Compete Project Annual Report

October 1, 2013 - September 30, 2014

COMPETE PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes the fiscal year 2013-2014 work of USAID's Compete Project, a major economic and business development initiative in the Palestinian Territories. The project's goal is to grow the economy, increase sales, and boost employment by opening new markets and expanding exports in four major economic sectors: Agriculture, Tourism, Information Technology, and Stone & Marble.

During the last three years, Compete has provided innovative solutions to unique constraints through: strategically building each industry's competitiveness and export; strengthening and developing vertical market linkages; building marketing networks; and training beneficiaries on tailored business practices.

In the next sections, the reader will learn about the results and high impact of the activities across the four sectors during fiscal year three, evidenced in meeting or exceeding nearly all 34 program and management indicators set by the USAID/WBG Mission. This report highlights the resourceful and strategic approach taken by each of the sectors, resulting with huge changes in the way businesses approached local and international markets, as well as their acceptance to take higher risks and aspire to greater results. This turnaround in the business practices and international perception of the Palestinian brand has been achieved in just three short years.

In addition to the technical team roles, highlights of the essential communications and public outreach successes and the vital role of the monitoring and evaluation efforts are recorded in detail. It is important to note that success of USAID's Compete project cannot be done alone; it is based on the hard work and dedication of every team member, partner, and beneficiary.

Some of the standout Compete initiatives from this year include:

Agriculture – The Palestinian agriculture sector is primarily composed of small farms which struggle to compete in a globalized world. To boost efficiency, Compete encouraged the formation of aggregator companies to maximize resources through combined business infrastructures. In addition, a total of 11 forward contracts were facilitated between Palestinian farmers and domestic and international buyers in FY3, generating a combined value of $6 million USD. A prime example is the newly formed the Green Qalqilya Company, which managed to export $2,430,000 USD worth of guava, avocados, and peppers to Jordan and Kuwait.

Another important development is progress toward opening 1450 hectares of new farm land based on Compete designs. Increased agricultural lands will support greater yield of much needed produce supplies to local and international markets. In addition, at least 700 hectares will be irrigated by Treated Waste Water, used for the first time in West Bank to solve a major challenge that has previously inhibited the growth. Compete will carefully measure the results of this intervention in the next fiscal year.

Tourism – It is undeniable that the Holy Land has global importance as a major tourist destination and needs high quality services to accommodate the needs of tourists. Compete has taken a standardizing approach to improving services to tourists. In line with international tourism standards, the new Hotel Classification System has been adapted by the Ministry of Tourism and all registered hotels. 34% of all hotels have completed their star ratings,

inspiring other positive effects from increased infrastructure investments and training for employees. The best example is of the Ritz Hotel in Jerusalem, who received the Award for Excellence 2014 from the international tourist website Trip Advisor following their classification.

Other important initiatives promoted priority destinations including the Christmas festival in Bethlehem and the Jericho Arts festival, which together generated $7.2 million in revenues. Compete also supported the launch of Breaking Bread Journeys, a unique Palestinian-Israeli tourism initiative to introduce mixed food and culture to tourists from all over the world. The company was officially launched at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, triggering huge interest from the World media.

ICT – To fulfill USAID's vision of enabling the talented entrepreneurs and strengthening the Palestinian IT sector to be more responsive to startups, Compete helped establish the first angel seed fund in the Palestinian territories: Arabreneur. To date, nine new startups have received almost $1 million USD in committed investments and valuable international linkages, promoting the sector globally.

Generating a pool of highly skilled labor was another major intervention during FY3. Compete supported partnerships with multinational companies including Microsoft and Intel, special topic boot camps and accelerators, tailored internships with Israeli companies, and a formal training program at Tel Aviv University (TAU) through a joint program with TAU's Recanati Graduate School of Business and Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

Stone and Marble – Compete has signed grants with four different companies to begin feasibility studies on recycling stone waste sludge. This game changing strategy solves environmental issues related to sludge run off, creates new products, expands the industry through new sub sectors, and generates jobs. The recycling of stone waste will create a sustainable, direct, and cost effective means of addressing the challenges and opportunities of the Palestinian stone and marble industry.

In parallel, Compete has been working to develop the Holy Land Stone brand to reflect the quality and unique characteristics of Palestinian stone by supporting export-ready exhibitions at international trade shows. Industry leaders have also developed their marketing skills and crucial business links through these interventions. This year, stone and marble companies exhibited at the Big 5 Trade Show in Dubai, the Coverings trade show in Las Vegas, and the Verona Marmomacc trade show in Italy. The shows generated returns that exceeded expectations in terms of business and marketing development, as well as in financial returns: a combined $3.7 million USD was earned with contracts and access to new markets.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR USAID'S COMPETE PROJECT

USAID's COMPETE PROJECT WORKPLAN FY3

Description

The Palestinian private sector is facing a window of opportunity. Significant reductions in Israeli security and trade barriers, a more stable political and security situation, and a commitment by the Palestinian Authority to undertake critical trade reforms have created an improved business environment. This allows the sector to assume its place as the primary driver for growth by creating the conditions for business leaders to participate in economic expansion. In such an environment, empowered leaders can influence the future of individual enterprises, industries, and the overall economy.

Lacking appropriate technology, information, and access to lucrative international markets, many Palestinian firms currently focus on selling to small domestic markets and Israeli buyers. To achieve global competitiveness and foster sustainable, broad-based economic growth, these enterprises must become active participants in the development of their industries. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has recognized that investing in key industries creates potential for the Palestinian private sector to meet expanding demand in both domestic and international markets.

USAID's Compete Project works to upgrade the individual and collective performance of enterprises in targeted sectors by maximizing added value and helping to calibrate changes throughout key value chains. Compete systematically provides stakeholders with key tools for performance, such as: linking businesses, networks, and information systems; providing capacity building for new technology; and ensuring commercially sustainable availability. The purpose is to strengthen vertical linkages and inter-firm cooperation by forging connections between microenterprises, SMEs, and larger firms, which have more efficient access to markets and a better understanding of market requirements. This sector-wide approach leverages USAID's current and previous investments to expand the radius of beneficiaries and accelerate the development of a prosperous Palestinian economy.

TAKING A SECTOR APPROACH

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

Agribusiness

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

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

To transform the Palestinian agribusiness sector into a globally competitive industry, the Compete Project works with stakeholders, local authorities, and key actors to maximize access to resources and technologies. Examples of improvement projects include:

- new grafting and seedling techniques to increase production and limit pest infestation in fresh herbs and fresh vegetables;
- improved irrigation and increased quality of productivity in arid areas such as the Jordan Valley;
- introduction of production practices based on internationally recognized standards to gain recognition as a reliable and safe source within global markets; and,
- increased product diversification and added value to expand domestic and international market penetration.

By implementing key improvements to the agricultural sector, Compete enables Palestinian professionals to increase sustainable competitiveness in a global market.

Tourism

Although the contribution of tourism to the Palestinian economy has rebounded in recent years, the opportunity to increase the overall value of tourism in the national economy has not yet been fully realized, particularly in local communities. As one of the largest industries in the global economy, an international integration of Palestinian tourism goods and services has the potential to make an impact on overall job creation and investments.

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

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

Supporting tourism stakeholders to develop a unified, industry-wide approach targeting market niches that increase destination demand will lead to a globally competitive tourism sector. In particular, facilitating Palestinian engagement in internet tourism platforms is critical to this effort. These platforms enable Palestinian tourism professionals to benefit from the growing number of tourists that rely on digital mediums for research, travel booking, and most importantly, sharing content through social media.

ICT

To facilitate faster growth in jobs and investment in ICT, talented and experienced human resources are critical. The Compete project works to create sustained growth in the local market by providing tailored solutions to expand the direct presence of ICT multinational companies in the Palestinian Territories.

Compete focuses on scalable interventions to foster talented pools of young Palestinians

capable of providing world class technological solutions. With the active engagement of key international ICT companies such as CISCO, Intel, Google and Microsoft, the Compete Project delivers practical training programs where the trainees gain valuable experience. The availability of talented human resources thus cultivates a positive research and development (R&D) environment for ICT multinational companies to expand in the Palestinian Territories.

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

The third element of the Compete Project's ICT strategy is to enable a healthy, open ICT environment capable of promoting entrepreneurship activities, facilitating more startup projects, and increasing investments in the sector. It is imperative for the Compete Project to actively engage all ICT stakeholders, particularly educational institutions, representatives of the private sector, and ICT social groups.

Stone & Marble

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

The Compete Project's effort in the stone and marble sector addresses the major challenges and creates business opportunities to develop a globally competitive industry. Interventions take into consideration the environmental concerns that present challenges and opportunities to be addressed with new investment, technology, and recycling techniques. In addition, Compete works with Palestinian stakeholders to prioritize new investment opportunities.

Improved technology and specialized marketing are essential for facilitating new market entries for Palestinian manufacturers. Advanced marketing allows Palestinian companies to reach global markets, develop promotional material, and gain access to market information, which are critical for transformational growth. Compete particularly focuses on linking current manufacturers with international buyers, investors, and equipment manufacturers. The introduction of new technology and training from Palestinian institutions also provides the current and future workforce with the opportunity to build their capacities and skills. Through these initiatives, the sector will be enabled to reach new markets, create higher value products, and offer more highly skilled jobs.

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

The Palestinian business environment has a strong presence of business, industry and professional associations that not only work as lobbyists to the government to protect the interest of their members, but also as platforms on which to organize market access

initiatives. The Compete project is working with dynamic and representative BSOs to enhance their market opening activities in the four target sectors, Agribusiness, Tourism, ICT, and Marble and Stone.

New and interested parties are funded through grants, which target developing and strengthening member services that advance sector strategies as agreed with Compete technical teams. Recipients are selected based on their ability to build linkages that encourage investments as well as identify and penetrate export markets. Other strengths include addressing specific constraints to global competitiveness and providing commercially viable methods to deliver services.

