



USAID
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WEST BANK/GAZA

COMPETE PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT

October 1, 2014 - September 30, 2015



October 30, 2015

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development.
It was prepared by DAI

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DAI

Contract Number: AID-294-C-12-00001

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	5
INTRODUCTION	6
SELECT YEAR FOUR ACHIEVEMENTS	8
YEAR FOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY SECTOR.....	9
AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR.....	9
Strategic Interventions	11
Conculsion	21
Agriculture Sector Indicators Table	22
TOURISM SECTOR	24
Strategic Interventions	24
Conclusion	34
Tourism Sector Indicators Table	36
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SECTOR....	37
Strategic Interventions	38
Conclusion	46
ICT Sector Indicators.....	47
STONE AND MARBLE SECTOR.....	49
Strategic Interventions	50
Conclusion	54
Stone and Marble Sector Indicators.....	55
COMPONENT B – UPDATE	56
AGRIBUSINESS	56
TOURISM.....	56
ICT.....	57
STONE AND MARBLE	57
CROSS CUTTING INDICATORS.....	58
Cross-Cutting Indicators	59
GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT	61
YEAR FOUR CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED	64

YEAR FOUR ADMINSTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS	65
Subcontracts and Grants	65
Year 4 Achievements.....	65
Issues That May Inhibit Or Enhance Performance.....	66
Goals and Future Activities	66
LEVEL OF EFFORT SUMMARY	67
FINANCIAL SUMMARY.....	67
MONITORING AND EVALUATION	68
ANNEX A:Year Four Trainings, Workshops and Conferences	69
ANNEX B: YEAR FOUR MEDIA COVERAGE	71
ANNEX C: GEO-MIS/ TRAINET PARTNER’S QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT (PARTNER/PROGRAM)	79
ANNEX D: PROGRAM PMP INDICATORS REPORT	80

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
FYI	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

INTRODUCTION

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Compete Project is pleased to present its Annual Report for the Project's fourth year (Fiscal Year 2014).

Over the past four years, the Project has improved the competitiveness of over 250 firms, primarily located in the rural West Bank. 1,965 jobs have been created as a result with 73% held by youth and 22-27% held by women. Through its support to 4 key markets, agribusiness, information and communication technology (ICT), stone and marble, and tourism, the Project has seen significant expansion in the export market performance of targeted sectors - an \$98.5 million increase in exports with expansion into 36 new regional and international export markets. USAID/Compete has also leveraged \$61 million of private sector investments, mainly to scale up and improve the quality of production to meet target market demand.

During project Year 4, USAID/Compete developed and implemented a **new approach** to building sustainable capacity of firms this by providing tailored solutions to address critical impediments to competitiveness among 257 firms in the agriculture, ICT, tourism and stone and marble sectors in the West Bank.

Key market failures were identified at the value chain level for targeted West Bank sectors, and the project has addressed these failures using the **Firm Level Assistance Program (FLAP)** as the primary vehicle through which support is provided.

As a result of USAID/Compete's public solicitations and outreach this year more than **250 West Bank firms have applied for support, and 58 firms have benefited** from the program this year.

Through the firm level assistance program and through newly introduced scalability and training programs, USAID/Compete facilitates rapid expansion in critical sectors of the Palestinian economy that show the most

Key Achievements At a Glance

- ✓ Improved the competitiveness of over 250 firms
- ✓ Created nearly 2000 new jobs with 73% held by youth and 22-27% held by women
- ✓ \$98.5 Million USD increase in exports among targeted sectors
- ✓ Expansion in 36 new regional and international export markets
- ✓ Leveraged \$61 Million USD in private sector investments in firm level support
- ✓ Engaged 250 firms in Firm Level Assistance Program, and provided support to 58 firms to date
- ✓ Launched program operations in Gaza, targeting six critical sectors
- ✓ The value of agriculture exports as a result of USG assistance reached over \$24.5 million USD this year
- ✓ 67 new or improved Palestinian products were produced by assisted agribusiness firms this year – 7 more than the FY 2015 target
- ✓ 48% increase in exports, 38% increase in employment, and 29% increase in sales among assisted ICT firms this year
- ✓ 32% increase in exports among assisted stone and marble firms this year, and a 23% increase in sales
- ✓ Supported 9 new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails this year

potential for employment and export growth by providing technical assistance to companies and expertise on how to maximize the value of their products. Strategic interventions carried out among the four targeted sectors have included:

Agribusiness:

USAID/Compete **helps Palestinian producers reach new markets** previously inaccessible to them, including Russia, Jordan, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Holland, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Singapore, and the United States. Participating companies produce a variety of crops for targeted export markets at **internationally-recognized standards of quality and production**. The project supports the adoption of modern technologies and techniques to reduce production costs and increase access to quality water for irrigation including **utilization of treated waste water for agriculture**. USAID/Compete supports the expansion of agricultural production land (20,000 dunum) specifically in **Area C** to support the agreement between Secretary Kerry and the Israeli government.

Tourism:

The project assists the Palestinian tourism sector to increase tourist numbers, overnight stays, and overall revenue. USAID/Compete works with stakeholders to **improve the overall quality of service** provided by hotels in the West Bank by supporting the launch of an **internationally-recognized hotel classification system**, and **in-service hospitality training**. USAID/Compete also supports improving **tourism infrastructure** through the renovation of historic sites that will expand the product offering and enhance the experience of visitors.

ICT:

USAID/Compete is developing the Palestinian “ICT ecosystem” by encouraging innovation and developing skilled human resources to deliver world-class technologies to the global market. The project **supports business incubators and accelerators** by facilitating access to seed funds and venture capital investments, as well as encourages partnerships with international companies. The project focuses on **creating a local and international Palestinian ICT network for improved mentorship and delivers targeted skills training**.

Stone and Marble:

USAID/Compete helps medium-sized stone and marble producers **develop new international export opportunities** in markets such as Europe, Brazil, the United States, Canada, Russia, Iraq, Korea, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan through the FLAP, and participation in international trade shows. The project supports the utilization of **sustainable mining practices and creating niche products**, including the transformation of stone waste from stone cutting factories into commercially-viable and environmentally-sound building materials.

SELECT YEAR FOUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Select project achievements this year include:

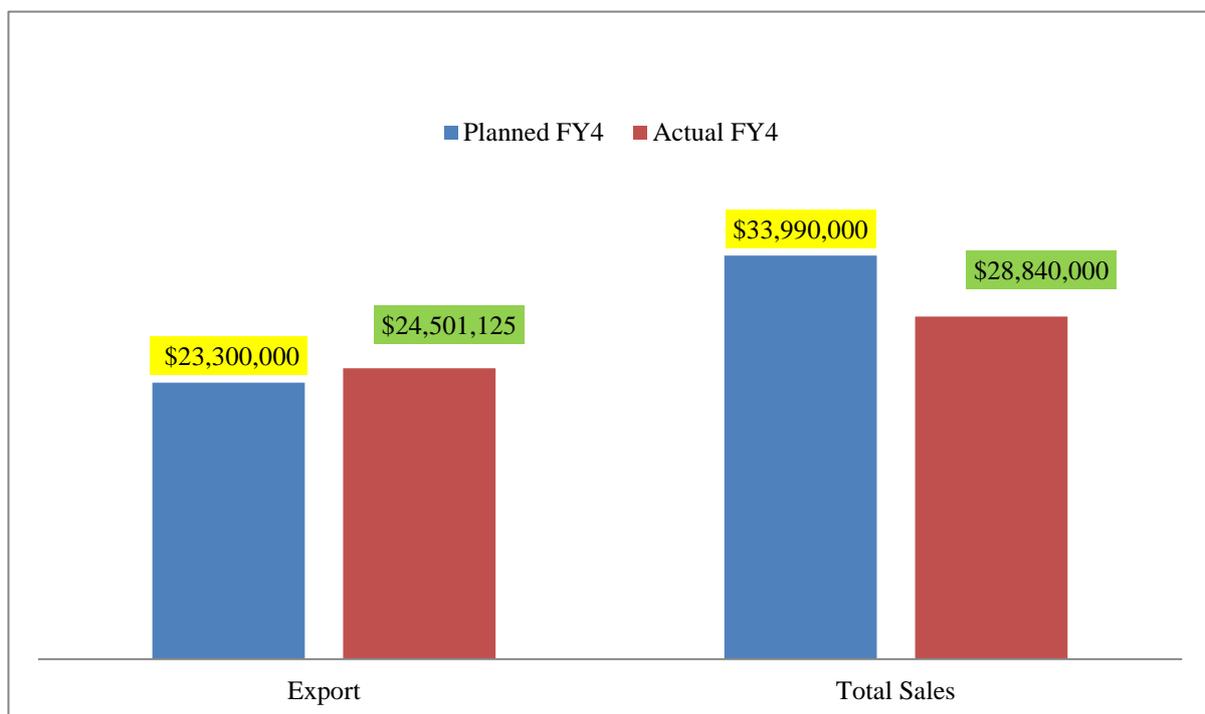
- **As a result of the project's support, exports** have increased by more than **\$33.5 million** through accessing **17 new regional and international export markets**. **Through its innovative cost share program, the project has leveraged private sector resources valued at over 20.4 million USD this year.**
- **1,374 people were provided targeted training** this year to address weaknesses and gaps at the value chain level where, if remedied, will quickly enhance the quality, productivity and export potential of the products. **35% of the trainees were women.**
- With a special focus on enhancing employment opportunities for women and youth; the Project created **409 jobs this year, of which 71% were filled by youth and 27% were filled by women.**
- Upon USAID authorization of **project operations in Gaza**, the project identified critical market failures, developed planned interventions, hired staff, and set up program offices in Gaza.

YEAR FOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY SECTOR

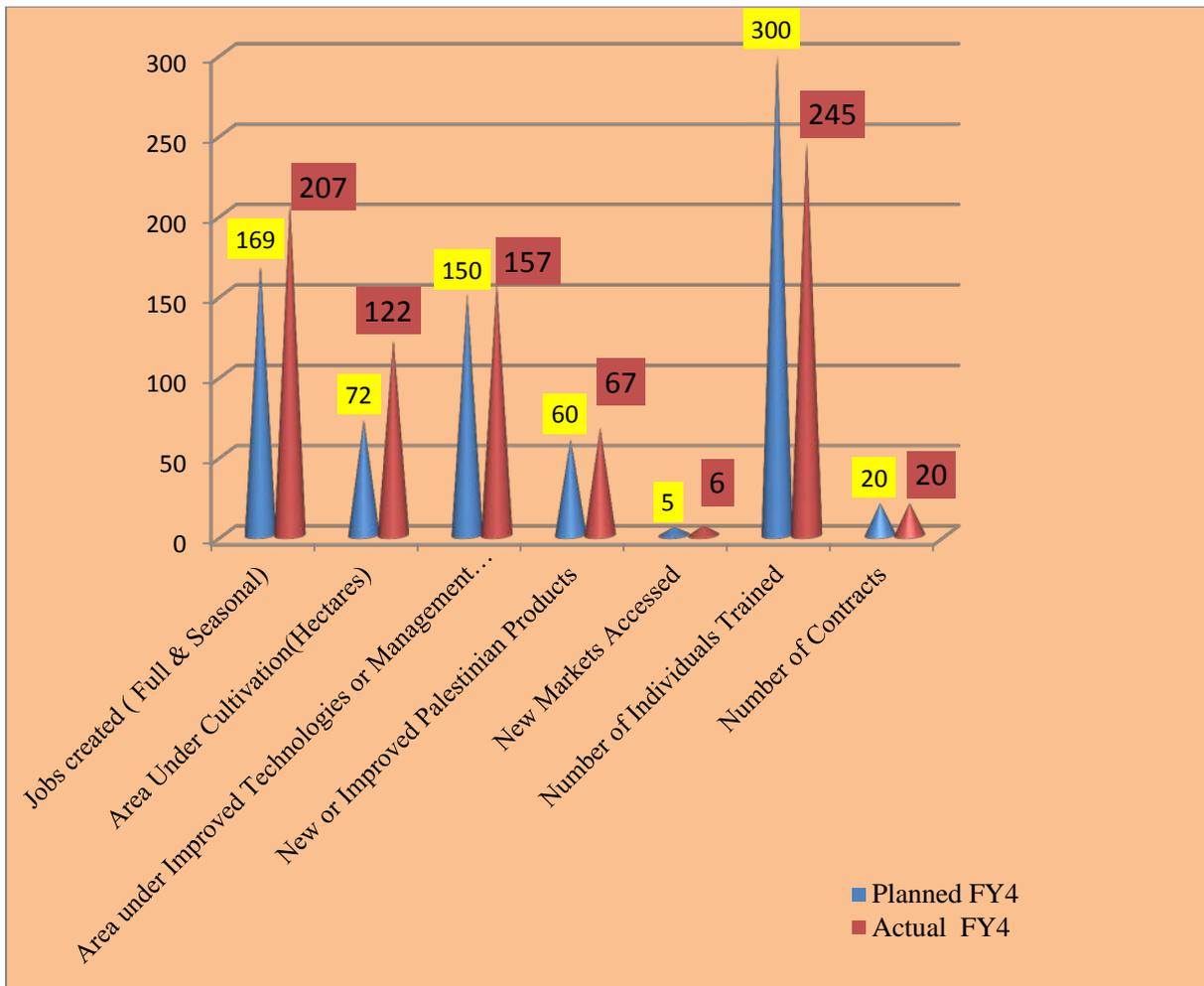
AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR

With USAID/Compete’s targeted assistance from project launch through Q4 of the project’s fourth year, the agriculture sector generated \$65 million in exports, and is expected to reach a cumulative \$88.6 million in exports by the end of the FY5.

The **value of exports** of targeted agricultural commodities as a result of USG assistance reached over **\$24.5 million USD** this year, whereas the target was set at **\$23.3 Million USD**, and **67 new or improved Palestinian products** were produced by assisted agribusiness firms this year – 7 more than the FY 2015 target.



157 hectares of agricultural land came under improved technologies or management practices as a result of assistance from USAID/ Compete (FY15 target was set at 150), and there was a **34% increase in area under cultivation** for export crops (target was set at 20%).



To date, the project has supported approximately 90% of farms growing fresh herbs, which have exhibited nearly double sales and exports since the base year. Thirty percent of strawberry producers (hanging system) are current clients, resulting in double the number of dunums allocated by local farmers to strawberry production and a 1.5 times increase in sales. Forty percent of date farms have been supported, resulting in a fourfold increase in sales and exports.

Fifty percent of avocado and guava producers are project beneficiaries, having seen a 1.5 times increase in the number dunums utilized and a five-fold increase in exports. Twenty percent of olive oil producers are USAID/Compete clients, primarily in the fair trade industry where they have greater potential for competitiveness, who have witnessed more than double an increase in sales and exports. Amongst red potato and carrot farmers, 100% have benefitted from project support, resulting in a three times increase in dunum usage and 19 times increase in exports. Dried herbs is a newly-addressed subsector, launched in Y3 supporting 40% of location production, with results yet to be determined.

USAID/Compete has helped to move five major Palestinian value chains into “developed” status through support in marketing, productivity, and export linkages to enhance the value

chains' competitiveness (see table below). Where the value chain was *growing*, the project employed technical assistance to increase efficiency, scalability and assist in growth planning; and when *promising*, supported pilot efforts and market assessments.

Value Chains	Y0	Y4
Fresh Herbs	Developing	Developed
Olive Oil	Developing	Developed
Dates	Developing	Developed
Dried Herbs	Promising	<i>Growing</i>
Avocado & Guava	Growing	Developed
Strawberries	Promising	<i>Growing</i>
Potato & Carrot	Promising	Developed
Seedless Grapes	Growing	<i>Developing</i>
Almonds	Growing	<i>Developing</i>

Strategic Interventions

Launching Wide Scale Assistance Programs

USAID/Compete has designed, developed and launched three wide scale assistance programs under the agribusiness sector this year – **The Firm Level Assistance Program, the Strawberry Scalability Program, and the Agronomist’s Training Program.**

Firm Level Assistance Program

Launched in the Summer 2015, the project utilized the **firm level assistance program** to build the capacity of the workforce, provide business and management assistance, and key equipment to increase productivity to both small and commercial farms. To launch the program, USAID/Compete held four workshops targeting the agribusiness sector; one each with the North Hebron Chamber of Commerce, the Tubas Chamber of Commerce, the Qalqilya Chamber of Commerce, and the Tulkarem Chamber of Commerce to spread information about the program. Over 130 stakeholders collectively attended the workshops.

As of September 30, 103 applications for firm level support were received by agriculture firms and of those, 16 were approved for support.

Firm Level Highlights

Super Hot Peppers Jamal Khalaf is a farmer who is involved in the production of open field vegetables and thyme. He also has a small packing facility and a cooling container for packing and storing the vegetables he grows. In 2014, Jamal planted 5 dunums of hot peppers as a trial under a forward contract with a client from the United States. The objective of the trial is to cultivate special varieties of super hot pepper under Burqeen weather to identify the hottest varieties to be planted later on. The results were promising; the customer imported the production and was satisfied with the product quality.



30 dunums of the hottest pepper varieties are expected to be produced from the cultivation that took place last spring.

USAID/Compete is supporting Jamal Khalaf with the equipment needed to build a facility for drying and packing the hot pepper for the export market. If successful, this initiative will be the first of its kind the West Bank in which the farmer will be introducing a new high value crop with a high return in investment.



USAID/Compete is supporting the development of baby cucumbers as a new, high value product in the West Bank.

Baby Cucumbers

USAID/Compete is supporting the development of a new West Bank value chain through its firm level support to the Kufr Dan Cooperative for Agriculture and Irrigation. In addition to irrigation activities (well rehabilitation, installation of irrigation networks), Kufr Dan facilitates marketing of pickled cucumbers and baby cucumber for the

cooperative members. They have no post-harvest facilities but the company owners do have

a total of 2,500 dunums, including 50 dunums of baby cucumbers planted under forward contracts, and the plan is to expand to 100 dunums by next season.

