrade their facilities and equipment to comply with the international standards.

After adopting international standards (GLOBAL GAP, ISO22000 & BRC) *Nakheel Palestine* increased its exports by \$150,396.

Organizing and Aggregating Agricultural Produce and Exports – With many small scale farmers in the West Bank, collective action greatly increases the reach of individual farms and food processors to connect with new markets and overcome operational and logistical constraints. USAID, through the Compete Project, brought together 23 fresh herb producers in the West Bank and supported them to create and register The Palestinian Fresh Herbs Producer Co. Additionally, the Green Qalqilya Company, representing 36 guava and avocado producers, and Tubas Packaging & Marketing Company, representing six potato and carrot companies and comprising 24 partners were all registered this year. Through the companies the producers are collaborating to increase the volume of exports and focusing their efforts on adopting best practices to meet international market requirements. USAID, through the Compete Project, is providing the new companies with the necessary equipment to establish packing houses with washing, packaging, storing, grading and cooling facilities, which will ensure the produce is export grade. With the companies acting as aggregators, farmers will have access to the equipment and facilities at reasonable costs.

Improving Packaging and Labeling– Attractive packaging can be integral to attracting customers and generating brand recognition in new markets. USAID, through the Compete Project is working with the Palestinian Food Industry Union (PFIU) to raise awareness about the need for professionally designed packages that meet international labeling standards and to build design expertise. To that end, USAID supported the PFIU to conduct a workshop on the standards of packaging and labeling; 59 representatives from the food sector participated. Following the workshop, USAID funded the visit of eight Palestinian food processors to LibanPack in Lebanon where they received technical training on packing regulations and design. The project has also supported 14 number of companies in redesigning their

packaging. These activities have been successful in creating a new mindset among Palestinian food producers as they realize the importance of successfully marketing their products through attractive packaging and proper labeling to access new markets.



Members of the Palestinian contingent at Libanpack, Lebanon, December

Through the Compete Project, in cooperation with PFIU, USAID also supported Palestinian students from two universities to submit designs to StarPack 2013. StarPack is a competition organized by LibanPack and aims to develop packaging design skills and link academic institutions to private companies. Through the contest the packaging of 14 Palestinian products were redesigned. An industrial engineering student from Gaza, Salem Da'our, won third place with his packaging design!

TRADE SHOW PARTICIPATION

Supporting the ability of Palestinian producers to penetrate world markets, USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, assists Palestinian producers to participate in international tradeshows, from Dubai, to Russia and the US. USAID supports stakeholder participation in a myriad of ways: through pre-event and post-event marketing support; financial assistance to exhibitors for booth design, preparation and rental; identification of prospective importers, wholesalers, distributors and other key players; as well as the transport of Palestinian products to targeted events. Participating companies were able to make deals with international importers, leading to over \$14 million in contracts for Palestinian products and have broken into new markets in Russia and the Gulf.



Palestinian Gourmet exhibit at the Gulfood trade show, Dubai, February 2013

FORWARD CONTRACTING: PARTNERSHIPS FOR GROWTH

During the second fiscal year of the USAID Compete Project in the West Bank, the agriculture team helped negotiate 15 forward contracts between Palestinian farmers and both domestic and international agribusinesses. Forward contracts remove many of the risks that farmers face selling their products on the open market where prices can fluctuate. By signing a contract for a specific amount of produce at an agreed upon price, farmers can predict their income for the year, which gives them the confidence needed to experiment with new crops (not only red

"At this training we didn't only learn about grafting, we were taught how to use the tools we have, this is what led us to new ways of thinking. Now I believe that if it is done right we can easily compete." Diab Abu Al Rub, Owner of Atta Abu Al Rub Nursery.

potatoes, but also carrots, guavas and broccoli), increase the land area under production, and invest in quality improvements on their farm. Additionally, the buyer is assured of the quality of the produce at a specific price thus avoiding discrepancies in quality found in the markets, and unpredictable price fluctuations on their end as well. The combined value of the negotiated forward contracts is \$8 million.

INTRODUCING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

In October 2012, USAID, through the Compete Project, enlisted an international consultant to deliver grafting training to improve the techniques used in local nurseries, enabling Palestinian nurseries to improve the quality of their seedlings and meet market demands. Using grafting to propagate seedlings provides an alternative to importing over 10,000,000 plants a year. Three months after the training Al Juneidy Nursery produced over 13,000 grafted seedlings of watermelon, 10,000 of which were exported to a buyer in the Jordan Valley with a value of \$10,000. Since then, local sales of grafted seedlings have increased by \$1.4 million and nearly 60 jobs were created at the nurseries. USAID has also supplied two nurseries with new equipment, including complete sowing lines, a tray washer and a substrate mixer, which, along with the grafting techniques will enable the two nurseries to achieve GLOBALGAP standards, facilitating Palestinian producers in penetrating new markets. Additionally, the modern technology and techniques have increased the local farmers' confidence in the Palestinian nurseries, giving them a local source for their seedlings rather than relying on imports.

MANAGING SCARCE WATER RESOURCES

In a dry region like the West Bank, water is essential for successful agriculture. USAID, through the Compete Project, has undertaken two activities designed to ensure water is managed effectively while meeting the needs of the agricultural sector.

Treated Waste Water For Agriculture – Activities supported by USAID through the Compete Project have succeeded in changing the image of treated waste-water for agricultural use in the West Bank. Previously, many Palestinian farmers and agronomists were unsupportive of the idea, not trusting the safety of treated waste water for food products. However, through the awareness raising efforts of the project's agricultural team, USAID is set to launch several infrastructure projects through the Compete Project to install a network of pipes that will bring TWW to dry agricultural lands in the West Bank.

Saline Water Technology In The Jordan Valley – In coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, USAID designed an activity to apply Magnetic Water Technology on five pilot farms across the West Bank. This new technology allows farmers to treat the saline water before using it for irrigation, enabling farmers to grow produce of sufficient quality and quantity for exporting. Results show that oregano harvest showed an increase of 26%, red bell peppers 19% and green beans 84%.

TOURISM

LAUNCH OF THE PALESTINIAN HOTEL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

In order to improve tourism service and quality standards in the Palestinian Territories, working closely with the Joint Committee (a USAID Compete facilitated alliance of major stakeholders Arab Hotel Association (AHA) and Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators (HLITOA)), and the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) the Hotel Classification Star Rating System was launched in December 2012. USAID, through the Compete Project, in cooperation with the Joint Committee organized awareness workshops for local hoteliers, managers, investors, representatives from AHA and HLITOA and MoTA that outlined the hotel quality standards. The classification system is now in full swing; by the end of September 2013, 36 hotels have been evaluated by trained and qualified assessors, and four hotels have been classified: three 5 star hotels, two in Ramallah and one in Bethlehem, and one 3 star hotel in Jerusalem.



"I congratulate the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities and the tourism private sector who worked hard to achieve the classification system in record time, which will have positive impact on the tourism industry. The classification system is very important and part of a number of procedures to enhance Palestinian tourism in accordance with international standards." USAID Mission Director, Michael Harvey (pictured left) at the Hotel Classification event in Bethlehem, December 2012

BUILDING CAPACITY IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

A strong and sustainable tourism sector starts with attention to hotel quality and service. Over the last year, USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, has supported a series of in-service trainings for front-line hotel staff, including supervisors, front desk agents, housekeepers and food and beverage employees. The training was designed in cooperation with the American Hotel & Lodging Education Institute, the Arab Hotel Association and the Hospitality Management Consultants Group "Diyafa" and introduces new concepts into the workforce that support improved service and quality standards in line with the Palestinian Hotel Classification System. Beginning with a train-the-trainer program in December 2012, 103 supervisors have now been trained through the Certified Hospitality Supervisor (CHS) program, and 789 frontline employees through the Train, Retrain, Assess Certify (TRAC) training program throughout the West Bank.

To further institutionalize quality service and standards in the hospitality sector, USAID, through the Compete Project, is working with the Arab Hotel Association to explore the possibility of establishing a Palestinian Hospitality School. This will be a key project for 2014 in the tourism sector.



Hotel employees accept their certificates for successfully completing the TRAC training.

The TRAC training was very beneficial—it brought to light many things that I considered irrelevant to my work, or that I had simply never thought of before, and made me realize the importance of simple things in relations with hotel guests—eye contact, for example, it makes a huge difference when interacting with the guests.”
Ms. Joshephine Turjman Front Desk Agent, Ambassador Hotel

BETHLEHEM MASTER PLAN

Bethlehem is already a key destination site for tourists coming to the West Bank. However, many tourists do not go beyond Manger Square and the Nativity Church, leaving a lot of room to lengthen visitor stays and develop sites to encourage tourists to explore further, and increase spending while in the area. Through the Compete Project, USAID works with local industry stakeholders providing support on different levels to ensure the implementation and sustainability of its development strategy. The areas of support include improving the directional signage for Bethlehem and surrounding towns and attractions within the Bethlehem Governorate, installing informative maps describing the key attractions, and support for the Bethlehem Christmas Festival.

Improved signage will help to enhance the visitor experience, providing a sense of arrival and giving a sense of comfort and safety for visitors. The directional signage activity includes town entrance signs, directional signs to key sites (brown signs), and large informative civic maps that show the location of key sites and provide descriptive information to help tourists find their way and encourage them to visit sites over a wider geographical area.

The annual Bethlehem Christmas Festival, which draws tens of thousands of visitors each year, provides an opportunity to improve the image of Palestinian tourism destinations. Through the Compete Project, USAID is assisting the Bethlehem Municipality in organizing this event in a number of ways, including: infrastructure, capacity building and skill development, PR outreach, and cultural activities.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT OF KEY TOURIST SITES

USAID, through the Compete Project, has undertaken an ambitious plan to assist in developing five sites with high tourism potential in the West Bank: Burqin, Bethany, Sabastiya, Hisham’s Palace (Jericho) and Taybeh. This activity requires close cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA) including the Department of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage (DACH). The tourism team is taking a “destination

approach” that comprehensively develops aspects of the entire tourism value chain at and around the sites in a way that will encourage tourists to visit and spend more time in the area. The project’s tourism team is working closely with tour operators, municipalities, local action groups, community “Heritage and Tourism Committees” and local businesses to anchor the destination approach in a dynamic participatory effort.

The destination approach takes into account the whole visitor experience, ensuring that facilities such as parking and public washroom facilities, restaurants, hotels and souvenir shops (to increase economic linkages for Palestinians) are available near the sites, as well as ensuring there are clear directional signs and informative civic maps to help tourists navigate to and from the major sites and smaller sites nearby, encouraging longer stays in the area. USAID, through the Compete Project has also partnered with Palestinian NGO Rozana and the international association of Abraham’s Path initiative to develop the trail network within the West Bank, attracting tourists with an interest in trekking and cultural discovery. This destination approach is designed to ensure the best return on investment and contribute to increased tourism numbers, length of stay, and average expenditure per visitor.

During the fiscal year 2013, directional signs were installed at all of the priority sites, and billboard informative civic maps are being piloted in Nablus and Taybeh, The maps will be designed to be adaptable for three different applications: tourist pamphlets, websites and larger-scale roadside billboards. At **Hisham’s Palace** (the remains of a magnificent palace from 8th century AD with mosque, water fountains and spectacular mosaic floors) the project’s tourism team has been working with MOTA’s partner University of Chicago Oriental Institute, which has significant excavation and archaeological research to contribute, and local firms Midmac and Al Nasher on the design of the interpretive panels and museum displays. The work in **Burqin**, which is still ongoing, focuses on renewing the Burqin Church, where it is said that Jesus stopped to heal lepers living in a cave. The sewage system was completely inadequate, and so USAID, through the Compete Project, has contracted Palestinian company Hamdeyeh to redesign and build new facilities.

FACILITATING ACCESS TO MARKETS FOR PALESTINIAN TOUR OPERATORS

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, has contracted Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association (HLITOA), a private sector association comprising 43 tour operator members, to enhance the capacity of inbound tour operators to diversify and secure relevant market segments. HLITOA is working to improve the image of Palestinian tourism destinations by presenting consistent messages that present a more compelling proposition to the target market. By developing market profiles and unifying messages HLITOA will be better equipped to provide effective services to their members and business partners. USAID, through the Compete Project, is also supporting targeted participation of innovative tour operators in trade events at key geographic markets. In September 2013, a group of 7 tour operators and a delegation from MoTA participated in the ABAV Tourism Fair in Brazil, one of the largest tourism fairs in the Americas, to tap into the Latin American Market.

JOINT ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN TOUR INITIATIVE

Through a grant from USAID, Palestinian tour operator Christina Samara and Israeli tour operator Elisa Moed are working together to create “Breaking Bread Journeys.” This

experiential tour initiative will provide tourists with a chance, not only to see the classic tourist sites, but also to interact with people living in both Israel and the West Bank. Together, Samara and Moed are expanding tourism product offerings, extending tourism outside of key hubs, and encouraging Israeli/Palestinian joint business development. With support from USAID, through the Compete Project, Breaking Bread Journeys is set to promote the new tourism product in the upcoming World Travel Market in London, Nov. 4-7.

ICT

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (MINI MBA)

Thirty General Managers, CEOs and middle management employees of Palestinian software companies from Ramallah, Jerusalem and Nablus completed an executive development program sponsored by USAID through the Compete Project and in partnership with Kellogg-Recanati School of Management at the Tel Aviv University that was held January to March 2013. The program was specially tailored to leverage their business skills to understand marketing and planning strategies aimed at expanding services in the local market and penetrating international markets. The participants received certificates of completion of the Executive Development Kellogg-Recanati Program at Tel Aviv University.



Mini-MBA students celebrate the last day of classes, Tel Aviv University, March 2013

DEVELOPING DIASPORA LINKAGES

In January the Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA) a familiarization trip to the U.S. Facilitated by USAID through a cost-sharing grant executed by the Compete Project, four PITA participants and the project's ICT component lead visited U.S. cities (Boston, Washington, Silicon Valley) to meet with members of the Palestinian-American ICT community as well as industry leaders and public officials. The purpose of the visit was to recruit tech business experts, entrepreneurs and academics into a Palestinian-American ICT network that will mentor Palestinian ICT companies and local entrepreneurs to help improve Palestinian business operations and expand their operations regionally and internationally. PITA is working to maintain these linkages through an online platform called GloPal, through which they have been hosting web seminars to connect Palestinians working in ICT both locally and in the US.

PAYMENT GATEWAY

USAID through the Compete Project in the West Bank in cooperation with Middle East Payment Services (MEPS) is taking steps to support the implementation of online payment services in the Palestinian market. Payment Gateway is an e-commerce application service

provider that authorizes payments for e-businesses by facilitating the secure transfer of information between a payment portal (i.e. website) and the bank. The Payment Gateway system has now been piloted in the West Bank and is set to have an impact on all Palestinian economic sectors by enabling Palestinian markets to connect with more companies and customers, and perhaps most importantly, it will help entrepreneurs implement ideas that were previously not feasible due to lack of proper electronic payments. It is expected to have a particularly beneficial impact in the tourism sector where tourists can reserve hotels and tour packages online. The official launch of the Payment Gateway is expected in early November.

STIMULATING EMPLOYMENT & INNOVATION IN ICT SECTOR

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank is providing grants to local IT companies to stimulate employment and innovation in the Palestinian IT sector. Palestinian ICT companies are given an opportunity to rapidly build their skills as they step up to meet the demands of the larger and cutting edge international companies. These grants are helping to lay the groundwork to build a strong software sector in the West Bank that can expand and reach new markets. The grants assist the companies to hire the employees required for the new contracts and to fund skill development and capacity building. USAID is supporting 6 companies with grants that have led to over \$300,000 in exports, and created 49 jobs (11 for women) in the Palestinian ICT sector.

APPLE iOS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Through a USAID Compete grant and close partnership, Palestinian Company *Infinite Tiers* has built an iOS training center in Nablus that will serve a huge base of students, entrepreneurs and IT graduates with the objective of creating a pool of Palestinian mobile technology experts. The center works collaboratively with local universities to alter the IT curriculum to include agile technologies like Apple applications. Through the grant, the center hired 19 interns, 2 new employees and developed five new products.