COMPONENT A – KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AGRIBUSINESS

INNOVATIVE MARKET SOLUTIONS

Harvesting potatoes for forward contracts in Tubas

The so called "forward contracting" is a one-step solution to achieving many of Compete's objectives for the agribusiness sector; by linking products to processors and international buyers. Forward contracts are contracts made in advance of harvest yields that pre-identify all specifications including the size, quantity, and quality of products at agreed upon pricing mechanisms. The system removes many of the risks that farmers face when selling their products on the open market where prices can often fluctuate. Compete has been working strategically with local farming companies to develop their capacities, support participation in trade events, enable familiarization trips, create distribution centers, and assist with negotiating forward contracts with new customers. USAID facilitated a total of 11 forward contracts between Palestinian farmers and domestic and international buyers in FY3, generating a combined value of over $6 million.

REVITALISING THE FRESH HERB SECTOR

USAID's Compete project is working with local famers to modernize facilities, especially in the heavily traditional Palestinian fresh herb subsector. Farmer Sami Abu Mansour, who maintains a chive farm in the Jordan River valley, was one such beneficiary. He gained new technology, including artificial soil (perlite), a fully computerized irrigation system called Plant Self-Management (PSM), two cooling rooms, and a precooling packing house to extend the shelf life of fresh produce. Sami Abu Mansour's modern chive farm is now one of the first of its kind for the Palestinian region and a live model for other farmers to monitor and emulate. The produce is currently exported with herbs from other farms in the global market.

ENHANCING QUALITY

Before USAID's involvement with Palestinian grape farmers, only 60 hectares of grapes with seeds were grown in open fields. Knowing that simple upgrades could drastically change the quality and export potential of the crop, USAID through the Compete Project began discussing the costs and benefits of upgrading farms with 34 grape farmers in the Jordan Valley. The result was to provide small Palestinian grape farms, varying from 0.5 to 7 hectares each (5 to 70 dunums), with simple net covers to encourage the production of high quality seedless grapes. The netting covers around 52 hectares, which represent 73% of the grape farms in the West Bank. The nets improve the quality of the produce, enabling farmers to reach lucrative export markets, increasing sales by $1.6 million.

UPGRADING THE GUAVA SECTOR

The Palestinian agriculture sector is characterized by small producers, making it difficult to compete in international markets. To reverse this trend and make local agribusiness globally competitive, USAID, through the Compete Project, encouraged the formation of companies that can act as aggregators, including the Green Qalqilya Company, which represents 36 guava and avocado farmers. To help the new aggregator achieve its potential, USAID provided financial assistance to establish a fully equipped packing line with washing, sorting,

Guava festival, Qalqilya

grading, packaging, and cooling facilities. The introduction of new production and storage technology helps the farmers to improve the quality and diversity of their products. The

Creative guava uses at Guava Festival

ability to store and package the fruit to international export standards helps the farmers access new markets and thus increase income. This year alone the Green Qalqilya Company sent $2,430,000 USD of guava, avocado, and pepper exports to Jordan and Kuwait. Moreover, through the partnership and the expansion in production activities, the company has also been able to hire 15 new employees, making a positive impact on the local economy.

TRADE SHOW PARTICIPATION

Supporting Palestinian producers ability to penetrate world markets, USAID's Compete Project assists these producers' participation in international tradeshows, such as in Dubai, Russia, the US, and Europe. This year, participating companies were able to attend four major international trade shows, leading to over $8.9 million USD in Palestinian exports and access to new market channels in both Russia and the Middle Eastern Gulf States. To further maximize the Palestinian agribusinesses sector strength in international markets, USAID supported hiring an export manager for two high potential Palestinian

Fruit Logistica 2014

companies: Canaan Fair Trade Company and Emirates Delight Company. This year's trade shows include: Gulfood in Dubai, the largest exhibition of food products in the Middle East; the Fruit Logistica Trade Show in Berlin; the Canaan Fair Trade exhibited at Natural Products Expo West in L.A.; the Fancy Food Winter Trade Show; and the Fancy Food Trade Show in New York. Canaan's Director Dr. Nasser Abufarha was accompanied by the USAID supported Export Manager for the company, Ms. Meryl Marsh, and Canaan's US Outreach

coordinator, Ms. Diane Adkin. They had meetings with Whole Foods Market Global to discuss the launch and promotion of the newest product: Jerusalem label olive oil.

Exhibiting at trade shows not only increases exports but also opens up access to new markets. This year, Palestinian companies accessed new markets in New Zealand, Ukraine, Lebanon, Poland, and Switzerland. An increased demand for products has the

Gulfood, Dubai 2014

effect of scaling up productivity at home, leading to the creation of new jobs and development of new products to meet international market interests.

INNOVATIVE MEASURES

Treated waste water study tour in Israel

The Compete Project is introducing the concept of treated wastewater (TWW) as a solution to the West Bank's water scarcity issues, initiating a solution to the largest impediment for agricultural development. A key part of getting the project off the ground has been educating Palestinian agronomists, farmers, and community leaders about the use of TWW for agricultural use. In November, USAID supported the Palestinian Center for Agricultural Research and Development (PCARD) in conducting a three day workshop on technical and managerial guidelines for using TWW on a large scale. The follow-up activity was a study tour to Israel for 68 Palestinian farmers. USAID subsequently gave its official approval of the Environmental Assessment (EA) supporting the reuse of treated water for

agricultural purposes in the northern West Bank. The Compete agribusiness team is now working to expand the irrigation capacities for farmers by installing irrigation networks over 10 hectares of farmland in Jenin. The project will also cover 20 hectares (200 dunums) in Deir Sharif in Nablus with export crops, including almond and pomegranate. The project will not only promote environmental sustainability in the area, but also create significant opportunity to introduce new crops with export potential.

Farmers sharing ideas during the study tour

SUPPORTING WOMEN'S COOPERATIVES

Al Aqaba's old product

The finished product at Al Aqaba

Working with women's associations improves the collective power of women beneficiaries, enabling strong cooperative links and marketing associations. Through these channels, women can engage in trade, adding to the development of the agribusiness sector as a whole. USAID is working with Al Aqaba Rural Women's Society (ARWS) in Tubas, a women's cooperative with 60 members, to produce agricultural products from raw materials, mostly dried herbs. USAID began working with the cooperative in November 2013 through a grant to upgrade the cooperative's facilities. This enabled the society to buy machinery which increased their yield, therefore increasing supply to the local market and opening up the possibility to reach export markets. To fully support the cooperative's ability to compete regionally, USAID signed an additional grant with Jusor Co. for Investment & Agricultural Marketing to package and market Al Aqaba's products. Al Aqaba is now selling their products to hotels owned by Palestine Development and Investment, Ltd. (PADICO Holding) around the country.

INTRODUCING NEW CROPS AND TECHNOLOGIES

The first ever broccoli harvest in the West Bank

USAID has introduced a range of new crops with high export potential to the Palestinian agriculture sector. These include red potatoes, broccoli, mushrooms, grapes, round peaches, nectarines, black amber plums, black diamond, and different varieties of pomegranates. A model farm cultivating lychee and mango was also established in the northern West Bank. The fruits were chosen for their adaptability to the climate and soil quality of the area, as well as being high profit products with high export demand.

In addition, new hanging system technology was introduced to five strawberry farms, all of which now produce higher quality strawberries. The strawberry farmers were trained on new methods of fertilization, harvesting, and international pest management (IPM) requirements to support the growth of healthy crops with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems. The hanging system allows the strawberries to be ready for harvest one month before more traditional farms, generating much higher prices for USAID's partners.

TOURISM

HOTEL CLASSIFICATION

Hotel Classification sign

Developing local capacities and standards are essential building blocks to create and support a sustainable tourism industry. To ensure this foundation was in place, USAID initiated the design and implantation of a Palestinian Hotel Classification System built on the internationally recognized star ratings system. Since 2013, Compete has been working to implement the hotel classifications in the West Bank. Hotel classifications greatly improve hotel marketing potential and attract higher numbers of online booking customers, also encouraging customers to stay for longer.

Hotel Classification Standards

As the numbers of guests increase, hotels must respond by hiring new staff. This year, six of the hotels that were classified have hired a total of 35 new staff. So far, 30 hotels have received their quality star rating and the Intercontinental Hotel in Jericho became the first five-star hotel to be fully classified under the system. The rating system is also enabling other positive effects, such as the now rated Ritz Hotel in East Jerusalem receiving the Award for Excellence 2014 from Trip Advisor.

SUPPORING QUALITY STANDARDS

Ensuring a standard quality of service across is a major priority for the development of the Palestinian tourism sector. Knowing this, USAID supported the design of a comprehensive series of seven training modules by the American Hotel & Lodging Association-Education Institute (AHLA-EI). The trainings were then given by local company Diyafa Hospitality Management Consultants to hotel staff of all levels and sectors, including supervisors, administrators, housekeepers, and food and beverage executives from across the country. While all sections of the trainings showed positive results, the Guest Service Gold trainings were particularly successful. 300 participants attended from 11 hotels from around the West Bank and six Palestinian hotels qualified for the Property Gold Quality Service Certificate, four in East Jerusalem, one in Bethlehem, and one in Jericho.

Gold Service event in Bethlehem

DEVELOPING PRIORITY DESTINATIONS

USAID has identified and prioritized a set of destinations across the West Bank with strong appeal to tourists based on their historical, cultural, and religious significance. Of particular focus are the historic city of Bethlehem itself, the nearby town of Bethany, and the beautiful city of Burqin in the north. USAID's work was launched in May, focusing on renovation projects in important public historical sites, development of local value chains, working with local industry stakeholders, and providing support to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the

Launch of the Renovation Program

development strategy. The Compete project has completed three interventions in Bethlehem: the renovation of public toilets, the rehabilitation of Dar Khater (jarour), and the introduction of a street light network, which are now managed by the Bethlehem Municipality. The CCHP (Center for Cultural Heritage Preservation), who implements the projects, is currently working on a series of 17 urban renovation projects including the King David Street, which is in the heart of the old city of Bethlehem leading to the Church of the Nativity and one of the most important historical and religious sites in the world. The CCHP is also undertaking the first project in the ancient town of Burqin: the renovation of Jarrar Palace which will operate as a visitor information center. The Compete tourism team has met with key stakeholders from Burqin to establish a strategic Conservation and Management plan, ensuring community stakeholders are ready to manage the sites, and to pinpoint locations for future interventions. The Compete tourism team is also undertaking the first intervention in the historic town of Bethany near Bethlehem by creating a tourist entrance to the historic town.