USAID/Compete will assist Kufr Dan through the firm level assistance program, in conducting a feasibility study for the production of baby cucumbers and will also conduct a gap assessment among 25 farmers in order to identify their needs and the types of interventions needed.

Fresh Herbs Daraghmeh Company is currently involved in the production of fresh herbs, including a post-harvest unit for export. The company owns 120 dunums of fresh herbs in green houses, in addition to 300 dunums of open fields planted with vegetables. The farms are located in Alfaraa and Mythaloon in the Tubas Governorate. The Company is planning to expand fresh herb production into an additional 150 dunums. This will enable the company to complete the fresh herbs basket all year round.

In order to successfully implement their future plans, the company is in need of a business plan for baby herb production. The business plan will be developed with support from USAID/Compete's firm level assistance program.



USAID/Compete is supporting the expansion of fresh herb production in the West Bank.

Strawberry USAID/Compete

is assisting high value-added subsectors in launching pilot programs with new technology and/or new crops to increase productivity and meet market demands. The project has assisted five West Bank strawberry farmers in the establishment of demonstration farms to introduce new technologies using hanging and computerized irrigation systems. The outcome of these demonstration farms was favorable in terms of productivity and profitability. The intervention lead to an increase in sales for the five strawberry farmers by \$565,021 USD this year.

As a result, USAID/Compete shared its findings and presented a business opportunity through a targeted cost-share mechanism for West Bank farmers to meet high demand for strawberries through the utilization of productive technology.

Launched in the Summer 2015, USAID/Compete's **Strawberry Scalability Program** released a rolling application process, for a targeted area of up to 60 dunums. The target area was reached within just over two months, with over 83 applications received from strawberry farmers since the announcement of the Program. To date, 16



applications have been reviewed and approved by the Strawberry Scalability review panel, (representing a total area of over 70 dunums). Three of these strawberry farmers are women. So far, four letters of agreement have been signed for support in the planting and scale up of over 15 dunums of strawberry. Furthermore, four dunums of strawberry have also been planted with support to farmers under the FLAP, bringing the total planted area to 19.75 dunums.

Agronomists Training Program

The third program launched this year is the **Agronomists Training Program**. Recognizing the need amongst agricultural firms for agronomists with good business skills in addition to tactile skills, the project launched the Agronomist's Training program in September 2015 for 40 agronomists with basic qualifications operating in targeted subsectors. The training will address a gap in workforce development not met by local universities, training individuals in market-led business qualifications and certifications. The project specifically targets women agronomists; 1/5 of the current pool are women.

Introducing New Water Sources –

This year, USAID/Compete began pursuing treated waste water (TWW) for the first time as a solution to the largest impediment for agricultural production in the West Bank: water shortages. Reuse of TWW is one of the few feasible means of increasing water resources and offers significant opportunity to introduce new crops for export.



USAID/Compete sponsored a study tour to Israel for West Bank farmers to learn about the use of TWW for agriculture.

Greening Jalameh : After rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Jenin Waste water treatment plant, USAID/Compete completed the establishment of a 100 dunum demonstration site to introduce and adapt the practices of wastewater reuse for irrigated agriculture. Using wastewater from the Jenin treatment plant, the project worked closely with farmers and community leaders in the northern West Bank to demonstrate how treated wastewater can be reused safely in agricultural production.

The project sponsored a three day theoretical and practical training on TWW use during a study tour to Israel where 22 West Bank farmers visited a number of farms irrigated with TWW (citrus, olives, almond and other fruit trees). The farmers also attended a lecture where they learned about treated wastewater irrigation networks and soil problems related to the use of treated wastewater.

At the close of this year, the project had completed the installation of fencing and irrigation systems on the demonstration farm and planted the first seedlings on the 100 dunum site.

USAID/Compete will continue by following up with the Water User's Association who will be overseeing the irrigation system and ensuring the quality of the water to be used.

Increasing Agricultural Lands

- USAID is conducting cooperative discussions with Israel's Coordination of Government Activities in

the Territories (COGAT) and local stakeholders as part of Kerry's initiative to develop Area C in the West Bank for Palestinian agricultural use. The "Economic Initiative for Palestine" agreement allows Palestinian farmers to irrigate the designated 1,460 hectares (14,600 dunums) with treated wastewater and rehabilitated wells in Jiftlik, Deir Sharaf, and Tamoun to increase their production capabilities. Several meetings took place this year, including; a meeting with COGAT to discuss Israeli requirements for Area C projects; an introductory meeting and tours regarding an area in Jiftlik in the Jordan valley and another in Al Beqa'ah near Tamoun; and a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Abdallah Lahlouh, to discuss the implementation plan.



Farmers inspecting the first seedlings to be planted on the demonstration plot to be irrigated with treated waste water.

Tammoun Water Design

Compete is preparing to offer support for the Tammoun Water Design project, which will provide water from wells located at Ras Al Far'a and An Nassariya to the Al Buqea Plains. USAID/Compete completed the Final Assessment Report in August, for submission to USAID review. If the outcome is favorable, the program will support the development of the preliminary and detailed designs, obtain necessary approvals, and develop the tender documents.

Enhancing Access to Market

Agribusiness Trade Shows

USAID/Compete supports the participation of Palestinian agribusiness companies at international trade shows to assist export ready firms in scaling-up their international presence. This has resulted in increased exports and opening new markets. Companies have participated in Foodex Saudi, SIAL, Fruit Logistica, Gulf Food, and Fancy Food during the past four years.

As a result of participation in **Foodex** last November, Naser Khalaf Company and Josour Company exported two trial shipments of dry herbs, maftool, dates, and olive oil for distributors in Saudi Arabia. This marks expansion and penetration of the Saudi market by these companies, which indicates a possibility for additional future exports. As a result of their trial shipment, Jousour company exported over \$27,000 USD in products to Saudi Arabia this year.

Emirates Delights Company and Nakheel Palestine, both date producers, exhibited at the **SIAL** trade show in Paris, France from October 19-23, 2014. The Palestinian delegation as a whole generated 212 business leads and initiated communication with four new potential markets at the trade show.

Additionally, Emirates Delights signed an agreement to export five tons of dates to France at the SIAL trade show. At the close of the year, the company had exported \$245,100USD in products.

Accelerating Export Growth

USAID/Compete provides technical assistance to export-ready firms to facilitate Palestinian produce sales internationally, particularly through forward contracts.

Date Contracts

In October, USAID/Compete introduced the Moscow based Kam-Trade Company to date producers, vegetable producers, and other exporters from the West Bank. As a result, Kam-Trade Company is negotiating two export contracts with Nakheel Date Company and Al Zaraoun Al Arab Company to buy 50 tons of dates worth \$350,000 USD from each. Kam-Trade Company is also negotiating the purchase of two containers with carrots, potatoes, and onions worth \$53,000 USD from the Tubas Packing House Company.

Potato, Carrot, and Onion Contracts

This year, USAID/Compete also assisted Abd Al Hakeem and Al Furat Company in signing five contracts with Jordanian companies to supply potatoes, carrots, and onions. The value of the contracts is nearly \$4.5 Million USD. The export of carrots commenced in February 2015, followed by the export of potatoes and onions in April 2015.

Local Contracts

USAID/Compete assisted Al Furat in signing a contract to provide 250 tons of onions to a local company, Al Hanjal, valued at \$87,679 USD. The onions were delivered in November 2014.

Compete also worked with Al Furat this year on penetrating the Russian market by assisting the company in meeting highly restrictive regulations to obtain shipment certificates from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and Ministry of National Economy (MoNE). All documents and draft certificates needed for shipment to Russia were finalized and approved by the customer; one container was scheduled to be shipped to Moscow in May of this year but was delayed due to the small size of the carrots. Al Furat plans to introduce a new variety to produce larger carrots for the Russian market this coming season, and a trial shipment is scheduled for December 2015.

By the close of the year, Al Furat increased its sales to Israel by \$480,000USD, local sales increased by \$450,000 USD and the total land area under technology and cultivation for export crops had increased by 455 dunums.

Emirates Delights

During 2014, USAID/Compete supported Emirates Delights Marketing Company in hiring an export manager in Dubai and developing a new factory layout. The export manager is aiming to open new markets and export to the Gulf region and Near East Asia market and the factory layout uses international food safety standards to improve the competitiveness, sustainability, and the export capabilities. This year, the export manager has brought in \$580,375USD in exports to Emirates Delights.

Supporting Facility and Service Upgrades- USAID/Compete supports the implementation of practices and packaging based on international standards to improve the ability of companies to penetrate global markets. The project has worked this past year to strengthen targeted export ready and non-export ready subsectors by assisting with resource upgrades on a cost-share basis that would otherwise limit the sector's ability to grow. As part of its effort to identify impediments along targeted value chains, the project conducted a cooling chain study to evaluate postharvest handling processes in several commodities in conjunction with existing cold chain components. Target commodities included: guava, avocado, dates, fresh herbs, carrots, potatoes, and table grapes. The study revealed poor or nonexistent cold chain management in all the targeted commodities and little knowledge about postharvest harvest handling and importance. Although strong

subsectors such as fresh herbs and dates are investing heavily in proper postharvest technologies, there still room for improvement.

To support improvements in cold chain management, the project purchased and installed 12 cooling rooms for four companies in the potatoe and carrot and fresh herbs value chains this year.



USAID/Compete procured and installed twelve cooling rooms for four companies to improve post harvest handling.

During the base period, Top Field Company was assisted in establishing forward contracts with local and Jordanian companies to provide potatoes and carrots, resulting in a need

for improved equipment to maintain supplies. To supplement, USAID/Compete assisted Top Field in installing **a new cooling room** to ensure high quality produce will be provided to their clients. In January, Top Field Company completed the installation of a 150 square meter cooling room and the training necessary to operate the room appropriately. This year, Top Field signed nine new contracts valued at over \$1,205,000 USD, increased the area under technology and cultivation by 512 dunums, and introduced two new products.

National Carton Company

USAID/Compete supported the National Carton Company, a Palestinian packaging manufacturer, during FY3 in achieving compliance with ISO 9001 certification schemes. National Carton, a Palestinian packaging manufacturer, adopted ISO 9001 certification schemes to help them comply with regional and global markets requirements, remove technical barriers embedding their entrance to new markets, and improve food safety and quality.

As a result, the National Carton Company passed the external audit and became ISO 9001 certified in March 2015. National Carton Company was able to increase local sales by \$320,588 USD by selling proper carton specifications that comply with the food packaging and labeling norms of the Palestinian Standardization Institution (PSI).



Machinery for producing almond oil at Canaan Fair Trade.

National Carton Company also improved two cartons for tomatoes and vegetables and introduced 1 new carton for grapes.

Scientific Lab Nablus

In 2012, USAID/Compete conducted a gap analysis for Scientific Lab Nablus regarding lab accreditations, microbiology analysis, and pesticide residue analysis according to ISO17025 standards. Based on the results, USAID/Compete assisted the lab on a cost-share basis in acquiring the necessary equipment, which will qualify it to achieve the ISO accreditations in the future.

On April 15th, USAID/Compete delivered, calibrated, and handed over three machines which can perform about 250 new tests for pesticide residues, heavy metals, and microbiology. This year, the Scientific Lab increased local sales by \$15,860 USD.

Canaan Fair Trade

USAID/Compete has supported Canaan with developing a feasibility study for new products, identifying market linkages, and drafting of forward contracts.

This year, USAID/Compete completed the installation and handover of machinery to assist with almond oil production, which has been in use since mid-May. As of the close of the year, Canaan had sold nearly \$85,644USD in almond oil.

Al Hithnawi

Al Hithnawi General Trade Company, a seed and spice packing company is upgrading their production facilities to stimulate the local market by providing new products: herb and seed oils. As a result, over 100 local suppliers will benefit from Al Hithnawi's need for large quantities of local produce for raw materials.

In May of this year the equipment was delivered to the Al Hithnawi facility. In June, Compete completed the installation and handover of the equipment for the packing and distillation lines for fresh herbs and seeds; the resulting oil products will target local and export markets. To date, the company has introduced 15 new products and created five new jobs, two of them are held by women, and three held by youth.

Holy Tree Cooperative

USAID/Compete supported the purchase of an olive oil tank for the Holy Tree Cooperative during quarter one of FY2015 to increase their productivity. The cooperative is based in Tubas in the northern West Bank and has 59 members, 16 of which are women. As a result of USAID/Compete's support, Holy Tree has increased its export values this year by \$12,870 USD and local sales by \$4,389 USD.

Vegetable Nurseries

During FY2014, USAID/Compete supported two nurseries, Atta Abu Rub and Juneidi, in upgrading nursery facilities, including seeder machinery, shading net, and a washing machine, according to GLOBALGAP standards. These upgrades enabled one nursery to donate an old

seedling machine to Thinabah Nursery, further strengthening the sector. USAID/Compete provided training on the machine for to the staff at Thinabah, to ensure sustainability.

On May 25th, Compete conducted a site visit to Atta Abu Rub Nursery to supervise the internal GLOBALGAP audit and assist the nursery in finding solutions to any issues. The nursery complies with GLOBALGAP requirements overall; however, some parts of the documentation system are not implemented. Compete gave the nursery instructions for all necessary updates to comply with GLOBALGAP. It is expected that Atta Abu Rub nursery will be the first Palestinian nursery to gain GLOBALGAP compliance by early next year.

Due to the provision of grafted seedlings, Atta Abu Rub's nursery allowed farmers to increase the area under new technology and improved management practices by 27 dunums, this year.

Al Buqea and Al Fara'a Farms

During the base period, Al Buqea and Al Fara'a Farms was assisted in establishing forward contracts with local and Jordanian companies to provide potatoes and carrots, resulting in a need for improved equipment to maintain supplies. With new cooling rooms and packing houses, high quality produce will be provided to their clients. During January, Al Buqea completed the installation of three cooling rooms and the training necessary to operate the rooms appropriately.

Nussiebeh Farm

Nussiebeh Farm produces fresh herbs for the export market. USAID assisted the farm in building four new cooling rooms in the packing house to provide high quality produce to their clients. During February, Nussiebeh completed the installation of the cooling rooms and the training necessary to operate the rooms appropriately.

Green Qalqilya Company

In 2014, USAID/Compete assisted Green Qalqilya Company, an aggregator made up of three guava and avocado companies and five farmers who represent 40% of their sectors, in establishing a packing house and two cooling rooms. Through this aggregator, farmers are able to use the equipment and facilities at low costs, allowing them to overcome the additional logistical issues that negatively impact quality, price, and competitive capacity, enabling them to meet export market demands. This year, Green Qalqilya generated 558,334 Kg of guava, 31,405 Kg of pepper, 183,760 Kg of lemon, and 144,576 Kg of avocado exports with a total value of US \$1,066,180 between October 2014 and March 2015.

Transforming Product Packaging- USAID/Compete assists Palestinian companies to upgrade the marketing and packaging of goods so as to meet international standards and penetrate new markets.

Al Aqaba Rural Women's Cooperative

USAID/Compete worked with Al Aqaba Rural Women's Society (ARWS) a women's cooperative from Tubas that generates products from raw materials, and Jusoor Company

for Investment & Agricultural Marketing, a local Palestinian marketing company, to design new packaging for ARWS products. By upgrading to bag-in-bag packaging for dry herbs, ARWAS products can now reach hotel markets as part of the UNDP National Product First initiative, as well as meet international market standards for export. 10 new products with new packages were introduced (Herbal, Chamomile, Anise, Thyme, Thyme Persian, Ginger with cinnamon, Sage, Mint, Ginger, Green tea). Following this support, ARWAS began contract negotiations with Yafo Company to begin exporting their products to England.

Al Hijaz

In previous years, USAID/Compete assisted Palestinian food producers in improving their production, packaging and labeling systems in compliance with the international standards and market demands. Under this grant, Al Hijaz improved the packaging for their ChocoMadjoul product for international distribution. Al Hijaz Company exported a trial shipment valued at US \$3,194 to the UK as a result of the new packaging.

Prime Company

USAID assisted Prime Company for Investment, which has been working for over two years in the development and testing of its anticipated product line. The line includes meals, bakery, pestos, sauces, marinades, jams preserves, honey, infused olive oil, and herbal teas. The project also assisted with the procurement of convention oven, fermenter, baking oven, and other kitchen equipment. This will enable the company to launch these products into the local market and eventually, internationally. This year, the company introduced nine new products including frozen meals, soups and pesto.

Conclusion

The Project exceeded the Year Four targets set for three of the four OP indicators in the Agribusiness sector, as seen in the Agriculture Indicators table, below. The target set for OP Indicator 0.5.2-7: *Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training* came short by 55, as in year four, Compete focused on specialized training to support targeted value chains, this approach takes longer time in design and implementation. The design of the comprehensive Agronomist Training Program and the selection of 28 fresh Ag engineers resulted in the delay of the start of the program to beginning of year 5, which will make the project right on target.

All other management level indicators for the agribusiness sector were met, or exceeded with the exception of Indicator number 4.5.2-C01 *Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms*. While the target set for this indicator was 33%. Compete interventions this year were focused on increasing access to export markets, and increasing export sales. Export values did in fact reach 3% over target. Expanding local sales beyond the 28% that was reached this year was not possible, due to the focus on exports.