USAID Mission Director Michael Harvey and one of the new employees cutting the ribbon to announce the opening of the iOS Center

ARABRENEUR

USAID, through the Compete Project, is helping to fill a gap in the Palestinian ICT ecosystem, by working with Al-Dawlah Investments to bring Arabreneur to Ramallah. Previously established in Jordan and Dubai, Arabreneur provides budding entrepreneurs with capital investment, first-class facilities, and seasoned mentors to grow and accelerate their companies and get their product to market. USAID is supporting the operations of an Arabreneur branch in Ramallah. “The idea of the seed fund,” says Radi El Fassed, Program Director of Arabreneur, “is to create an investment culture in the country. We hope that Arabreneur will act as a catalyst for further investment. The seed fund allows angel investors to share the risk – through one fund each investor can put money into multiple startup companies, and hopefully by having two or three successes out of ten or twelve it will encourage them to invest more.”

In the first year Arabreneur will support ten startups, investing \$50,000-\$100,000 per startup, resulting in 50–100 new jobs in the emerging Palestinian ICT sector. The setup of Arabreneur is complete and the first pitching event for Palestinian entrepreneurs will be held early November 2013.

STONE & MARBLE

REPOSITIONING PALESTINIAN STONE COMPANIES INTERNATIONALLY

USAID, through the Compete Project has dedicated significant efforts to helping Palestinian stone producers position themselves more competitively in the international markets. A comprehensive marketing campaign, “Precious Stone from the Holy Land” made a splash at the Marmomacc Trade show, receiving recognition from the Marmomacc organizers for the dramatic improvement in their communication and improving the image of Palestinian Stone. Initial results for Marmomacc 2013 show the potential for exports exceeding \$2.5 million.

DRIVING STONE EXPORTS: GROUP MARKETING

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, is dedicated to working with the Holy Land Stone Group a consortium which represents leading stone producers, second tier companies, and specialty companies, embedding the “group marketing model” in the stone sector. The group marketing consortium supports a unique representation of Palestinian stone and marble globally, raises the capacity of second tier stone producers, attracts large strategic international projects and builds partnerships that will result in sustainable exports. This method ensures that a wider network of stone producers with different types and colors of stone, and a variety of slabs, tiles and specialty stone products from various parts of the West Bank are represented internationally, and strengthens partnerships between leading stone companies, second tier cutting companies, and specialty companies to produce higher value products. The group marketing model has proven itself over the last fiscal year – participating companies have successfully bid on large projects such as commercial centers and government buildings,



leading to a significant increase in exports. With this success, the companies are investing in new products and specialized equipment, marketing, and infrastructure.



"I never dreamt of this type of success, and I promise to do my best to represent more stone producers and provide business to as many stone cutting companies as possible. I am now working double shifts, giving continuous business to 4 stone cutters, increase employment by more than 20% and was able to secure \$3.5 M in exports. This type of impact across the stone sector will definitely contribute to the Palestinian economy at scale and export high quality stone and marble globally" – Verona Group Representative

NEW PRODUCTS FROM BYPRODUCT

USAID, through the Compete Project, has been assisting Palestinian stone companies to rehabilitate filter presses. The filter press is a machine that converts liquid slurry into dry sludge, which enables the reuse of water and protects the environment. Sludge, however, is not only a byproduct, it presents an opportunity to the stone industry. Due to its clay-like makeup there is potential to use sludge in products such as blocks, artificial stone, gypsum boards, building materials and processed calcium carbonate that could feed into many industries. USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, is financing a feasibility study to investigate all the potential industry gains. The project has contracted local firm Expo Works Plus to conduct the study and has also enlisted the support of an Italian stone expert to provide expertise. During the Marmomacc trade show in Italy in September, the project's stone sector lead and stone producers took the opportunity to tour sludge processing facilities and make plans to send a sample of sludge from the West Bank to Italy for testing; December 10 has been set as a tentative date to share the findings.

An economic analysis shows that using with assistance from USAID, through the Compete Project, stone companies will begin to see a return on investment within the first year of installing a new filter press.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

The ensuing section contains highlights, quotes and testimonials from a variety of USAID Compete project activities.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – Forward Contracts



Red potatoes become French-fries at Al Salam Factory, Hebron

“Through this activity we seek to expand agricultural areas, diversify products, and introduce new products such as red potatoes, where there is high demand in the global market. We’re going to increase the production and export for guava, almonds, avocados, seedless grapes and watermelons. We are working on the introduction of other products like mangos and kiwis” – Ghassan Al Jamal, USAID

Palestinian farmers are breaking new ground in the West Bank. Land that has never been planted is now being plowed and prepared for new crops of potatoes, carrots, broccoli and cauliflower by Mowaffaq Daraghmeh. Previously Daraghmeh did not have the confidence to expand his crop production because of unstable market prices, never knowing what price his produce would sell at.

USAID, through the Compete Project, helped Daraghmeh negotiate several forward contracts with three Palestinian food processing companies, Al Salam, Al Ashqar, and Abu Al Joud. He is plowing the new land to make room for the crops that he already knows will be sold to the processing companies.

Forward contracts remove many of the risks that farmers face selling their products in the open market where demand and price can fluctuate. By signing a contract for a specific amount of produce at an agreed upon price farmers can not only predict their income for the year, but also know exactly the amount and type of produce they should produce, rather than trying to foresee the demands of the market. The price stability also benefits the food processing companies, and at the same time they are assured of the produce quality, avoiding discrepancies in quality found in the markets.

Daraghmeh is not only expanding the land under production, he is also investing in new equipment and irrigation systems to improve his farm. Forward contracts give farmers the confidence and assurance they need to experiment with new crops and invest in quality improvements.

USAID, through the Compete Project, helped introduce forward contracts to farmers and food processors in the West Bank as part of its efforts to increase the competitiveness and export potential of the Palestinian agribusiness sector.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – Opening the Payment Gateway



USAID is helping Middle East Payment Services (MEPS) to bring online payment options to Palestinian businesses.

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank works to create sustained growth in the local market by providing better-tailored solutions that strengthen the competitiveness of key sectors.

“The ability to accept payment online will broaden the market reach of Palestinian companies, enabling them to reach out to online customers. Payment Gateway will remove some of the limits on startup companies, allowing them to reach out in new directions.”—
Mustafa Deeb, ICT Component Lead, USAID

These days most tourism starts online. Would-be tourists research destinations and book tours and hotels online, relying heavily on online photos, reviews and travel websites. Tourists want to find clear and accurate information online, and hotels may lose business if their website doesn't do justice to their hotel and available services.

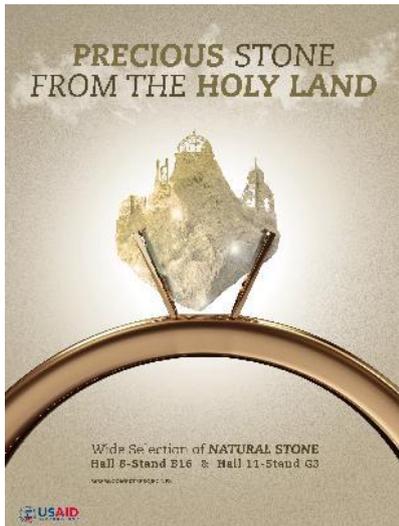
Palestinian hotels and tour operators have been missing out on an essential part of the new online tourism planning: online bookings and payments. Until recently there was no online payment platform in the West Bank that Palestinian businesses could use. A lack of investment in online payment services in the West Bank has hindered development of these key services.

In a cross-sectoral initiative, USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, is working with Middle East Payment Services (MEPS) and MasterCard to bring Payment Gateway to the Palestinian territories, which will allow businesses to develop online payment capabilities, accepting all major credit cards.

Lack of investment was only one of the factors holding back online payment options for businesses – still a fairly traditional economy, Palestinian businesses were wary about the security and reliability of online payments. While MEPS and MasterCard are bringing the necessary investment and infrastructure, USAID is holding awareness raising workshops across the West Bank, and conducting trainings to ensure people are better informed and have the necessary technical skills to equip businesses with online payment capabilities.

Online payment will enable Palestinian businesses to reach out to wider markets, not only in tourism, but also to market other products to a broader customer base.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – Renovating the Stone Industry



Palestinian display at Marmomacc Show in Italy.

“We’ve created a better environment in the industry—buyers are confident and impressed by the Palestinian display. But more importantly, the Palestinian companies have more self-confidence, they are eager for new markets—they now see their own potential.” – Hanna Raba, Stone Sector Lead, USAID Compete Project

A leading export sector in the Palestinian economy, the Stone and Marble industry is a major source of employment, accounting for more than 12,000 direct jobs. However, with most of the exports in the form of uncut blocks, there remained tons of untapped potential.

USAID saw the potential—from slabs, to tiles, to decorative items, and expanding and strengthening the industry to include more second-tier stone cutters and specialty companies to do the finer work of arches and columns. It was clear that “Stone from the Holy Land” could compete with the big players on the world stage.

With the encouragement of USAID, stone companies came together to form the Holy Land Stone Group, a consortium of lead stone companies, second tier stone cutters and specialty companies. Working together these companies are able to demonstrate the full palette of the newly branded “Natural Stone from the Holy Land.” USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, worked closely with the consortium to design professional displays that showcased the real quality of the stone at international trade shows in Italy, Brazil, Dubai and the USA. In 2013 USAID, working with Palestinian company Zoom Advertising, launched a hugely successful marketing campaign: Precious Stone from the Holy Land. This campaign, combined with a distinctive display earned recognition from Marmomacc 2013 organizers in Italy, as the best communicators at the show.

In only one year, “Natural Stone from the Holy Land” has become not only recognizable, but renowned on the world stage. The professional display gave confidence not only to the Palestinian stone companies, but also to potential buyers. Through the Holy Land Stone Group, Palestinian companies have the ability to compete and win large projects, first landing a commercial center in the US, and more recently a building for the Ministry of Justice in Dubai, complete with tiles, arches and columns.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – A Palestinian Hotel Classification System



Members of the Palestinian Hotel Classification Joint Committee

USAID supports Certified Hospitality Supervisor (CHS) Training as well as Train, Retrain, Assess, Certify – TRAC Training for frontline hotel staff, including housekeepers, food and beverage servers, and front desk agents.

“The training had tangible effects that I can see in how my staff deal with clients—they are much more client-focused, they pay more attention to hygiene and cleanliness. It is clear that TRAC certified employees bring the hotel to another level of quality—it is all added value for the hotel and for the clients.” Shakib Hussein, Director of Operations at the Landmark Hotel.

Tourists have long relied on star ratings when it comes to selecting hotels. Tourists know that a 3, 4 or 5 star *means* something and they have expectations for a certain level of service and facilities that all contribute to the visitor’s experience. Improving tourism services and quality standards in the Palestinian Territories are at the core of USAID’s strategy to strengthen the tourism industry in the West Bank. A foundational element and major step forward for the industry was building the Palestinian Hotel Classification System (PHCS).

The key to success in building the system was rallying together public and private industry stakeholders. USAID worked with the Ministry of Tourism (MoTA), the Arab Hotel Association, and Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators to form the Palestinian Hotel Classification Joint Committee.

Parallel to the newly established classification system, USAID is cooperating with the American Hotel & Lodging Education Institute, the Arab Hotel Association and the Hospitality Management Consultants Group “Diyafa” to ensure hotel owners and staff have the required knowledge and skills to uphold the new standards through a series of trainings aimed at supervisors and frontline hotel staff. In 2013, 74 supervisors and 619 frontline staff participated in the offered training working at over 70 hotels throughout the West Bank and East Jerusalem

The new system and the training are having tangible effects in the industry. Issa Dahdal, General Manager of the Ritz Hotel, a mid-sized hotel in the heart of East Jerusalem and the first hotel to be classified says: *“We’ve made changes in our hotel that are a direct result of skills training and new standards born out of the “Let the stars guide you” system and USAID workshops. Our service has become more attentive – reflected in Trip Advisor comments – and we’ve added new room features to meet the standards of a 3-star hotel.”*

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – Seed Fund to Spur Startups



Floor Plan of new Arabreneur offices in Ramallah

USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank is working to create a local and international Palestinian ICT network for improved mentorship and investment in Palestinian startups.

“As we start our operations in the Palestinian territories we will capitalize on our partnerships around the globe to open the way for Palestinian startups to make it to global markets.”—Abdul Malek Jaber, Chairman and Founder, Arabreneur.

One hundred and forty square meters of open space, in addition to a reception area, a meeting room and 9 offices are now waiting to be filled with Palestinian entrepreneurs at the new offices of Arabreneur in Ramallah. Arabreneur aims to support young Palestinian entrepreneurs to grow startups, spurring employment and fostering an environment of creativity by providing capital investment, first-class facilities, and seasoned mentors to grow and accelerate their companies and get their product to market. USAID partnered with Al-Dawliyah Investments to bring Arabreneur (previously established in Jordan and Dubai) to Ramallah.

“The idea of the seed fund,” says Radi El Fassed, Program Director of Arabreneur, “is to create an investment culture in the country. We hope that Arabreneur will act as a catalyst for further investment. The seed fund allows angel investors to share the risk – through one fund each investor can put money into multiple startup companies, and hopefully by having two or three successes out of ten or twelve it will encourage them to invest more. That is how we can create more of a culture of investment in entrepreneurship and boost angel investing.”

Over the last few months Arabreneur has been hiring staff, recruiting mentors and building partnerships with universities and a wider network of entrepreneurs and investors to provide the support to the startup companies. Their offices will soon be filled with budding entrepreneurs, as Arabreneur holds its first pitching event in early November 2013. In the first year, the Ramallah branch of Arabreneur will support ten startups, investing \$50,000-\$100,000 per start-up, resulting in 50–100 new jobs in the emerging Palestinian ICT sector. The fledgling companies will also have access to the wider Arabreneur networks.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – New Tourism Initiative: Breaking Bread Journeys



Touring Suq Al Atarin in Jerusalem; photo courtesy of Breaking Bread

The support to the Palestinian tourism industry comes as part of USAID’s work to facilitate deeper integration of Palestinian tourism goods and services in the global tourism industry, which has the potential to make a significant impact on overall job creation and increased investment.

“The tourists from abroad will get a real feel for the culture, the food, what they think, what they feel... They leave from here knowing more than what they have heard in the media.” Christina Samara of Breaking Bread Journeys

As a tourist destination, Israel and the Palestinian territories are steeped with history and myriad cultures and religions. Many tourists come wanting to learn about all aspects of the land – historical, cultural, political, religious – they want to feel a connection to the people in the place in order to understand the complex nature of the place.

“Breaking Bread Journeys” is a new Palestinian-Israeli joint experiential tourism initiative started by Christina Samara, a Palestinian and Elisa Moed, an Israeli. The initiative is supported by USAID as part of its strategy, to enhance the competitiveness of the Palestinian tourism industry. Each program includes a daily cultural exchange component enabling participants to engage in a meaningful personal interaction with the people who live here. This engagement is not something typically offered within classical pilgrimages or other Holy Land travel tours. The tours focus on the diversity of culture and history in the region, that include many of the classical sites that tourists really want to see, and interaction with local people to learn more about their culture, their food, and even glimpse a bit of their day-to-day life.

“Travel can bring people together in many positive ways and helps in the pursuit of stability, prosperity and peace in the entire Holy Land,” said Christina Samara.

“We believed that what tourists really want is to experience the land in a personal way and we knew that by working together we could provide authentic experiences that would otherwise be virtually impossible,” explained Elisa Moed.

USAID believes that this innovative initiative will serve as an example of how to develop new tourism products in the West Bank and has asked Breaking Bread Journeys to document their process to assist other tour operators in the West Bank.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – Best Newcomer at World Food Moscow



Issam Abu Khaizaran accepts the Best Newcomer Award at WorldFood Moscow, 2013

USAID's Compete Project is focused on transforming the Palestinian agribusiness sector into a globally competitive industry; global trade show participation is one way USAID works to drive export growth and expand into new markets.

"This is a great achievement and an honor for Palestinian exporters. We have exhibited the best design in competition with several international businesses! This will improve the image of Palestinian products and shows that Palestinian producers are capable of achieving world class standard." – Samir Mari, Director of Export Promotion, PalTrade.

The Palestinian Pavilion took home the Best Newcomer award at the WorldFood Moscow 2013 – the custom design of the Palestinian display, out of ten new exhibitors, caught the eyes of the selection committee evaluating the design and presentation of the exhibitions. Major international trade shows, such as WorldFood provide a vital channel for Palestinian food producers to showcase their products

Assisting Palestinian producers to participate in international trade shows is one of the ways that USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, supports the ability of Palestinian producers to penetrate new markets. Presenting quality products in a professional and inviting manner is key to success at these trade shows. Among other interventions, USAID contracted PalTrade to develop the design of the Palestinian Pavilion for the WorldFood exhibit in Moscow to ensure the display effectively marketed the Palestinian goods, and contributed to improving the image, and thereby increasing the competitiveness of Palestinian products international markets.