IMPROVING VISITORS EXPERIENCES

The re-opening in May of the historical Hishams Palace and its museum in Jericho highlights the importance and success of USAID's site renovation activities and improving the ability of Palestinian destinations to attract more tourists. At Hishams Palace, the museum's interpretation and displays were designed to enhance the site and provide understanding of its cultural significance. To underscore its importance, USAID and the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities held a joint press conference to raise awareness about site renovation and urban rehabilitation activities throughout the West Bank.

Opening of Hishams Palace

Exhibits at Hishams Palace

INCREASING TOURISM THROUGH FESTIVALS

USAID supported the Bethlehem Municipality in hosting the largest Christmas Festival ever held as a means to showcasing the city as a vibrant tourist destination. The number of daily visitors in Bethlehem during the Christmas season increased by 50%, while the number of overnights increased by 64% from the year before. This also increased revenues by 55% from the previous year, generating $6 million USD. The Christmas Market featured 22 kiosks supported by USAID and ran for 8 days, a full week longer than previous years,

Bazaar at Jericho Festival

with revenues reaching around $10,000 USD for participating businesses. Following the success of the Christmas Festival, USAID partnered with the public and private sectors to

organize the Jericho Arts Festival. The festival increased Jericho's reputation as a unique tourist destination for all ages of people with a whole range of interests. Opening on May 1, it presented a variety of musical, cultural, and interactive events over four weekends, including a bazaar featuring Palestinian specialty food and handicrafts. The Jericho Arts Festival successfully brought 105,701 visitors to the city, increasing revenues by approximately $1.1 million USD.

Palestinian band Toot Ard at Jericho Festival

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF ALTERNATIVE TOURISM

USAID has been striving to place the unique attractions of the West Bank on the international tourist destination agenda. Compete has been working with Rozana, the Abraham Path Initiative, and communities along the Abraham Path between Nablus and Jenin to establish lodging and food options, increasing tourist access. Training workshops were also provided

for 16 local guides, covering topics related to wild plants, wildlife, local history, culture, and architecture in addition to first aid. The trail subsequently received international recognition, signaling a major boost for the tourism sector. The *National Geographic* cover story for the April 2014 issue featured the Abraham Path, calling the Palestinian segment number one of the "10 of the Best New Walking Trails" worldwide. The article highlighted the importance of this work with particular attention paid to the "sense of immersion" that is part of the experience of walking the Palestinian Abraham Path. It also stressed the success of one of USAID's priority areas in developing comfortable accommodation for hikers, giving particularly positive feedback for the "welcoming home stays." The partnership with Rozana and the Abraham Path Initiative has been an enormous success in producing an online guidebook, marketing materials, and the extraordinarily comprehensive Jenin area atlas containing absolutely everything a visitor

National Geographic April 2014

would want to know about the hiking route. The atlas includes turn by turn descriptions, as well as detailed information on the climate, local amenities, and sites of interest. The Abraham Path Initiative has also recently obtained a two-year grant from the World Bank to further develop the Abraham Path in the West Bank, complementing the work being done through USAID.

DEVELOPING NEW TOURISM PRODUCTS

Breaking Bread Journeys is a unique Palestinian-Israeli tourism initiative that was officially launched at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London in November 2013. The initiative has gained major success and attracted international recognition from media outlets all over the world, from Europe to the U.S. The founders were also nominated for the Women of the Year award in August this year by Myself Magazine, a German subsidiary of Conde Nast. USAID is supporting this initiative as part of its strategy to offer more equitable tours in the region, and is working with the tour operators Christina Samara and Elisa Moed on a toolkit to aid in replicating the enterprise elsewhere. The Marketing and Product Development Toolkit provides step by step information for tour operators to develop new or improve existing joint tourism products. As a practitioners guide, it covers testing, pricing, advertising, and developing a marketing strategy.

Christina and Elisa in Myself

SUPPORTING EQUITABLE TOURS

As part of their strategy to increase tourism in the West Bank, USAID's Compete Project is supporting equitable tours, including partnering with "Israel-Palestine: Creative Regional Initiatives." The goal of the equitable tours is to focus on bringing visitors, including foreigners and Israeli citizens of all races and religions, to experience Palestinian culture and heritage, meet and interact with the local communities, and purchase Palestinian services and products. Since the project began in February 2014, five tours have been conducted: three in Ramallah, one in Jericho, and one in Bethlehem with 161 participants, 68% of which were Israeli.

ICT

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

For the Palestinian ICT sector to grow and thrive, partnerships between Palestinian software development companies and international companies are essential. USAID, through the Compete project, is facilitating such partnerships which have the potential to establish the West Bank as a quality outsourcing hub. Major achievements were accomplished this year to meet this goal. Compete signed a 10 month grant agreement worth $90,090 USD with Palestinian company Exalt to facilitate two long term contracts providing software development for American company Cisco Video Technologies (formerly NDS) and with Israeli startup Headbox. So far this year, the results of the contracts included Exalt hiring seven new employees and exports increasing by almost $90,000. Intel also contracted Jaffa.Net independently to undertake another software development project based on the success of the Platform Enablement Test Suite "PETS" project, an ongoing USAID project. This resulted in hiring an additional three engineers and exports increasing approximately $305,000 USD this year alone. With support from USAID, ALTARIQ systems gained access

to markets in Libya and Oman and implemented new time attendance and library management systems per their contract. They signed further agreements with local IT companies in both countries to deliver support services. Finally, Palestinian firm Progineer signed a contract to undertake a pilot project with major multinational company Thompson Reuters to develop software on Natural Language Processing which has the potential to expand into a further, more extensive partnership.

INTRODUCING SEED FUNDING

USAID, through the Compete Project, is helping to fill a crucial gap in the Palestinian ICT environment by having worked with Al-Dawliah Investments to bring the first angel investor seed fund network, Arabreneur, to Ramallah in 2013. Previously established in Jordan and Dubai, Arabrenuer provides budding entrepreneurs with capital investment, first-class facilities, and seasoned mentors to grow their companies and get their product to market. After their first pitching event in November,

3rd Arabeneur pitching event

Arabreneur invested $440,000 USD in four of the six companies who pitched their ideas, marking the first ever angel investments in startups in the Palestinian territories. Arabreneur again partnered with USAID and the Startup Bootcamp, the largest European network of accelerators, in April 2014 to organize the Second Angel Pitching Event at the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem. Three startups received combined investments of $250,000 USD. In September, Arabreneur hosted the third pitching event. Seven start-ups, including two from Gaza and one Arab-Israeli, pitched to a panel of judges, all experts in the field of entrepreneurial ventures. The startups represented diverse areas of focus, including: Edunation, an online portal for schools, which has since signed contracts in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Iraq and Canada; Sooshef, an online platform that allows aspiring chefs to find and customize recipes based on the ingredients they have; Jobreneur, a cloud-based platform that offers talent pool in the MENA region access to online consultancy assignments in international markets; and Imagry, a mobile image recognition platform that enables users to search through images that are hyperlinked to the vendors' online portals.

DEVELOING AN ENTREPRENEURIAL ECO-SYSTEM

3rd Arabrenuer Pitching Event

In addition to providing direct investment and business support, Arabreneur has been building links to launch Palestinian startups internationally. In April, Arabreneur signed a partnership agreement with Price Waterhouse Coopers to provide specialized support to Arabreneur's Palestinian startups, encouraging the companies to comply with international standards and making them more attractive to global investors. The company later forged connections with the Microsoft Accelerator Program in Tel Aviv and Turkish accelerator

Etohum. As a result, this summer AidBits became the first Palestinian startup to complete the world renowned Microsoft acceleration program in Netanya, Israel, where they received mentoring from top Microsoft employees and other industry leaders. After the program, AidBits was named "coolest startup" at the ArabNet Digital Summit in July and placed in SeedStars World, a Swiss global competition for the best startup in emerging markets in February. In addition, Compete supported Arabreneur's participation at the Arabnet Show in Dubai, where five Palestinian startups pitched their initiatives and showcased their products, several of which received leads for future investments from Gulf-based investors and generated new client bases. At the latest pitching event, Arabreneur also hosted the Ramallah leg of SeedStars World, who selected AidBits to represent their initiative and country, meet with European investors, and develop connections to expand their businesses.

ACCELERATING STARTUPS

Compete is working with Leaders, a local NGO that aims to build the capacity and leadership of Palestinian youth. Together they created E-Zone, a business accelerator that provides services for Palestinian startup companies and a shared space designed to create an entrepreneurial environment to maximize the benefits of Leader's 'Fast Forward' acceleration program. The E-Zone Mini Tech Park, an entrepreneurial work space located **at** the Leaders headquarters in Ramallah, officially opened in April. Three E-Zone selection events were held this year and

Mr. David Harden at the StartUp Cup

ten startups have been created as a result. This has an immediate set of positive effects for the entrepreneurs, creating 28 new jobs and developing five software products at E-Zone. To
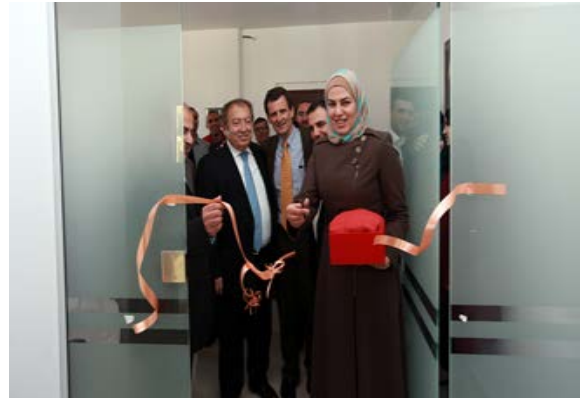

StartUp Cup final ceremony

further maximize the potential of E-Zone, USAID partnered with a Palestinian-American company "ConnectME" to implement the first Palestinian StartUp Cup, a global network of locally-driven accelerators focusing on capacity building and providing mentorship and consultancy for startups through competition. Following a six-month program, seven finalist startups participated in the final mentorship stage in the StartUp Cup program before graduating in May.