Agriculture Sector Indicators Table

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-36	OP Indicator	Agribusiness	Value of exports of targeted agricultural commodities as a result of USG assistance	Decimal	\$35,926,562	FY12	\$23,300,000	\$24,501,125	
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C05	OP Indicator	Agribusiness	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Integer	0	FY12	150	157	
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C02	OP Indicator	Agribusiness	Number of new or improved Palestinian products produced by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Integer	0	FY12	60	67	30 of the new products came as a result of providing new technology for Hithnawi Co. to produce oil from herbs, almond and Aqaba Cooperative to produce packing of dried herbs such as thyme, tea, etc.
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-7	OP Indicator	Agribusiness	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	Integer	N/A	FY13	300	245	In year four, Compete focused on specialized training to support targeted value chains, this approach takes longer time in design and implementation. The design of the comprehensive Agronomist Training Program and the selection of 34 fresh Ag engineers resulted in the delay of the start of the program to beginning of FY16.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C02	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	35,926,562	FY12	65%	68%	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C08	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Integer	7	FY12	5	6	Exports of Agriculture to Saudi Arabi was not expected and materialize.

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C01	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	103,000,000	FY12	33%	28%	Compete interventions this year were focused on increasing export values (which were 3% over target). Expanding local sales beyond 28% was possible due to exports.
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C03	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Percentage increase in area under cultivation for export crops (hectares)	Percentage	360	FY12	20%	34%	The increase in export demand of fresh vegetables, carrot potatoes and onions resulted in an increase in cultivated areas beyond target.
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C06	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Number of new agribusiness contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Integer	0	FY12	20	20	
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C01	MNG Indicator	Agribusiness	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	1,690.00	FY12	10%	12%	Increased exports and cultivated land resulted in higher employment figures.

TOURISM SECTOR

Over the last four years, USAID/Compete has focused its interventions in areas that would restore market confidence and address key market failures, such as access to market, product diversification, and quality workforce standards. The project implemented a number of activities to address these challenges, including intensive participation in trade shows and study tours, marketing support through collaborative efforts with the industry associations, and capacity building of hotel management and operations through workforce development training and firm-level assistance to provide necessary management information systems.

USAID/Compete intervened actively at the supply level, working with the private and public sectors to bring service quality to international standards through the development of a successful classification system for hotels (adopted by 66% of the industry in just three years), rolling out a in-service training program, and developing tourism vocational curricula with Bethlehem University.

While political unrest and the unstable security environment has hindered significant progress within the tourism sector in the West Bank, there were still several achievements made this including an increase (1.2%) in employment of assisted tourism firms, even while employment figures for the sector as a whole have declined dramatically this year.

Working to build the full “destination eco-system” for key tourism sites in the West Bank USAID/ Compete supported 9 new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails this year (two more than the targeted seven sites), including urban rehabilitation works in important historical sites in Bethlehem, Burqin, Bethany, and Jenin.

Strategic Interventions

Firm Level Technical Assistance –

The firm level technical assistance program was officially launched in May 2015. Two workshops were held to announce the program to the tourism sector: one with the Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association (HLITOA) and one with the Arab Hotels Assosiaton (AHA), to spread the information about the program. 13 tour operators, including experiential tourism service providers Abraham's Path and Masar Ibrahim, and 24 representatives from 13 hotels attended the workshops.

Firm Level Highlights

As of September 30th, 17 applications for firm level support were received from the tourism sector and of those, seven were approved for support.

The primary beneficiaries of USAID/Compete’s support to the tourism sector are hotels and tour operators. For this reason, the project is focusing in on three main intervention

areas – the provision of property management systems to hotels, support in developing business plans and marketing support.

Santa Maria Hotel, Orient Palace Hotel, Orient Company for Hotel Management and Laila Tours: Through the firm level assistance program, USAID/Compete is providing a comprehensive Property Management System to two hotels (Santa Maria and Orient Palace), a Hotel Management company (Orient) and to a tour operator (Laila Tours). The property management system will help these companies reduce operational costs, increase their operational capacity, increase the number of clients, expand to new markets, and generate revenues.

The system will also enable beneficiaries to update and maintain their records, enhancing their managerial and decision making capabilities. In addition, the system will help them organize their procurement and compliance procedures leading to enhanced quality of service.

Bethlehem Hotel and Grand Hotel: Hotels in the Palestinian territories are seeking assistance in conducting full assessments of their operations, and in developing business plans so that they will be able to evaluate their market performance to include competitive analysis, price positioning and market segment penetration. In response to this need, USAID/Compete has begun working with two hotels – the **Bethlehem Hotel and Grand Hotel**.

Through the firm level program, the hotels will develop plans that will through the process of their development, help clarify their vision and lead to enhanced customer confidence. This process will allow the hotels to improve their internal capacities, and service standards, allow them to achieve classification. will also help hotels determine their strengths, weaknesses and gaps, increase annual occupancy rates, and selling points, increase profit, communicate planning objectives and strategies to bankers, partners, employees, financial sponsors and will allow hotels to plan the growth of their business and associated capital requirements.

Rehabilitating Urban Sites - USAID/Compete worked with the Center of Cultural Heritage Preservation (CCHP) on urban rehabilitation efforts in and around Bethlehem, Bethany, and Burqin this year to improve urban planning, zoning, and beautification and to expand and diversify the

USAID/Compete also aided in the expansion and improvement of tourist infrastructure at key sites throughout the West Bank. Buildings were selected based on accessibility and physical charisma, as to provide unique visitor experiences combined with improved tourist resources. The project also worked closely with the private sector to commercialize tourist infrastructure, attracting private investments that could bring priority destinations to the next level.

Bethlehem

USAID/Compete worked with the CCHP this year to complete a cluster of renovation projects in Bethlehem. The project coordinated with Bethlehem Municipality to identify the sites in need of infrastructure improvements or renovations in order to enhance the tourist experience at these sites. The renovations in Bethlehem will help revive Bethlehem's historic pilgrimage route, given its religious and historic significance.



USAID Mission Director Dave Harden, Minister of Tourism Ms. Rula Maayah, and Bethlehem Mayor Ms. Vira Baboon cutting the ribbon of Al Qattan Stairway during an inauguration ceremony for a cluster of renovated sites in Bethlehem.

Hosh Abu Jarour

The renovation of Hosh Abu Jarour, a traditional building located on Star Street in central Bethlehem, was completed during November of 2014. The renovated building now serves as a visitor information center and houses the first Icon School in the West Bank. The Icon School will train local students to paint religious icons by hand; returning an ancient handicraft to Bethlehem, generating employment opportunities for young people, and offering an additional attraction on this important historic route

Bethlehem Gallery

USAID/Compete supported the rehabilitation and furnishing of Bethlehem Gallery at the Arab Women Union's building to allow the Union to operate a gift shop, gallery, and restaurant at their premises. The Gallery opened its doors in February, 2015.

Street Lighting Network and Public Toilets

USAID/Compete has upgraded and replaced the existing lighting fixtures within the Historic Town of Bethlehem (on Star Street in particular) in order to improve the walking trails and enhance security for visitors, and to help increase nightlife activities.

The project also supported the renovation of public toilets located in Manger Square in Bethlehem. The finished site now provides healthy, environmentally friendly, and properly ventilated sanitary units for local and international tourists.

Rehabilitation of Bus Station Stairway

USAID/Compete also rehabilitated a bus station stairway which is located near Manger Square. The rehabilitation serves to organize tourist flow transporting from the bus station to the Manger Square; reducing the traffic jam that used to result from tourist groups crossing the main street to Nativity Church. The stairway has a total length of 100 meters and an average width of 2 meters.

King David Street

USAID/Compete also rehabilitated King David Street to adjust the slope of the street to provide an alternative road way for tourist buses. The rehabilitation also allowed for pick up and drop off areas, organized vehicle flow, and reduced traffic on Star Street.



King David street was made accessible to tourist buses through USAID/Compete rehabilitation works.

Qattan Stairway

USAID/Compete rehabilitated Qattan Stairway, which is located in the old core of Bethlehem and is considered an important path connecting the Market area with Star Street.

Qattan Square

USAID/Compete rehabilitated Qattan Square (an abandoned site) and turned it into a green area, located near Star Street in Bethlehem, providing tourists with a rest area in the middle of the historic town. The square has a total area of 380 m².

Beit Sahour

Shepherd's Field is considered one of the most important tourist sites in the Bethlehem District, after the Nativity Church. USAID/Compete has beautified the area by upgrading the street leading to the area, organizing flow of tourist buses by providing pick and drop off points, sidewalk construction for visitors, greening and landscaping, in addition to



Shepherd's Field traffic circle in Bethlehem was completed this August, 2015.

street furnishing. The project worked closely with Beit Sahour Municipality on the plans for rehabilitation, the design works, and on follow up and monitoring of progress in implementation.

To complement the rehabilitation of the Shepherd's Field Area, the project also rehabilitated the tour bus parking lot in Beit Sahour. The rehabilitation has helped to organize the traffic in that area by providing tourist buses with a space to park, rather than on the towns main streets.

Battir

The renovations of Battir Village, designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2014, aim to improve visitors' experience by enhancing the old core of Battir. The beatification works at Battir Historic Center that were completed this year included the renovation of walking trails in the old core of Battir and other civil works including sidewalk construction, landscaping, installation of lighting fixtures, and street furniture. Rehabilitations also included a restaurant located in a public park that was in bad physical condition. This rehabilitation has provided tourists with a public space (to be leased to the private sector) for rest and food and improved the roadway leading to the park.



USAID/Compete has completed the renovation of Battir Park Restaurant, supporting the development of Public-Private Partnership frameworks.

Burqin

Renovation works at Jarrar Palace in Burqin were also completed this year. The program supported the rehabilitation of a traditional building in order to revitalize the historic town of Burqin. The renovated building will offer visitors services and attractions in the historic buildings, including rest areas and a restaurant.



USAID/Compete has completed rehabilitation of Jarrar Palace in Burqin (Jenin) this month.

Compete also met with key stakeholders from Burqin to establish a strategic conservation and management plan, ensuring that community stakeholders are ready to manage the sites, and to identify additional locations for potential future interventions in the historic town.

Bethany

Historic Center, Bethany

The rehabilitation of Bethany's Historic Center aimed to improve visitors' experiences by enhancing walking trails in the old town of Bethany, improving the entrances, and providing the old town with all touristic elements that will encourage visitors to spend more time at the site. Works conducted included urban rehabilitation and beautification, civil works, tiling, landscaping, lighting fixtures, and street furniture.

Bethany Museum

USAID/Compete also developed and furnished a museum for the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities (MoTA) in the old town of Bethany, in order to provide the thousands of visitors with additional attractions when visiting Eleazar tomb. The project completed all museum renovations and furnishing, including show cases, carpentry works and glass fabrication.



Developing Innovative Interpretation- In *Completion of Bethany's historic center.*

In addition to the renovations and rehabilitations described above, the project has been working with CCHP in collaboration with MoTA, to develop interpretation panels to enhance tourist experiences by highlighting important historical and cultural information at key sites. USAID/Compete and CCHP representatives evaluated site conditions for proposed interpretation panels, selected 27 sites in Burqin and Bethlehem, and developed all content and text in English and Arabic. The text was reviewed and approved by MoTA, and the printing and production was underway as of the close of the year. The panels will be installed at the key sites in the first quarter of Year 5.

Destination Marketing - USAID/Compete is partnering with the Office of the Quartet Representative (OQR) to develop the Bethlehem Governorate as a tourist destination hub. As part of that effort, the project hired a consulting firm to develop a branding strategy for the Bethlehem governorate and on September 30th, 2015 the branding toolkit and vision strategy were presented to a group of 30 stakeholders. The workshop was attended by the Bethlehem Municipalities, MoTA, tour operator and tour guide associations, and other sector actors. The consultant presented the new proposed branding tool kit including the logo, umbrella message, concept posters, concept designs and content for social media, a branding campaign strategy and branding guidelines.



On September 30, 2015, thirty five tourism sector stakeholders met in Bethlehem to review the newly devised branding strategy for the Bethlehem Governorate.

Bethlehem 5K Run



USAID/Compete held a 5K run in Bethlehem this year to highlight Bethlehem's touristic landmarks and newly renovated sites.

On February 6th, 2015 USAID/Compete, Bethlehem Municipality, and local youth councils held a 5K Run in Bethlehem. More than 500 participants attended, mainly made up of youth from throughout the West Bank. The route went through Bethlehem's landmarks and newly renovated tourism sites under the CCHP contract to market them and

highlight the link between the new attractions. The event was concluded with an awards ceremony and a musical performance. USAID Mission Director David Harden, visiting USAID Assistant Administrator Paige Alexander, and Mayor of Bethlehem Municipality Verra Baboun all attended the event.

Christmas Festival – USAID promoted Christmas activities throughout the holiday season as part of the strategic branding of Ramallah, Bethlehem, Beit Jala, and Beit Sahaour as destination locations. With grant from USAID/Compete, HLITOA tailored spiritual, shopping, culinary, and cultural events to increase tourism and awareness of each location's products and services, specifically targeting the Star Street decorations and tree lighting events. The Christmas tree lighting



Christmas Festival 2014/2015

ceremonies were held in Bethlehem on December 6th and in Ramallah on December 7th. Both lighting events were attended by thousands of people, including West Bank residents, Arab-Israeli tourists, and foreign tourists, with speeches given by the Prime Minister and respective mayors in each city. Bethlehem Municipality also offered activities throughout the month, including a Christmas market in Star Street, musical concerts, children's plays, cultural performances, Christmas carols, and a scout's parade.

Implementing Quality Standards – USAID/Compete has been supporting the Arab Hotel Association (AHA), the official representative of Palestinian hotels, in raising Palestinian hotel service standards. The AHA hired PalClean, a professional local Palestinian cleaning service provider, to educate members on a systematic approach to cleaning. PalClean initially assessed 12 Palestinian hotels, developed a cleaning manual to address local needs, and successfully delivered training on basic cleaning to the staff of eleven of the twelve hotels.

In October 2014, USAID/Compete held a celebration to recognize the achievements of all 11 participating hotels in acquiring the **Property Gold Quality Service Certificate**. Roughly 300 employees from the hotels completed and passed the trainings, which constituted eight modules designed by the American Hotel & Lodging Association-Education Institute (AHLA-EI) delivered by a local company, Diyafa Hospitality Management Consultants.

Since October 2014, AHA has continued to assist hotels in achieving classification under the hotel classification scheme developed with USAID support. In July, MoTA approved the new proposed management structure of the classification system, which will ensure the hotel classification sustainability without donor support. USAID/Compete has continued to provide support to hotels in achieving classification, under the Firm Level Assistance Program. 36 hotels are classified to date, and 12 new jobs have been created as a result.

Establishing Vocational Training – USAID/Compete worked with Bethlehem University to improve the quality of service standards in the West Bank by providing a vocational education program for the first time. In December 2014, Bethlehem University launched 25 training modules developed through a USAID/Compete grant in collaboration with internationally recognized institutions outside of the West Bank. The



Food and beverage students from Bethlehem University practicing during the launch event

modules targeted front-line staff, covering five clusters: Front Office Management, Food Safety and Sanitation, Food & Beverage, Culinary Arts, and Communications. To meet industry requirements, this initiative focuses on specific pedagogy and curriculum development built around specific training needs. This will fill an education and labor gap and contribute to an increased number of Palestinians employed in the tourism sector.

Developing a Tourist Information System

Visit Palestine

Visit Palestine, an online destination travel guide, was selected to be developed as a commercially viable resource to guide foreign and local visitors in Bethlehem and the Holy Land. *Visit Palestine* is expanding their resources for tourists by establishing a tourist information office in the heart of the Bethlehem with staff speaking nine languages, redeveloping their website



(www.VisitPalestine.ps in English, Arabic, Spanish, and Italian), and developing a mobile application to help visitors with special features such as planning, booking, maps, and city guides. The company was supported under a grant that ran through August 2015.

Throughout the year, *Visit Palestine* achieved important milestones, with USAID/Compete support, including: establishing six new product lines and eight new suppliers to supply the gift shop; progressing the development of four video trailers targeting different tourist groups; increasing publicity by holding a book signing event; increasing the number of followers on the Visit Palestine Facebook page by 15% since opening; and hiring a Dublin-based, Palestinian-owned web marketing company to upgrade the website.

The Tourist Information Center continues to organize various events and tours. *Visit Palestine* has entered into several partnership agreements with various stakeholders from across the tourism industry and beyond, including promotion of the Maftoul Festival and Yabous Cultural Center.

Visit Palestine is also signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with various service providers that operate day tours and hiking tours. (ie. Siraj center, Massar Ibrahim, Rozana). Six new jobs were created at *Visit Palestine* as a result of USAID/Compete support.

Improving Tourism Sector Marketing - USAID/Compete is improving the marketing capacity of stakeholders in the Palestinian tourism sector through availability of new quality marketing products. On November 26, 2014, an event was held at Solomon Pools in Bethlehem to launch the online Image Bank providing a comprehensive digital archive of high quality pictures of Palestinian cultural and natural tourist sites. The materials are available to tourism industry professionals for use in marketing and promotional materials. The event was attended by USAID West Bank/Gaza Mission Director Mr. David Harden, stakeholders

in the tourism industry, and local media. An MOU was signed at the event, handing management of the Image Bank to USAID/Compete partner HLITOA.

Improved Branding Strategies – USAID/Compete supported the design of a new branding strategy and messaging guidelines to increase awareness and unify the image of the West Bank tourism sector.



USAID Mission Director Dave Harden and USAID/Compete COP Said AbuHijleh enjoy the Image Bank photo exhibition

Under this initiative, the project worked with HLITOA to develop the new branding strategy, including a new organization name, brand, logo, and message, as well as guidance for other Palestinian tourism companies to unify their own brands. The plan provides direction every aspect of the brand, such as how to create new names, logos, taglines, and umbrella messages, which will better assist members with marketing materials.

USAID/Compete and HLITOA launched the branding strategy to members in February 2015, who learned about the strategy and provided feedback. Using the new strategy, HLITOA held two branding workshops with the objective of training tour operators how to use it and unify the West Bank image.

Travel Road Shows – USAID supports Palestinian tourist sector participation in international trade shows to showcase the range of unique tourism packages available in the West Bank. Presence at such events increases the visibility of the Palestinian sector in global markets.