The trade shows present an opportunity for Palestinian farmers and food processors to engage directly with international buyers, enter into negotiations, and better understand regulations for operating in a global marketplace and exporting their products to new markets.

In 2013, with the support of USAID, Palestinians exhibited their products at the both the World of Perishables and Gulfood in Dubai, Fruit Logistica in Berlin, Fancy Food in New York and WorldFood Moscow. With each trade show the Palestinian producers have learned, adapted and made their products and display better, leading to undeniable success – participating companies were able to make deals with international importers, leading to over \$14 million in contracts for Palestinian products and have broken into new markets in Russia and the Gulf.

COMPONENT B

Component B is a core part of the Compete work plan targeting assistance in developing Palestinian Business Support Organizations (BSOs). The Palestinian business environment has a strong presence of business, industry and professional associations that not only work as lobbyists with the government to protect the interest of their members but also as platforms on which to organize market access initiatives for their members. USAID Compete works with dynamic and representative BSOs to enhance their current direct market opening activities in the four priority sectors of Agribusiness, Tourism, ICT and Marble and Stone.

AGRIBUSINESS

USAID Compete is working with **Business Excellence Services Company (BESCO)** in adopting several quality systems for the fresh and processed foods industry. These international standards include GLOBALGAP (Global Good Agriculture Practices), BRC (British Retail Consortium) and ISO22000 (Food Safety). Compete has also subcontracted the National Trade organization in Palestinian Areas, **The Palestinian Trade Center – PalTrade** as the main service provider to prepare Palestinian companies participating in international exhibitions (such as the upcoming WorldFood Moscow exhibition), and to reach out to new markets and clientele to assess their export abilities in order to help address any structural gaps the Palestinian companies have in their managerial structures.

The Palestinian Center for Agricultural Research & Development (PCARD) was contracted to establish 60 olive oil demonstration sites aimed at increasing olive oil productivity through supplementary irrigation and other agricultural practices; these demonstration sites enable producers to gain the experience and knowledge needed to roll out the new technology all over the West Bank. PCARD has trained over 1,200 farmers across the West Bank on the results of the demos and how they can benefit from the new technology.

USAID Compete also worked with the **Palm Date Farmer’s Cooperative Association (PFCA)** to procure 200 red palm weevil traps to distribute to farmers and train farmers on how to use the traps to monitor and control palm weevil infestations. The goal is not only to solve the infestation problem but also to raise the capacity of the PFCA to serve its members and provide better services. On another front, Compete cooperated with **The Palestinian Food Industries Union (PFIU)** to leverage its capabilities to assist its member companies in upgrading and improving the packaging and labeling of 16 products to increase their competitiveness, compliance and market access.

ICT

USAID Compete signed agreements with the Palestinian private IT sector representative, **Palestinian IT Association (PITA)**, to connect the Palestinian IT sector with the international markets through Palestinian expats and diaspora elements. This project, along with a second one to encourage employability in the sector, is leveraging **PITA** capabilities to showcase a capable and highly skilled Palestinian IT sector in the international markets.

PITA is now a strong organization with a new managerial structure that represents more than 150 major companies in the West Bank's emerging ICT sector.

ICT work extends to other major economic sectors, such as commercial agriculture and tourism. Introducing ICT solutions in these sectors has a disruptive market impact in terms of return on value and streamlining operations. ICT can help move towards more of a digital tourism, as is explained below. In agribusiness, the ICT sector will support the **Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)** to implement and automate ICT solutions to broadcast information to farmers at critical periods.

TOURISM

The **Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association (HLITOA)** has received **assistance** to introduce digital tourism to their members through social media solutions such as the Facebook Destination App. This project enables the usage of new disruptive innovations that are designed to reach out to different segments of the international tourism market.

USAID Compete is working with **Diyafa**, a highly regarded Palestinian hospitality consultancy firm, to implement a training program for hospitality service employees in hotels across the West Bank. **Diyafa** is becoming increasingly capable of providing expertise on how to leverage capacity in hotels and raise the standards of the services provided to tourists.

USAID Compete also supports the development of the two main representatives of the tourism sector: the **Arab Hotel Association (AHA)** and **HLITOA**. Project activities are designed to increase capacity to better serve their members and provide tailored solutions that help tour operators and hotels attract more tourists to Palestinian areas.

STONE & MARBLE

The Stone and Marble team works closely with the **Stone and Marble Union (SMU)**, which represents the industry, and **PalTrade** as a trade service provider, to increase the Palestinian natural stone exports. Compete has worked closely with the **SMU** and **PalTrade** to develop new criteria to select the participating companies in the *Marmomacc* (Italy) and the *Big 5* (Dubai) shows. **PalTrade** and **SMU** are cooperating effectively to provide services for exhibitors and marketing assistance that enables them to reach new segments of the market and expand their businesses. Furthermore, both organizations are providing new services entailing detailed assessment of the participating companies' capabilities to export, their managerial structure and how they can address the gaps to provide higher quality services. This approach supports the development and reliability of **PalTrade** within the sector as a reliable service provider that can develop professional approaches to penetrate international markets.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS BY SECTOR

AGRIBUSINESS

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impacts and evaluation of Agribusiness activities during FY2.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2	
Fresh Herbs Sector	
<i>Description</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a fresh herbs organization to adapt a protocol of best practices in order to satisfy international market standards and USDA-APHIS requirements. • Upgrade fresh herb facilities to comply with Integrated Pest Management systems (IPM) and USDA requirements 	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Palestinian Fresh Herbs Producers Co. registered a not-for-profit company –five individuals were identified as board members for the company. • Internal system for the not-for-profit company has been performed. • <i>Thimar</i> began implementing, British Retail Consortium, and ISO 22000 and certified with GLOBALGAP. • “Traceability training” was conducted for 37 male employees of <i>Thimar Co.</i> • Contract signed with Jasmine Co. to implement Global Gap (GG). • Distributed over 300,000 m² of insect nets to 16 fresh herb growers on a cost-sharing basis; • Assessment of the fresh herb sector was conducted and revealed that there is no need for a cold chain assessment. • Grant signed with Sami Abu Mansour for Chives Farm and RFQs released. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One unified voice with strong bargaining powers; • Enforcing quality competitiveness standards; • Higher productivity and lower cost /dunum. • Area under new technology 622 dunums /155 acres; area covered by insect nets. • Production of covered products increased about 30% • A total of 253 fresh herb workers adopted Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
Olive Oil Sector	
<i>Description</i>	
Expand olive production, quality and competitiveness through 60 demo plots that employ supplementary irrigation, tree maintenance, harvest/post-harvest activities.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results have been disseminated to all stakeholders through a series of workshops and onsite training. • An additional 120 farmers implemented supplementary irrigation. • Workshops in several governorates were held with a total of 1203 participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$380,767 USD value of exports to Dubai, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Jordan, USA, and Israel. • \$14,513 USD value of local sales. • The farmers have been trained on applying production enhancing practices resulting in increased incomes and job creation;

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treated Wastewater (TWW) demo has no microbial hazards on the fruits. • PERSUAP (Pesticide Evaluation Report and Safer Use Action Plan) in progress; local and international consultants hired. 53 interviews were conducted with farmers, agriculture engineers, input stores, the Palestinian Ministry of Health, and importer companies to collect data for the PERSUAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how local chains could increase yields and their competitiveness in international markets, thereby increasing growers' revenues. • Final results showed that there was an approximately 60% increase in olive oil yield.
<p>Date Sector</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create long-term sustainability and open new markets through the adoption of international quality standards. • Date Pollen Facility – Start/upgrade date pollen facilities in the West Bank; presently 90% of date pollen is brought from Israel through cost sharing of inputs required for the simple technology required to capture and distribute date pollen. 	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traps delivered to cooperative and installed. • Traps training workshops completed. • <i>Nakheel Palestine Co.</i> (date exporter) is certified with GLOBALGAP, British Retail Consortium, and ISO 22000. • An assessment of the date sector was conducted and revealed that there is no need for a cold chain assessment; • RFQ announced for Nakheel lab equipment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the competitiveness of Palestinian products in international markets through meeting food safety standards; • Prevent Red Palm Weevil (RPW) outbreak. • An increase of \$150,396 USD of exports as a result of <i>Nakheel Palestine's</i> adoption of international standards (GLOBAL GAP, ISO22000 & BRC). • With Global GAP and ISO 22,000, BRC Certification, <i>Nakheel Palestine</i> demonstrates adherence to food safety and quality standards to fulfill market requirements; consumers can rest assured that the food has been sustainably produced, adhering to health, safety, and environmental standards, increasing their marketability. • Area under new technology: 1600 dunums/395 acres
<p>Meat and Dairy Sector</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Upgrade Meat & Dairy facilities to maintain current markets in East Jerusalem and to open new export links.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Al Mahareeq Slaughter House</i> began implementing ISO 22000. • GAP analysis completed for 7 companies. • Supplied lab equipment to eight meat and dairy companies to test food products for quality and food safety standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve current market share; • Remain competitive in East Jerusalem; • Improve the productivity and quality of meat and dairy products. • Compliant with ISO 22000 food safety requirements.

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Trade Show Participation	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Assist Palestinian food processors to exhibit their products at international trade shows in order to attract product buyers, enter into negotiations and receive export orders.</p>	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID Compete signed a grant with <i>Agripal B&S for Agricultural Investment</i> to assist the company in exhibiting fresh produce, dates and fresh herbs under a Palestinian Pavilion at the World of Perishables Show in Dubai. The company also took farmers to walk the show. • Two export awareness workshops were conducted by <i>Lausanne Trade Co.</i> • 6 exhibitors and 3 walkers participated in Fruit Logistica. • 6 exhibitors and 3 walkers participated in Gulfood. • Harvest Export exhibited at AgroMashov Israel 2013; • 5 Palestinian companies exhibited at Fancy Food Show (FFS) 2013. Dexis, a consulting company contracted by USAID Compete, conducted a breakfast meeting and AmCham facilitated business to business (B2B) meetings; • Dexis completed a marketing research study with three targeted market regions of the US Specialty food retail industry to provide market intelligence, advice and support to the Compete Project and its partners; • A grant was signed with Canaan for marketing promotion at Whole Foods stores in the US. • Five Palestinian companies exhibited at Fancy Food Show 2013 • Six Palestinian companies displayed their produce at the Palestinian Pavilion at the WorldFood Moscow 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and maintain market linkages, market information and support current distributors of Palestinian specialty foods; • Help to capture new market leads and buyers, create direct sales, and expand market penetration. • As a result of the World of Perishables Show in Dubai, <i>Agripal B&S for Agricultural Investment</i> have exported products with a total value of \$450,000. • As a result of Gulfood Show, exhibiting companies have exported \$7,083,213 worth of products. • As a result of Fruit Logistica Show, exhibiting companies have exported \$5,782,480 worth of products. • As a result of Moscow WorldFood show, exhibiting companies have exported products with a total value of \$718,950.
Forward Contracting	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Link Palestinian value chains to international and domestic markets with long-term contracts to avoid major price fluctuations and supply shortages.</p>	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist companies in meeting their contract commitments, USAID, through the Compete Project did the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procured 25,500 meters of lateral pipes, sprinklers, Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) valves to <i>Top Field Co.</i> and a Tubas farmers as well as a sprayer to <i>Top Field</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward contracts can increase competitiveness, increase export performance and improve country image (brand and origin) recognition; • This will help to avoid major price fluctuations and help sustain a consistent

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

<p><i>Co.</i> on a cost-sharing basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procured a main water line on a cost-sharing basis to the Tubas farmer. • USAID Compete and Al Salam Group signed a grant to run a marketing campaign prior to the holy month of Ramadan; • New contract between Top Field Co and Al Forat Co., two companies supported by USAID Compete and a major Jordanian supplier of potatoes, Al Ashqar Company. 6000 MT of Red Desiree potatoes valued over \$2 Million will be executed to the Jordanian factory in the next period. 	<p>supply flow in response to the market’s needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 10 forward contracts were signed for Top Field Co. and Tubas farmer (two of them are local). • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Tubas farmer</i> with <i>Al Ashqar Co.</i> in Jordan for 2445 tons of white potatoes with a value of \$783,860. • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Abu Al Joud Co.</i> in Jordan for 250 tons of carrots and potatoes with a value of \$257,816. • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Tubas farmer</i> with <i>Al Salam Group</i> in Hebron for 775 tons of red potatoes with a value of \$230,404. • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Tubas farmer</i> with <i>Al Ashqar Co.</i> in Jordan for 750 tons of white potatoes, onions and carrots with a value of \$362,250. • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Abu Al Joud Co.</i> in Jordan for 950 tons of white potatoes and onions with a value of \$532,000. • A contract was signed between <i>Top Field Co.</i> with a local company “<i>Ali Brothers Co.</i>” for cucumbers with a value of \$462,400. • Jobs Created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Top Field Co.</i> hired 308 seasonal workers with 138 female. ▪ <i>Tubas farmer</i> hired 549 seasonal workers with 135 female. • An increase in the local sales by \$ 1,182,084 for <i>Top Field Co.</i> and <i>Tubas farmer</i>. • New products introduced: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Top Field:</i> 1 choysum (Chinese cabbage) ▪ <i>Tubas farmer:</i> 4 (carrots, white potatoes, onions, onion bulbs) • Exports increased to Israel by \$ 34,478 for <i>Al Salam Group</i> and local sales • Sales increased by \$1,018,655 for <i>Al Salam Group</i> with an export value to Israel of \$34,478. • Jobs created: <i>Al Salam</i> hired 14 male workers.
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Use of Treated Waste Water (TWW)

Description

Build awareness and support for the reuse of TWW for agriculture to address the inadequate water supply. Study tours will focus on the exchange of technical knowledge and the study of models to be replicated in the

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
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West Bank.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOU signed with MoA. • TWW working group identified. • One-pager of the project's proposed interventions for TWW completed. • SOW of implementer completed. • Environmental Assessment team identified • Environmental Assessment in progress. • Crops for pilot project have increased to cover 300 dunums (200dunums in Nablus and 100 dunums in Jenin) • Scoping Sessions conducted in Nablus and Jenin and reports submitted to USAID for approval. • Grant was signed with PCARD and Near East Foundation for designing phase. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer knowledge of how to use the TTW; • Provide additional sources of irrigation water by making use of the TTW from the Nablus waste water plant; • Increase awareness of the importance of using TTW in agriculture. The study tour provided them with guidelines regarding irrigation techniques, sanitation control and sustained quality. Most participants accepted the idea of using treated wastewater in the Palestinian Territories and are ready to use the treatment plant that is being constructed in Nablus.
Saline Water Demonstration	
<i>Description</i> Conduct several pilot tests that use a Swiss technology (magnetically treated water) to enable the use of saline water for irrigation	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fifth unit of the Aqua4D water treatment system ordered and installed. • Organized a workshop in Jericho to announce the results of saline demos at 5 field locations. • Due diligence on passive and active magnetic treatment are completed. • Comparison between active (Power Sourced) and passive technology completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new saline water technology will have major long-term benefits for the agriculture industry; • Increase productivity, quality, export volumes and competitiveness of Palestinian produce. • Area adopting new technology for <i>Nakheel Palestine Co.</i>: 23 dunums/ 6 acres. For <i>Abd Al Malek Jaber</i> (5th unit): 3 dunums. • Initial results showed 30% increase in yield of bell peppers and fresh herbs. • 12 farmers expressed interest and are willing to cost share magnetic saline equipment.
Upgrading of Nurseries Facilities	
<i>Description</i> Upgrade and qualify Palestinian nurseries in order to provide high quality grafted and fresh herb seedlings at reasonable prices.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STTA (Short Term Technical Assistance) consultant completed grafting training for three nurseries. • <i>Al-Juneidy</i> and <i>Ata Abu Rub Nurseries</i> identified as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer knowledge of grafting systems; • Address market needs, and adapting to soil conditions through grafting.