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT

A USAID initiative in partnership with the Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA) resulted in implementing a series of specialized training programs to improve the employability prospects of young university graduates. Through the program, PITA implemented a specialized industry training course designed to give access to the vital skills blocking Palestinian graduates from finding jobs. The program trained high potential students over a one year period, resulting in 33 of its 50 trainees signing long term employment contracts. To promote employment in Hebron and to generate a pipeline to employment for graduates of the Palestinian Polytechnic University (PPU), USAID signed a grant of

$150,000 USD to support eight women in becoming certified in sales force technology and motivate H+W Mena, a software development company headquartered in Ramallah, to open a branch in Hebron. The training for the women included developing custom applications to become immediately integrated into the activities of H+W Mena Hebron. As a result, H+W Mena hired 31 additional employees and expanded their IT services to non-IT industries in the local market through the cloud concept. USAID also supported a unique pilot professional

Official opening of H+W Hebron

internship program at Israeli IT companies to build key skills in the Palestinian IT sector. Together with the Palestinian Internships Program (PIP), a US NGO, ten-week internships were organized for eight young Palestinians at Israeli hi-tech companies Intel, Google, Medisafe, FreightIOS, Lool, and JVP. The program is outlined in detail in the features section below.

RESARCH AND DEVELEMENT

 USAID facilitated relations with four Palestinian universities who came together to create and launch a technology transfer company, this initiative named Ibdaa is the only research based entrepreneurship initiative in the Palestinian Areas especially that it is shared among four universities. Ibdaa will be facilitating the relationship between the private sector and universities to bridge the academia-industry gap. Now a Palestinian Ministry of Economy registered company, Ibdaa is designed to facilitate the commercialization of R&D to local and international markets, helping the private sector address market problems and capture opportunities through creative projects. Both universities and the private sector will use R&D to generate new solutions to market problems. This year, Compete organized a study tour to Jordan and Dubai in February to explore existing modules of research oriented institutions and look at successful R&D entities partnered with the private sector. The delegation consisted of four university officials, Compete staff, and

Official launch of the Ibdaa Tech Transfer Company

USAID COR Ghassan Al Jamal. This tour laid the groundwork for launching the technology transfer company (TTC) in the Palestinian Territories by building on the successes and challenges of TTCs located in Amman and Dubai. Ibdaa selected a General Manager in March 2014, signifying an important milestone in the development of the TTC. The GM will be responsible for launching Ibdaa, running the first round of projects, and managing the relationships between the partner universities and the private sector. Workshops were also held with 25 professors from the four partner universities, the Palestinian Polytechnic University, Najah University, American University in Jenin, and Al-Quds University, to promote better understanding of intellectual property rules and regulations especially in the MENA region.

INTEL ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM

USAID's Compete project introduced the Intel Entrepreneurship Program to four Palestinian universities, all of which are members of Ibdaa. The program supports the commercialization and scaling of businesses, promotes an entrepreneurial culture amongst university students, and builds the capacity of participants to deliver entrepreneurship courses on their campuses. Developed by Intel and localized by Queen Rania Center for Entrepreneurship, this program included 40 training hours on the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and education, covering topics such as technologic tools to empower businesses, increasing employability, driving innovation, and accelerating economic growth in computing technology. During a three day workshop, participants were trained to teach introductory entrepreneurship courses, targeting students in the business, science, and technology undergraduate colleges.

IP POLICY

USAID supported Ibdaa universities with technical assistance provided by the Intellectual Property Commercialization Office (IPCO) to help build a successful transfer structure aimed at improving the impact of applied scientific research on the national economy. This is done through supporting the educational entities and individuals in matters related to Technology Transfer, Intellectual Property Managements, and commercialization of R&D results. USAID, through IPCO, organized a five day workshop which devised an IP Policy shadowing the established national technology transfer structure to be applied by the relevant institutions.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Class in session at the 3ʳᵈ Mini MBA

19 middle managers from both the Agribusiness and ICT sectors attended in 3ʳᵈ Mini MBA, an event designed by Compete with USAID support. This year's program ran for 12 days over a period of six weeks and was adapted to meet industry needs to improve the management skills of leading Palestinian companies, better enabling them to do business on a global scale. The training program helps Palestinian companies understand the complex international business environment and how to introduce services in a targeted manner rather than the current, open-ended marketing approach.

STONE & MARBLE

INCREASING EXPORTS THROUGH TRADE SHOWS

With assistance from USAID through the Compete Project, Palestinian stone companies are participating in major international trade shows and generating impressive results. The trade shows not only generate high revenues through contracts made from the shows, but crucially build the image

Palestinian Pavilion at Marmomacc 2014

of Palestinian stone on an international stage. To maximize interest in the Palestinian pavilion at the trade shows, the USAID-Compete stone and marble team has been supporting the creation of high quality innovative and artistic displays, resulting in high numbers of potential buyers. At the shows, the companies have also been developing their knowledge of new technologies, market trends and industry obstacles. Seven companies exhibited at the Big 5 Trade Show in Dubai the last week of November, the Coverings trade show in Las Vegas in May, and the Verona Marmomacc trade show in September. The companies include: the Holy Land Group, Al Omraniya Group for Jerusalem Stone, Al Waleed Co., Sharabati Co. for Marble and Stone, Fonoon, and Marble Company. Together the companies generated an impressive $6.7 million USD in contracts through the trade shows, gained access to new markets, and created 38 new jobs. Participating at the trade shows also works to improve building strong business relationships with buyers and engineers, which ultimately increases exports and jobs within the Palestinian stone sector.

TURNING WASTE INTO PROFIT

Sludge New Product Symposium 2014

USAID has been working to introduce the recycling of stone waste as a sustainable, direct, and cost effective driven means of addressing the challenges and opportunities of the Palestinian stone and marble industry. Despite high quality natural resources, a lack of innovation has held the stone industry back from competing in global markets. The recycling of stone waste makes for a turnaround in terms of the industry's approach to boosting its competiveness internationally and in improving efficiency and quality of production. Generating interest of local investors to realize the potential of stone waste recycling, the Compete stone and marble team hosted the Sludge New Product Symposium in cooperation with UNIDO and the Palestinian Stone & Marble Union. The symposium showcased almost 20 new products which offer business opportunities for Palestinian stone producers and interested investors. Following the event, USAID signed contracts to partner with four Palestinian investors, including the President of the Palestinian Stone Union, to prepare a full feasibility study for the development of new profitable products from stone waste. Two of the investors and their local consultants traveled to Europe, India, and Turkey to meet with machine manufacturers, consultants, and experts in the field to learn more about establishing Palestinian factories to manufacture new products from stone waste. The feasibility studies outline the cost-benefit analysis of new product development, assisting the investment partners in developing a solid business plan to drive investment in the Palestinian stone industry and trigger an increase in sales and employment. The most recent progress reports are focusing on the marketing aspects of the initiative, concluding the initiative is showing positive potential in this regard.

INNOVATIVE MARKET SOLUTIONS

USAID has decided to add a new focus: decorative stone products as a new specialization in the current stone and marble portfolio. Mosaics, pottery, and ceramics have

Worker at Foonon Art of Carved Stone

enormous added value and are showing export potential, confirmed through a series of successful meetings between USAID, members of the office of the Quartet Representative, and the Representative Offices of South Korea and Brazil to the Palestinian Authority (PA). The industries, in particular glass and ceramic, also offer high cross-cutting potential with the tourism sector. This important feature is illustrated by the Twemeh Art Gallery, an artisanal workshop that creates carved wooden religious sculptures sold in souvenir shops in Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The USAID Compete team have undertaken months of research to identify the needs of the producers, obstacles in reaching international markets, and areas where future interventions can support export potential. Having identified companies producing decorative items with high export potential, the next step is to initiate a pilot project to assess interventions with the highest potential and test the export readiness of this important subsector.

UPGRADING INDUSTRY

USAID's Compete project is strategically working to modernize the Palestinian stone and marble industry by upgrading filter presses. Filter presses convert liquid slurry into dry sludge, part of a key value-chain in the industry. Improving filter presses is the first step in transforming the industry and complying with international environmental regulations, opening up export potentials. In May, the program for maintenance of filter presses in the stone industry was completed. Sixteen filter presses were serviced at stone factories in the West Bank to ensure that slurry is turned into sludge and allow the reuse and conservation of water, also protecting the environment from stone residue.

ALL SECTORS

PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT LEVERAGED

Since the beginning of the Compete Project, the M&E team has captured the value of capital investments from our partners leveraged as a cost share from project activities. As of September 30, 2014, private sector investment for the four sectors has reached a total of $40,922,000 USD, with the following sector contributions:

Agriculture: $18,940,000 USD
ICT: $9,283,000 USD
Tourism: $7,178,000 USD
Stone & Marble: $5,521,000 USD

COMPONENT A – PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – RESTARTING DOMESTIC WATERMELON PRODUCTION

Abundant Watermelon fields in the Jordan Valley producing for the domestic market for the first time in twenty years.

USAID has helped to create a remarkable turnaround in the Palestinian agriculture sector this year. Working through a series of strategic interventions to introduce new technologies to graft high quality watermelon and melon seedlings locally, USAID has helped to entirely restart the sector for farmers in the West Bank. This year saw the first major local Watermelon harvest in over twenty years, resulting in local produce now accounting for 30% of the domestic market, an increase from almost zero two years ago, and sales of more than $3 million USD.

USAID has upgraded nurseries, introduced grafting technology, and provided training in grafting methods to ensure nurseries have the capacity to provide quality seedlings to farmers at competitive prices. This also solves the problem of soil borne disease which destroyed the local industry in the 1990's. Before the project began, local farmers relied heavily on expensive imported seedlings, creating little incentive for farmers to grow the crops. In 2012, there were a mere 10-15 dunums in Jericho producing watermelon for the local market but now, just 18 months later, that number stands at 866 dunums.