Adventure Travel World Summit

HLITOA and five local tour operators attended the Adventure Travel World Summit in October 2014 in Ireland with USAID support, marking the first adventure based industry event for HLITOA. The annual event draws tourism boards, tour operators, destination marketing organizations, and specialty travel agents from 60 countries across the world. HLITOA hosted a successful roadshow dinner in parallel to the event to introduce Palestinian tour options to 40 industry professionals and representatives from top international publications. As a result of increasing Palestinian tourist sector awareness at this summit, online adventure travel magazine *Curious Animal* listed the West Bank on “The Adventure Travel ‘Hot List’: the 10 most exciting adventure travel destinations for 2015,” found at <http://www.curiousanimal.com/adventure-travel-hot-list/>.

CulturFair

HLITOA organized and held a road show at CulturFair, an international cultural travel fair in Mexico In December 2014. With USAID support, HILTOA assisted the participation of three members including the MoTA, aiming to build capacity for the tour operators to support their own road shows in the future. Also called the International Cultural Travel Fair, CulturFair targets the cultural and heritage travel market.



Participants at the international CultourFair in Mexico

Targeting Outdoor Tourism – USAID/Compete is developing new services and products in key locations to diversify options available to tourists interested in rural and outdoor activities in the West Bank. Rock climbing was selected as one target market, and USAID/Compete engaged independent consultants to identify, map, operationalize, and market sites near Yabroud and Ein Qinya in the West Bank. During the first quarter of FY2015, the consultants met with the village councils from each village to form agreements regarding the usage and development of the selected areas. Ein Qinya officially signed an agreement, which designates public land to be developed for rock climbing sites. To date, 14 climbing routes, 7 in each location, have been physically prepared.

Supporting a Hospitality School – In conjunction with the curriculum developed for Bethlehem University in December, USAID/Compete is developing plans for a Hospitality School modeled after the Amon Hotel School in Amman, Jordan. Plans for the school incorporate key findings from previous assessments, including geographic demand. The school will increase industry standards and the attractiveness of careers in the hospitality sector to Palestinians. .

USAID/Compete supported the development of the business plan for the construction and operation of the hospitality training school and restaurant at Bethlehem University's Mount David site including a market analysis of the Palestinian tourism industry, a managerial and organizational plan, a design overview, and a financial plan.

Conclusion

While political unrest and the unstable security environment has hindered significant progress within the tourism sector, there were still several achievements made this year including an increase (1.2%) in employment of assisted tourism firms, even while employment figures for the sector as a whole have declined dramatically this year (see indicator 4.7.3-C02 in the Tourism sector indicators table below).

Working to build the full “destination eco-system” for key tourism sites in the West Bank USAID/ Compete supported 9 new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails

this year (where in FY15 Compete planned 7 new sites to be renovated, in addition to 2 sites that were not fully completed in FY14. Therefore the project exceeded FY15 target by 2 sites under indicator OP Indicator 4.2.2-C11.), including urban rehabilitation works in important historical sites in Bethlehem, Burqin, Bethany, and Jenin.

USAID/Compete has also succeed in bringing service quality to international standards through the development of a successful classification system for 35 hotels which represents 66% of targeted hotels. (see OP indicator number 4.6.2-C02).

The remaining Management Indicators whose targets were not met, were designed to measure the performance of the sector overall – rather than Compete’s specific interventions with targeted firms. The increase in bed nights, in exports, and in overnight stays was not within the Project’s manageable influence – and the sector as a whole was especially challenged by the Gaza War and deteriorating security situation in the West Bank and Gaza.

Tourism Sector Indicators Table

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C11	OP Indicator	Tourism	Number of new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails	Integer	0	FY12	7	9	For FY15 Compete planned 7 new sites to be renovated, in addition to 2 sites that were not fully completed in FY14. Therefore the project exceeded FY15 target by 2 sites.
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C02	OP Indicator	Tourism	Percent of hotels adopting nationally-adopted, USAID-introduced hotel classification	Percentage	54	FY12	70%	66%	This indicator is measuring a non-mandatory standard which means only hotels that are ready to be classified can apply; based on Compete assessment, only 80% of the hotels which represents a total of 43 hotels out of 54 will be classified by the end of the project.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C03	MNG Indicator	Tourism	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	Percentage	56,674,923	FY12	5%	-10%	This indicator doesn't reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather it's a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C14	MNG Indicator	Tourism	Percentage increase of overnight stays in Palestinian hotels from key tourism source markets	Percentage	60,630	FY12	10%	-8%	This indicator doesn't reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather it's a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C01	MNG Indicator	Tourism	Percent increase in number of bed nights in Palestinian hotels	Percentage	863,947	FY12	9%	-10%	This indicator doesn't reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather it's a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C02	MNG Indicator	Tourism	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	Percentage	2,251	FY12	2%	1.2%	It's clear that the whole industry is in a decline, while 1.2% is less than 2% of the target, it's still the best that can be done giving the industry performance.
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C06	MNG Indicator	Tourism	Number of training courses developed and delivered through the USAID -established hospitality school	Integer	0	FY12	5	5	

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) SECTOR

USAID/Compete has played a key role in enabling the ICT sector for growth, convening key stakeholders to support investment and increase interest, and cultivating targeted initiatives to meet evolving challenges, such as developing seed funding initiatives for the initial stages of company growth and providing technical support and mentorship to acceleration projects.

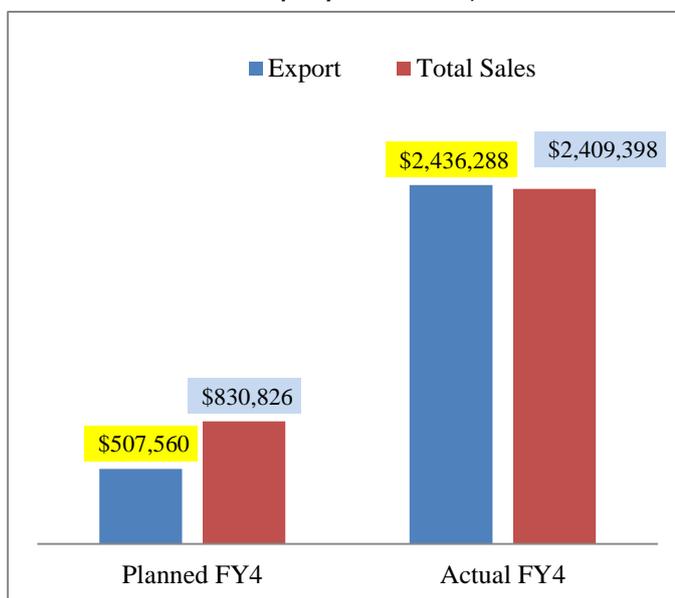
USAID/Compete has helped these firms scale their services to new markets (such as the Gulf States and Europe) and strengthen their business relationships with the major multinational IT companies such as CISCO, Intel and Microsoft. Doing so has spurred local business development, particularly in the area of project development and outsourcing. One of the major vehicles of development was the introduction of a start-up acceleration funding vehicle which has closed funding gaps in the ICT eco-system and has provided young entrepreneurs with capital to start their companies.

In the past, the project has supported workforce enhancing projects, including: the mini-MBA Project with Kellogg/Recanati to build the managerial capacity of firm leadership in order to make these firms more attractive for external investors; and the Palestinian Internship Project (PIP), which connects recent Palestinian IT graduates to multinationals, startups, and venture capital firms in the Israeli hi-tech field, helping the market create more talented resources capable of delivering top notch services according to international standards. Of the 15 PIP alumni from this past year (half of which are women), at least a third have secured follow-on employment with their host company or other jobs, started their own ventures or prolonged their internship.

With the launch of the firm level assistance program, the project has directly targeted support for firms and sector enablers in marketing, access to finance, and further training initiatives.

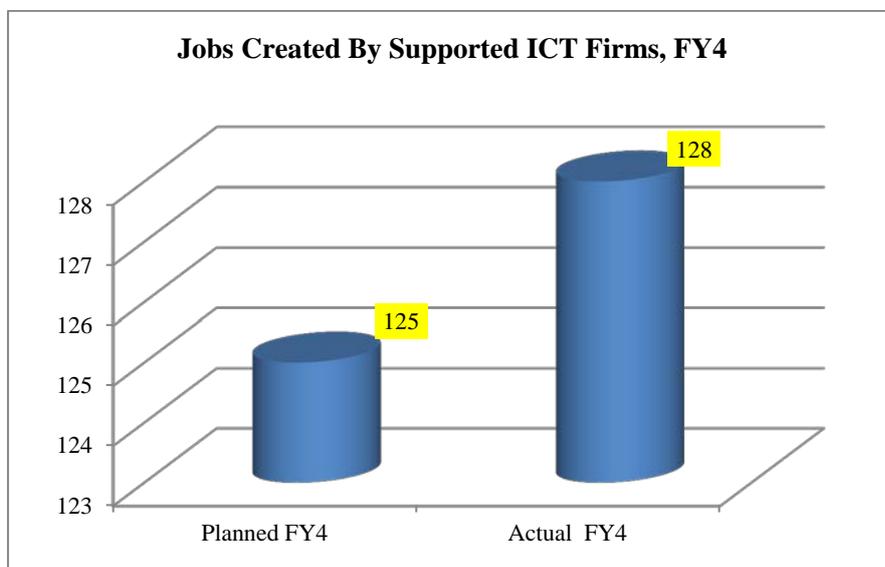
Industry forecasts show that the software sector is expected to continue growing with the development of human resources and sustainable targeting of new markets.

Consequently, during the first two years of the project, USAID/Compete-assisted firms experienced nearly 100% growth in employment, year to year.



USAID/Compete planned vs. actual exports and sales among supported ICT firms for FY4.

This year, USAID/Compete assisted **ICT firms** saw a **48% increase in exports**, a **38% increase in employment**, and a **29% increase in sales** as a result of firm level support to the sector.



Strategic Interventions

Firm Level Technical Assistance –

With firm level support, the Project has provided technical assistance to exporting and non-exporting firms in the ICT sector to increase financial, management, and marketing capacity. During the last week of May, the firm level program was announced to the ICT sector via social media, newspapers, and mailing lists.

Firm Level Highlights

As of September 30th, 55 ICT firms had applied for the assistance program and 14 of these firms were approved for assistance. ICT firm level highlights include:

Integrated Solutions



Staff from Integrated Solutions attended a TEMENOS training in Dubai in August 2015.

Integrated Solutions, a company based out of Ramallah, has been in business for the past 15 years providing hardware and software services for the banking sector. The next step for the company is to enter the banking software implementation business, which they have pursued by signing a partnership agreement with TEMENOS, a Swiss company and a global leader in banking software. Integrated Solutions is receiving support through

USAID/Compete's firm level assistance program to certify ten employees with training in TEMENOS technology, which will qualify the company to perform site installation and development.

Four people from Integrated Solutions attended a training on TEMENOS in Dubai in August 2015. The attendees were trained on TEMENOS 24 technical implementation levels 1 and 2. The full training program will be completed in January 2016.

Once staff training is complete, Integrated Solutions will work as a support partner with the new banks in the West Bank to gain experience, and later become a lead implementation partner. There are currently no other TEMENOS implementation companies in the West Bank or Jordan other than Integrated Solutions.

Ideal Projects Company

Ideal Projects Company (IPC) was founded in 2007, focusing on developing simple software solutions for banks such as check reading. Recently, IPC started developing their own vehicle tracking software (fleet management) for corporations, and the company is planning to expand and develop new software. To support this vision, USAID/Compete is providing support to Ideal Projects Company to launch a new product for individual car tracking which they plan to launch in local and regional markets.

USAID/Compete is assisting the company to build the new product identity, develop their business plan, and conduct market research. These interventions are critical at this stage, as the company works to build the image of the new product and to better promote it locally and internationally, and in order to eventually increase the company's exports and help access new markets.



USAID/Compete is supporting IPC to build their product identity and rebrand their image.

Social Dice Company for Technology Services and Information

Social Dice is a Palestinian start-up that provides a recruitment solution that helps human resource managers match candidates to jobs. Social Dice is currently operating in the West Bank, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Dubai, but with very limited sales, staff, and resources.

USAID/Compete is supporting Social Dice in resolving technical issues which came as a result of incomplete components of the software. The goal is support Social Dice in establishing itself as a recruitment service provider which will have a great impact on employment, exports and contracts.

The project's support to the company also includes a cost share for the travel costs to the region's largest gathering of HR professionals – the 2015 HR Summit to be held in Dubai in

November. The HR Summit is an ideal platform for the best learning, networking and inspiration. In 2015, the HR Summit will be hosting a number of best-in-class global thinkers, authors and inspirational speakers.

Smart Modern Systems (SMS)

SMS is a new company specialized in providing software and hardware solutions to banks and other sectors that interact with a large number of customers. The company offers systems such as queue management systems (JQMS) and Self-Service kiosks, and their software segment has 4-5 software packages (some exclusive to banks).

USAID/Compete will support the company in attending the GITEX Conference in Dubai in October 2015. GITEX is the 3rd largest technology event in the world. This participation will help the company expand into the international market and will enable them to build relations with the local vendors in the Gulf region.

Acceleration Activities- USAID is promoting access to finance in the ICT sector by supporting acceleration activities for startup companies in the West Bank.

USAID/Compete has partnered with four local universities to **create the first technical transfer company (IBDAA)** to promote research and development (R&D) activities between private sector and academia to help the private sector solve market failures and spur innovation among Palestinian youth. This year, ten projects from the four universities were selected to become actual start-ups and four are already registered.

Despite the natural connection between industry's demand for solutions and academia's ability to provide R&D support, Palestinian universities and the private sector do not have a collaborative dynamic. Both universities and the private sector use R&D to generate new solutions to market problems, increase industry performance, and add value to the market through supporting the introduction of new products. By facilitating projects between the private sector and academia through joint teams made up of students, university professors, and private sector individuals, IBDAA supports these teams to work on market problems to develop solutions that can be commercialized. The result is the creation of startups, as well as the far more intangible potential result that the quality of graduates will increase, solving a major impediment for ICT sector scale up.

USAID/Compete is supporting IBDAA to hold fundraising, awareness, and capacity building events, and provides resources to run the incubation program. In September 2015, the Project supported IBDAA in conducting three awareness sessions



In total, more than 200 young entrepreneurs attended the informational sessions held by IBDAA in September 2015.

on intellectual property rights at Al Quds, An Najah Universities and Hebron Polytechnic University.

More than 200 participants attended the sessions in total, where Engineer Mazen Abu Shari'a, from the MoNE reviewed the legal and policy implications around intellectual property rights. Attendees included teams of students and academics working together on market problems to develop solutions that can be commercialized.

By the close of the fiscal year, IBDAA had created and registered four new start-ups, with six more to be registered early next year. Eight new jobs had already been created by the new start-ups.

eZone

In 2014, USAID/Compete supported the development of a new accelerator, eZone, by providing mentorship, consultancies, and short term employment for startups. USAID's support of eZone has enabled an environment to attract foreign companies to open offices in the West Bank. Harri.com, a New York-based startup that offers hospitality solutions, began with one employee at eZone in November 2013.

As of January, Harri.com expanded back office operations hosted at eZone in Ramallah to 15 engineers. They also plan to engage in a new, train-to-hire program, which will quickly raise the number of engineers to 60. Three new jobs were created at a startup called Fadfid. By the close of the year, seven start-ups had developed new products, and 53 new jobs were created; 18 of them held by women and 43 of them held by youth.

Developing New Sector Services – USAID/Compete is developing new value chains in the market capacity to introduce services and tap the highly-skilled ICT workforce within the Palestinian software sector.

eGovernment to Improve Business Services

USAID/Compete seeks to improve “eGov” services to reduce the burden of operational necessities, such as registrations, for Palestinian companies. Currently, the government relies largely on separate IT systems and manual operations, lagging behind most of the world using quicker technology-based systems. In partnership with the Palestinian IT Association (PITA), and in collaboration with the OQR, USAID/Compete worked to develop e-services and encourage policy changes to improve these resources for Palestinian companies and citizens, leaving more time to focus on growth. An assessment and business analysis was completed for ten e-services to determine the best business model.

In April, 2015 the Ministry of Telecommunications and IT held a workshop to give a brief on the eGov initiative and its status. It was attended by the Minister and Deputy Minister of Telecommunications and IT, IT department heads of other Ministries, the PITA chairman and executive, private sector companies, the World Bank, and a Quartet representative. The government expressed huge interest in advancing eGov services and a decision was made to find support to continue working on the initiative.

USAID/Compete followed this workshop with meetings with stakeholders from the private sector and the government and based on the information collected during these meetings, a financial analysis and the first draft of the position paper was prepared for review by PITA.

The eGov report and position paper were submitted in final form to PITA and OQR in August 2015, who will present these documents to the Ministry of IT and Telecommunications, in order to later present them to the Prime Minister's office. The goal is to influence a decision by the Palestinian government to outsource the development of e-service solutions to the private sector.

Infinite Tiers

In October 2014, Compete signed a grant with Infinite Tiers Software Development to create new jobs and the largest internship program in the West Bank. As a result of USAID's support, the US-based company is relocating their offshore development program from China to Nablus to centralize their international operational requirements. The grant also supported the first phase of internships, where 40 interns were integrated within several software development tracks within Infinite Tiers and at least 50% of the 40 interns will be hired with long term contracts. Another two rounds of internships will be subsequently held, supporting another 40 interns during each. The initiative is an important step in strengthening Nablus as a northern software development hub and provides an opportunity for the students of three nearby West Bank universities, the Arab American University in Jenin (AAUJ), An-Najah National University in Nablus, and the Palestine Technical College- Kadoorie in Tulkarem, to obtain essential skills and work experience. By the close of the year, Infinite Tiers had signed two new contracts, and created 18 new positions, all held by youth. Six of the employed youth are female.