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
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<p>partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First batch (35,000 seedlings) of grafted watermelon from <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i> (value \$35,000 USD) were delivered to Jordan Valley farmers. • <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i> also delivered 20,000 seedlings of grafted tomatoes, 13,000 seedlings of grafted cucumber, and 5,000 seedlings of grafted eggplants • <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i> upgraded 6 dunums of greenhouses in compliance with GG requirements. • PO signed for nurseries equipment; • EDF approved; • Nursery owners took the opportunity to evaluate and be trained on new equipment. • Two nurseries met GLOBALG.A.P. (Global Good Agricultural Practice) standards by installing thermal screen shades, procured with USAID financial support. • Al Juneidy and Ata Abu Rub Nurseries received new seeders equipment procured from Agripal Co. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i> increased its local sales by \$633,000 • <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i> increased its local sales by \$809,892 • Improved products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i>: 5 improved products ▪ <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i>: 30 improved and 4 new products. • Jobs created: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 15 jobs created at <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i>(out of the 15 workers, 1 female was hired) ▪ 43 jobs created at <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i> (out of the 43 workers, 19 are female). • <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i> has 72 dunums/ 18 acres as area assisted by adopting new technology. • Farmers procured grafted seedlings from <i>Al Juneidy Nursery</i> and planted over 65 dunums/16 acres. • <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i> has 9 dunums/ 2 acres as area assisted by adopting new technology. • Farmers procured grafted seedlings from <i>Ata Abu Rub Nursery</i> and planted over 491 dunums/121 acres. • The new equipment will enable the two nurseries to achieve GLOBALG.A.P standards which will raise the local standards and enable Palestinian producers to penetrate new markets.
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Upgrading Accredited Laboratory for Fresh Produce

Description

Upgrade and accredit Palestinian private sector laboratories to conduct tests according to international standards (ISO 17025) that comply with customers’ needs, specific market requirements, and enable firms to take immediate corrective action when required.

Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compete identified the labs with the best short term potential to obtain ISO 17025 certification. • Completed GAP analysis against ISO17025 for the Scientific Center for Food and Drug Analysis Lab. • RFQ submitted. • Vendor winners identified. • EDF approved by USAID. • 3 machines were delivered to the laboratories while the rest of the equipment will be delivered before the end of October. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting tests in accordance with ISO 17025 will comply with customer needs, specific market requirements as well as reducing costs and time.

Packaging and Labeling

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<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Create a qualified team and system with the PFIA in order to assist food-processing companies in upgrading and improving their packaging and labeling capabilities for improved market access.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four PFIU employees went on fact-finding tour to <i>LibanPack</i> (Lebanon) in October 2012. • PFIU conducted an awareness workshop following their return from <i>LibanPack</i>. • PFIU/Compete technical staff were trained in Lebanon from December 11-14 on technical aspects of packaging and labeling at <i>LibanPack</i> training center. • Two workshops were conducted with Al Najah National University and Islamic University to engage senior students in the student StarPack Contest through PFIU. • An international expert visited the companies (package assessment and training). • 3 trainings were conducted to demonstrate the <i>LibanPack</i> model with a total of 37 participants. • 8 Palestinian design students participated in the StarPack Contest and one winner was identified. • Regional competition for product packaging design followed by StarPack ceremony; • StarPack agreement signed. Ceremony in Oct 23, 2013. • 14 products redesigned and approved by related companies. The last 2 product designs were determined satisfactory and require no further redesign (<i>LibanPack</i>). 	<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the global competitiveness of the industry through better packaging, higher production standards and better reputation; • Building association-led capacities in export packaging, labeling and market requirements
<p>Upgrade the Aquaculture Sector</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Revitalize the Palestinian fish industry in the region of Jericho and other governorates to satisfy domestic demand by conducting an assessment on the future outlook of the industry.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Aquaculture Consultant visited <i>Al-Sabi</i> Nursery in Qalqilya to look into the use of aquaponic systems as a viable means of irrigation. <i>Al Sabi</i> Nursery recently installed this system and has been using it to irrigate 1/10 of its young seedlings. • Extension Agents and farmers completed. Aquaculture Assessment workshop with the MoA • Assessment completed and final report submitted by consultant. • Meetings conducted with stakeholders. • Identified 4 partners. 	<p>Impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revitalized fish pond sector will meet domestic demand, contribute to integrated water management improvements and potentially grow to serve export markets.

**TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
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FAM Trips	
<i>Description</i> FAM Trips: Familiarize Palestinian exporters with international market demands through targeted Familiarization Study Tours (FAM tours); invite key buyers to visit and build business relationships with local producers.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key buyer from <i>Kam Trade Russia</i>, visited olive oil, sea salt, fresh herbs and date producer in the West Bank. • Signed grant with Palestinian American Chamber of Commerce. • Inward buyer from Dubai visited West Bank with 7 contracts in negotiation. • Inward buyer from Russia visited West Bank with 1 contract with Nakheel with a value of \$643,200 and another 3 contracts in negotiation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>FAM trips –including inward “ buyer airlifts ”- will facilitate critical link between international market makers and local agricultural value chains ,thus increasing export opportunities and country image as a source for quality agriculture products.</i>
Updates for Other Agribusiness Activities in the Work Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture Information Call Center: Introduce mobile applications providing inexpensive mobile phone-based services to Palestinian producers to access local and international market information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received proposal from MoA • Finalized SOW with ICT department and MoA. • Consultant completed TOR. • Produce Distribution Hub: Support for market research and a feasibility study as the first steps toward establishing a distribution hub for fresh produce in target markets to directly link local value chains to growing international markets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefeasibility study for distribution hub in Dubai during Gulfood completed. • Round table meeting completed – buy in form stakeholders granted. • Agreement signed with Equity for technical and legal assessment for distribution hub. • Upgrade Grape Sector: Upgrade 34 Palestinian grape farms to produce high quality seedless grapes at competitive prices through technical assistance and cost-sharing upgrading inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting preparations with stakeholders and vetting of partners are completed. • RFQ announced for netting roll. • Contract with vendor for grapes was prepared. • Upgrade Guava Sector: Assist guava farmers to upgrade their production to provide high quality guavas at reasonable prices through cost sharing inputs to the guava producers’ farms including fruit fly traps, packing lines, and cool stores among others. : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palestinian Guava exporters were supplied around 213,000 cartons that are designed and manufactured according to export market specifications through a cost-sharing mechanism to ensure sustainability. • USAID, through the Compete Project in the West Bank, is providing packing house equipment (washing, packaging, storing, grading & cooling) for the Green Qalqilya Company for Packaging and Labeling, (which was recently formed by three guava and avocado companies and five farms, representing 36 partners) and for six potato and carrot companies, comprising 24 partners also registered under one packing house company. With the companies acting as aggregators, farmers will have access to the equipment and facilities at reasonable costs. Indirect beneficiaries from the guava and avocado packing 	

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house will include 500 sharecroppers, and 1,000 sharecroppers will benefit from the potato and carrot packing house.

- Upgrading Packing Line of West Bank Salt Company: Support Palestinian producer of Dead Sea gourmet salt to meet international quality/food packaging standards and access new international markets. Cost Benefit Analysis is completed.
- Traceability Software: Support the design and implementation of an operational traceability system (developed by the Palestinian ICT sector) for the fresh export produce sector following international best practices in order to increase product standards:
 - Signed grant with M.A.K international Co.
 - Traceability Software Clients identified and blue print produced.
 - TOR for IT Company prepared.
 - 1 workshop was conducted.
- Capacity Building for the MoA Veterinary Services (VS) Staff: Provide technical assistance and capacity building for 20 MoA Veterinary Staff on laboratory operations and business methods: Compliance announced RFQ and prepared hand over memo.
- Capacity Building for Date Firm Staff and Date Farmers and cost share equipment to raise knowledge and competence of the workforce to improve date quality and increase export produce to high value markets :
 - Nakheel lab equipment winners identified and contract signed with 4 vendors.; EDF approved
 - Contract signed with Zoom Co. to redesign the packaging of 8 date companies, 4 designs are completed.
- Export Manager for Hire: Hire an export manager for companies that have demonstrated a clear competitive advantage and access to international markets: A grant was signed with Canaan Fair Trade for Export Manager for hire.

Lessons Learned

To enhance agriculture development in the West Bank, there were some lessons gained in FY2 on linking producers to international markets, and increasing market share and competitiveness. These include:

- Encouraging individual actors to build associations or companies for technical and marketing cooperation requires flexibility and constant evaluation. While the benefits of these associations are clear, it is imperative to have effective communication methods and clear agreements between the individuals.
- Participating in tradeshows has provided local producers with invaluable opportunities to connect directly with their competition has encouraged innovation and spurred competition within the sector. Through participation in multiple trade shows several lessons have been learned:
 - Prices must be in line with market requirements without compromising individual regional taste.
 - To ensure arrival of sample products, products should be shipped early and separately to minimize problems at customs. Customs regulations should be reviewed thoroughly prior to shipping.
 - Early registration can secure better booth locations.

- Participatory approaches, while complex and time consuming, are critical to ensure the needs and concerns of all stakeholders are identified as part of the planning process and addressed early on in the project.
- It is a good idea to inspect equipment prior to purchase to ensure that the equipment is appropriate and meets the required specifications. Technical people with the appropriate expertise and knowledge should be part of these inspection visits.
- To ensure access to the West Bank for inward buyers and investors, it is best if USAID coordinates with the Israeli authorities to guarantee access to the West Bank.

TOURISM

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Agribusiness activities for FY2.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Analysis - Digital Marketing Capacity • Digital Marketing Seminar Conference & Workshop • Digital Tourism Demo for Social Media Conversion • Web Clinics 	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an assessment of where the Palestinian Territory currently stands in terms of digital prowess for tourism and using “value chain” techniques to identify current weaknesses and opportunities and to identify the most urgent weaknesses that need correction and support. • Support the development of the digital marketing capacity across the sector. 	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three workshops implemented in Ramallah, Jerusalem and Bethlehem • Two hotels trained on Social Media Conversion • Training for one tour operator. • Facebook offers developed for one hotel to demonstrate implementation and efficacy of social media. YouTube and Twitter account set up. Splash page recommended to encourage check-in and likes to support leaderboard page. • Meeting with ISP “Internet Service Provider “to support location check-in and likes to support leaderboard page. • 47 pre-selected websites have now undergone the web clinic • Organized a workshop for 18 tourism and ICT companies to demonstrate best practices for digital content creation. The workshop also addressed the art of doing interviews and how to use them when building a website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the most critical areas of need of tools and capacity requirement for the Tourist companies and individuals; • Reach target markets and takes advantage of the digital environment to promote their business to increase demand and convert bookings; • Highlight development opportunities; • Enable the companies to better utilize their websites to achieve their goals.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Profiles Implementation • Destination Brand Development • Trade Shows Participation • HLITOA/AHA Development Support 	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop market profiles for key source country markets and key niche markets to expand market access and business development in the strategic tourism market. • Develop a country brand strategy based on research, analysis and market needs that evolve into a strong country image. • Support the participation of a selected number of Palestinian ICT companies for tourism to attend the World Travel Market and Internationale Tourismus Börse (ITB); firms will gain exposure to the types of opportunities open to serve the tourism sector within the West Bank and globally. • Support to HLITOA and AHA (the two major Palestinian tourism trade associations) through increasing member services, expanding product offerings, and directly engaging with international travel buyers. 	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive research samples were provided on 10 international markets to HLITOA and AHA. Accordingly; HLITOA/AHA agreed to research three international destinations based on their highest potential for tourism growth and nominate key target markets to create market profiles. • A sub contract was signed with HLITOA to improve the capacity of inbound tour operators to diversify and secure relevant market segments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This intervention will assist in strategic decision making and for the first time enable targeting one of the most lucrative potential markets; • The Palestinian tourism industry will use a unified message to increase the awareness of the Palestinian territories as a tourist destination, and shift perception to accurately represent Palestinian tourist destinations; • Delivery of clear and consistent messages on tourism products that represent the Palestinian experience will result in a more compelling proposition to the target market, and increase sales of Palestinian firms and increase tourists' expenditures in Palestinian areas; • This intervention will enable HLITOA/AHA to provide better services to their members and business partners, particularly through the four market profiles HLITOA is developing; • The destination brand will support Palestinian tour operators to organize road shows, actively sell new destinations and sites developed in collaboration with Compete, as well as improve the digital presence of Palestinian tour operators; • This intervention will increase sales and bring more investments in the tourism sector; • This intervention will provide an opportunity for the Palestinian ICT sector

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	to tap into a rapidly growing global market, opening new markets for their products and skills; this will directly increase exports, expand sales, and will create new jobs in the Palestinian digital tourism sector.
Support Bethlehem Master Plan Implementation through Signage Activity	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Support the Bethlehem Signage initiative which includes a mobile stage in Manger Square, street lights and sanitation facilities around major tourism attractions, tourist information centers and walking trails in Bethlehem.</p>	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed draft sign location map. • Stakeholder group review of exact sign location in finalized throughout three municipalities. • MoTA briefed on plans following full review. • Branded directional sign dimensions and design finalized. • RFQ directional signs published - proposal evaluated and service provider contracted. • RFQ informative/welcoming signs issued. • Comprehensive presentation developed as guideline for service providers and to expedite stakeholder approval. • Total of 176 signs across Bethlehem Governorate installed. • Bethlehem Signage: Phase II was completed. • GPS coordinates of 169 signs have been completed and logged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of individual tourists visiting the city, increasing spending in the local economy.
Hotel Classification	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Develop and implement a mandatory hotel classification system in the Palestinian Territories to ultimately support an increase in tourism numbers, length of stay and average expenditure per visitor.</p>	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot project undertaken and finalized. • Criteria and quality standards agreed and finalized. • Assessors recruited. • Assessor technical and practical training finalized. • Post launch implementation plan developed. • Website TOR developed. • Hotel classification manual developed and designed in Arabic/English. • Hotel Classification System Launched. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system provides assurance of the highest quality possible for the amounts paid by tourists; this increases the credibility of Palestinian products and services. • Increase in number of tourists, length of stay and average expenditure per visitor. • Out of the four hotels that are fully classified, 43 jobs were created (2 are female).

**TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM
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- Held a soft skills training for the hotel classification assessors on March 25-27, 2013 in Bethlehem. The soft skills training included communication techniques, problem solving/conflict management in the inspections process, preparing and delivering feedback report to hotel management team, and other skills that are necessary to carry out a proper inspection and essential for building the assessors' capacity
- Organized 3 awareness workshops to introduce the new hotel classification standards;
- Signed a grant with AHA to raise the capacity of hotel classification assessors.
- The Joint Committee launched the Hotel Classification star rating process for all hotels in the West Bank;
- 36 hotels have been assessed for the Hotel Star Rating; 4 have been fully classified.

Site Renovation and Trail Site Development

Achievements

Directional Signs for Tourism Attractions:

- The directional signs are aimed at helping roadside traffic to find our key destinations with content in Arabic and English. Year 2 achievements include:
- Grant agreement signed with Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce to develop and install directional signs, informative panels and interpretation signs.
- Subcontract signed to develop and install directional signs for Nablus, Jericho, Ramallah, Taybeh and Bethany.
- Conducted required Environmental Assessment and produced environmental documentation (EDF, EMMP and ERS).
- Installation work completed and all signs were installed (number of signs 31+Bethlehem).

Visitor Location Panel and Maps:

- This activity is designed to provide user friendly city maps available for 13 urban areas in the West Bank (Jenin, Burqin, Sabastiya, Nablus, Taybeh, Ramallah, Albeireh, Bethany, Jericho, Bethlehem, Beit Jala, Beit Sahur and Hebron) that will be used for panels, brochures and ICT applications. Year 2 achievements include:
 - Subcontracted Artechnologies to design maps that could be used for all applications (visitor location panels, maps, brochures, ICT applications, etc.)
 - Approached and coordinated with 13 municipalities to collect the available data with the assistance of MOTA/DACH.
 - Selection criteria for information to be featured in the maps secured with the private and public sector (municipalities, HLITOA, MOTA).
 - Artechnology provided pilot maps of Nablus and Taybeh that included all the layout comments and criteria. Roll out of the rest of cities will commence in Year 3.

Burqin Church Sewage System:

- The toilet facilities and related sewage and waste water system within the Burqin Church complex are

**TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM
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currently failing to meet desired standards, in terms of operational requirements, efficiency and environmental performance. Year 2 achievements include:

- Contracted design services to produce final design and tender construction services at the Burqin Church complex from MIDMAC.
- Final designs examined and approved by the CP consulting architect, the EA expert and the Church Priest.
- Contracted Al Humedeyeh Construction Company to build the design and MIDMAC to supervise the construction works.
- Work in final stages for constructing the septic tank and doing the finishing works.

Hisham’s Palace Site Interpretation, Museum Rehabilitation:

- Contracted MIDMAC and Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago to work on the design and plan to upgrade interpretation at the site and rehabilitate the Museum.
- Hisham’s Palace Interpretation and Museum Rehabilitation: Site Branding and Concept design was presented to MOTA/DACH including Dr. Hamdan Taha, Assistant Deputy for Cultural Heritage and Antiquities currently Deputy Minister.