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

Upgrading local nurseries ensures they are able to meet increasing demands for quality seedlings. At Ata Abu El Rub Nursery in the northern West Bank, the new facilities allow the implementation of the GlobalGAP (Global Good Agricultural Practices) System so the nursery can compete in both the local and global markets. This season alone, two local nurseries have produced 402,510 and 124,900 melon seedlings respectively; 257,410 for local nurseries and 270,000 for the Israeli market. The result is driving domestic sales, increasing the quality and creating job opportunities –an unparalleled success in the sector.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – SUPPORTING INNOVATORS

"The nomination, coming just a year after the official launch of our company, really validates what we are trying to do. We are very privileged and honored to be considered after such a short time."
Christina Samara

Tourism is undoubtedly one of the largest industries in the global economy, with an estimated $1,159 billion USD spent by international visitors while abroad in 2013. While Israel and the Palestinian Territories are famous for their unique mix of the cultural and historical sites central to three of the world's major religions, the reputation of the region as a site of political conflict has also blighted the area for decades.

Two enterprising women have, however, managed to turn that dynamic on its head. Co-founders Christina Samara, a Palestinian and managing director of Samara Tourist & Travel, and Elisa Moed, an Israeli and CEO of Travelujah, broke the mold in creating Breaking Bread Journeys. The company organizes tours that crisscross the Palestinian-Israeli border, introducing visitors to the heart of both cultures: food. Their initiative opens doors to the heritage, folklore, traditions, and hospitality of the Middle East, giving a real life taste to a fascinating part of the world.

In doing so, Christina Samara and Elisa Moed started media frenzy, with journalists from NBC to the London Times clamoring to experience something completely different. As if further proof of success was needed, Christina and Elisa have been nominated as Women of the Year by Myself Magazine, a German subsidiary of Conde Nast for the "risk they took to realize their vision of a friendlier world." USAID has supported the initiative since the women introduced their unique take on tourism in the Holy Land. The partnership between Christina, Elisa, and USAID is based on a shared vision and belief in the ability of local tour operators to create truly unique market niches, placing one of the most fascinating parts of the world where it belongs – firmly on the map of the globally competitive tourism industry.

ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS – SUPPORTING BEST BUSINESS PRACTICE

Canaan founder Nasser Abu Farha

Canaan Fair Trade is a Palestinian company using the fair trade approach to work directly with over 1,700 small farmers in the West Bank. Canaan's work with the farmers in sourcing premium quality and certified organic produce processed by artisanal women's groups creates better trading conditions and promotes sustainability by generating added value for producers.

USAID shares Canaan's focus in supporting local farmers to create specialty produce that can be successfully marketed internationally. Canaan's olive oils, unique condiments, honey, soaps, and dried foods such as za'atar, a middle eastern signature thyme blend, are sold around the world, from Europe to the U.S. and Australia to Asia.

USAID's work with Canaan focuses on providing support to the company's international marketing campaign, helping Canaan exhibit produce at Fancy Foods in New York, North America's largest specialty food and beverage event. A key part of this support included hiring an export manager to maximize opportunities in introducing Palestinian products into the global marketplace. Through the assistance, Canaan successfully introduced six products to the North American and European Whole Foods markets. The expansion not only generates profit for the company, but also creates crucial added value for the famers themselves. Sales of olive oil alone stand at $5 million USD per year, generating almost $3 million USD in sales for local farmers, which remarkably translates to almost $500,000 USD in added value for local olive oil producers. Working in this way ensures best quality produce is delivered for the best possible results which can be seen and tasted from farm to fork.

COMPONENT B – UPDATE

Component B is a core part of the Compete work plan in developing 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, through the Compete Project, 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

With technical assistance from USAID, **the National Carton Factory** has become the primary local service provider of cartons to local farmers, especially for guava and avocados. The Compete Project assisted in applying proper carton specifications to comply with the food packaging and labeling norms of the Palestinian Standardization Institution (PSI). The assistance to the National Carton Factory included placing a consultant with the company in January to develop the required system to attain the ISO 9001 international standard, enabling them to enter export markets. The newly improved capacities of the National Carton Factory increase the competitiveness of Palestinian farmers, helping them to access international markets by complying with international packaging standards.

USAID awarded **The Palestinian Center for Agricultural Research & Development** (PCARD) a grant to conduct an awareness program for wastewater reuse for agricultural purposes. PCARD conducted a three day training in Israel in February 2014 for 14 Ministry of Agriculture extension agents and others. The training is a necessary step in generating understanding among key stakeholders of the viability of treated wastewater for agriculture as a solution to the water shortage issues in the West Bank.

The Compete Project worked with the **Equity Legal Group (ELG)** to undertake desk research and market analysis for the legal and technical tasks required to establish a Marketing Intelligence and Distribution HUB Company (MIDHC) in Dubai to represent and assist in the development of Palestinian agribusiness. The existence of such a hub would greatly increase the presence and image of Palestinian produce in the GCC region, thereby increasing export potential. The ELG assisted with an investigative trip to Dubai by organizing meetings with relevant business partners and agencies. When they returned in February 2014, ELG conducted a workshop with 21 principle Palestinian exporters to Dubai to disseminate the results. Plans to initiate the HUB are continuing, with the USAID Compete team holding bi-monthly meetings with key stakeholders.

The Compete Project supported the design and implementation of an operational traceability system by **M.A.K International,** the main professional food safety training provider in the West Bank. The traceability system is designed to implement international best practices in the fresh export produce sector. In February, the farmers were trained on applying this system to promote increased transparency and trust among stakeholders along the value chain. Dissemination of the software was facilitated through partnerships with the fresh producers and packers groups. Implementing a traceability system increases product standards and creates positive perceptions of Palestinian produce. Adopting modern technologies and meeting international export requirements are vital steps in assuring the success of the fresh

produce industry export sector. M.A.K. International, in partnership with the Compete Project, is meeting with potential ICT companies to develop the traceability software for Palestinian companies. In May, USAID partnered with MAK International to organize an event celebrating the success MAK international has achieved in their long term partnership with USAID. They have supported over 50 Palestinian companies in obtaining international certificates in fields such as quality, food safety, environment, occupational health, and social accountability since 1998.

In February, Compete engaged the services of the **Palestinian American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham-Palestine)** to recruit export managers for two Palestinian agricultural companies. AmCham-Palestine is a group of private sector business leaders with over 50 members and is regarded to be the national platform for Palestinian-American business relations. AmCham Palestine completed an assessment of the needs and profiles of the companies.

The Compete Project worked with the **Palestinian Food Industries Union (PFIU),** who represent over 205 companies in the food production and marketing sectors, to support the participation of six Palestinian companies in the second Arab Products Exhibition in Nazareth, December 6-7th 2013. Through the exhibition, the PFIU created important links with the Nazareth Chamber of Commerce to promote the quality of West Bank products and increase the presence of these products inside Israel.

The project's agribusiness team worked with business service provider **PalCircless** to support the participation of four Palestinian companies at the Fruit Logistica trade show in Berlin, February 5-7, 2014. Through this activity, PalCircless gained valuable experience by assisting with the design and construction of the booths, marketing, logistics and shipping samples.

Maximizing the development of local expertise in the field of export related services, the agribusiness team also worked with the national trade association, **PalTrade,** to support the participation of six Palestinian companies in the Gulfood trade show in Dubai, February 23-27, 2014. PalTrade assisted the selected companies in the design and construction of the booths, as well as organizing logistics.

To enhance Palestinian production practices USAID supported the upgrade of the **Scientific Center for Food and Drug Analysis** in Nablus, enabling them to conduct tests in accordance with international standards (ISO 17025) and comply with customer needs and market requirements. USAID's assistance with developing domestic capacity to undertake product residue and microbial testing makes the Scientific Center for Food and Drug Analysis the first Palestinian laboratory capable of conducting these tests.

ICT

Through the Compete Project, USAID signed agreements with the Palestinian private IT sector representative, the **Palestinian IT Association (PITA**), to connect the Palestinian IT sector with international markets through the Palestinian diaspora. PITA conducted a trade mission to the United States between November 4th and 8th to lay the groundwork. PITA hired a B2B consultant for the mission to connect 9 Palestinian companies with US-based firms in New York, Philadelphia, and New Jersey. Several companies came back with leads for new partnerships and contracts. As computer science graduates are lacking many of the cutting-

edge skills currently in demand, the Compete ICT team also worked with PITA to implement an employability program. The program, which concluded in February, provided training on niche technologies and linked young people to internships in IT companies. The majority of the 50 participants successfully obtained either internships or long-term employment.

In mid-2013, the Compete Project partnered with **Al Dawliah Investments** to launch **Arabreneur**, a Palestinian acceleration program seeking to create an enabling environment for young Arab entrepreneurs by providing them with capital investment, first-class facilities, and seasoned mentors to grow their companies and get their product to market. Following the first pitching event in November 2013, Arabreneur announced its first seed investment of $440,000 USD in four quality Palestinian startups. Since, Arabreneur has hosted pitching events on a quarterly basis. In April 2014, they partnered with USAID and Startup Bootcamp, the largest European network of accelerators, to organize the Second Angel Pitching Event at the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem. Three Palestinian startups that pitched at the event in Jerusalem received combined investments of $250,000 USD announced at the ArabNet Digital Summit 2014 held at the Palm in Dubai. The organization's third cycle of investments took place in Ramallah in September 2014 in partnership with SeedStars World and Startup Bootcamp.

Through the Compete Project, USAID partnered with **Al Dawliah Investments** to send five Palestinian startups to attend the ArabNet Digital Summit in Dubai. The summit is a major event for digital professionals and entrepreneurs in the Middle East where startups can take part in workshops, forums, and present their initiatives to investors and the press. The startups pitched their businesses to investors and were subsequently featured in ulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. Through the event, the startups also received leads for investments from GCC investors and generated new client bases. The Palestinian Startup AidBits, who received funding through the first seed investments, was also named the coolest startup at the Summit.

Leaders is a Palestinian NGO aiming to build the capacity and leadership of Palestinian youth. Leaders manages 'Fast Forward', an acceleration program for Palestinian startups providing seed funding, education, mentorship and coaching for young entrepreneurs. Compete Project began working with Leaders in January to establish E-Zone, a fully equipped working space and hub for Palestinian entrepreneurs. Before E-Zone was even fully established, three startups had already graduated from the Fast Forward accelerator with strong products and business models. Leaders opened the third round of the Fast Forward program that will benefit from the now complete E-Zone facilities in July. Seven startups are currently benefitting from the program.