Gaming and Animation

Gaming and animation, a US \$170 billion global industry with an annual projected growth rate of 10%, offers strong potential for Palestinian professionals to enter in the previously untapped industry.

This year, USAID/Compete mobilized the industry and worked to form an Animation Task Force. The project lead meetings among representatives from the animation industry, to identify sector impediments and how they are prioritized, including the best way to develop the talent pool, important markets to expand into, industry business models, a representative entity, and university relationships. The companies then signed an MOU in March 2015, where seven animation companies agreed to create the Animation Task Force. The task force will create an aggregate set of needs that prevent the sector from growing for USAID and other donors to reference. USAID/Compete is following the task force to plan for future programming and offer firm level technical assistance for companies and has since then, coordinated with various donors including the Korean International Development Agency (KOICA), the Goethe Institute, and DFID to determine possible cooperation and support for the animation industry.

SAP Market Development Initiative

SAP Software Technology (SAP), headquartered in Germany with regional offices in 130 countries, is a multinational software corporation that makes enterprise software to manage business operations and customer relations. The company is hurting from shortage of certified engineers who can provide services for their global and regional customers, opening a window of opportunity for Palestinian software firms to fill the gap. This new initiative involves qualifying software companies to provide SAP solutions, training fresh graduates on SAP technologies, and facilitating international projects for Palestinian companies.

Meetings have been conducted with the Senior Vice President of SAP, and with others on their staff to discuss the initiative as well as another initiative to involve SAP in startup boot camps geared towards youth. Discussions with SAP were still underway as of the close of the year.

Export Market Assessment – USAID is supporting ICT companies to scale up their current exporting activities by assessing ten companies and providing them with export market development plans. The assessment, completed in April, identifies current gaps in exporting companies which hinder export development and create an export management structure to ease the exporting process for ICT companies.

At the beginning of April, David Ross, the consultant, interviewed companies to gather data for the assessment. On April 9th 2015 Compete held a workshop for the assessed companies to promote successful business development practices, present the preliminary findings of the assessment to industry representatives, and open a discussion to further enhance their capabilities. In support of collaboration with other USAID projects, Compete also invited a representative from the International Youth Foundation to present the Ta3amal portal, which assists youth in finding jobs and training programs. The portal, developed with Microsoft and Silatech, was received with enthusiasm; several outsourcing companies asked about possibilities of connecting with resources outside Palestinian areas.



USAID/Compete interviewed ICT firms as part of its export market assessment this year.

The export market assessment report was finalized in May of 2015, along with ten individual company assessments. Overall, weaknesses were identified in mid-level management, international business knowledge, and commoditization.

Following this assessment, the project has begun a study to identify product and market niches among the ten companies. The assessment will assist these companies in becoming more competitive in the international markets, enabling them to grow. Following this

activity, selected companies will be supported under a cost-share scheme to hire market research companies to assist with expansion plans. The Niche Market Determination was underway as of the close of the year.

Introducing Export Managers – USAID/Compete supports the hiring of export managers to assist and enhance companies' abilities in reaching international markets.

AI-Andalus Software and Information Technology

During fiscal year three, USAID/Compete supported AI-Andalus Software and Information Technology firm (ASD) to hire an export manager for the Saudi Arabian market to increase ASD's regional export sales and develop into a regional software development company. Results are still being felt; this year, AI Andalus exports increased in value by \$62,716USD three new contracts were signed with Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Jordan, and six new jobs were created.

Promoting Multinational Partnerships – USAID/Compete supports the establishment of multinational partnerships with Palestinian companies to increase exports and market access. In addition, this initiative promotes professional trained human resources.

H+W Mena

With USAID/Compete assistance, H+W Mena began development of a HIS healthcare System for Gulf countries. To support the development of the system, the company selected 20 interns and 5 professional developers to begin specialized training and initiate development of the Medical Practice Management Software System, which will manage hospital-wide operations for the Gulf countries' market. Currently, the company is installing the system as a pilot in local hospitals.

At the beginning of June, H+W Mena concluded their internship program. 40 participants benefited from the program and 10 have been hired with long term contracts to date. The HIS software development is underway. As of the close of the year, H+W Mena export values increased by nearly \$400,000USD and created 12 new jobs as a result of USAID/Compete support. Eleven of these positions were filled by youth.

Progeneer

From August 2014 through February 2015, USAID/Compete provided technical assistance to Progeneer, a Palestinian software solutions company, to develop and expand their resources. In February, Progeneer, after hiring two employees for the pilot, began implementing projects for an Israeli subsidiary through Thompson Reuters on a long term contract basis. The company is gaining more experience in delivering high caliber projects; however, lack of qualified local resources in the natural language processing (NLP) field is a challenge the company is trying to solve with training. This presents another opportunity to create talented resources demanded by international markets. With USAID/Compete support, Progeneer's exports increased by \$197,346 USD this year, and three new jobs were created.

Al-Tariq Systems

In 2013, USAID/Compete supported Al-Tariq Systems to develop tailored software systems for clients in Gulf countries, allowing them to increase their international presence. In March, Compete signed a grant with Al-Tariq Systems to further facilitate market penetration to two new markets: Poland and Norway. Al-Tariq will build new software packages to be sold in these markets and is using a partnership model with local software solution companies in these countries. Due to USAID/Compete support, AL Tariq's export values increased by \$175,000USD this year. Six new jobs were created, five of which are held by youth.

EXALT Technologies

Earlier this year, EXALT concluded two projects with Cisco Video Systems (formally NDS) and Headbox (an Israeli Startup). EXALT provided software development services in the field of software development and quality assurance to build their Android Mobile Application. Headbox provides an integrated identity for user's streams and social presence. These business relationships with the global reaching companies has introduced EXALT to new clients and possible business opportunities, increased EXALT's exposure to international clients, and increased their capacity in software development. So far this year, the results of the contracts included export increases of \$53,586 USD.

Jaffa Net

Under this initiative, USAID supported Jaffa Net Company to develop the Head-UP

Application that helps users to manage his or her online time by blocking certain applications (such as Facebook, Whatsapp, etc.) during certain timeframes chosen by the user. Head-UP Tribe is the startup company which Jaffa Net supports as the developing and technology partner. Jaffa Net also signed a contract to develop a mobile billing application for water utility companies working in the Aker area of Israel this year. In February, Jaffa.net won the 2015 Mobility Innovation Award for the MENA region. The ceremony was held by Oracle in Dubai, and attended by more than 300 companies from the region. By the close of the fiscal year, Jaffa Net increased its sales by \$444,085 USD and created 11 new jobs – five of them held by women and seven by youth .



The USAID/Compete supported Jaffa Net won the Mobility Innovation Award in 2015.

iConnect

In 2013, USAID/Compete facilitated iConnect, a Palestinian software company specializing in outsourcing and consulting, in developing two partnerships with international companies working in healthcare and retail e-commerce. By the close of FY 2015, iConnect had increased its sales by \$340,831 USD, signed two new contracts, and created 11 new jobs – three held by women and 10 held by youth.

Conclusion

USAID/Compete assisted **ICT firms** saw a **48% increase in exports this year, a 38% increase in employment, and a 29% increase in sales as a result of firm level support to the sector.** These achievements were primarily made through direct, targeted, firm level support to ICT firms, and through the support to ICT accelerators.

The target set for OP Indicator 4.7.3-C08 *Number of assisted ICT start-ups that have developed products or signed contracts*: Compete approach to start up in FY15 has been shifted from working through funds to a more firm level startup support, this approach is more effective in meeting the needs of startups and increasing the likelihood of success, in addition the average of the previous years startups is 15. (See ICT Sector Indicators table, below).

ICT Sector Indicators

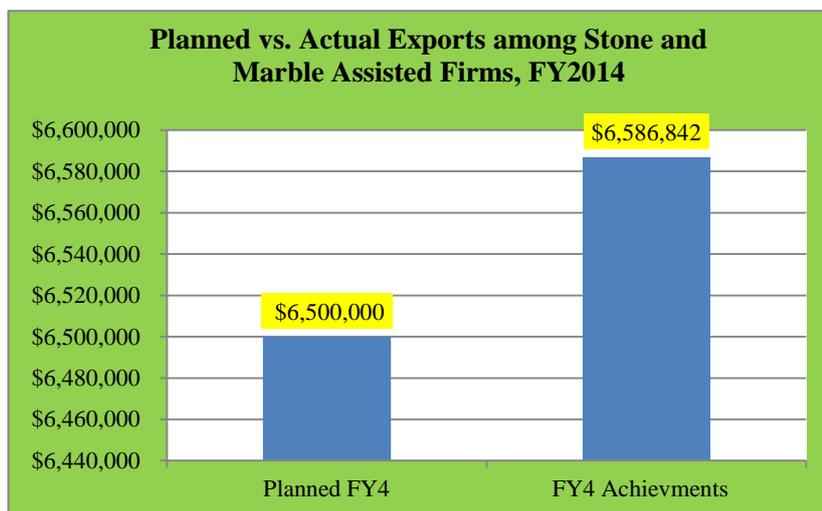
PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C08	OP Indicator	ICT	Number of assisted Information and Communication Technology (ICT) start-ups that have developed products or signed contracts	Integer	0	FY12	30	7	Compete approach to start up in FY15 has been shifted from working through funds to a more firm level startup support, this approach is more effective in meeting the needs of startups and increasing the likelihood of success, in addition the average of the previous years startups is 15, therefore the target of 30 was unrealistic.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C04	MNG Indicator	ICT	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	5,075,600	FY12	10%	48%	Compete focused effort on supporting firms by targeted firm level technical assistance in year FY4 resulted in higher companies export performance.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C06	MNG Indicator	ICT	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	8,308,269	FY12	10%	29%	Compete focused effort on supporting firms by targeted firm level technical assistance in year FY4 resulted in higher companies export performance.
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C09	MNG Indicator	ICT	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Integer	2.00	FY12	5	5	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C13	MNG Indicator	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Integer	0	FY12	16	15	
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C03	MNG Indicator	ICT	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	339	FY12	37%	38%	

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C09	MNG Indicator	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) start-up companies established	Integer	0	FY12	14	10	In FY4, startups shall be generated from IbdAA and eZone. eZone produced 6 and IbdAA selected 10 startups out of which 4 completed registration. The rest will be early FY5 and not included in the 10.
MEP0040	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0040	MNG Indicator	ICT	Number of business started by youth with USG assistance, disaggregated by sex of founder.	Integer	-	FY14	10	7	Since six of IbdAA startups are not registered yet which all are youth, the target will be exceeded early FY5.
MEP0041	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0041	MNG Indicator	ICT	Total number of start-up capital raised by youth	Integer	-	FY14	\$240,000	\$66,000	Access to finance from funds for startups is still an issue and Compete is working to address in FY5.
MRP0039	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MRP0039	MNG Indicator	ICT	Number of businesses started by youth with USG assistance that are still in operation one year later, disaggregated by sex of founder	Integer	-	FY14	8	3	In FY3 Compete reported 9 startups, 3 of which are still alive in FY4. which is higher than the industry standard of 80-90% die, therefore its unrealistic to have 8 out of 9 to survive.

STONE AND MARBLE SECTOR

In the stone and marble sector, USAID/Compete focuses on increasing Palestinian stone and marble exports, and assisting companies to find solutions to environmental issues that threaten the long-term viability of the sector, and developing new stone, marble, and decorative products.

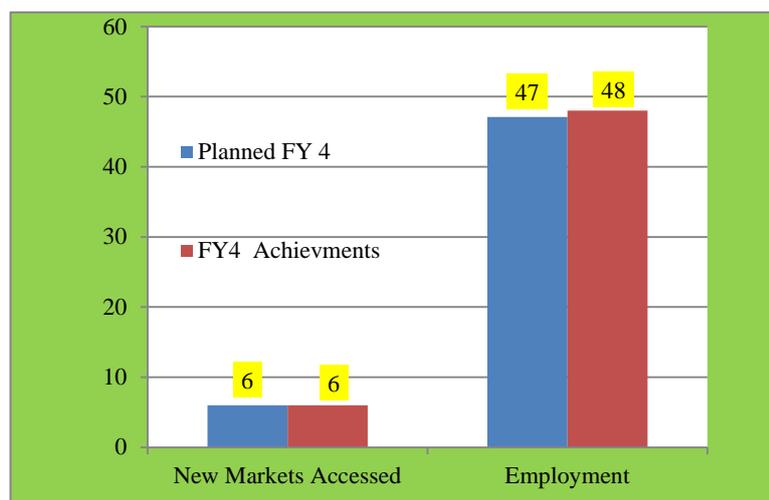
During the first four years of the project, stone and marble assisted firms were able to generate \$18,332,112 USD in exports, 115 new jobs, \$7,519,834 USD in new investments and successfully entered 18 new markets.



USAID/Compete's stone and marble interventions

have all yielded the expected results this year -where **all five sector targets have been met, or exceeded**. During year four of the program, the value of exports among USAID/Compete supported stone and marble firms were valued at over **6.5 million USD**. **There has been a 32% increase in exports of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms this year, and a 23% increase in sales**

USAID/Compete supports the Palestinian stone and marble sector's participation in international trade shows as exhibitors to showcase the range of unique products the West Bank has to offer and as walkers to learn about industry demands. The project has worked with Paltrade and the Union of Stone and Marble to assist eight



Key indicators for the Stone Sector, FY2014.

companies with unique value-added products to participate in the first annual Middle East Trade Show, which took place in May 2015. It was the first show specifically focused on stone and marble products to be held in Dubai. The show also had an interior design hall, allowing Palestinian companies to expand and target the niche market.

Two Palestinian companies out of 230 companies from 22 countries were recognized for their **stone decorative and art work** at the trade show. Fonoun Arts of Carved Stone ranked second overall and Al-Omraniyeh Company ranked eighth overall. Leading up to the show, USAID/Compete held several meetings and workshops to support participants in developing booth designs, improving stone samples, and provide technical assistance. This major international recognition marks a breakthrough for Palestinian companies in the market.

Following the development of business plans for potential investors interested in sludge product development, USAID/Compete has supported a company in the piloting of light weight block production, made from stone slurry.

Strategic Interventions

Firm Level Technical Assistance – To officially launch the firm level assistance program among the stone sector in May of this year, USAID/Compete held three workshops with the Union of Stone and Marble (USM) to spread the information about the program. Over 50 companies attended the workshops.

Firm Level Highlights

As of September 30th, 34 Stone and Marble firms applied for the assistance program and of these firms, 12 have been approved for assistance. Stone and Marble firm level highlights include:

Abu Kamil Automatic Block Factory
USAID/Compete is focusing on the slurry waste issue in the stone sector in a staged approach to support the gradual transformation of the industry by supporting business solutions for ‘dry sludge’ and ‘liquid sludge’, thereby creating commercially viable new products. Creating these environmentally conscious, competitive new products will lead to business opportunities that could be targeted in local and international markets.



USAID/Compete is supporting Abu Kamil Automatic Block Factory in piloting the production of light weight blocks made of stone sludge.

In line with this goal, USAID/Compete is supporting Abu Kamil Automatic Block Factory, via the firm level assistance program, to pilot the development of light weight blocks. The Factory was established in 1980 and is located over a 3,500m² with a semi-automatic concrete block production line with an annual production of 3,300,000 blocks per year in various sizes.

Abu Kamil distribution channels include large contractors in the Nablus area, however the factory still does work with contractors in other locations in the West Bank.

The production of the light weight blocks will enhance their revenue and gross, however upgraded technological capabilities will be required in order to move towards the production of this new product. USAID/Compete will support Abu Kamil in this regard.

The additional inputs will allow the factory to install the full production line, and sell the blocks through the standard distribution channels in the construction sector including contractors in the Nablus Governorate, (representing 20-25 small and medium contractors).

Within the first year of production it is expected that the factory will establish several strong sales relationships with additional local or regional construction contractors and distributors. This project will utilize 50% of stone slurry in Beit Iba and Wadi Altuffah which is approximately 4,725 tons per year – with great environmental benefit to the area.

Yaboos Jerusalem Stone

Yaboos Stone was established in 2005, specializing in a wide variety of operations in the field of stone. The company has experienced and highly trained staff, a quality production line, and possess a structured internal process and a well developed management team.

Yaboos is considered a specialty producer of decorative and antique tiles for indoor designed based applications and outdoor decorative areas.

The main challenge facing stone companies is the ability to access new markets; especially because the majority of stone producers rely on Israeli companies to market their products in the global market.

USAID/Compete is working with the company via its firm level assistance program, to develop its marketing plan. This includes enhancing its marketing channels and building the company's identity by developing a new branding theme to be reflected among all its publications and promotional tools.



Stone & Marble Trade Shows – USAID supports the Palestinian stone and marble sector’s participation in international trade shows as exhibitors to showcase the range of unique products the West Bank has to offer and as walkers to learn about industry demands.

Middle East Trade Show

Compete worked with Paltrade and the Union of Stone and Marble to assist eight companies with unique value-added products to participate in the first annual Middle East Trade Show, which took place in May 2015. It was the first show specifically focused on stone and marble products to be held in Dubai. The show also had an interior design hall, allowing Palestinian companies to expand and target the niche market.

Two Palestinian companies out of 230 companies from 22 countries were recognized for their stone decorative and art work at the trade show. Fonoun Arts of Carved Stone ranked second overall and Al-Omraniyeh Company ranked eighth overall. Leading up to the show, USAID/Compete held several meetings and workshops to support participants in developing booth designs, improving stone samples, and provide technical assistance.



The Middle East Trade Show workshop.

Verona Marble and Industrial Investments Company

Verona participated at Marmomacc 2012, Victoria 2013, Marmomacc 2013, Big 5 2013, Coverings 2014, and Marmomacc 2014 with USAID/Compete support. Verona also attended the Dubai Big 5 show in 2014 without USAID support. Exports values as of the close of the fiscal year as a result of their attendance at the Marmomacc tradeshow amounted to \$1,232,300. Exports as a result of the Vitoria tradeshow equaled \$242,100, exports as a result of Dubai Big 5 tradeshow equaled \$847,894, and exports as a result of the Coverings tradeshow equaled \$648,500.