Hiking Trails:

- Preliminary list of trails to be developed was prepared and discussed with relevant stakeholders at priority destinations.
- Signed grant agreement with Rozana Association and sub-contract with Abraham Path Initiative to develop the northern extension from Nablus to Jenin of Abraham’s Path Trail.
- Work on the identification of trail route and local communities to be involved started in late September 2013.
- SoW to complete development of other two trails has been developed and will be published in Year 3.

Hospitality School

Description

Implement plans for a hospitality school to increase the volume and availability of service level staff within the labor force; this includes comprehensive In-Service training for front and back of house hospitality staff currently working in hotels

Achievements

- AHA approved training program, participate throughout and promote to members.
- Hotel assessments agreed with AHA for early 2013.
- Supervisor, housekeeping, front desk and food & beverage training booked early 2013.
- Trainees registered and approved by AHLA.
- Training materials procured.
- Train-the-trainer program completed.
- All Trainees completed AHLA-EI exam, passed and certified

Impact

- Raise the level and availability of service level employees;
- Indirectly raise the exports in the Tourism sector.
- Compete assessed the level of readiness of the employees who took the training and discovered that the majority of the participants believe that their skills have improved tremendously and that they can apply the skills in their jobs; they also said that the training will help them

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted the In-service Hospitality Training Program in four main cities in the West Bank. 87 hotel supervisors from food and beverage, housekeeping and reception departments were trained and passed the exam to become Certified Hotel Supervisors “CHS”. • Organized Hospitality School Working Group made of Ministry of Tourism, representatives of the tourism private sector, AHA and HLITOA, and Bethlehem University. • Private sector representatives are working on a position paper depicting their vision for the Hospitality School, including the management structure and possible locations. • USAID Compete supported the TRAC (Train Retrain Assess Certify) in-service training in which 559 front desk agents, housekeeping and restaurant/bar servers from over 70 hotels participated in order to improve the front-line service to tourists. • Signed a contract with Diyafa to deliver phase two of the in-service training for employees in the hospitality industry, including management, supervisors, and front line employees. • 16 hotel employees participated in the Certified Hotel Supervisor (CHS) training conducted over four days in Bethlehem • The Arab Hotel Association (AHA) is considering establishing a hospitality school based on the Jordanian example of a functioning 4 star hotel that provides training for hospitality employees. Compete drafted the scope of work to hire an engineering company to assess an existing building in Jericho that could be converted into a 4 star hotel for this purpose. • The project’s tourism team accompanied the contracted engineering firm on a site visit to assess a semi-finished building in Jericho that could be converted into a 4 star hotel for this purpose. The engineering firm provided a rough estimate based on blue prints provided by HLITOA. 	<p>advance in their future careers. Furthermore; all the participants agreed that the training prepared them to take the CHS exam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The training offers an opportunity to improve services provided by the hospitality sector, and in particular supports the service and quality standards across the sector in line with the new Hotel Classification system • A total of 6 hospitality training courses were developed. (CHT, CHS, TRAC Restaurant Server, TRAC Front Desk, TRAC Room Attendant and CHS phase 2).
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Tourism Image Bank

Description

Ensure the availability of quality images to support the sector to compete internationally both online and offline.

Achievements

- Evaluation of bids received from photographers undertaken
- More information requested
- Contracts signed with 2 photographers;
- The two contractors provided Compete with pictures to be posted on the online image bank;
- Pictures for the image bank are in the process of being uploaded to the Pinterest and Flickr sites

Impact

- Addresses the lack of high quality images of Palestinian tourist, heritage and historical locations that can be used in branding for the sector and enable it to compete internationally both online and offline;
- Indirectly increases the sales of Palestinian tourism operators.

Facebook Application for Tourism

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Description

An opportunity exists for a fully functional Facebook (FB) Application that would aggregate content from across the different destinations into an itinerary builder and be made available to all tourism stakeholders for use on their own FB pages. The application would include a trip planning tool, ongoing engagement and database building. The FB Application would ideally be managed by a local firm and offered to the tourism sector as a service.

Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content is fully developed. • Sites, attractions and locations developed across the entire destination. • Facebook Leaderboard application was technically completed followed by training on managing the application for HLIOTA staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the engagement between the ICT sector and the tourism sector to create new products and solutions to expand in the local market and reach new markets; • Enable the Tourism sector to use local IT expertise to benefit from the social media campaigns to attract new tourists.

Updates for Other Tourism Activities in the Work Plan

- Palestinian/Israeli Tour Development and support to Samara/Travelujah in order to expand tourism products, extend tourism outside of key hubs, and encourage Israeli/Palestinian joint business development:
 - Grant signed with Samara Tours.
 - Samara Tours hired Elisa Moed from Travelujah as a consultant for the project.
- Compete is planning to work with Burqin Women Association to manage the multipurpose visitors center in Burqin to provide locally made products and experiences
- Compete is also planning to work with local grass root organizations at Sabastiya and Bethany to enhance the business environment surrounding the cultural heritage sites and traditional handicrafts.
- Bethlehem Museum: Compete met with the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation to discuss the concept and ultimate message of the Bethlehem museum; it was agreed that the foundation submitted more information elaborating on the concept design for the museum’s display/presentation.
- USAID, through the Compete Project, signed a grant agreement with AHA to implement their proposal for ensuring standards of cleanliness at Palestinian hotels. The proposal includes a full assessment of the current status of participating hotels, recommendations for improvements in order to meet quality standards, training for hotel staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to meet the standards, and the development of a manual describing the quality cleanliness standards for hotels.
- Bethlehem Christmas Festival: USAID Compete is supporting the Bethlehem Christmas Festival, a major tourist event, both through in-kind support and direct funding.

Lessons Learned

The Tourism sector had several key lessons learned this year.

- Public-Private Partnerships support success and sustainability of activities but most importantly will support better participation, collaboration and growth across the sector.
- AHA/HLITOA require support in developing market access through capacity building, technical support and business development activities. The associations remain sporadic in their target market list, rather than basing their decisions on rigorous research. While some supply side research is available, no demand side

research is utilized in order to choose markets for development based on strategic opportunities, demand, access, etc. To ensure maximum return on financial investment and effort, it is imperative that as a result of research, investments are made in the markets that offer the highest potential for return on investment, tourism growth and sustainability.

- Several lessons arose in regards to site renovation:
 - The tourism team has learned to remain flexible to adapt implementation plans based on these insights to ensure that interventions are tailored to the needs of the local community and are created to yield the most impact.
 - Particularly in urban design interventions, municipalities need community participation workshops should be held before starting the projects. If not properly represented through the municipality, women and youth should be a part of community participation to be informed and to ensure their perspectives are included in planned interventions. Having diverse voices in community discussions about activities that will affect the local community is critical, and can be done through workshops and town halls.
- It's important to fully assess all the needs of the project and ensure they are captured in the SOW; when some details are missed it can cause problems later on if the responsibilities for each aspect of a project are not clear. It is also important to define the roles of each member of the task force.
- The Compete Strategic Retreat provided a much needed opportunity for the Tourism team to reflect on current activities and plan for the future. The team realized that it must focus the activities in order to ensure coordinated efforts that produce real results. The tourism team will focus on three destination sites in the West Bank – consolidating Bethlehem, developing Jericho and setting the base for Nablus. The destination catchment area will be flexible to include tangible attractions within reach of each destination.
- The team has also learned that the design and development of even small museums is complex and requires a depth of material, information, and design to bring together the concept that will deliver the desired visitor experience. All of this requires careful consultation with stakeholders and takes more time than was initially estimated. The coordination between MOTA/DACH, the Oriental Institute of Chicago University has proven to be professional, efficient and productive for museum work in Hisham's Palace; the research institute helps to ease and facilitate the complexity of the work.

ICT

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Agribusiness activities for FY2.

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

PDF Project with ProGineer	
<i>Description</i>	Assist ProGineer engineers to develop the knowledge and skills required to create additional enhancements to

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

PDF's software offerings	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired new 8 employees. ProGineer Technologies Joins TIBCO Spotfire Partner Network. ProGineer Technologies became a certified Microsoft Application Development Partner PDF Solutions have been able to gain access to some very talented, qualified, and highly motivated individuals through working with ProGineer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating additional new jobs in the Palestinian Territory; Encourage PDF to consider opening a format research center in the Palestinian Territory. Increase in Exports by \$126,345 Jobs created: 8 employees (2 are female)

Palestinian Business Innovation Center

Description
Inspiring young Palestinian entrepreneurs at the first ever Hi-Tech Hub Event. This event has been designed as monthly gatherings of developers, web designers, entrepreneurs, students, academics and investors who are interested in contributing to a more vibrant start-up community.

Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched the second Hi-Tech Hub Event. PNB Event: USAID's Compete Project sponsored Partners for a New Beginning (PNB) project to host "The Palestinian Entrepreneurship Sector: Analysis, Planning and Coordination Meeting". 75 people including donors, the venture capital industry in addition to participants representing the banking and financial, government and education sectors attended the event. Preparations are underway for the 3rd Hi-Tech Hub in November. Study tour in Jordan to introduce the gaming concept into the West Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided a forum to connect, innovate, lead and listen to a global line up of speakers, and share experiences of breaking into international markets with an innovative tech idea. Palestinian startup Ma3lomeh, a winner of USAID Compete's Hi-Tech Hub, was invited to participate at the "Start-Up Turkey" (www.startupturkey.com) event on February 15. 6 Applications were developed for Hi Tech Hub 3. 4 applications were developed for e-Zone

Apple iOS Mobile Development Center of Excellence

Description
The Apple iOS Development Center of Excellence, owned by Infinite Tiers, partnered with USAID Compete to develop deep knowledge in agile technologies and mobile applications – especially for Android and Apple applications.

Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 new applications were developed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop deep knowledge in agile technologies and mobile applications – especially for Android and Apple applications; Enable a local branch of US based company to develop local resources in mobile applications. 2 jobs created (1 Female).

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Export increased by: \$220,877 USD
H+W Sales Force Cloud Computing	
<i>Description</i> H+W Product Force is working with Palestinian partners to create a resource center under the name H+W Product Force. The center will develop and market SaaS applications on the Sales force platform.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant agreement signed. 5 Applications were developed; Training was held for 30 new graduates on sales force and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity will build Palestinian capacity to develop IT tools—particularly cloud computing technology services—a leading edge technology that is in high demand globally; Salesforce.com technology will eventually help disseminate IT solutions to non IT enterprises. Building Palestinian skills in this technology will enable local IT firms to take advantage of this rapidly growing market. New Markets accessed (Denmark and Germany). Jobs Created: 13 (6 are female). Exports increased by \$ 121,750
Diaspora Linkage	
<i>Description</i> This activity aims to build bridges between Palestinian Diaspora worldwide and the ICT sector in West Bank and Gaza. The U.S has been selected as a pilot country for this activity.	
Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant agreement signed on Nov 11th. Finished a trade mission to the U.S. for advertising the network, setup of a cloud based system to facilitate communications between Palestinian Companies and entrepreneurs and Diaspora, and the creation of foundation groups that will serve as mentors and facilitators of flow of ideas, mentorship and possibly business deals. PITA selected a New York based company to organize B2B meetings for the November 2013 trade mission; PITA hired a consultant to lead PITA efforts to establish a successful business to business mission for the participating companies. PITA hosted webinar to engage Palestinian diaspora with the local ICT. An international PR consultant, Alan Wainkrantz, has been selected to run a campaign to recruit 125 Palestinians from within the US diaspora to join 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This activity will contribute to greater innovation in the Palestinian economy by enabling the ICT sector to connect with the Diaspora living abroad – particularly in the U.S., motivating them to invest in the Palestinian ICT sector.

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

<p>GloPal (the Palestinian Global IT Network)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparations for the next PITA mission to the US to increase diaspora linkages are in progress. 127 meetings have been confirmed between Palestinian and American IT companies 		
<p>Solidify Multinational Partnerships</p>		
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Support Palestinian software houses to partner with international based companies (not necessarily first tier ones such Microsoft or Intel) but with a focus on European and Arab Gulf markets.</p>		
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signed Grant Agreement with Jaffa for INTEL project. • Signed Grant Agreement with ArtTech for Brain Games. • Signed Grant Agreement with ASAL for INTEL project. • Signed grant agreement with I-Connect, a Palestinian Software Company specializing in E-commerce and health IT to facilitate 3 projects related to healthcare IT as well as software consulting for e-commerce services for Arab-speaking customers; • Signed grant agreement with Fanar Soft, a Palestinian Software Company specializing in freight forwarding software providing services to the Israeli market, to enable Fanar Soft to hire additional engineers to develop a new system for the Israeli Customs Authority through an Israeli Company named Amital; • Signed grant agreement with Al-Tareq Software systems to support the company to start two new projects in Oman and Libya, including a software system for governmental entities in Oman, and a new system for Libyan Universities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This intervention aims to solidify the ICT sector’s position as a reliable partner and maintain the momentum achieved so far; • This activity will support the achievement of new contracts, job creation and exports; • This initiative would encourage companies to open branch offices in Palestinian cities other than Ramallah to ensure new resources are hiring (especially females) who have difficulties moving to Ramallah for social/family reasons. • Contract between ASAL and Intel. • Exports increased by 72,000 USD for ASAL with Intel Project; • Jobs created for ASAL: 15 (2 are female) • Contract between Jaffa Net and Intel. • Exports increased by 151,020 USD for Jaffa Net. • Jobs created for Jaffa Net: 11 (3 are Female). • Art Technologies as a start-up developed a product (Brain Science Lab project). • Contract between Art Technologies and Brain Games. • Exports increased by 20,000 USD for Art Technologies. • Jobs created for Art Technologies 5 employees (2 are female). • FanarSoft as a start-up company developed a product for Amital. • Contract between FanarSoft and Amital. • Jobs created for FanarSoft 6 employees (3 are female). • A contract between iConnect and DIA-FKAM. • Exports increased by 39,455 USD for iConnect • Jobs created for iConnect 3 (1 female) • Contract between Al Tariq Systems and United 	

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

<p>Systems in Oman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exports increased by 50,000 USD for Al Tariq Systems Jobs created for Al Tariq Systems 9 employees (2 are female). 	
<p>Seed Fund for Start-up Companies</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Support risk-sharing associated with a “Seed Fund” for startup companies. This fund is a fundamental element in creating a pipeline of startup companies with the potential to attract venture capital investment</p>	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed with Al-Dawlieh Investments to create an investor-led seed/angel fund in the West Bank. Arabreneur signed an MOU with Leaders to accelerate startups. Arabreneur set-up completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Seed Fund is a necessary step to create a pipeline of startup companies that are attractive to venture capital investment; Startups will be able to receive investments in the range of 50K-150K and benefit from the portfolio of business services Arabreneur has developed for startups. This is in addition to a regional and international business acceleration network that will add value in terms of international exposure for these startups.
<p>Oracle Training Center</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>USAID Compete is supporting an Oracle Training Initiative activity geared towards strengthening the technical capacity of Palestinian companies working in the oracle domain by helping in providing capacity building in subjects like Seibel.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USAID Compete organized training at Oracle University in Israel and supported nine web developers from Palestinian ICT firms to participate in the training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing skilled human resources in key Oracle technologies and supporting Palestinian outsourcing service providers to land jobs in the outsourcing industry is the prime focus of this activity. This would help the beneficiaries to work on international and regional projects on this technology.
<p>Microsoft Research Center</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Based on the success of the USAID-sponsored Microsoft Research center- Israel incubation Project at PICTI, Microsoft is expanding the project to include more Palestinian employees who will work out of the ASAL company office in Ramallah. To ensure that the project goes forward, Compete will provide a cost-sharing grant to ASAL to off-set risks to Microsoft Israel.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compete provided a grant to ASAL company to Palestinians with required skills to be able to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grant will eventually create needed Palestinian talent to open a full-service Microsoft

**TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

with Microsoft R&D projects.	<p>R&D center in the Palestinian Territories.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exports increased by 60,000 USD; • Jobs created: 10 employees (7 Male, 3 Female).
Updates for Other ICT Activities in the Work Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and technical skills development: identify and engage private companies, introduce case competition programs, and support an Executive Development (“Mini-MBA”) series in cooperation with leading U.S and Israeli universities for course content tailored for private ICT sector needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finished one round of the Mini-MBA with Kellogg Recanati: the program started on January 13, and finished on March 14 2013. 33 Palestinian middle managers, GMs and entrepreneurs attended the course. ○ Signed the PITA Employability Program for skills development. • Export Manager for Hire: Support an Export Manager/Overseas Agent to penetrate specific markets to sell Palestinian products or obtain outsourcing contracts especially in the Gulf, Saudi Arabian and North American markets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launched the ICT sector’s Export Manager for Hire Program. ○ Signed grant agreement with H+W MENA to expand in the German market. ○ Supported Al Andalus Software to hire an export manager that will help expand their markets in Saudi Arabia and northern Iraq; exports are expected to increase by \$700,000, tripling their current exports. • Cross-Sector Technology Program for Finance, Tourism, Agro, Stone & Marble Sectors (Diffuse IT technology in each sector): On-Going. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cross-Sector Tech-Program-Agribusiness: (Introduce “traceability software” systems to help Palestinian fresh produce exporters adhere to ISO 22000 and Global Gap food safety standards, directly contributing to increase sales and exports of Palestinian fresh produce) : ○ A meeting was conducted between USAID Compete team and Lahav at the Kellogg/Tel Aviv University to integrate and design six intensive modules for the second Mini-MBA course to meet the needs and requirements of agricultural management in the West Bank. This new program is scheduled to start in October 24th, 2013. • Cross-Sector Technology Program for Finance – (Introduce the game-changing Payment Gateway solution to the Palestinian Market in partnership with regional and local businesses, in addition to supporting employee training initiatives and facilitating necessary partnerships with local banks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preparations for the Payment Gateway launch event are underway. • Cross-Sector Technology for Program –Tourism Introduce digital tourism into the Palestinian market, beginning with the selection and qualifying of ICT partners to build and support solutions for the tourism industry through the development of websites, Facebook applications, booking and reservation platforms, and systems integration with key tourism organizations. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Facebook App Data Collection for major tourist attractions in the West Bank and Jerusalem. ○ Payment Gateway pilot project started ○ Payment Gateway :The Palestinian Monetary Authority has approved the payment gateway services that Middle East Payment Services (MEPS) will provide in the West Bank and Gaza, enabling MEPS to open a new branch in Ramallah. The Compete Project has been advocating for this type of payment service as it will facilitate business, and will arrange a launch event and awareness raising workshop. 	