The **StartUp Cup** is a global entrepreneurship program of locally-driven business model competitions. Through the Compete Project, USAID partnered with Palestinian-American Company ConnectME to operate the Palestinian StartUp Cup. The Startup Cup focuses on cultivating a strong network of mentors for Palestinian startups to ensure their sustainability and to increase collaboration among business leaders, government officials, and business service providers. In June, the Palestinian StartUp Cup wrapped up its first six month business model competition with seven promising startups graduating with strong business models.

Compete is working with the **Palestinian Internship Program**, a registered NGO in the US, to organize ten week unique, high quality internships for ten Palestinian young people. The

participating Israeli hi-tech companies are based in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa and include Intel Israel, Google, Medisafe, FreightIOS, Lool, and JVP. The internships, some of which began in June, have proved to be a great success with 75% of interns having been offered to have their internships extended, while Medisafe, FreightOS and JVP have all made offers of employment to interns.

TOURISM

Compete supports the development of the two main representatives of the tourism sector: the **Arab Hotel Association (AHA)** and **Holy Land Incoming Tour Operators Association (HLITOA).** HLITOA is one of the main stake holders in the Palestinian tourism industry with a membership of about 50 Palestinian tour operators. Ongoing project activities with USAID through the Compete Project are designed to enable HILTOA to provide better services to their members and tailored solutions to help tour operators and hotels attract more tourists to Palestinian areas. Specific activities under the contract include: creating better brand identity, developing market profiles, selling new destinations, participating in trade shows, and improving the digital presence of the Palestinian tourism sector. Since starting work with USAID, HLITOA has defined and profiled four market segments targeted for marketing and sales efforts through the Compete-funded initiative. The U.S. faith tourism market is complete and consultants have engaged Mexico and Brazil to profile the faith tourism markets there. Through the assistance of the Compete Project, HLITOA has improved the capacity of inbound tour operators to diversify and secure relevant market segments.

HLITOA is also engaging with Palestinian tour operators to promote the inclusion of more Palestinian destinations in their tourist packages. To ensure Palestinian areas receive more focus from tour operators, the company organized two field visits for more than 15 Palestinian Tour Operators to new sites developed recently by USAID's Compete project with a particular focus on the cities of Bethany, Jericho, and Bethlehem. To assist tour operators in developing these new products, HLITOA has also developed guidelines and an industry standard toolkit based on market profiles. The toolkit includes an overview of global trends and HLITOA's market profiles, as well as a checklist to build new products, tips to promote the new products and resources for further learning.

The Compete Project partnered with the **Arab Hotel Association (AHA)** to establish the Palestinian hotel classification system Follow the Star". So far, a total of 30 hotels have been fully classified, with another 59 hoteliers adopting the system and currently renovating their hotels in light of the assessment results. USAID through the Compete project also worked with the AHA to implement a cleanliness assessment program for thirteen hotels, contracting **PalClean** to assess and make recommendations for hotels to ensure standards of cleanliness are met. The activity supports hotels to achieve a higher star rating and enhances visitors' experience at the hotels.

Diyafa, a highly regarded Palestinian hospitality consultancy firm, was hired as the local partner to implement a series of in-service trainings to enhance the quality of service in the hospitality sector. Diyafa conducted the final Gold Service Professional Course for 300 hotel employees from 11 hotels around the country. The hotels are now qualified for the Property Gold Quality Service Certificate, strengthening the tourism industry's ability to deliver a positive tourist experience in the West Bank.

The Compete Project is working with the **Centre for Culture and Heritage Preservation (CCHP)** to undertake a series of major urban rehabilitation projects in Bethlehem, Burqin and Bethany, which aim to improve visitors' experience at major Palestinian tourist destinations. The USAID partnership with CCHP aims at enhancing the business environment with 17 interventions, including light renovations to allow access to the locations. This allows CCHP to continue developing its capacity and expertise in creating strategic frameworks to enhance the visitor's experience through improving location accessibility and services provided by the private sector.

STONE & MARBLE

Compete works closely with the **Union of Stone & Marble (USM),** the official representative of the sector, and **PalTrade,** the official Palestinian national promotion organization and sector service provider. PalTrade and USM are working through guidelines developed by Compete to provide services for beneficiaries to promote, exhibit, and market their products. This helps them to reach new markets, develop their companies, and export their products globally. This year, Compete worked closely with the USM and PalTrade to update selection criteria for companies participating at trade shows. PalTrade and USM supported both the Big 5 trade show in Dubai in November 2013 and the Marmomacc trade show in Verona, Italy in September 2014. Support services include designing, managing, reserving strategic space, and building quality booths for Palestinian producers who are export ready and have the capacity to cost share such participation. Further developing the capacities of the sector, USAID is supporting the establishment of a new services unit at the Union of Stone and Marble (USM) to assist the producers to improve marketing, trade show participation, and participation in B2B events. The unit also supports administrative, legal, human resources, and other services. Planned future work includes developing specialized marketing activities to heighten brand awareness of Palestinian stone internationally and providing tailored services to enable companies to reach global markets. In 2015 USM will move forward with their next intervention, which includes a pilot project to hire 5 marketing managers to improve international market access.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS BY SECTOR

AGRIBUSINESS

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Agribusiness activities during FY3.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3
Organize and Upgrade Fresh Herbs Sector

Description
- Create a fresh herbs organization to adapt a protocol of best practices in order to satisfy international market standards and USDA-APHIS requirements.
- Upgrade fresh herb facilities to comply with Integrated Pest Management systems (IPM) and USDA requirements.
- Establish a packing house for fresh herbs in the Jordan Valley.

Achievements	**Impact**
- Enhancing the fresh herb industry through the establishment of a modern chive farm. - New technologies delivered (PSM system) established the first modern Palestinian chive farm. Palestinian farmer Abu Mansour received the fully computerized irrigation system called Plant Self-Management (PSM) to install in his newly completed state-of-the-art greenhouse. - Abu Mansour built the greenhouse on the chive farm as part of his cost share in the project. Additional improvements included the drip irrigation system, ground plastic cover, a collective pool, and a standby generator. - 2 printers supplied to HEPCO to facilitate documentation procedures. - Installed 2 cooling rooms for Sami Abu Mansour's modern chive farm to lengthen the shelf life of fresh produce and ensure quality goods reach the market. - Official opening of the modern chive farm. - Installed 5 cooling rooms at Thimar Co. Jasmine Co. - 100 % of Global GAP system developed. - Delivered GlobalGAP work training to the Company Staff. - Jasmine has already started planting& herbs production & started implementing the whole system on their farm. - Jasmine is Global GAP Certified.	- One unified voice with strong bargaining powers. - Enforcing quality competitiveness standards. - Protect the Palestinian Territories' existing fresh herb market share and will increase subsector competitiveness by instituting best practice IPM approaches. - Higher productivity and lower cost /per dunum. - Increase in exports by $196,928 USD for Jasmin Co. - Increase in exports by $2,005,157 USD for JannetAdan Co. - An increase of 30 dunums under new technology for Daraghmeh Co. - 16 new male workers for Daraghmeh Co.; 11 are youth. - 1 new product was introduced for Daraghmeh Co.: Basil. - Two new products were introduced for JannetAdan: Lavender and Estevan. - 2123 dunums under improved management practices (MBA Program).

Produce Distribution Hub

Description
  Support for market research and a feasibility study as the first steps toward establishing a distribution hub for fresh produce in target markets to directly link local value chains to growing international markets.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Achievements	Impact

• Equity Legal Group (ELG) conducted desk research on market information for the legal and technical tasks required for a Marketing Intelligence and Distribution HUB Company (MIDHC) in Dubai.
• Conducted a mission to Dubai to visit locations and facilities of the MIDHC to assist in making decisions on the best scenario.
• Following the completion of a comprehensive legal due diligence and technical assessment for a Marketing Intelligence and Distribution Hub Company (MIDHC) in Dubai, the project's agribusiness team in coordination with Equity Law conducted a dissemination workshop, attended by 21 participants. The purpose was to present the findings to the main Palestinian exporters to the Gulf markets from the following sub-sectors:
   ○ Fresh Herbs Sector
   ○ Date Sector
   ○ Fresh Produce Sector
   ○ Olive Oil Sector
   ○ Traditional Products Sector
   ○ Meat and Dairy Sector
   ○ Nuts Sector
• Received proposals from six companies expressing their interest in the hub. They requested support on the legal registration and establishing a feasibility study with more detailed business plan, particularly with regard to establishing operations for the hub in the UAE.
• A contract will be signed with Equity Group to conduct a business plan for the hub.
	• A distribution facility will provide a local market presence to store, aggregate and distribute quality products that better serve international customers.
	• These efforts will extend the reach of partner marketing efforts, connect our partners to new markets, and increase export production areas and volumes produced with commensurate increases in sales, incomes, and employment.

Upgrade Grape Sector

Description

    Upgrade Palestinian grape farms, which vary from 1 to 70 dunums, to produce high quality seedless grapes at competitive prices. The Compete Project will provide technical assistance as well as cost share upgrading inputs with grape farms to include insect netting for grapes.

Achievements	Impact
• A meeting was held with 12 farmers from Jiftlik, Bardalah, and Al Nasareah, who represent 70% of the seedless grape farmers in the West Bank, to discuss future work in upgrading the grape sector. • The farmers agreed to prioritize investing in new technologies including: modern irrigation systems, new seedling varieties, refrigerators in each location, new nets, and greenhouses. • Assisting Mr. Abdul Hakeem Zaki Ahmad Al Areedy, a farmer seeking to develop the potential of his lands in the Arraba plains of Jenin, by creating a partnership to expand the range of produce grown on his farm. Through the project,	• Along with improved precocity and yields, seedless grape varieties are more competitive and so will increase international market share for Palestinian producers. • This activity introduces new production technologies and will increase sales in new markets. • 517 dunums with new technology. • Increase in sales by $1,661,786 USD as a result of the netting.