Al Waleed for Cutting Stone and Marble Company

Al Waleed participated at Marmomacc 2012 and Big 5 2013 with USAID/Compete support. Al Waleed also attended the Dubai Big 5 show in 2014 without USAID support. At the close of the fiscal year, the following impacts were reported by Al Waleed:

- Exports as a result of Dubai Big 5 tradeshow : \$311,609
- Exports as a result of Verona Marmomacc tradeshow: \$14,350
- Total Exports: \$325,959
- 1 new market accessed: Saudi Arabic
- 1 new job created (female, youth).

Al Omraniyeh Group Company

Al Omraniyeh exhibited products at Marmomacc 2013, Big 5 2013, and Coverings 2014 with USAID/Compete support. Impacts as of the close of the year included:

- Exports as a result of Dubai Big 5 tradeshow: \$731,459
- Exports as a result of Coverings tradeshow: \$16,052
- Total Exports: \$747,511
- 11 new jobs created, 3 female and 8 are youth.

Al Sharabati Company

Al Sharabati exhibited products at Big 5 and Middle East Tradeshows with USAID/Compete support. Impacts as a result of their attendance, as of the close of the year include:

- Exports as a result of Verona Marmomacc and Dubai Big 5 tradeshows: \$1,012,412
- 2 new markets accessed: Jordan and Kuwait
- 3 new jobs created: 2 are youth

Promoting Value-Added Products – USAID/Compete is targeting firms in the stone and decorative/handicrafts subsectors to develop new value-added products. This new initiative seeks to develop desirable products to increase the visibility of the subsectors both locally and internationally.

Fonoun Company for Carved Stone and Marble

USAID/Compete is assisting the development of new value-added products by assimilating skilled women with an exceptional eye for design into the sector. Under this initiative, Compete supported Fonoun Company for Carved Stone and Marble, the first company in the Palestinian territories and the MENA region to break with tradition and create managerial positions for women, with a cost-share grant to hire female staff and develop new and creative stone products.

Sludge New Products and Facilities –Prior to providing support to Abu Kamil Automatic Block, the Project supported Abu Kamil, as well as two other investors, Al-Aqsa Company and Creative Business Solutions (CBS) to develop feasibility studies and business plans for new sludge products with USAID/Compete cost-sharing and technical support.

In April, Abu Kamil presented their New Sludge Products business plan findings to the Project. Through the firm level assistance program, Abu Kamil was then awarded procurement support to enable the factory to produce prototypes for testing and pursue research and development in the field. As of the close of the fiscal year, the procurement They are ready to move forward with their plans to produce prototypes (light weight blocks) from sludge and will obtain a technical data sheet for the equipment needed to produce and test the prototypes.

Conclusion

In the stone and marble sector, the Project has effectively increased exports, created new jobs, and enabled assisted firms to access new markets. The Project has in fact, met or exceeded all its targets under the stone and marble sector . This includes OP Indicator 4.2.2-C12, *value of exports through group and specialized Palestinian stone and marble marketing companies and consortia* where the target was set for \$6.5 Million USD, and where Compete reached \$6,586,842 USD by the close of Year 4 (see Stone and Marble Sector Indicators table below).

USAID/Compete has worked with Palestinian stone producers to position themselves more competitively in the international market. The project supported the participation of potential small and medium sized Palestinian stone exporters to sell their products at regional and international trade shows including the Gulf, Brazil, US, and Italy. As result of this assistance, 10 Palestinian stone producers were able to export \$6.5 million during Compete FY4.

USAID/Compete also encouraged larger firms to work with the second-tier producers and/or specialty stone producers to cooperate and promote their products at international trade shows focusing on branding under Holy Land Stone and Jerusalem Stone which reflect symbolic connections with the Holy Land. Supporting companies who specialize in decorative stone products also increased the over-all competitiveness of the suppliers.

Stone and Marble Sector Indicators

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	Justification
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C12	OP Indicator	Stone & Marble	Value of exports through group and specialized Palestinian stone and marble marketing companies and consortia	Integer	0	FY12	\$6,500,000	\$6,586,842	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C05	MNG Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	20,573,475	FY12	32%	32%	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C07	MNG Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	30,046,475	FY12	22%	23%	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C10	MNG Indicator	Stone & Marble	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms.	Integer	6.00	FY12	6	6	
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C04	MNG Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	471	FY12	10%	10%	

COMPONENT B – UPDATE

Component B is a core part of the USAID/Compete plan to develop Palestinian business support organizations (BSOs) and commercial business service providers (BSPs). The Palestinian business environment has a strong presence of business, industry, and professional associations that not only work as government lobbyists 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 and BSPs to enhance their direct market opening activities in the four priority sectors of Agribusiness, Tourism, ICT, and Stone & Marble.

AGRIBUSINESS

Paltrade

USAID/Compete supports Paltrade, the official Palestinian export agency, in expanding the export horizons for stone and marble businesses. In particular, Paltrade assists with coordinating trade show participation and providing market information useful to the industry.

Compete is engaging Paltrade through the firm level program to connect beneficiaries with new information needed to develop marketing plans and export potential.

TOURISM

AHA

The Arab Hotel Association (AHA), the official representative of Palestinian hotels, provides a variety of services to develop the Palestinian tourism sector. USAID/Compete supports AHA to improve and increase Palestinian tourism products and services that offer the highest potential contributions to increasing tourism numbers, length of stay, and average visitor expenditure.

This year, Compete conducted an internal assessment of the organization. The findings of the assessment revealed some internal staff and management weaknesses, leading to weak internal policies. Compete recommends signing an MOU to assist AHA in overcoming these issues and developing new policies.

HLITOA

The Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association (HLITOA) is one of the main stakeholders in the Palestinian tourism industry with a membership of 46 Palestinian tour operators. USAID/Compete is assisting HLITOA in gaining capacity to better serve their members, provide tailored solutions, and help tour operators and hotels attract more tourists.

ICT

PITA

PITA is a Palestinian-based organization that represents the ICT industry in the West Bank and Gaza. The association has around 150 members and provides export promotion, capacity building, and advocacy services for the sector. USAID/Compete supports PITA by providing technical assistance to improve their services to their members.

Ibdaa

Ibdaa is a technical transfer company (TTC) which facilitates projects between the private sector and academia through joint teams made up of students, university professors, and private sector individuals. These teams work on market problems to develop solutions that can be commercialized. The anticipated result is the creation of startups, as well as the far more intangible potential result that the quality of graduates will increase, solving a major impediment for ICT sector scale up.

This year, a meeting was held with Microsoft Jordan to introduce Compete activities, including Ibdaa. Ibdaa's ability to advance training new resources on different technologies and platforms was presented and attendees discussed possible synergies with the MIG initiative, which is still under planning with another department in Microsoft. Microsoft also agreed to the possible creation of new partnership with Palestinian private sector to advance the needed skills and asked Compete to be introduced to two Palestinian IT companies, Infinite Tiers and iConnect, as potential partners. Microsoft introduced its Dynamic Academic Alliance as a possible venue for cooperation and possible synergies with the project.

STONE AND MARBLE

USM

The Union of Stone and Marble (USM), the national industry representative, offers services related to trade, exports, standards, capacity building and education for members. In particular, USM is creating a marketing unit to implement activities that will heighten international awareness of Palestinian stone companies and provide tailored services to build marketing capacity at the factory level, enabling companies to reach global markets. USAID contributes technical assistance to help expand their spectrum of services, empowering them to better assist beneficiaries and tackle industry issues.

Going forward, Compete will further engage USM to develop a new program through local education centers and service providers to create a marketing, sales, and development program targeting recent graduates in the sector. This initiative will address one of the many gaps in the stone producer and will focus on women.

CROSS CUTTING INDICATORS

While the Project made good progress in working to increase access to employment for women, the target set for OP Indicator *Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted program designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)*: Given the nature of the value chains that compete is focusing on mainly Agriculture and Stone and Marble, and their receptivity for female labor and given that the average of the previous year performance was around 22-23%, the performance of this year 27% came higher because of extra targeted activities to engage females.

In addition Compete has requested the change of this indicator by email sent to COR dated on February 5th, 2015 requesting to adjust the target from 46% to 24%. (see *Cross Cutting Indicators table below*).

Other important achievements in gender this year include a \$138,181 increase in exports and/or sales by women-owned businesses and cooperatives as a result of U.S. Government assistance in the Agribusiness, Stone and Marble, and Tourism sectors. The project also supported nearly 500 women (458) in training and capacity building courses that improve skills in the ICT and Tourism sectors.

Other cross cutting indicator targets were met this year – including that designed to measure the project’s work in enhancing the capacity of business service providers: *Number of new services provided by targeted business service providers and business service organizations to targeted sectors by the Compete Project*, where the target of 6 was exceeded by 8 this year. The target set for the indicator measuring the *percentage increase in revenues of business service organizations from new services delivered to their members as a result of USG assistance* was set before the modified workplan and in unrealistic. The limited services offered and the limited number of association members cannot grow beyond the normal growth of 5%-10%. Therefore, the project’s actual achievement was 9% rather than the targeted 30%.

The *Number of youth gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded program* was also heavily influenced by USAID/Compete interventions this year – where the target of 260 was exceeded by 64, due to firm level support activities that generated more employment than expected this year.

Cross-Cutting Indicators

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	
	GNDR-2		OP Indicator	All Sectors	Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted program designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)	Percentage	N/A	FY13	46%	27%	Given the nature of the value chain that compete is focusing on mainly Agriculture and Stone and Marble, and their receptivity for female labor and given that the average of the previous year performance was around 22-23%, the performance of this year 27% came higher because of extra targeted activities to engage females. In addition Compete has requested the change of this indicator by email sent to COR dated on February 5th, 2015 requesting to adjust the target from 46% to 24%.
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C03	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Number of assisted private sector organizations and private sector service providers receiving USG assistance	Integer	N/A	FY13	10	9	
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C04	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Number of new services provided by targeted business service providers and business service organizations to targeted sectors by the Compete Project	Integer	N/A	FY13	6	14	Service providers such as ABS, Scientific Lab, Holy Tree, etc... which were assisted to support Agribusiness sector, tourism, and ICT start offering needed services to those sectors on commercial basis.
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C11	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Percentage increase in number of firms that received services from business service organizations and business service providers as a result of USG assistance	Percentage	1756	FY13	10%	9%	
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C15	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Percentage increase in revenues of business service organizations from new services delivered to their members as a result of USG assistance	Percentage	\$2,394,236	FY13	30%	9%	The target is unrealistic and not changed for modified workplan. Limited services offered and limited number of association members cannot grow beyond the normal growth of 5%-10%.

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY4	Actual Value for FY4	
MEP0042	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0042	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Number of youth gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded program	Integer	-	FY14	226	290	The impact of the FY4 Workplan activities mainly focused on firm level which resulted in creating more jobs that far exceeded expectations.
6.3.1	Gender	6.3.1 C	MNG Indicator	All Sectors	Increase in exports and/or sales by women-owned businesses and cooperatives as a result of U.S. Government assistance in the Agribusiness, Stone and Marble, and Tourism sectors.	Percentage	-	FY14	0	\$138,181	
6.3.1	Gender	6.3.1 D	MNG Indicator	ICT and Tourism	Number of women participants in training and capacity building courses that improve skills in the ICT and Tourism sectors.	Integer	-	FY14	0	458	

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

USAID/Compete's project interventions are shaped and informed by the guiding principles outlined in USAID/Compete's gender strategy. These include the 1) **promotion of the success of women in business in the Palestinian Territories, especially those operating within Compete Project sectors, 2) identification of new entry points for women within the Project's value chains, 3) encouraging private sector support for the economic participation of women through financial and technical cost share models and incentives and 4) Expanding efforts to increase the full participation of women in training and capacity building programs.** .

The below section details examples of ways in which the Project is supporting Gender Equality and Women's empowerment in each of the Project's sector areas as well as gender achievements in FY 2015.

Strategic interventions carried out in support of women's empowerment in the private sector include:

- Women and youth owned and managed businesses applying under the Project's firm level assistance program receive priority consideration for award. As a result of USAID/Compete's public solicitations and outreach, more than 250 West Bank firms have applied for support. 58 firms have been granted awards under this program this year and of these, four are owned and/or managed by women. These include a strawberry farm, a mushroom supplier, a tour operator and a hotel.
- Compete worked with Al Aqaba Rural Women's Society (ARWS) a women's cooperative from Tubas that generates products from raw materials, and Jusoor Company for Investment & Agricultural Marketing, a local Palestinian marketing company, to design new packaging for ARWS products. By upgrading to bag-in-bag packaging for dry herbs, ARWAS products can now reach hotel markets as part of the

KEY GENDER ACHIEVEMENTS

FY2015

- ✓ **488 women** (of 1,374) were provided targeted training this year to address weaknesses and gaps at the value chain level.
- ✓ With a special focus on enhancing employment opportunities for women, the Project created **409 jobs of which 27% were filled by women**.
- ✓ Sales and exports by women owned businesses increased by nearly **140,000 USD this year**.
- ✓ Firm level support provided to **four female owned and operated businesses this year**.

UNDP National Product First initiative, as well as meet international market standards for export. 10 new products with new packages were introduced (Herbal, Chamomile, Anise, Thyme, Thyme Persian, Ginger with cinnamon, Sage, Mint, Ginger, Green tea). Following this support, ARWAS began contract negotiations with Yafo Company to begin exporting their products to England.

- Compete is conducting an Agronomist Capacity Building program to solve one of the most critical impediments that a number of key agricultural sub-sectors are facing - finding qualified agronomists to manage the quality and productivity of local farms. Eight of the 34 agronomists are female agricultural engineers. Through this initiative, USAID/Compete aims to upgrade the technical experience and performance of agronomists to be recruited by enterprises working in Fresh Herbs, Dates, Carrots, Potatoes, Dried Herbs and Olive.
- USAID/Compete supported a woman owned and operated farm to cultivate hanging strawberries. Ms. Raeda Assous was exclusively involved in the production of greenhouse vegetables. Her farm consisted of 5.6 dunums: 3.6 dunums of greenhouses planted with tomatoes for the local market, and 2 dunums of greenhouses were empty. In order to plant strawberries, Ms. Assous applied for the program's strawberry scalability program, and has received critical inputs including a computerized irrigation unit, as well as other agricultural inputs that will allow her to cultivate strawberries. Three dunums of hanging strawberries have been planted on Ms. Assous' farm for sale in the local market.
- USAID/Compete is supporting a female owned company to introduce a new high value crop to the West Bank market. The project will help Mushroom House address a crucial impediment to the cultivation of mushrooms – the lack of compost and mycelium. Two thirds of Mushroom House is owned by women, and the company's main technical expert is a female biotechnical engineer who specializes in the production of mycelium.
- USAID/Compete is also supporting two women owned and operated tourism sector businesses with firm level support.
- Compete has identified and is pursuing a range of activities which involve offering more attractive cost share structures to encourage software development companies to employ women software developers, including under the payment gateway, website solutions, micro payment solutions, and remote-work/remote-training technology activities. Implementation of this more generous cost share model which provides a 10 to 15 percent higher subsidy for hiring women employees, many of whom are recent graduates entering the job market, is now under way.

- Under the Hebron Gender Project grant, Compete partnered with the software company H+W Mena to open a software development center in Hebron which exclusively employs female software developers.
- The Project worked in partnership with Burqin Municipality and the Burqin Women Association to manage a restored historic building which will serve as a visitor center for Jarrar Palace.
- Compete also funded the development of a restaurant and gift shop at the Bethlehem Gallery, a project developed by the Arab Women's Association who operates the two new businesses.
- By-products of the stone and marble sector offer great potential for new product development. Compete will capture the opportunity this presents to introduce women into a new sub-sector of a typically male-dominated sector through the provision of support to stone producers in new product development and manufacturing using residual stone.
- For example, the Stone & Marble sector has been working with Fonoun Company for Carved Stone and Marble in Bethlehem to break gender barriers and create managerial positions for women including a marketing manager, a designer, and engineers. The company is the first stone and marble company in the Palestinian territories and the MENA region to do so. Fonoun Arts of Carved stone was ranked second overall for their decorative stone work out of 230 companies at the Middle East Trade Show in Dubai in 2015.
- Initial assessments are underway to gauge the feasibility of firm level support to a women's cooperative in Hebron, West Bank. The cooperative is currently planting seedless grapes, and USAID/Compete is assessing the feasibility of providing the cooperative support to expand into the production of raisins.

YEAR FOUR CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Restrictions on the movement of people and goods and limited access to export markets continue to pose a challenge and have negatively impacted the economy as a whole. The sectors targeted by USAID/Compete have all suffered from a loss of their key markets in recent years, a loss of skilled labor, and are experiencing a critical gap in the needed technology for the specified value chains.

To help mitigate these challenges, the Project will continue to work with targeted sectors with a special focus on working with firms to enhance their cost structures, improve supply chain efficiencies and facilitate trade. The Project will continue to utilize a Market Development Approach to correcting identified market failures that hinder the progress of all targeted sectors and will also continue using the Firm Level Assistance Program as the primary vehicle through which support to these sectors is provided.

Access to finance poses a cross cutting challenge as well. The disconnect of private sector firms and a credible pipeline of potential investments and financiers including banks and investment, and start up funds poses a significant impediment to growth. In response, USAID/Compete will implement interventions to bridge this gap, leading to better capital flow and bringing in new investments into capital sectors.

The tourism sector is particularly vulnerable to political instability. This risk is compounded by a lack of a critical mass and commitment among the sector's firms and stakeholders. Efforts should be focused on building a critical mass and forging public/private partnerships to build the Tourism sector. The development of a tourism board would be highly effective in this regard.