Lessons Learned

- *Youth is not a guarantee of innovation* - A key issue identified during the ICT team’s visit to the GES summit in Dubai is that when targeting startup and entrepreneurship opportunities, Compete should not only anchor our search to young entrepreneurs. Also, looking for older and experienced entrepreneurs is important and it is highly probable that they would generate high value ideas.
- *Mini-MBA lessons* – Not surprisingly, tailoring the course to the participants had an impact on the success of the course. Since most of the participants were from the software industry, the ICT team worked closely with the professors and the organizers, course by course, session by session to adapt the content to the technology savvy participants who are keen on improving their operations and to better understand global trends.
- *Choosing Partners with Global Footprint*: Choosing the right partner to work with in a development project must be done carefully. First, in order to make sure that we will be achieving the anticipated market impact, and second, to ensure that whatever is built in the local market can be scaled-up to increase the impact. In the ICT sector, working with partners who have existing or are affiliated with international networks that generate demand for services is critical. As opposed to starting from the local market and going global, this is a much simpler model for growth; having a mix of both models should be encouraged.
- When trying to support startups and entrepreneurship, it is critical to understand the current maturity of the sector in order to recognize where to channel the support. If the sector has established incubators and accelerators, but is not producing startups it is clear that startups are rejected once they try to get funding. A focus on quality mentorship that is regionally relevant with proper monitoring is key to creating startups.
- Compete will focus its support for trade missions to inbound trade missions because it has proven to be more successful in bringing in new investments and creating joint cooperation. An outbound trade mission is more suitable for niche market services or for companies that would like to start working with new technology or discover a new idea.

STONE AND MARBLE

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Agribusiness activities for FY2.

**TABLE 5: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Trade Show Participation	
<i>Description</i> Assist Palestinian producers to participate at leading trade shows to enable opportunities to learn about new equipment, technology advances, and attract buyers and distributors.	
Achievements	Impact

**TABLE 5: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended 'Big 5' Trade Show (Dubai, UAE) with 2 companies participating: <i>Next Step</i> represented second tier producers and <i>Verona Group</i> represented 5 stone producers. • The project supported <i>Verona Marketing Group</i> Company to attend the Vitoria Stone Fair in Brazil. • Participation at Coverings Trade Show; • Six Palestinian stone companies participated at Marmomacc Trade Show in Italy • Preparations are underway for the Big 5 Trade Show5 in Dubai. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting export ready SME's with new products will increase exposure to international market buyers which will lead to an increase in exports. • 642 containers sold (during and after Marmomacc and Big 5 and Vitoria Trade Shows) with a value of \$6,077,000 USD for <i>Verona Co.</i> • 2 major new markets accessed for <i>Verona Co</i>: Canada and Russia. • Jobs Created: 20 male employees hired for <i>Verona Co.</i> • Exports increased by \$ 384,062 USD for <i>Al Waleed Co.</i> • 2 new markets accessed for <i>Al Waleed Co.</i> Iraq and Korea. • Jobs created: 6 employees hired for <i>Al Waleed Co</i> (2 are female).
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Form Partnership with Specialized Marketing Firms

<p><i>Description</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking Palestinian manufacturers with international buyers and investors is essential for reaching global competitiveness and increasing exports. • Group and Specialized Marketing activities will assist Palestinian companies in reaching global markets, developing promotional materials and products that meet international standards and provide continuous market intelligence. • USAID Compete is supporting and facilitating the development of group and specialized marketing consortiums to represent second tier stone and marble producers.
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Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Next Step</i> participated at the <i>Dubai Big 5</i> trade show. • Two marketing groups were created in the industry and further developed their portfolios and the scope of representative companies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link global buyers with Palestinian producers. • Provide firms with access to creative marketing materials that will support export development. • Export growth.

Filter Press Evaluation and Upgrading

<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>Facilitate proper maintenance and upgrading of filter presses to increase their overall effectiveness; produce higher quality products; extend the lifecycle of cutting tools; comply with environmental regulations, and capture slurry produced during the cutting process.</p>
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Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation of all filter presses across the sector was completed (86) • Details regarding the cost to fix and upgrade existing filter presses were analyzed (86) • Out of the 23 filter presses in the Hebron Industrial Zone (HIZ) that require maintenance, 15 filter presses applied for the program. • Coordinating with Union of Stone and Marble (USM) to vet the companies in starting from HIZ and moving cross-sector • General Procurement Notice in the local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling stone producers to transform slurry to sludge to meet environmental requirements, recycle water and increase cutting tool lifecycle. • Will increase effectiveness, higher quality products are produced, short the lifecycle of cutting tools, recycle water for the stone producers, comply with environmental regulations and capture all slurry produced during the cutting of stone

TABLE 5: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2

<p>newspaper for 7 days prior to awarding the contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP for Filter Press maintenance outside of the Hebron industrial zone, vetting companies. • RFP for sludge new product development pre-feasibility submitted; • Environmental expert Mr. Nazih Bandak and the stone and marble team conducted a site visits to four factories in the Hebron to address some of the environmental compliance concerns related to filter press activities. • Signed a contract with Lamar Import and Marketing to execute the filter press maintenance in Hebron Industrial Zone. • Hired an Engineer to monitor and evaluate the filter press program. • A cost-benefit analysis of filter presses shows that with Compete support, the stone producers will begin to see a return on their investment in the filter presses within one year. 	
<p>Sludge New Product Development</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>As part of project efforts to support the sustainability and transformation of the Stone and Marble sector there has been a great focus on the sludge issue or more specifically the ability to transform slurry to sludge that has further economic value. Compete will conduct a feasibility analysis and assist in cost and financial planning for the production of new sludge-based products and processing production.</p>	
<p>Achievements</p>	<p>Impact</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Feasibility studies submitted and review. Further letters with comments were sent out to all applicants. • Expo Works Plus, a local company based in Ramallah, was awarded the contract to conduct the Sludge New Product study, which was launched June 1. • Initial lab tests conducted on the filter press sludge in the stone industry show promising results for creating products used in the construction industry. • The project’s stone team conducted field visits in Italy to sludge processing facilities, and met with experts, researchers, and teaching institutions to exchange ideas and learn about possible uses for sludge. • Efforts continue to create new products from the sludge by-product. A preliminary symposium date of December 10th was set to present the findings and create a road-map moving forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity will attract investors interested in new product development using dry sludge. Activities will focus on targeting stone producers throughout the stone industry as potential investors. This program will be open to potential investors in other industries
<p>Filter Press Cost Sharing Cross-Sector Program</p>	
<p><i>Description</i></p> <p>To provide an equal opportunity for stone producers to own filter presses to transform slurry to sludge, meet environmental requirements; recycle water and increase cutting tool lifecycle.</p>	

**TABLE 5: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Achievements	Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verified list of suppliers by official stakeholders. • Launched the New Filter Press Program in Hebron • 31 stone producers vetted. • USAID, through the Compete Project, continues its work to procure filter presses for stone cutters in the West Bank, to ensure they are compliant with environmental standards and to improve the efficiency of the factories. • Finalized three contracts with three Palestinian suppliers to provide Stone and Marble factories in the Industrial Zone of Hebron with new filter presses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This activity will enable stone producers to transform slurry to sludge, meet environmental regulations, and expand their income by engaging in new product development using sludge.
Updates for Other Stone & Marble Activities in the Work Plan	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the sector activities have been strategically updated and customized to meet gender requirements during the retreat. Proposed new activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Show Rooms and Hubs. ○ New Product Development – Residual Stone ○ International standard Compliance ○ Private Academia Partnership (Demo) 	

Lessons Learned

During FY2, the Stone and Marble Sector learned several lessons relating to the filter press program, developing new products from sludge, trade show participation:

- Filter press machines should be an integrated part of stone production and enforced as a part of the overall environmental and production regulations. Both the mechanical and environmental implications of these machines is a part of transforming the stone industry and transferring 'liquid slurry' into 'dry sludge' that has further economic value. Without functioning filter presses, the industry's sludge problems will go unresolved – this is critical as a first step.
- Preparing the contract and negotiating with the stone producers took much more time than was anticipated. In the future, the contractual requirements should be expedited to ensure the program moves forward. To facilitate this, it would be a good idea to have strict deadlines that the stone producers have to meet to be a part of the program; this would ensure that procurement of the equipment could happen in a more timely fashion.
- Addressing the sludge problem should be a phased approach. It is critical that the stone industry and stakeholders play a critical role in the sustainability and transformation of the industry, directly overseeing, monitoring and controlling the hauling of sludge into dedicated dumping sites. This is a short-term solution until potential investors view sludge processing as a business solution.
- A movement to solve the sludge issue is in the early stages in Brazil and provides opportunities for collaboration. For example, Brazil producers are relying on regulation to

facilitate industry change. A similar but modified approach could conceivably be applied across the Palestinian stone sector.

- Brazil is an important country for Palestinian producers to penetrate but difficult to reach in some aspects given exports are highly taxed. It is still worth entering the market especially for Palestinian companies that have experience in the export business.
- The *Coverings* trade show in April provided valuable lessons learned for future trade shows. The Stone & Marble team needs to spend more time assessing the target market and conducting research on current trends. Other pre-show preparations include price lists, converting measurements from metric to imperial systems, buyer research and organizing meetings in advance for Palestinian exhibitors. At *Coverings* it was also evident that U.S. buyers were attracted to finished or decorative items versus only raw samples; accordingly, Compete's Stone team is preparing an innovative campaign for the upcoming *Verona* trade show (Italy).
- *Gender Equity* – While it has been assumed that the stone industry was the most closed to the participation of women in the value chain, after the gender team met with industry stakeholders it turns out there is a need and a space for women in the sector, feasibly in administration, marketing or design.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS

The following table is a report of all indicators specified in the PMP.

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATIONS FOR ALL SECTORS COMPLETE PROJECT FY2									
Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
OP	4.5.2-36	Agri	Value of exports of targeted agricultural commodities as a result of USG assistance	35,926,562	5,000,000	1,072,500	10,000,000	15,990,716 ²	20,000,000
OP	4.7.3-C08	ICT	Number of assisted Information and Communication Technology (ICT) start-ups that have developed products or signed contracts	0	10	10	20	13 ³	20
OP	4.2.2-C11	Tour	Number of new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails	0	0	0	5	1 ⁴	10

² The outcome from tradeshows far exceeded expectations; the increase in exports is primarily from tradeshows and forward contracting.

³ Due to the direct relationship between angle/seed project and the e-zone project with startups, this indicator was not achieved due to the late start of the Seed fund activity

⁴ Work has been launched in the fourth quarter in four major activities: Abraham's trail (10% completed so far), Burqin Church (for Implementation 60% completed so far), Hisham's Palace (50% completed so far) and Bethlehem Visitors Signs (100% completed); hence, the results of these interventions will be captured in FY 2014. The main reasons that inhibited the launching of the activities are: excess delays in issuing permits to work on the trail and excess delays in vetting

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
OP	4.6.2-C02	Tour	Percent of hotels nationally-adopted, USAID-introduced hotel classification	87	0	0	40%	5% ⁵	90%
OP	4.2.2-C12	SM	Value of exports through group and specialized Palestinian stone and marble marketing companies and consortia	0	0	0	2,250,000	6,461,062 ⁶	6,000,000
OP	4.7.3-C05	Agri	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	0	2000 dunums 200 hectares	2148 dunums 214.8 hectares	5000 dunums 500 hectares	6266 ⁷ dunums 626.6 hectares	10,000 dunums 1000 hectares
OP	4.5.2-C02	Agri	Number of new or improved Palestinian products produced by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	0	5	5	35	63 ⁸	50

⁵ Four hotels **received (5%)** final classification rate from the Hotel Classification Committee and **more than 35% of the hotels have adopted** the classification system; however, renovation at those hotels is delaying their final classification. So far, the Hotel Classification Committee visited 35% of hotels and 27 West Bank hotels submitted their self-assessment forms.

⁶ Branding modern booth designs and positioning at International tradeshows attracted more buyers and secured more exports.

⁷ The outcome from upgrading fresh herb facilities, nurseries, guava, forward contracting, and adopt international standards has led to an increase in the area adopting improved technology or management practices.

⁸ USAID Compete interventions with nurseries include grafting and GAP assessment. Closing key gaps led to improvements in all seedling varieties (an additional 30) in the nurseries, as well as the development of new products as a result of tradeshow participation.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
OP	4.5.2-7	Agri	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	N/A			100	1755 ⁹	200
MNG	4.2.2-C02	Agri	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	35,926,562	5%	3%	28%	44% ¹⁰	56%
MNG	4.2.2-C03	Tour	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	56,674,923	0%	0	5%	0 ¹¹	8%

⁹ The olive oil supplementary irrigation project was intended to train 60 direct plot beneficiaries. Due to the high success of the activity it was decided to disseminate the knowledge through training workshops to neighboring farmers (over 1000), in addition to capacity building for date farmers, packaging and labeling, and on adopting international standards

¹⁰ The outcome from tradeshows far exceeded expectations; the increase in exports is primarily from tradeshows and forward contracting.

¹¹ USAID deceleration plan affected the development of the promotion of the Palestinian Tourism sector; consequently, the tourism season was missed. However; Compete has signed individual agreements with HLITOA and Samara Tours to promote Palestinian destinations that will show returns in FY14.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.2.2-C04	ICT	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	5,075,600	3%	2%	5%	17% ¹²	7%
MNG	4.2.2-C05	SM	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	20,573,475	0%	0	26%	31% ¹³	29%
MNG	4.2.2-C06	ICT	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	8,308,269	3%	2%	5%	10% ¹⁴	7%
MNG	4.2.2-C07	SM	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	30,046,475	0%	0	18%	21.5% ¹⁵	20%

¹² Intel has decided to increase the size of the project with ASAL and Jaffa Net after signing the grant agreement; in addition to that the project also signed other grant agreements.

¹³ Branding modern booth designs and positioning at International tradeshows attracted more buyers and secured more exports.

¹⁴ Intel has decided to increase the size of the project with ASAL and Jaffa Net after signing the grant agreement; in addition to that the project also signed other grants agreements.