Mr. Alareedy will plant a new variety of trees on 109 dunums (10.9 hectares) of land marked for this activity and install a new hanging system for growing grapes. The procurement of the all inputs has been recently completed including: irrigation pipes for the tree seedlings, a hanging steel system for growing grapes, an irrigation pool, and netting for the grapes. • The first phase of upgrading the Palestinian seedless grape sector has been completed on 33 farms covering 41.1 hectares (411 dunums) across the Jordan Valley and in the Tubas district. The intervention focused on installing 459,333 m2 of netting on small Palestinian grape farms, which vary from 0.5 to 7 hectares each (5 to 70 dunums.)	

Upgrade Guava Sector

Description

In partnership with 36 guava and avocado producers, Compete is providing financial assistance to establish a packing line with washing, packaging, storing, grading and cooling facilities.

Achievements	Impact
• Installed 2 cooling rooms for the Green Qalqilya Company and their new guava and avocado packing house (washing, packaging, storing, grading, and cooling). Compete is assisting 3 guava and avocado companies and 5 farmers, who represent 36 partners. They are now registered under The Green Qalqilya Company to act as the aggregator for the sector. Through this aggregator, farmers will be able to use the equipment and facilities at low costs. • Green Qalqilya employees trained on packing line equipment.	• These activities will introduce new production technologies to the guava subsector, improve and diversify products, and increase income by expanding into new markets. • In August 2013, the producers registered their packing house company which will act as an aggregator for the export produce. • The 2 cooling rooms will improve the export quality of Palestinian produce. • A value of $2,430,000of guava, avocado, pepper, and potato exports were sent to Jordan and Kuwait. • Increase in local sales of $6,000 USD. • 15 new workers; 12 are youth.

Traceability Software

Description

Support the design and implementation of an operational traceability system (developed by the Palestinian ICT sector) for the fresh export produce sector following international best practices in order to increase product standards:

Achievements	Impact
• IT consultant was hired by MAK for TOR software process. • Software TOR published and submitted for quotation • M.A.K. International Training and Certification services : IT consultant developed the evaluation Matrix that will be used to evaluate the technical offers submitted by the companies • Software developer is identified	• Allows Palestinian products and services to meet international standards and specifications. • Supports an increase in exports of both new and improved Palestinian products and services that are dependent on reliable food safety traceability systems. • The new technology will contribute to growing exports, incomes, and employment. • Increase transparency and trust among stakeholders along the value chain.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Date Sector

Description
- Create long-term sustainability and open new markets through the adoption of international quality standards.
- Date Pollen Facility – Start/upgrade date pollen facilities in the West Bank. Presently 90% of date pollen is brought from Israel through cost sharing of inputs required for the simple technology required to capture and distribute date pollen.
- Improve capacity building for date firm staff and date farmers and cost share equipment to raise knowledge and competence of the workforce, which will improve date quality and increase export produce to high value markets.

Achievements	Impact
- Contract signed with Zoom Co. to redesign the packaging of 8 date companies; 3 designs are completed. - Delivered lab equipment for Nakheel. 5 date 'companies (Emirates Delights, Qitaf, Al-Wadi, Nakheel, and Al -Mares) accepted the new designs of their packages.	- Increase the competiveness of Palestinian products in international markets through meeting food safety standards. - With GlobalGAP and ISO 22,000 BRC Certification, Nakheel Palestine demonstrates adherence to food safety and quality standards to fulfill market requirements. The result is sustainably produced food adhering to health, safety, and environmental standards, increasing their marketability. - An increase in area of 1300 dunums under production for Nakheel Palestine. 1 new worker for Nakheel Palestine.

Meat and Dairy Sector

Description
  Upgrade meat and dairy facilities to maintain current markets in East Jerusalem and open new export links.

Achievements	Impact
<u>Al- Mahareeq Slaughter House</u> - Procedures and Records for ISO22000 system have been delivered to Al-l Mahareeq Slaughter House. - All required training had been executed. - Completed the internal and external audit. - Al-Mahareeq is ISO 22000 certified.	- Preserve current market share. - Remain competitive in East Jerusalem. - Improve the productivity and quality of meat and dairy products. - Maintain compliance with ISO 22000 food safety requirements.

Trade Show Participation

Description
  Assist Palestinian food processors to exhibit their products at international trade shows in order to attract product buyers, enter into negotiations and receive export orders.

Achievements	Impact
- Five Palestinian companies showcased fresh agricultural products in Fruit Logistica Trade Show 2014 in Berlin, which was attended by 60,000 visitors from 140 different countries. - Six Palestinian firms exhibited their products at Gulfood in Dubai, the largest exhibition of food products in the Middle East with over 4200 exhibitors and 77,609 buyers. - Canaan Fair Trade participated at Fancy Food	- Enable Palestinian food producers to meet face-to-face with international buyers, showcase their products, enter into negotiations and better understand regulations for operating in a global marketplace. - Open and maintain market linkages, market information and support current distributors of Palestinian specialty foods. - Capture new market leads and buyers, create

**TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3**

Show 2014 in San Francisco and Natural Products Expo West 2014 in L.A. During both shows, Canaan's US team held several meetings with potential retailers and distributers as well as Whole Food Market Grocery Category manager to finalize listing of the ShajaraTayyeba olive oil for autoshipping to all Whole Foods Stores.

- Canaan Fair trade participated at Fancy Food Show 2014 in New York City from June 29th to July 1st. Fancy Foods is North America's largest specialty food and beverage event, with more than 2,400 exhibitors from 80 countries participating. The trade show generates new export contracts between Canaan Fair Trade and buyers in the American market.

direct sales, and expand market penetration.
- Improve the image and exposure of Palestinian products in global markets.

Fancy Food Trade Show Impact
- In both Fancy Food trade shows, the Canaan booth received heavy traffic, with roughly 200-250 leads of varying types from each show, approximately 120 leads per show. This includes national accounts, media, retailers, etc. After following up with these leads, some efforts were translated into sales and the company is still following up with others.

Fruit Logistica Trade Show – Berlin, February 5-7, 2014
- Participants evaluated the assistance provided by both the Compete Project and PalCircles as good or very good.
- 75% agreed the show was very organized to extremely organized.
- All participants agreed that the learning outcomes of the show were achieved.
- 75% agreed said that participation in the show was very useful.
- 100% agreed that their skills improved as a result of participating in the show.
- The participants made a total of 55 business leads and met a total of 19 potential customers during the trade show.

Gulfood Trade Show – Berlin, February 23-27, 2014
- Participants evaluated the assistance from both the Compete Project and Pal Trade as good to very good.
- 83% agreed that participating in the tradeshow was very useful for their companies.
- All participants agreed that their marketing skills improved; 50% said they improved a great deal.
- Half of the participants said they would participate in Gulfood in the future without donor assistance.
- The participants made a total of 511 business leads, met 345 potential customers, and made 49 deals during the trade show.

- As a result of Gulfood Show:
  - Emirates Delight has exported $320,968 USD worth of products.
  - Canaan Fair Trade exported products with a total value of $23,665 USD.
  - Jibrini Co. has exported $17,211 USD worth of products.

- As a result of Fruit Logistica Show:
  - Emirates Delight has exported $450,000

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	USD worth of products
	• Jannet Adan has exported $25,355 USD worth of products.
	• Daraghmeh Co. exported products with a total value of $179,451 USD.
	• Agripal exported products with a total value of $361,238 USD.
	• As a result of Moscow World Food show:
	o Jannet Adan has exported products with a total value of $33,309 USD.
	o Daraghmeh Co. exported products with a total value of $305,000 USD.
	• As a result of Fancy Food show:
	o West Bank Salt has exported products with a total value of $100,000 USD.
	o Canaan Fair Trade expanded their product portfolio with Whole Foods Market and exported products with a total value of $52,464 USD.
	• New/Improved products:
	o 1 improved product and 1 new product introduced for Emirates Delight.
	o 5 new products were introduced for West Bank Salt: merlot, aromatic salt, organic rosemary, enriched night cream from the Dead Sea, hands and nails cream, and luxury bath salts.
	o 8 new products for Canaan Fair Trade.
	o 2 new products were introduced for Jibrini Co.: Ayran and processed cheese.
	• Jobs hired:
	o 24 new hires for Emirates Delights; 19 females and 23 youth.
	o 3 new hires for Jannet Adan; 1 female and 2 youth.
	o 3 new hires for West Bank Salt; 3 are youth.
	o 19 new male workers for Agripal; 14 are youth.
	• New Markets:
	o Expansion to Morocco for Emirates Delight.
	o 1 new market accessed for Emirates Delight: Malaysia.
	o 1 new market accessed for Jannet Adan: Ukraine.
	o 5 markets accessed for Daraghmeh Co: Moscow, Vienna, Switzerland, Ireland, and Belgium.
	o 1 new market access for Jibrini Co.: Iraq.
	• International Contracts:
	o 1 contract with a Russian company for Daraghmeh Co.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	o 2 contracts for Canaan Fair Trade. o 1 contract with a company in Iraq for Jibrini Co.

Forward Contracting

Description
   Link Palestinian value chains to international and domestic markets with long-term contracts to avoid major price fluctuations and supply shortages.