The scarcity of water and land in the West Bank continue to pose an impediment to growth in the agriculture sector. USAID/Compete will continue to work with farmers to enhance the productivity of available land, and to reduce water seepage and waste through the introduction of new technologies and farm management techniques. Concurrently, the project is working to expand the availability of arable land in Area C, and on increasing water supplies for irrigation through the use of treated waste water.

In the stone and marble sector, environmental issues in the West Bank are posing impediments to growth in the sector. The project is promoting creative solutions to these environmental issues by generating uses for sludge waste in the stone and marble sector, feasibility studies and business plans for new sludge products were conducted, and the piloting of the production of light weight blocks made of stone slurry is underway.

In the ICT Sector, the major challenge remains in the ability of ICT firms to reach export markets, and to maintain their growth trajectories. The lack of access to financial and qualified human resources are major impediments to growth. USAID/Compete is providing tailored solutions to select firms through its export development program to provide critical inputs as needed for sustainable growth among these firms.

YEAR FOUR ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The following section details the crosscutting administrative and management highlights of Year 4 including challenges and achievements in performance, subcontracts and grant administration, vetting and Mission Order 21 compliance. Level of Effort and Financial summaries are also provided.

This section also includes a summary analysis of the project's performance against its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) indicators and targets, including OP and management indicators. A summary table of progress towards the project's indicators is also presented, in Annex A.

Subcontracts and Grants

During the fourth year of the project (October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015), Compete implemented new measures to ensure all procurements, subcontracts and grants met USAID and DAI rules and regulations for proper procurement. The new procedures took time to implement while also increasing the lead time for contracting new vendors, subcontractors and awardees. As a result the number of purchase orders, subcontracts and grants issued was lower in Year 4 than the previous year.

Year 4 Achievements

Eighty eight (88) field-based purchase orders, blanket purchase agreements, and subcontracts for operational and project activities were executed with an estimated value of \$950,000. Examples include BDS provider to train 35 agronomists, irrigation equipment supplier to develop 60 dunums of hanging strawberry fields, exhibition organizer who supported Marble and Stone traders to help identify new sales opportunities, and hotels which provided space for conferences and meetings.

Twenty two (22) grants totaling \$1,358,392 USD were executed in Year Four. Examples include grants to agribusiness firms to process potatoes, carrots, and fresh herbs, support to associations for sector development and participation in domestic and international trade shows and exhibitions, support to IT incubators/accelerators to spur new investment and creation of new IT startups, and support to farmers to gain access to treated waste water for irrigation of new crops.

A number of these new procurements and grants was the result of processing applications received from the Request for Applications (RFA) under the Firm Level Assistance Program (FLAP).

In the third and fourth quarters of Year Four, Compete started ramping up for the anticipated increase in program activity as a result of the FLAP RFA. The Project hired 13 new staff including 2 staff in Gaza for the first time. In order to accommodate the new staff, Compete rented the 5th floor of the office building in Ramallah while opening a new office in Gaza.

Issues That May Inhibit Or Enhance Performance

The project is anticipating that logistical and compliance challenges that are upcoming in Year 5 as most of the work plan activities for next year are planned to take place in Gaza. Specifically, Mission Order 21 for vetting beneficiaries, partners, and subcontractors is more intensive which requires additional layers of vetting. Additionally, import of equipment and materials for program implementation into Gaza requires approvals from the Coordination and Liaison Administration. Meeting both requirements is a matter of following processes and procedures but will add to lead times for program implementation. The project has undertaken the necessary preparations for program implementation in Gaza.

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 will help process the remaining FLAP applications that were not processed in year 4 while processing any new applications submitted in year 5. The Compete project has robust systems and procedures in place which will facilitate processing the large number of applications and procuring the necessary goods, services and equipment necessary for program implementation.

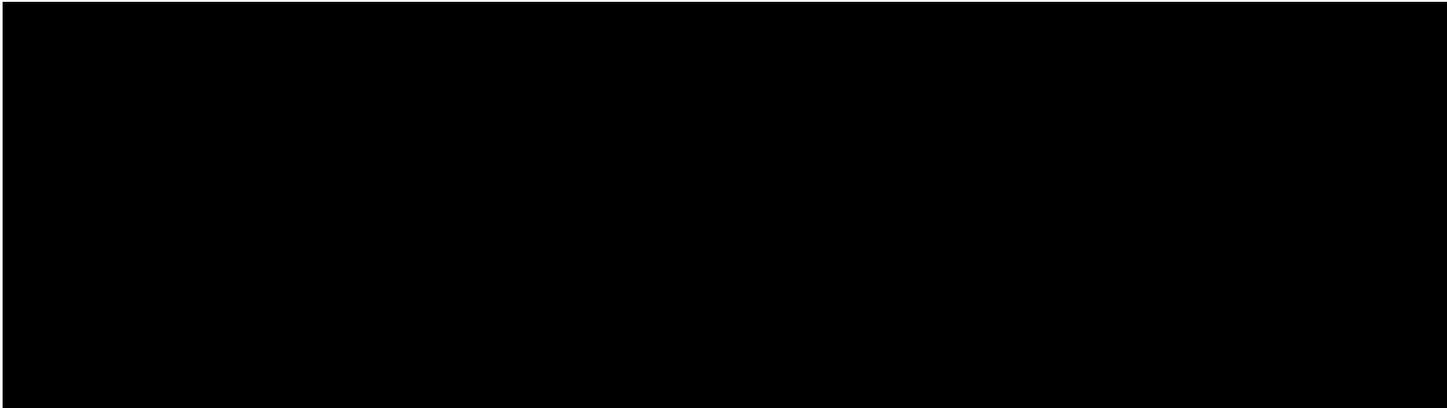
Toward the middle of year 5, the Compete operations and finance team will start to develop the project close down plan. Project close down involves the completion and close out of all grants, procurements, subcontracts, and letters of agreements, disposition of all Compete assets, closing of employment agreements of staff, and shipment of all financial documents to the home office.

LEVEL OF EFFORT SUMMARY

LOE SUMMARY (PERSON MONTHS)												
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY4												
Item	Contract Budget –		Year 4 Actuals			Contract Budget						
	Year 4					Year I	Year II	Year III	Year IV	Year V	Total	Remaining
Labor Category	Person Months	Number of Long Term Professional Employees	Total Person Months	Number of Long Term Professional Employees	Total Person Months							
All	12	14	233	15	226	238	233	235	233	233	1172	355

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

FINANCIAL OBLIGATION SUMMARY			
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY4			
Current Obligation	Obligation Spent	Obligation Remaining	Per Cent Obligation Remaining
\$44,663,000	\$ 35,463,088	\$ 9,199,911	20.60%



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

USAID/Compete captures and reports on **nine OP** indicators as well as on **thirty-one management** indicators. This process is done on **quarterly basis** according to the frequency of data collection.

The project's M&E team conducted over **90** field visits to the beneficiaries across the West Bank this year, to verify the data collected on a quarterly basis, and to ensure that it meets USAID data quality standards in this regard.

Other key tasks conducted this year include:

- Continuous updating of activities and interventions in the West Bank on Geo-MIS, TraiNet, and TAMIS.
- Worked closely with component leads and the technical staff to make sure that USAID regulations have been met.
- Worked with the communications team to submit project progress reports.
- Captured ongoing technical data related to the program's interventions.
- Conducted field visits and interviews across the West Bank to collect, capture, and verify data required.
- Provided the team with the required statistics and economic analysis, updated sector related figures.
- Worked closely with Compete staff and beneficiaries to prepare feasibility studies, and business plans that are scalable, and that can generate investments to support growth.
- Produced monthly Gaza shipment reports, economic and quantitative models and techniques developed to measure Compete supported impact on the four sectors.
- Prepared Environmental Documentation Forms, Environmental Review Summary and Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plans, as well as status reports on environmental compliance and investigations.
- Provided the project team with recommendations on necessary environmental provisions during the planning, design and implementation phases of projects and interventions.
- Participated in internal technical review of all grant proposals to evaluate measurable results and impact, M&E methodologies, and qualitative and quantitative indicators.

ANNEX A: YEAR FOUR TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

Date	Event	Total Participants	Number of females	Number of males	Type of event
9/30/2015	Avocado and Mango farms management under treated wastewater reuse	15	3	12	Training
9/8/2015	Introductory Workshop for the Agronomist Capacity Building Program	34	8	26	Workshop
8/17/2015	Study tour to Israeli farms irrigated with treated wastewater	22	0	22	Training
8/11/2015	Introductory workshop to Strawberry Scale-up Program - Hebron	7	1	6	Training
8/2/2015	Introductory workshop to Strawberry Scale Up Program - Tulkarm	22	3	19	Training
7/27/2015	Training on wastewater reuse for agriculture	24	6	18	Training
7/26/2015	Temenos Training	4	0	4	Training
7/23/2015	Introductory workshop to Strawberry Scale Up Program	28	3	25	Training
Sep. 2015	IPC training	240	99	141	Training
6/21/2015	Training on Equipment _ Hathnawi	10	4	6	Training
6/14/2015	Firm Level Technical Assistance Program_ Nablus/ Jenin	20	0	20	Workshop
6/11/2015	Firm Level Technical Assistance Workshop - Tulkarem	64	9	55	Workshop
6/10/2015	Firm Level Assessment Program_ Bethlehem	25	2	23	Workshop
6/8/2015	Firm Level Assessment Program_ Qalqilia	29	3	26	Workshop
6/4/2015	Middle East Trade Show Workshop	11	3	8	Workshop
6/3/2015	Firm Level Assessment Program_ Jenin	38	3	35	Workshop
6/2/2015	Firm Level Technical Assistance Workshop _ AHA	24	3	21	Workshop
6/2/2015	Firm Level Technical Assistance Workshop _ Tubas	29	1	28	Workshop
6/1/2015	Firm Level Assistance Workshop - PITA	18	2	16	Workshop
5/28/2015	Firm Level Technical Assistance Workshop _ HLITOA	16	4	12	Workshop
5/26/2015	Firm Level Assistance Program Launch - Stone Sector Workshop	25	0	25	Workshop
5/24/2015	Canaan Workshop on Branding	4	2	2	Training
5/20/2015	Present Compete Firm Level program_ Agribusiness	5	1	4	Workshop
5/17/2015	Business Workshop on Fair Trade Principles	5	4	1	Training
4/26/2015	Training on Almond mill production line	4	1	3	Training
4/15/2015	Presentation of Dubai Hub Business Plan	4	1	3	Workshop
4/9/2015	Business Growth Workshop	27	5	22	Training

4/7/2015	Investor Discussion Workshop	4	0	4	Workshop
4/7/2015	Middle East Trade Show Workshop	6	2	4	Workshop
3/9/2015	Middle East Tradeshow - Workshop	9	3	6	Workshop
2/18/2015	Training on machine - Al Aqaba Coop	4	3	1	Training
2/18/2015	Training on Cooling Rooms - Al Forat 2015	2	0	2	Training
2/10/2015	Cooling Rooms Training - Nusseibeh Farms	5	0	5	Training
1/28/2015	Asparagus Planting Training	21	0	21	Training
1/28/2015	Training Topfield - Cooling rooms	6	0	6	Training
1/17/2015	Cooling room training - Al buqe'a and Al far'a farms	5	0	5	Training
1/14/2015	Strawberry farmers management training	27	0	27	Training
12/23/2014	Organizational Exchange Visit- Strawberry Farmers	15	0	15	Training
12/18/2014	Launch of Hospitality Vocational Training Curriculum	28	11	17	Seminar
12/11/2014	Compost & Mushroom production training	3	0	3	Training
12/6/2014	Enhancing Almonds Productivity workshop- Canaan	16	0	16	Training
11/26/2014	Image Bank Launch Event	24	8	16	Conference
10/30/2014	Ibdaa Brain Storming session	44	2	42	Workshop
10/21/2014	Gold Quality Service Graduation	47	9	38	Conference
FY4	ezone trainings	837	337	500	Training
FY4/Q1	Infinite Tiers Internship program	21	17	4	Training
Total		1878	563	1315	

ANNEX B: YEAR FOUR MEDIA COVERAGE

The following report details the 24 press releases that were produced this year, in addition to ensuing media coverage.

Event/initiative: USAID and in cooperation with Intel and an educational Jordanian concludes a number of specialized trainings

Sector: ICT

Date: 12/10/2014

Media Coverage:

Al Hayat Newspaper

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/81891>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=168805>

<http://mawwal.ps/ar/mawwal/35435>

<http://samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=189789>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/20-2-2014/p12.pdf>

Event/initiative: USAID supports the Palestinian participation at Marmomacc international Tradeshow in Italy

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: 19/10/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/103025-عالمياً-الأكبر-والرخام-الحجر-معرض-في-وممبزة-مثمرة-فلسطينية-مشاركة>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=185596>

<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/529151>

Event/initiative: 11 Hotels Receive the Golden Certificate

Sector: Tourism

Date: 21/10/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=185704>

<http://samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=216590>

<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=246280&cid=3453>

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/103266>

<http://sahafaty.net/news2237990.htm>

<http://newhub.shafaqna.com/AR/PS/5564251>

Event/initiative: Ibdaa launches a marketing campaign in cooperation with 4 Palestinian universities

Sector: ICT

Date: 10/11/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=187130>

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

<http://dl.alquds.com:8080/pdf/fd56a2b92060f6e29c9c42c47f29ca50/546c6421/pdf-docs/2014/11/13/page21.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/13-11-2014/p10.pdf>

Event/initiative: USAID launches a tourism image bank

Sector: ICT

Date: 27/11/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/11/27/624935.html>

<http://www.mawwal.ps/ar/mawwal/62283>

<http://hebronfm.ps/index.php?news=20906>

<http://zamnpres.com/news/64050>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=188094>

<http://www.wafaimages.ps/album.aspx?id=13797>

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/107497>

<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/534608>

<http://www.shasha.ps/more/122314>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=251931&date=>

<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/27-11-2014/p06.pdf>

Event/initiative: USAID launches packing houses in Qalqilia and Tubas

Sector: Agriculture

Date: 03/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/03/628301.html>

<http://www.fatehwatan.ps/page-97580.html>

<http://www.palsawa.com/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=15298>

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/108229>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=188590>

<http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=744723>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsnHqb3D8Ko&list=UU61reKB-JvsnWGWmsGN6deA>

<http://kufiyah.net/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83>

<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=188590>

<http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=7939>

<https://www.facebook.com/563508163711637/photos/pcb.81212139>
<http://kufiyah.net/%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%8>

Event/initiative: Christmas activities in Bethlehem and Ramallah

Sector: Tourism

Date: 06/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=745227>
<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/108561>
<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=188715>
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/06/629451.html>
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/06/629416.html>
<http://newhub.shafaqna.com/AR/PS/8544321>
<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/535864>

Event/initiative: USAID Launches Hospitality Vocational Training Curriculum at Bethlehem University

Sector: Tourism

Date: 20/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/110202>
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/20/636257.html>

Event/initiative: USAID Inaugurates a Cluster of Renovated Sites in Bethlehem

Sector: Tourism

Date: 20/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=748233>
<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/537787>
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/18/635520.html>
<http://arabic.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=168805>

Event/initiative: Palestinian Farmers Plant Sweet Potatoes (Feature Story)

Sector: Agriculture

Date: 22/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/22/637300.html>
<http://zamnpres.com/news/65612>
<http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=749161>
<http://www.shasha.ps/more/125488#.VJI0vsAA>

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/110477>
<http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/126909.html>
<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/881975.html>
<http://www.honaalquds.net/ar/article/8141/#.VJh-x14Clk>
<http://www.pal24.net/ViewNews.aspx?ID=49696>
<http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/23-12-2014/p22.pdf>

Event/initiative: Palestinian Strawberry (Feature story)

Sector: Agriculture

Date: 24/12/2014

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/110651>
<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/882246.html>
<http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/117744.html>
http://www.shasha.ps/more/125657#.VJ_PK_xAA
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/12/24/638048.html>
<http://ekhbariyat.net/?newsID=58901>
<https://newhub.shafaqna.com/AR/PS/9222418>
<http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/117744.html>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7>

Event/initiative: Palestinian Image Bank (feature story)

Sector: Tourism

Date: January 12, 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://www.fatehwatan.ps/page-100211.html>
<http://honaalquds.net/ar/article/8912/#.VLYj58VWSz3U>
<http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/128193.html>
<http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/119820.html>
www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php
<http://elsaba7.com/articlesPrint.aspx?id=2243%20%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%83%20%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%AF%D9%8C%20%D9%84%D8%AA%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AE>
<http://www.maannnews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=753461&MARK=%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%83%20%D9%84%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%B1%20%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%AF>
<http://motaded.net/show-5043408.html>
<https://arbindex.com/C2kzlw>
www.all-agencies.com/ps/l.php?id=23169
<http://translate.google.ps/translate?hl=en&sl=ar&u=https://arbindex.com/C2kzlw&prev=search>

<https://www.facebook.com/QudsN/photos/a.119620728114837>
<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/884146.html>
<http://pal24.net/ViewNews.aspx?ID=51687>
www.asdaapress.com/?page=details&cat...newsID...
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/01/12/646126.html>

Event/initiative: Christmas in the Holy land (feature story)

Sector: Tourism

Date: January 26, 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://ekhbariyat.net/?newsID=59306>
<http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=9420>
<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/01/26/652308.html>

Event/initiative: 5K Run to explore Bethlehem (published by partners)

Sector: Tourism

Date: February 2, 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/index.php/local/115340>
<http://www.baladnafm.ps/baladnafm/18388>
<http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/129761.html>
<http://media24.ps/public/newsDetails/4871>
<http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/544892>
<http://www.rita.ps/ritaps/2452>
<http://www.mawwal.ps/ar/mawwal/63767>
<http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=192260>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/details.php?opt=3&id=254513&cid=3558>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2015/2/7/page5.pdf>
<http://www.albawabhnews.com/1098293>
<http://www.el-balad.com/1376558>
<http://www.khabarmubasher.com/new-58790>