¹⁵ Branding modern booth designs and positioning at International tradeshows attracted more buyers and secured more exports.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.2.2-C08	Agri	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	7.00	0	0	4	15 ¹⁶	4
MNG	4.2.2-C09	ICT	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	2.00	0	0	3	3	5
MNG	4.2.2-C10	SM	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms.	6.00	0	0	4	4	1
MNG	4.2.2-C13	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	0	6	4	8	8	10
MNG	4.2.2-C14	Tour	Percentage increase of overnight stays in Palestinian hotels from key tourism source markets	252,574	0	0	5%	0 ¹⁷	10%

¹⁶ The number of new markets accessed was measured through the new geographical markets accessed by beneficiaries.

¹⁷ USAID deceleration plan prevented the timely promotion of the Tourism sector leading to minimum results during the FY 13. Compete through HLITOA launched a trade mission to Brazil in September 2013 that will show results in the second quarter of FY 2014.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.5.2-C01	Agri	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	103,000,000	5%	1%	16%	19% ¹⁸	29%
MNG	4.5.2-C03	Agri	Percentage increase in area under cultivation for export crops (hectares)	360	10%	9%	17.5%	19%	25%
MNG	4.5.2-C04	Agri	Additional liters produced by farmers adopting olive oil demo technologies	7,200	12000	13200	60,000	- ¹⁹	100,000
MNG	4.5.2-C05	Agri	Number of fresh herb farmers and sharecropper adopting integrated pest management (IPM)	0	20	23	253	253	340
MNG	4.5.2-C06	Agri	Number of new agribusiness contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	0	6	2	10	16 ²⁰	15

¹⁸ The outcome from tradeshows far exceeded expectations; the increase in exports is primarily from tradeshows and forward contracting

¹⁹ This indicator will be reported in the next fiscal year due to the harvest season being in Oct.-Dec.

²⁰ The outcome from forward contracting activity far exceeded expectations.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.6.2-C01	Tour	Percent increase in number of bed nights in Palestinian hotels	863,947	0	0	5%	0 ²¹	9%
MNG	4.7.3-C01	Agri	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	1,690.00	0	0	5%	55% ²²	10%
MNG	4.7.3-C02	Tour	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	2,251	0	0	2%	2%	4%
MNG	4.7.3-C03	ICT	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	339	10%	9%	20%	23% ²³	30%
MNG	4.7.3-C04	SM	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	471	0	0	9%	10% ²⁴	13%

²¹ Major issues prevented the progress in implementing many activities that will lead directly to an increase in the Tourism numbers including USAID deceleration plan, excess delays in vetting beneficiaries and working on Tourism sites that prevented the promotion of the Palestinian Tourism sector. However, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities data reveals an increase of 1.9% during the last quarters of 2013 over 2012.

²² The outcome from forward contracting activity far exceeded expectations; primarily seasonal workers were employed.

²³ Intel decided to increase the level of engagement with Palestinian companies as a result an increase in employment has occurred in addition to other grant agreement signed.

²⁴ Employment increased due to the impact of tradeshow, Filter press maintenance and consortium marketing.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATIONS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.7.3-C06	Tour	Number of training courses developed and delivered through the USAID -established hospitality school	0	0	0	20	6 ²⁵	16
MNG	4.7.3-C07	Tour	Number of Palestinian tourism and hospitality establishments adopting new technology and tools. (such as booking platforms, payment gateways, market access information and corporate social media presence)	0	5	39	5	8 ²⁶	10

²⁵ Compete was depending on the creation of a Hospitality School during FY 2103 to deliver the needed set of training courses, however; the lengthy process to receive the stakeholders approval to partner delayed the launching of the activity. Despite the fact that planning process was launched during FY 2013, the results will show in FY 2014. Furthermore; Compete provided more than 10 different training courses but since it is under one heading such as TRAC training, we are considering TRAC training and its entire sub courses as three training affecting the final total number of training courses delivered.

²⁶ As a result of the initial success of the web clinics activity; more hotels and tour operators joined in asked for this increase.

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.7.3-C09	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) start-up companies established	0	2	1	5	4 ²⁷	15
MNG	4.7.3-C10	SM	Number of Palestinian stone and marble firms adopting new technologies or investing in new equipment	0	0	0	30	31 ²⁸	30
MNG	GNDR-2	All	Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted program designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)	N/A	NA	NA	22%	85% ²⁹	24%
MNG	4.6.2-C03	All	Number of assisted private sector organizations and private sector service providers receiving USG assistance				15	15	25

²⁷ Due to USAID deceleration followed by extreme delay in vetting, the Investors Seed Fund activity could not start as planned in June.

²⁸ The targets for adopting new technology are based on the New Filter Press program in Hebron Industrial zone under execution.

²⁹ The outcome from workshops and seasonal workers far exceeded expectations

**TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS FOR ALL SECTORS
COMPLETE PROJECT FY2**

Indicator Type	Indicator Code	Sector	Indicator Name	Baseline Value	Planned Value for FY1	Actual Value for FY1	Planned Value for FY2	Total Value for FY2	Planned Value for FY3
MNG	4.6.2-C04	All	Number of new services provided by targeted business service providers and business service organizations to targeted sectors by the Complete Project				2	18 ³⁰	4
MNG	4.7.3-C11	All	Percentage increase in number of firms that received services from business service organizations and business service providers as a result of USG assistance				10%	12% ³¹	20%
MNG	4.2.2-C15	All	Percentage increase in revenues of business service organizations from new services delivered to their members as a result of USG assistance				10%	62% ³²	20%

³⁰ Compete underestimated the quick return of its activities with Service Providers based on historic responses of the market, believing results will be obtained in FY 2014. However enabling service providers to reach the market directly, unlocked quickly the new opportunities, particularly servicing untapped needs.

³¹ Compete underestimated the quick return of its activities with Service Providers based on historic responses of the market, believing results will be obtained in FY 2014. However enabling service providers to reach the market directly, unlocked quickly the new opportunities, particularly servicing untapped needs.

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M&E ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Monitoring progress and evaluating results are key management functions that enable the team to capture performance data that plays a critical role in planning and management decisions. M&E is an on-going process that allows managers to determine whether or not an activity is making progress towards its intended results.

Methodology

USAID Compete Project's M&E team conducted a series of field visits and interviews across the West Bank to collect systematic and timely performance information with regard to achieving quantifiable targets for FY2 of the project. The M&E team asked the technical team to join them in these visits to lend their first-hand knowledge of sector-specific activities and resulting impacts, to ensure that data is collected from the appropriate and knowledgeable people at the targeted companies, farms, etc. M&E also employs the use of online surveys for events, trade shows, etc., to get feedback directly from participants.

Key Accomplishments

During FY2, the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team continued to play a critical role in capturing and evaluating performance data from project activities. The following are select accomplishments for the M&E team this quarter:

- Development of the PMEP for FY2, including the list of indicators and targets;
- Continue opening and updating USAID activities and interventions through the Compete Project in the West Bank on Geo-MIS, TraiNet and TAMIS;
- Developed Project Fact Sheets to be updated twice a month;
- Conducted a series of field visits and interviews across the West Bank to project beneficiaries to track the progress and capturing the intended results as well as to assure data quality;
- Developed new templates for action memos, vetting determination, data verification "Memo to the File" and STTA reports;
- Reflected and integrated all the changes and additions on the new version of Geo-MIS as well as continued opening and updating USAID Compete activities and interventions;
- Led Data Quality Assessment "DQA" to ensure that the Compete Project has met USAID DQ standards in accordance with ADS 203.3.5.1. by preparing for the audit and gathering all required support documents for submission to the auditors;
- Facilitated Compliance Review of the Compete Project with regard to Mission Order No. 21 under the new protocols. The review process covered the period of Apr. 1, 2012 - Feb. 28, 2013;
- Attended workshops, training sessions and events organized by USAID through the Compete Project to assure proper implementation as well as getting participants' feedback and comments;
- Conducted seventeen online surveys to evaluate events and tradeshows organized by USAID through the Compete Project;
- Worked closely with Component Leads and the technical staff to make sure that USAID regulations have been met;

- Worked with Communications team to submit project progress reports.

A RIG (Regional Inspector General) performance audit was carried out to provide an independent assessment of the performance and management of the Compete Project's systems, programs, activities, and functions against objective criteria. The M&E team took the lead in preparing for the audit and gathering all required support documents for submission to the auditors.

Lessons Learned

The M&E team conducted a series of field visits across the West Bank. While the team's primary function is to monitor progress against indicators, the M&E team also focused on building trust with project stakeholders and beneficiaries. A key lesson learned is that building strong relationships with beneficiaries and the technical team will help in monitoring improvement, meeting the project's objectives and responding positively to all USAID requirements. This approach has had a positive impact on obtaining constructive feedback and comments on the implemented activities.

The M&E team continued its review of data quality requirements for data collection in FY1. A key lesson learned is that quality requirements are unlikely to be met unless all templates, system and written procedures are in place; the M&E team continued to work towards this in FY2.

The M&E team worked very hard to facilitate the audit process by preparing and gathering all required support documents for submission to the auditors.

After the RIG performance audit, the M&E team updated their system for verification of data to include additional templates and written procedures in order to improve the procedure of data collection.

After the audit, the M&E team responded positively to address the findings by updating their system for data quality requirements.

A key lesson learned from three USAID audits conducted within four months is that it is useful to know what is missing or what can be improved upon from the beginning of the project in order to facilitate capturing better quality data and for implementing the project.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

In FY2, the Communications team carried out a number of activities to create and maintain dialogue and positive perception in the media and other channels around USAID support of sustainable economic development in the Palestinian Territories. Communications team efforts included a number of PR, outreach and media activities, issuing 27 press releases, planning 12 events where media was present, and receiving approximately 150 media impressions.

Media coverage represents an alternative measure of impact, as it is responsible for positioning USAID Compete and telling the story of its social, human, and economic impact.

During the year the Communications team carried out media outreach activities to continue and expand its efforts to maintain dialogue and positive perception in the media and other channels around USAID support of sustainable economic development in the Palestinian Territories.

USAID Compete sector activities were covered by the following media outlets:

- *Newspapers:* Al-Quds Newspaper, Alayyam News, Al Hayyat Al Jadideh
- *News agencies:* Wafa News agency, Maan News agency, PNN News Agency, Shasha Raya Press, Ekhbaryat News Agency;
- *News webpages:* Panet.co.il, Wamda.com, alwatanvoice.com, AlMaghriebiya, Ra3y.org, gulf media, Baladna fm, Ramallah.net, Elajyal, PalJournal, Mubasher.info, Alwatanvoice, Albalad.net, AlqudsAlraqami.ps Alrai, Raya Press, Rb 2000.
- *Radio interviews:* Hebron Radio, Angham, Raya FM, Tareeq Al Mahaba, Bethlehem 2000, Ajyal, Marah, AlHuraya, Hayat Nablus.
- *TV coverage:* Israeli Channel 1, Israeli Channel 2, Wattan TV, Maan Mix TV, Palestine TV, Hebron TV
- *TV interviews:* Palestine TV (in-studio interview), Shashat TV, Maan TV, Maan Mix, Wattan, Palestine TV (News), Hebron TV.
- *YouTube:* Olive Oil Demo; Hi-Tech Hub 2 (Live-streaming); USAID announcement of programs at ExpoTech in support of Palestinian ICT sector development.
- *International:* Wamda, AMEInfo.com,

On February 19 Al Nasher Public Relations Company (USAID PR contractor) organized a press tour in cooperation with USAID Compete's Communications team to draw media attention to USAID's interventions in the West Bank and highlight the success of this intervention and its effect on the lives of Palestinian farmers. The tour included a visit to USAID's Compete olive oil roll out demos of supplementary irrigation, including a visit to a demo plot in the village of Asira to highlight the increased yield and enhanced quality of olive oil production. Three news agencies – Wafa News Agency, Maan Mix TV and Watan TV – participated in the tour and produced the following reports:

- Watan: http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_video_desc.cfm?id=a5285580a5483228
- Wafa: <http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=148558>

Media coverage represents an alternative measure of impact, as it is responsible for positioning the project and telling the story of its social, human, and economic impact.

ONLINE

Compete is focused on creating an online presence to reach people interested in learning more about how USAID works with the Palestinian private sector and the individuals sectors. In March the Communications team launched the USAID Compete project website:

<http://www.competeproject.ps> The Communications team worked closely with a local Palestinian web design firm to build the website, which includes videos, photo galleries, success stories as well as activity and sector descriptions.

Following the launch of the [USAID Compete website](#) in May 2013 the team focused on ensuring regular updates and continued improvements to make the site more dynamic and user-friendly. Since the launch of the website has received 1,826 visits; 55% of visitors are from within the Palestinian territories, but we have received visits from people in over 60 countries, including the United States, Israel, Italy, Russia, and the UK. The team also launched the project's [YouTube](#) channel and uploaded three videos, which have been viewed 113 times.

By the end of September 2013, the number of likes on the [Compete Facebook page](#) reached over 400 from thirty different countries.

EVENTS

The Communications team oversaw and managed public events carried out by the four sectors, ensured proper branding, media coverage and relations.

Support provided during these events included:

- Producing branded materials: roll ups, banners, invitations, promotional items
- Venue set-up, seating, lighting sound system, branding
- Organizing and running PR and media campaigns
- Documentation of events (pictures, interviews, videos, media monitoring)
- Managing radio and TV interview

PR and Branding:

- Billboard- post Hi-Tech Hub displaying winners and announcing next Hi-Tech hub
- USAID Advertisement in the ExpoTech booklet
- Fruit-Logistica – Berlin booth
- USAID announcement at ExpoTech
- USAID announcement at Hotel Classification Launch Event.
- *Fruit Logistica* Trade Show: booth design and booklet
- *Gulfood 2013* Trade Show: booth design and booklet
- Mini-MBA: panel session and graduation ceremony
- Coverings Trade Show 2013: booth design, booklet and giveaways design
- *Fancy Food 2013* Trade show: booth design and booklet
- *World Food Moscow 2013*: booth design, leading to “Best Newcomer” Award and booklet
- *Marmomacc 2013*: booth design and Precious Stone from the Holy Land branding & marketing campaign, leading to “Best Communicator” Award

Production:

- Vox Pops for Hi-Tech Hub, (promotional video)

- Vox Pops for Hotel Classification
- Short illustrative video about hotel classification standards
- 2 minute video about Grafting training (Agribusiness)
- 2 minute video about Aquaculture (Agribusiness)
- 2 minute video about Fresh Herbs (Agribusiness)
- 2 minute video about In-Service training (Tourism)
- 5 minutes video demonstrating the use of the new Aqua 4D Technology to treat the salinity of water in the Jordan Valley (Agribusiness)
- Coordinating with i-Connect film producer to customize videos (ICT)
- 3 minute video capturing Olive Oil Demos with Watan (Agribusiness)
- 5 minute video Fancy Food 2013 (Agribusiness)

PUBLICATIONS

- Hotel Classification Manual: thorough review and design

REPORTING

As a key vehicle to communicate project progress, impact and evaluation, the Communications Team works closely with M&E to produce meaningful monthly, quarterly and annual reporting. During fiscal year 2 the team produced the following project reports:

- 47 weekly reports
- 10 monthly reports
- 3 quarterly reports
- 1 annual report

The Communications team wrote seven success stories this year to highlight achievements in the four sectors.

- Growing a Fresh Herbs Association
- Serving Up Success in Tourism (regarding in-service training for employees)
- Seeing Stars in Palestinian Hotels
- Using Treated Wastewater can Boost Palestinian Agriculture
- Transforming an Industry Threat into a Business Solution
- Getting Guavas to Market
- Forward Thinking for Palestinian Agribusiness
- Building an Ecosystem for ICT

IN THE FIELD

Compete's Communications team act as "investigative reporters" going out in the field to witness and understand activities first hand. The team conducts interviews and produces stories on locations such as the date and guava harvests, HiTech Hubs, hotel in-service trainings, etc.