Event/initiative: Palestinian Dates Sub-Sector (feature story)

Sector: Agriculture

Date: March 3, 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/890688.html>
<http://www.maannnews.net/Content.aspx?id=764423>

<http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=10280>

<http://www.fatehwatan.ps/page-103102.html>

<http://www.pal24.net/news/55673.html>

<http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/131192.html>

Event/initiative: Kick off workshop for the design of a water project to transform water from Faraa and Al Nasariya wells to Al Baqea'ah plant

Sector: Agriculture

Date: 11/05/2015

Media Coverage:

<https://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=777029>

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/05/12/713036.html>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/13/p25.pdf>

Event/initiative: Palestinian participation in the Middle East Stone

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: May 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/126792-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%B6-%D8%AD%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%B7-middle-east-stone-2015>

[http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/133543.html](http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/126792-%D9%85%D8%B4%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%B1%D8%B6-%D8%AD%D8%AC%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%88%D8%B3%D8%B7-middle-east-stone-2015)

<http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/133543.html>

<http://www.amad.ps/ar/?Action=Details&ID=73850>

<http://www.alakhbar.ps/posts/176678>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/18/p21.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/18/p21.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/18/p21.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/18/p21.pdf>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/05/18/p21.pdf>

Event/initiative: A meeting with the stakeholders of the Stone and Marble sector to announce the launch of the new Firm Level Assistance Program (Published by Partners)

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: May 2015

Media Coverage:

<https://www.maannews.net/Content.aspx?id=779716>

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/05/28/721158.html>

Event/initiative: Jenin Chamber of Commerce and USAID Compete project organize an introductory meeting to announce the "Firm Level Assistance Program" (published by partners)

Date: June 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/06/04/p21.pdf>

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/06/03/723871.html>

http://www.al-ayyam.ps/ar_page.php?id=f5a9c03y257596419Yf5a9c03

<http://hebronfm.ps/index.php?news=24477>
<http://www.jeningate.com/ar/showart.php?id=20676>
<http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=263747&cid=3673>
<http://nasfm.ps/%D8%AA%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%BI%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%88%D9%83%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A3%D9%85%D8%BI%D9%8A%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D9%84%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%86%D9%85%D9%8A/>

Event/initiative: Fonoon for Arts of Carved Stone received the second place for “**Best Product Stone Design and Art Work**”, out of 230 exhibitors representing 22 countries in the Middle East Stone Exhibition

Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: June 2015

Media Coverage:

<http://pnn.ps/2015/06/18/pnn-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%8A%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%88-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D9%88%D8%BI-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D8%AD%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%A8%D9%81%D9%88%D8%B2-%D8%B4%D8%BI%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%81/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ouljwgracVI>

Event/initiative: IbdAA organizes a course about Intellectual property in four universities (Palestine Polytechnic University, An Najah National University, Al Quds University, Arab American University of Jenin)

Sector: ICT

Date: 15/9/2015

Media Coverage:

PPU:

<http://pnn.ps/2015/09/15/%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%86%D9%83-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B6%D8%BI%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D9%86/>

<http://harmees.com/articles/view/263406>

<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/918192.html>

<http://sirajfm.com/%D8%AC%D8%A7%D9%85%D8%B9%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%AA%D9%83%D9%86%D9%83-%D9%81%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B7%D9%8A%D9%86-%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%85-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B6%D8%BI%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D9%86/>

<http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/2015/09/16/p14.pdf>

NNU:

<http://www.najah.edu/ar/print/37876>
<http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/916609.html>

AAUJ:

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/10/21/797104.html>
<http://www.prealmedia.com/ar/?Action=Details&ID=4001>
<http://www.nablustv.net/internal.asp?page=details&newsID=226704&cat=14>
<http://www.jeningate.com/ar/showart.php?id=22167>

Quds University:

<http://pnn.ps/2015/09/04/%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%AA%D9%84%D9%82%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B6%D8%B1%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D9%88%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%84%D9%83%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%81%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9-2/>

USAID broadcasts a video that demonstrates its support for the agriculture sector in the West Bank

The video demonstrates how USAID has been helping the West Bank for the past 7 years in developing their agriculture sector, and in growing better and healthier crops.

<http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2015/09/14/776320.html>

**ANNEX C: GEO-MIS/ TRAINET PARTNER'S QUARTERLY UPDATE
REPORT (PARTNER/PROGRAM)**

Geo-MIS/TraiNet Partner's Quarterly Update Report (Partner/ Program)

FY 2015 (July-Sep/ 2015)

I the project COP certify that we have appropriate tools in place for data collection, verification, analysis, and storage and we have updated the Geo-MIS system and the participant training system TraiNet with the most updated information that reflects the current project implementation deliverables and achievements.

In addition, the attached list of PMP indicators are still appropriate, valid, and up to date for program performance tracking up to this quarter and those indicators are in compliance with DQA measures (Validity, Integrity, Precision, Reliability, and Timeliness) as per ADS 203.3.5.1.

1) **Number of Activities Added/Updated this reporting period*:**

Activity Type	Activity Status			Total
	Closed	Completed	On Going	
A031 - Reclamation of agricultural land	0	0	8	8
P072 - ICT Technical Assistance	0	0	3	3
P073 - ICT Incubation services	0	0	1	1
P074 - Organize/Participate in ICT exhibitions, trade shows and B2B events	1	1	0	2
P078 - Training/Capacity building ICT	0	1	2	3
P402 - Rehabilitaion/construct Ag. related sites	0	1	5	6
P409 - Technical assistance/Capacity Building to Ag. Ins, BSP and BSO and PA ministries	0	2	6	8
SM003 - Technical Assistance	0	0	2	2
T004 - Public outreach/media events	0	1	0	1
T005 - Construction/ Renovation of tourism sites	0	11	1	12
Total:	1	17	28	46

**To generate this sheet follow the followings: from the main menu: choose Activity Analysis, then Activity Query. In the new window: pick your office name, project name and partner name and clock on OK. From the new form, click on advanced report and pick cross tabulation. Vertically choose location, horizontally choose status, then count of activities and press on the tabular sign and export the generated report to Excel. Then copy to this template.*

2) Quarterly Program Updates during this reporting period:

Category	Added/Updated this reporting period	Date of last update	Comments
Overall Goals and Achievements	Yes / No	29/10/2015	
FY 20xx Goals and Achievements	Yes / No	29/10/2015	
Success Stories	4 added	27/8/2015	
Pictures	6 added	29/10/2015	
Documents	1 added	21/8/2015	
Sub Partners	2 added	30/10/2015	
PMP Indicators FY 2015 Results	40 indicators updated PMP document, PIR document	29/10/2015	
PR Indicators FY 2015 Results	9 indicators updated DQA document	2/11/2015	

i. PMP Indicators: Attach Current Geo-MIS PMP Matrix report (PMP indicators).- **Attached.**

ii. Attach list of proposed PMP indicators to be added or dropped (if any). **Attached**

3) Participant Training (FY4/Q4):

a. All Participant Training programs have been updated in the TraiNet system: YES ___ NO ___

b. Number of courses reported in TraiNet: ___ 4 ___

c. Number of participants reported in TraiNet: ___ 301 ___

COP Name: _____

Said
Abu Hyeleh

Date: _____

5/11/2015

Signature: _____



ANNEX D: PROGRAM PMP INDICATORS REPORT

Program PMP Indicators Report
 Program: **COMPETE** Partner: **DAI**

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Page 1 of 1

Program Component / IR	Program Element	Indicator Code and Name	Ind. Type / Ind. Result Type	Ind. Format	Baseline/ Partner's PMP Code		LOP to Date	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Comment
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C02 - Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	35926562		Planned: 54 Actual: 74	5% 3%	28% 44%	56% 59%	65% 68%	41%	
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C03 - Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian Tourism Firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	56674923		Planned: 18 Actual: 2	0% 0%	5% 0	8% 8%	5% -10%	3%	This indicator doesnt reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather its a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C04 - Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	5075600		Planned: 25 Actual: 94	3% 2%	5% 17%	7% 27%	10% 48%	36%	Compete focused effort on supporting firms by targeted firm level technical assistance in year FY4 resulted in higher companies export performance.
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C05 - Percent increase in exports of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	20573475		Planned: 87 Actual: 96	0% 0%	26% 31%	29% 33%	32% 32%	32%	

Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C06 - Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	8308269	Planned:	25	3%	5%	7%	10%	19%	Compete focused effort on supporting firms by targeted firm level technical assistance in year FY4 resulted in higher companies export performance.
						Actual:	58	2%	10%	17%	29%		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C07 - Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	30046475	Planned:	60	0%	18%	20%	22%	23%	
						Actual:	68	0%	21.5%	23%	23%		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C08 - Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Mgmt Output	Integer	7	Planned:	13	0	4	4	5	7	Life of the project: Markets are only counted once Actual value for FY4: Exports of Agriculture to Saudi Arabia was not expected and materialize.
						Actual:	27	0	15	13	6		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C09 - Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Mgmt Output	Integer	2	Planned:	13	0	3	5	5	3	Life of Project: Markets are only counted once
						Actual:	12	0	3	5	5		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C10 - Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Mgmt Output	Integer	6	Planned:	15	0	4	5	6	6	Life of Project: Markets are only counted once
						Actual:	15	0	4	8	6		

Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C11 - Number of new or improved assisted tourism sites and tourism trails	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	18	0	5	6	7	3	2 planned FY4 renovations in Bethany were postponed to FY5 due to incomplete plan from the local authority.4 renovations were completed this year, as requested by BeitSahour and Battir municipalities
						Actual:	16	0	1	6	9		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C12 - Value of exports through group and specialized Palestinian stone and marble marketing companies and consortia	Mgmt Outcome	Integer	0	Planned:	14750000	0	2,250,000	6,000,000	6,500,000	6,746,160	
						Actual:	19833002	0	6,461,062	6,785,098	6,586,842		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C13 - Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	40	6	8	10	16	6	
						Actual:	43	4	8	16	15		
Component A	4.2.2 Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C14 - Percentage increase of overnight stays in Palestinian hotels from key tourism source markets	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	60630	Planned:	25	0	5%	10%	10%	8%	This indicator doesnt reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather its a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
						Actual:	10	0	0	18%	-8%		
Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-2 - 4.5.2(2): Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	OP_std Outcome	Decimal		Planned:	1850	200	500	1,000	150	150	
						Actual:	2034	214.80	626.60	1,035.50	157		

Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-36 - Value of exports of targeted agricultural commodities as a result of USG assistance	OP_std Outcome	Decimal	35926562	Planned:	58300000	5,000,000	10,000,000	20,000,000	23,300,000	17,444,842	
						Actual:	57654180	1,072,500	15,990,716	23,681,626	24,501,125		
Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-7 - Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	OP_std Output	Integer	N/A	Planned:	600	N/A	100	200	300	300	Training provided this year was targeted, specialized training as needed based on firm level assessments. Agronomist training program to begin early FY5. Overall, 1374 people were trained.
						Actual:	2100	N/A	1,755	218	245		
Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C01 - Percent increase in sales of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	103000000	Planned:	83	5%	16%	29%	33%	15%	Compete interventions this year were focused on increasing export values (which were 3% over target). Expanding local sales beyond 28% was possible due to exports.
						Actual:	76	1%	19%	28%	28%		

Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C02 - Number of new or improved Palestinian products produced by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	150	5	35	50	60	69	30 of the new products came as a result of providing new technology for Hithnawi Co. to produce oil from herbs, almond and Aqaba Cooperative to produce packing of dried herbs such as thyme, tea, etc
						Actual:	196	5	63	61	67		
Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C03 - Percentage increase in area under cultivation for export corps (hectares)	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	360	Planned:	73	10%	17.5%	25%	20%	20%	The increase in export demand of fresh vegetables, carrot potatoes and onions resulted in an increase in cultivated areas beyond target.
						Actual:	115	9%	19%	53%	34%		
Component A	4.5.2 Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C06 - Number of new agribusiness contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	51	6	10	15	20	13	
						Actual:	53	2	16	15	20		
Component A	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C01 - Percent increase in number of bed nights in Palestinian hotels	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	863947	Planned:	23	0	5%	9%	9%	24%	This indicator doesnt reflect the results from firms directly assisted by Compete but rather its a general statistics produced by MoTA on annual basis. Decline is as a result of Gaza war.
						Actual:	23	0	0	33%	-10%		

Component A	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C02 - Percent in hotels adopting mandatory hotel classification system	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	54	Planned:	70	0	40%	70%	70%	100%	This indicator is measuring a non-mandatory standard which means only ready to be classified hotels can apply
						Actual:	66	0	5%	34%	66%		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro- Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C01 - Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	1690	Planned:	25	0	5%	10%	10%	10%	Actual value for FY4: Increased exports and cultivated land resulted in higher employment
						Actual:	79	0	55%	12%	12%		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro- Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C02 - Percent increase in employment of assisted Tourism Palestinian Firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	2251	Planned:	8	0	2%	4%	2%	2%	Its clear that the whole industry is in a decline, while 1.2% is less than 2% of the target, its still the best that can be done giving the industry performance.
						Actual:	5	0	2%	2%	1.2%		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro- Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C03 - Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	339	Planned:	92	10%	20%	25%	37%	37%	
						Actual:	112	9%	23%	42%	38%		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro- Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C04 - Percent increase in employment of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	471	Planned:	32	0	9%	13%	10%	8%	
						Actual:	28	0	10%	8%	10%		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro- Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C06 - Number of training courses developed and delivered through the hospitality school	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	29	0	20	4	5	8	
						Actual:	18	0	6	7	5		

Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C07 - 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)	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:		5	5	10							This indicator is dropped: this indicator was set to capture new technology and tools, and have been already captured before.
						Actual:		39	8	1							
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C08 - Number of ICT assisted start-ups that have developed products or signed contracts	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	80	10	20	20	30	15					30 startups are unrealistic. Average past 3 years was 15, and only 14 out of 46 reported startups are in operation. Our approach changed from supporting startups through funds to direct support.
						Actual:	52	10	13	22	7						
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C09 - Number of New ICT Start-up companies established,	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:	36	2	5	15	14	3					In FY4, startups shall be generated from IbdAA and eZone. eZone produced 6 and IbdAA selected 10 startups out of which 4 completed registration. The rest will be early FY5 and not included in the 10.
						Actual:	27	1	4	12	10						
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C10 - Number of Palestinian stone and marble firms adopting new technologies or investing in new equipment	Mgmt Output	Integer	0	Planned:		0	30	4	0	0					This indicator is dropped. This indicator was set to capture new filter presses, and have been already captured in FY2
						Actual:		0	31								

Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0040 - Number of businesses started by youth with USG assistance, disaggregated by sex of founder	Mgmt Outcome	Decimal		Planned:	20			10	10		Since six of Ibdad startups are not registered yet which all are youth, the target will be exceeded early FY5.
						Actual:	16			9	7		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0041 - Total number of start-up capital raised by youth, disaggregated by sex	Mgmt Outcome	Decimal		Planned:	360000			120,000	240,000	82,650	Access to finance from funds for startups is still an issue and Compete is working to address in FY5.
						Actual:	388650			322,650	66,000		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0042 - Number of youth gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded programs	Mgmt Output	Integer		Planned:	339			113	226	96	The impact of the FY4 Workplan activities mainly focused on firm level which resulted in creating more jobs that far exceeded expectations.
						Actual:	612			322	290		
Component A	4.7.3 Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MRP0039 - Number of businesses started by youth with USG assistance that are still in operation one year later, disaggregated by sex of founder	Mgmt Outcome	Decimal		Planned:	16			8	8	0	In FY3 Compete reported 9 startups, 3 of which are still alive in FY4. which is higher than the industry standard of 80-90% die, therefore its unrealistic to have 8 out of 9 to survive.
						Actual:	3			0	3		
Component B	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C09 - Number of assisted private sector organizations and private sector service providers receiving USG assistance.	Mgmt Outcome	Integer	N/A	Planned:	40	15	15	10	10		
						Actual:	56	15	32	9			

Component B	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C11 - Number of new services provided by targeted business service providers and business service organizations to targeted sectors by the project.	Mgmt Output	Percentage	N/A	Planned:	12		2	4	6	10	Service providers such as ABS, Scientific Lab, Holy Tree, etc... which were assisted to support Agribusiness sector, tourism, and ICT start offering needed services to those sectors on commercial basis.
						Actual:	66		18	34	14		
Component B	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C12 - Percentage increase in revenues of business service organizations from new services delivered to their members as a result of USG assistance.	OP_std Output	Percentage	2394236	Planned:	60		10%	20%	30%	30%	The target is unrealistic and not changed for modified workplan. Limited services offered and limited number of association members cannot grow beyond the normal growth of 5%-10%.
						Actual:	186		62%	115%	9%		
Component B	4.6.2 Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C10 - Percentage increase in number of firms that received services from business service organizations / providers, as a result of USG assistance.	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage	1756	Planned:	30		10%	10%	10%	12%	
						Actual:	31		12%	10%	9%		
NA	6.3.1 Gender	6.3.1 C - Increase in exports and/or sales by women-owned businesses and cooperatives as a result of U.S. Government assistance in the Agriculture, Stone and Marble, and Tourism sectors.	Mgmt Outcome	Percentage		Planned:	138181						
						Actual:	59346				138,181		
NA	6.3.1 Gender	6.3.1 D - Number of women participants in training and capacity building courses that improve skills in the ICT and Tourism sectors.	Mgmt Output	Integer		Planned:							
						Actual:	812			354	458		

NA	6.3.1 Gender	GNDR-2 - Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)	OP_std Outcome	Percentage	N/A	Planned:	24	N/A	22%	24%	46%	24%	The set target of 46% is unrealistic and not changed for modified work plan. Previous years performance was around 22-24%. This year we achieved 27% which is higher than the average previous years.
						Actual:	27	N/A	85%	22%	27%		