ISSUES THAT MAY INHIBIT OR ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

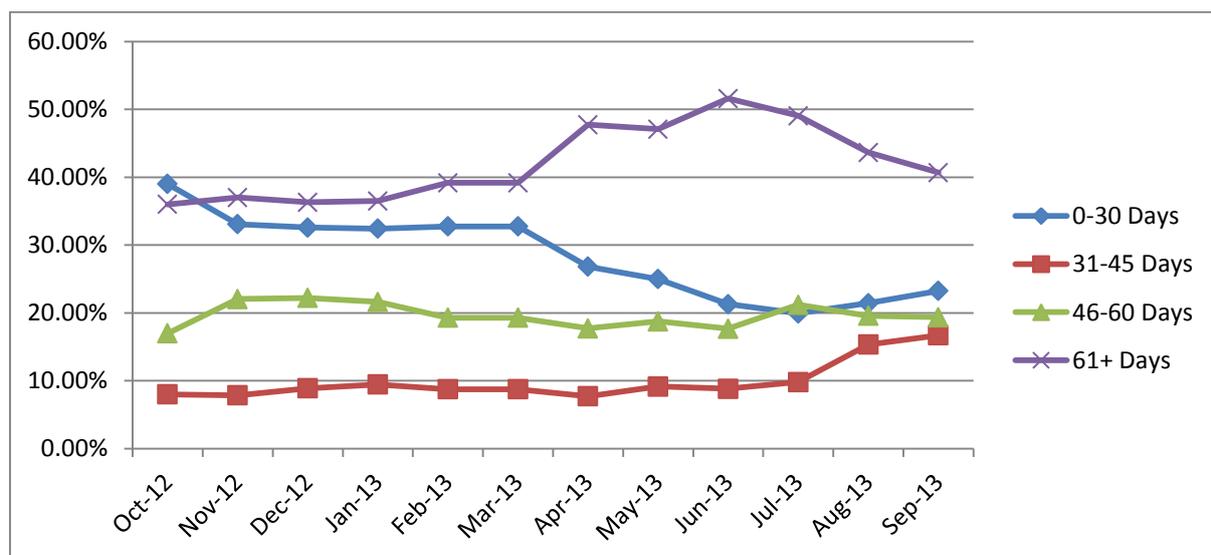
VETTING

In the final audit report that USAID Compete received on May 27, 2013 from the Regional Office of the Inspector General there was recognition that the project team was in full compliance with Mission Order 21 and that delays in the processing of the vetting requests, together with delays in funding obligation had a negative impact on the pace of project implementation and impact. The report also stated that from March 2013 onward the vetting process had improved, which unfortunately reversed in direction during the April/May/ June Q3 time period.

As the graphs below reflect, during the past year up until Q4 (July-September 2013) nearly every category of individuals or companies submitted by Compete for vetting under Mission Order 21 has witnessed a sharp deterioration of the time period between the submission and receipt of vetting approval.

The Compete management team notes that our continued raising of this issue with USAID/WBG over the past year has resulted in some, although marginal, improvement in the processing of vetting requests (see graph below).

Nevertheless, regarding the most critical company partners of Compete, over 40% of firms submitted for vetting require at least 60 days or more before a response from the USG vetting system is received, delaying the ability of Compete to engage in implementation. We also note with concern the continuing deterioration in the other timelines for response within the vetting process system, and again we reiterate that while we fully support the “zero tolerance” for non-compliance by USAID, the delays seemingly inherent in the vetting process remain possibly the most serious impediment to the successful implementation of the Compete Project.



SUBCONTRACTS AND GRANTS

During the second year of the project (October 1, 2012 – September 30, 2013), the Compliance and Grants team worked closely with the technical staff to ensure an agile and streamlined implementation of technical activities performed in a manner compliant with USAID regulations and the special requirements of the Mission.

ACHIEVEMENTS DURING YEAR 2

Eighty-three (83) field-based purchase orders, blanket purchase agreements, and subcontracts for operational and project activities were executed. These purchase orders ranged from the expansion of the project offices on the operational side to trade show management, filter press maintenance, renovation design services, and equipment procurement for agricultural demonstrations on the activity side.

Thirty-one (31) grants totaling \$3,310,801 were executed in the second year ranging from equipment procurement in agriculture to

As part of ongoing USAID oversight of contractors, the Compliance and Grants team with significant support from the Finance team managed the process of the Partner Contracted Audit (PCA) of the first year of the project. The audit has been finalized with the Regional Inspector General in Cairo and there were no significant findings.

As of September 30, 2013, 1430 requests for vetting had been submitted to USAID for individuals and organizations. Eligibility Notices have been received for 1356 of these requests.

The Contracts and Grants team oversaw the recruitment, approval, and hiring process for 7 full time professional and support staff, as well as 10 CCN short term consultants. In addition, the team coordinated with the USAID Mission Project Support Unit on issues of permitting and USAID identification.

GOALS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

The Compliance and Grants team will continue to focus on supporting the technical components to implement an effective and compliant project. The team was able to add two members in the recent months. This will allow us to fully implement a system of assigning each component dedicated resources from the Compliance and Grants Team. Each Procurement and Grants Manager will be assigned two sectors and they will provide consistent support of each activity from inception to completion.

In Year 3, the Compliance and Grants team anticipates supporting international trade shows, renovation and rehabilitation of select tourist sites, and continuing grants support in all sectors.

The Compliance and Grants team will work in coordination with the Monitoring & Evaluation team to perform site visits to grantees, pilot projects, and other project sites and events to resolve any compliance issues that may arise.

ANNEX

ANNEX 1: MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

The following report details the 27 press releases that were produced this year, in addition to ensuing media coverage.

Sector: Tourism

Date: 2/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/388934>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/28937-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D8%B7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82-%D8%B2%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%86-%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AC%D8%AD%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D8%A7>

<http://www.maanneews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=525481Al-Hayat>

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:VuGQIW-IaUYJ:www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2012/10/3/page12.pdf+&hl=en&gl=ps&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESgOuNH4ms6MtJ-L9Ac9o6_3EpfbmXm15ei8qNXHxZr026VGp5QLl64uX0fB6YHG0SLR24ALXRb6TIvyl07KKyoLorAuo9TpElzgnf5A1URTuonCbbVEWjUh9XV3ZFiQn1woBGl&sig=AHIEtbQ4ogCr81i59A59W6SKGPfZR9Zs3Q

Event/initiative: Opening of iOS Mobile Development Center of Excellence

Sector: ICT

Date: 4/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/29385-%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%A8%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%AA%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A5%D9%81%D8%AA%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%AD-%D9%85%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%B2-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%B2-%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%B7%D9%88%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%AC-ios-%D9%84%D8%A3%D8%AC%D9%87%D8%B2%D8%A9-iphone-%D9%88-ipad>

Event/initiative: ExpoTech

Sector: ICT

Date: 7/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSd3MrVAwUU&feature=youtu.be>

Event/initiative: MOU signing ceremony between USAID and MOA

Sector: Agribusiness

Date: 10/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=1>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/11-10-2012/p25.pdf40128>

<http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/10/11/page24.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2012/10/11/page18.pdf>

Event/initiative: Aquaculture workshop

Sector: Agribusiness

Date: 16/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=529840>

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/30720->

[و بتمويل-الوكالة-الأمريكية-للتنمية-الدولية-يستضيف-خبير-دولي-دعما-لقطاع-تربية-الأسماك-مشر وع](http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/10/18/page25.pdf)

<http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/10/18/page25.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2012/10/18/page19.pdf>

Event/initiative: MOU signing ceremony between USAID and Hebron Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Sector: Stone & Marble

Date: 23/10/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=140855>

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=531622>

<http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/31413--الوكالة-الأمريكية-الخليج-تحتفل-بتوقيع-مذكرة-تفاهم-بين-الوكالة-الأمريكية-الخليج-للتنمية-الدولية>

[وغرفة-تجارة-وصناعة-محافظة-الخليج-usaid-للتنمية-الدولية](http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/10/24/page13.pdf)

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2012/10/24/page13.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/24-10-2012/p22.pdf>

Event/initiative: Second High Tech Hub

Sector: ICT

Date: 29/11/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://aqarfelesteen.ps/1107.html>

<http://www.samanews.com/index.php?act=Show&id=144116>

http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_hp_details.cfm?id=a3273813a3559509&c_id=11#.ULo3XoPqmSo

http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_hp_details.cfm?id=a4531811a1342078&c_id=11

<http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=46331>

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=543953>

[http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/35227-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B9-compet-](http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/35227-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%88%D8%B9-compet)

[%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B6%D9%86%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-picti-%D9%8A%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D8%B3%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%A6%D8%B2%D9%8A%D9%86](#)
<http://www.shbabq.com/moltqa/showthread.php?t=74830&page=5>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwAtA1YAgaE> 1.12.2012
<http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/12/1/page8.pdf>
<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/1-12-2012/p09.pdf>
<http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2012/11/28/page25.pdf>
<http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=46031#.ULo-eYPqmSo>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2012/12/3/page12.pdf>

Event/initiative: Launch of Palestinian Hotel Classification System

Sector: Tourism

Date: 12/12/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=144577>

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/Default.aspx>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/36893-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A8%D8%A5%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%86%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9>

<http://www.mubasher.info/portal/PSE/getDetailsStory.html?goToHomePageParam=true&storyId=2211404>

<http://www.rb2000.ps/arb/?p=48113>

<http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=47404>

<http://gulffmedia.com/ar/2012-12-13/article/5672345-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%84-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D9%8A%D8%AA-%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%A5%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82-%D9%86%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%AA%D8%B5%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%81-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%84.html>

<http://www.mubasher.info/portal/PSE/getDetailsStory.html?goToHomePageParam=true&storyId=2211404>

<http://www.almaghrebiya.com/?p=10938>
<http://www.asiatv.ps/site/news.php?action=view&id=220>
<http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-623935,110,111.html>

Event/initiative: In Service Training

Sector: Tourism

Date: 16/12/2012

Media Coverage:

<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/404804>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=192337&cid=2799> (Al-Hayat Al Jadideh, Dec 17 Pg 15)
<http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/local/37347-الضيافة-مجال-في-معتمدين-مدرسين-وتأهيل-لإعداد-تدريبية-دورة>

Event/initiative: Supervisor Certified Trainer Training

Sector: Tourism

Date: 29/1/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=560593>
<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/42290-عقد-سلسلة-دورات-تدريبية-للعاملين-في-الفنادق-في-اربعة-مدن-رئيسية>
<http://www.alquds.com/pdfs/pdf-docs/2013/1/31/page24.pdf>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/newspaper/index.php>

Event/initiative: Announcing the results of the Olive Oil Demo

Sector: Agribusiness

Date: 4/2/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=562054>
<http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/42869-الإعلان-عن-نتائج-مشروع-الري-التكميلي-لأشجار-الزيتون>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/2/4/page12.pdf>

Event/initiative: Increasing Income from Olives

Sector: Agribusiness

Date: 19/2/2012

Media Coverage:

http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_video_desc.cfm?id=a5285580a5483228,
<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=148558>

Event/initiative: The Palestinian Entrepreneurship Sector: Analysis, Planning and Coordination Meeting

Sector: ICT

Date: 27/2/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=569763>
<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/28-2-2013/p26.pdf>
http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_hp_details.cfm?id=a9786381a337748&c_id=17
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2013/02/27/366170.html>
<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=149092>

Event/initiative: Channel One (in Arabic) and Channel two (in Hebrew) reports on the USAID Compete Mini-MBA program for Palestinian Executives at Tel Aviv University

Sector: ICT

Media Coverage:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYeB-oUIGVw>

<http://www.mako.co.il/news-channel2/Economy-Newcast/Article-85515eb2bc5bc31004.htm>

Event/initiative: Coverings Tradeshow

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: 8/5/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=153358>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/9-5-2013/p21.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/newspaper/index.php>

[Al Quds newspaper page 22](#)

Event/initiative: Saline Water Treatment workshop

Sector: Agribusiness

Date: 12/5/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/54404--ملوحة-حديثة-تعالج-ملوحة-النتائج-الأولية-لاستخدام-تقنية-حديثة-تعالج-ملوحة-المياه-في-غور-الأردن-كهر ومغناطيسياً>

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=595012>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/14-5-2013/p22.pdf>

Event/initiative: Launch of New Filter Press Program

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: 21/5/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=597794>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/newspaper/index.php>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=154131>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/22-5-2013/p22.pdf>

Event/initiative: Inauguration of filter Presses Project in Hebron

Sector: Stone & Marble

Headline: A delegation from USAID visited stone mines in area C in Hebron, after launching the filter presses project in the city, with the fund of USAID through the Compete project in the West Bank

Date: 1/6/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.usm-pal.ps/index.php?c=topic&id=19>

Event/initiative: Launch of Arabrenuer Seed Fund

Sector: ICT

Date: 16/6/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/58300-توقيع-الله-رام-الناشئة-والشركات-الفلسطينيين-الرياديين-لدعم-اتفاقية>

<http://wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=155555>

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=605488>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/17-6-2013/p24.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/newspaper/index.php> page 15
<http://ghad.ps/110940.html>
<http://www.ameinfo.com/usaidsupportsangelinvestorseedfundpalestinianterritories-345584>
<http://www.wamda.com/2013/07/palestine-gets-its-first-seed-fund-supported-by-mena-apps-and-usaid>

Event/initiative: Hotel Classification Launched from Jerusalem

Sector: Tourism

Headline: Minister of Tourism Announcing the launch of Hotel Classification from Jerusalem.

Date: 8/6/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/ARB/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=602987>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/57363>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=155097>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/6/9/page6.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/9-6-2013/p21.pdf>

Event/initiative: Sludge new product pre-feasibility study

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: 9/6/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=603352>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=155150>

<http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/57499-الروبة-الحجر-مخلفات-التحضير-لتصنيع-منتجات-جديدة-من-مخلفات-الحجر-الروبة>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/10-6-2013/p20.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/newspaper/index.php> Page 16

Event/initiative: USAID's Visit to the Agricultural-Industrial Projects

Sector: Agriculture

Headline: A delegation from USAID visited a number of projects implemented in local Palestinian areas.

Ghassan Al-Jamal explained that, "we seek to expand agricultural areas and increase the variety of exported products."

Date: 30/6/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=609784>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/59805>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=156364>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=218579&date=>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/7/1/page15.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/1-7-2013/p21.pdf>

Event/initiative: Honoring Local Media

Headline: USAID honored active local media outlets in Palestine in an Iftar Event held as an appreciation for their cooperation and keen coverage of different USAID funded projects.

Date: 17/7/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/61303>

Event/initiative: Meetings in Nablus and Jenin to discuss treated waste water initiative

Sector: Agriculture

Headline: USAID met with a number of local institutions to discuss waste water reuse in irrigation and possible environmental benefits.

Date: 27/7/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/local/62259>

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=617497>

http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_hp_deta242a2554355&c_id=17

Event/initiative: Al-Salam Investments supports Palestinian farmers

Sector: Agriculture

Headline: Al-Salam Investment Group launched a marketing campaign with the fund of USAID through the Compete project in the West Bank.

Date: 1/8/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=618449>

Event/initiative: TRAC Training

Sector: Tourism

Headline: 619 Palestinian hotel workers attended the TRAC Training funded by USAID through the Compete Project in the West Bank.

Date: 6/8/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=619659>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/63014>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=212485&cid=3032>

<http://www.wafa.ps/Arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=158099>

<http://www.nour-ps.com/ar/2013/08/55064.html>

<http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=74096#.UgiLz9IoXkw>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/7-8-2013/p17.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/8/7/page11.pdf>

Event/initiative: Participation in the Verona International Exhibition of stone and marble Preparations Concluded

Sector: Stones and Marble

Headline: Final arrangements for the participation for 8 Palestinian companies in the Verona International Exhibition of stone and marble with the fund of USAID through the Compete project in the West Bank.

Date: 26/8/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/26-8-2013/p17.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=221918&date>

Event/initiative: Classification of Retz hotel in Jerusalem

Sector: Tourism

Headline: Retz hotel in Jerusalem celebrates the classification with the attendance of H.E Minister of Tourism Rula Ma'a'yah

Date: 28/8/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/29-8-2013/p22.pdf>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/8/29/page14.pdf>

<http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-712166,110,111.html>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=159154>

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=624965>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=222160&date=>

<http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=76192>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/64902>

Event/initiative: USAID Supports Dates Production in Jordan Valley

Sector: Agriculture

Headline: (comprehensive report): Dates production in the Palestinian Territory, and the support provided by USAID through the Compete Project.

Date: 25/9/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=633201>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=160659>

<http://www.qudsnet.com/arabic//news.php?maa=View&id=253717>

http://www.ayash.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=12286:2013-09-26-05-53-49&catid=123:2010-09-18-05-42-00&Itemid=99

Event/initiative: Third Guava Cardboard Box Batch Delivered with the fund of USAID

Sector: Agriculture

Headline: The National Carton Industry Company delivered the last batch of Guava cardboard boxes to farmers in Qalqilia, with fund of USAID through the Compete Project.

Date: 30/9/2013

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=634397>

<http://www.palestineafree.com/index.php?id=3853#.Ukk8M9IoU0k>