Achievements	Impact
• The project's agribusiness team helped to close a deal between Israeli exporter company Mahdrine Co., and Palestinian farmers (Al Forat Co., Daraghmeh Co.) to export potatoes, sweet potatoes, fresh herbs and carrots to the EU and Russia. Al Forat Co. is planting a demo of 20 dunums of each crop according to the client's requirements and GLOBALGAP. • Tubas Company for Packaging and Marketing successfully exported shipments of carrots processed and packed at their new potato and carrot packing line to Jordan. • Installed four cooling rooms for Tubas Company for Packaging and Marketing for their new potato and carrot packing house. • Carrot and potato packing line operational. • The project's agribusiness team hosted Ben & Jerry's during a field visit to Palestinian companies Canaan Fair Trade and Emirates Delights. USAID hopes to facilitate a partnership between Ben & Jerry's and the Palestinian companies, enabling Ben & Jerry's to expand its source of fair trade ingredients, date paste and tahini from Emirates Delights and almonds from Canaan, and strengthen or introduce new high-value crops among Palestinian farmers. • Purchased seven cooling rooms to be installed at Top Field, Al Forat, Al Faraa ,and Al Buqeea Modern Farming Companies. The companies are preparing to install the cooling rooms which will create the capacity to store a combined total of 2,000 tons of vegetables.	● Forward contracts can increase competitiveness, increase export performance, and improve country image (brand and origin) recognition. This will help to avoid major price fluctuations and help sustain a consistent supply flow in response to the market's needs. ● A contract was signed between a farmer Abd Al Hakeem Abd Al Razeq and Al Rafedin Co. in Jordan for 2000 tons of potatoes, 1500 tons of onions, 200 tons of onion bulbs, and 500 tons of carrots, for a total value of $2,547,945 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field Co., Al Forat Co., farmer Mohammad Basheer Daraghmeh, and Al Ashqar in Jordan. ● A contract was signed between Top Field Co., Al Forat Co., and Al Salam Group in Hebron for 1000 tons of red potatoes, 200 tons of carrots, 50 tons of broccoli, and 50 tons of cauliflower, for a total value of $401,389 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field Co. and Al Ashqar Co. in Jordan for 2,750 tons of potatoes and 500 tons of carrots, for a total value of $1,138,889 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field Co. and Zein Co. in Saudi Arabia for 1000 tons of tomatoes, for a total value of $456,281 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field and Haj Omar in Israel for 2,072 tons of vegetables, for a total value of $1,081,657 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field and Al Ashqar in Jordan for onion bulbs, for a total value of $115,419 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field and Al Balad Al Amin in Kuwait for 200 tons of white potatoes, for a total value of $100,000 USD. ● Sales to Israel increased for Top Field Co. by $1,419,386 USD. ● A contract was signed between Top Field Co. and Wael Ibrahim in Qalqilya for 2220 tons of vegetables, for a total value of $1,096,286 USD. ● Sales to local market for Top Field Co. totaled $1,102,600 USD. ● A contract was signed between Al Furat Co. and Al Ashqar Co. in Jordan for 2,750 tons of

	TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

	potatoes and 500 tons of carrots, for a value of $1,138,889 USD.
	
	• A contract was signed between Al Furat and Al Ashqar in Jordan for 200 tons of onion bulbs, for a total value of $225,575 USD
	
	• A contract was signed between Al Furat and Al Ashqar in Jordan for 200 tons of onion bulbs, for a total value of $230,838 USD.
	
	• A contract was signed between Al Furat and Al Balad Al Amin in Kuwait for 200 tons of white potatoes, for a total value of $100,000 USD.
	
	• A total of exports worth $205,000 USD for Al Forat Co.
	
	• Sales to local market for Al Forat Co. worth $433,000 USD.
	
	• Sales increased by $106,439 USD for Al Salam Group with an export value to Israel of $226,070 USD.
	
	• 1 new market accessed for Top Field and Al Forat: Kuwait
	
	• Jobs created:
	  o Abd Al Hakeem Abd Al Razeq hired 21 seasonal workers; 11 are female and 18 are youth.
	  o 25 new hires; 22 are youth and 3 are female.
	  o 4 new workers for Al Salam Group; all are youth.
	  o 22 new workers for Tubas Company for Packaging and Marketing.
	
	• Increase in area:
	  o 1800 dunums are under new technology, with 900 dunums cultivated for export crops for Abd Al Hakeem Abd Al Razeq.
	  o Increase of 208 dunums for Top Field Co.
	  o Increase of 795 dunums for Al Furat Co.
	
	• Installing cooling rooms will greatly increase capacity to export produce and to continue working under the forward contracts system.

Reuse of Treated Waste Water Demo (TWW)

Description

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

Achievements	Impact
• Crops for pilot project have increased to cover 300 dunums (200dunums in Nablus and 100 dunums in Jenin.) • 14 Palestinian agronomists, local farmers, and community leaders attended a workshop in Israel	• Transfer knowledge of how to use the TWW. • Provide additional sources of irrigation water by making use of the TWW from the Nablus waste water plant. • Increase awareness of the importance of using

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
to learn more about TWW and develop technical and managerial guidelines for using TWW on a large scale. • Organized study tour to Israel for 68 farmers and community leaders from Nablus and Jenin. • Organized a field visit to Nablus on March 24, 2014 for USAID Deputy Assistant Administrator Alina L. Romanoski and USAID West Bank/Gaza Mission Director David Harden to visit the TWW project in Nablus. • USAID approved the Environmental Assessment (EA) supporting treated water reuse for agricultural purposes. The approval gives the green light for the implementation of a project aiming to introduce treated wastewater irrigation from two new treatment plants: the Nablus Sewage Treatment Facility and the Jenin Wastewater Treatment Plant. In addition to enhancing environmental sustainability, the project also creates a significant opportunity to introduce new crops with export potential. • Working to demonstrate the capacities of the treatment plants by installing irrigation network over 30 hectares of farmland through the request for quotations to procure irrigation pipes, networks, and almond and pomegranate seedlings for the interventions.	TWW in agriculture. The study tour provided guidelines regarding irrigation techniques, sanitation control, and sustained quality. Most participants accepted the idea of using treated wastewater in the Palestinian Territories and are ready to use the treatment plant that is being constructed in Nablus. • The project aims to irrigate 200 dunums in Nablus and 100 dunums in Jenin to start. The long term plan is to irrigate more than 2,000 dunums of farmland in the areas around the wastewater treatment plants. Evaluation of the Training Program Comparing between responses pre and post assessment: 1. Most of the participants answered the question of the general evaluation of the program goals for the pre and post assessment with excellent, very good and good, while none answered with acceptable or poor. Open Questions : 1. What are the main skills obtained during the training program? A: Most of the participants replied that they were introduced to: waste water treatment plants, their facilities, and their treatment procedures; the Ministry of Health's laws and regulations for the use of waste water; the possibility of disease transmission to humans; poisonous substances and their dangerous effects on plants; and the advantages of using treated waste water in planting olive and almond trees for instance. 2. Will you use the information that has been discussed in the training session? A: Most of the participants replied that they will use the information discussed in the training session because there are existing waste water treatment plants and they want to help to rehabilitate sewage networks to become suitable for the processes of these plants. 3. In your opinion, what are the subjects that were not addressed enough in the training program? A: Most of the participants replied that environmental dimensions and finding future solutions for possible problems did not get enough attention.

Upgrading of Nurseries Facilities

Description

Upgrade and qualify Palestinian nurseries to provide high quality grafted and fresh herb seedlings at reasonable prices.

Achievements	Impact
Ata Abu Rub Nursery :	• Transfer knowledge of grafting systems.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
• 100 % of GlobalGAP system development was accomplished. • The implementation phase has started. • New agronomist receiving on-the-job training regarding the Global GAP. • Internal audit course had been accomplished and conducted for the Nursery Agronomist. • Inauguration of Ata Abu Rub Nursery. Al Juneidi Nursery • Inauguration of Al Juneidi Nursery. :	• Address market needs, and adapting to soil conditions through grafting. • Ata Abu Rub Nursery increased its local sales by $925,258 USD. • Juneidi Nursery increased its local sales by $587,066 USD. • Atta Abu Rub increased exports by $231,429 USD. • Increased sales for watermelon by $1,515,500 USD. • 6 new products were introduced for Ata Abu Rub: Green tea, lemon grass, asparagus, brosh, ficus and liquorice. • 4 new kinds of flowers were developed for Juneidi Nursery: Gerbera, Carmel, Angelina and Geranium. • 3 new hires for Ata Abu Rub Nursery; all are youth. • 29 new workers at Juneidi Nursery; 7 are female and 11 are youth. • 4 new hires for Zenaba Nursery; all are youth. • 142 dunums for farmers who procured seedlings from Juneidi Nursery. • 501 dunums under new management practices for Zenaba Nursery. • 353 dunums for watermelon under new technology.

Packaging and Labeling

Description
- Create a qualified team and system with the PFIA to assist food-processing companies to upgrade and improve their packaging and labeling capabilities for improved market access.
- Upgrade packing line of West Bank Salt Co. to improve market access and penetration.

Achievements	Impact
• Upgrading Packing Line of West Bank Salt Company o RFQ for Packaging equipment published. o Installed new packing line for crystal salt. o Construction for the new salt packing station in Jericho is completed. • The Compete Project signed an MOU with UNDP and PADICO hotels to support Palestinian women cooperatives by selling their products in PADICO hotels. The Compete agricultural team will provide technical assistance to insure that the products meet the required standards. • Delivered and installed equipment for Al Aqaba Women's Cooperative. The equipment includes an herb drying machine, a cutting machine, a packaging line, and a wrapping machine. • 5 date companies (Emirates Delights, Qitaf, Al-Wadi, Nakheel, Al-Mares) accepted the new designs of their packages.	• Increase the competitiveness, compliance and market access of the Palestinian food processing sector by building association-led capacities in export packaging, labeling, and market requirements, leading to growing exports, incomes, and employment. • The packages of 13 products have been redesigned. • Upgrading equipment will support ability to expand exports and meet the requirements of vendors selling their products. • Improve packaging of 13 products for 13 companies. • 3 improved packages for each company; Qitaf Co., Emirates Delights, Al Zaroun Al Arab, and Al Wadi Co.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Upgrading Accredited Laboratory for Fresh Produce

Description

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

Achievements	Impact
• Inauguration of the Scientific Center for Food and Drug Analysis.	• Conducting tests in accordance with ISO 17025 will target customer needs, specific market requirements, and reducing costs and time. • The center has the capability to provide new tests on food and feed products.

Introduce New Crops and Technologies to the Palestinian Agriculture Sector

Description

Provide new technology and/or support new product development for a range of partners.

Achievements	Impact
• Al Forat Farms harvested 2 seasons of broccoli in the Palestinian Territories from a 10 dunums demo plot. • A consultant has been hired to follow up with the strawberry farmers and provide on the ground technical support. • Planting new varieties of fruit trees with high export potential in Jenin, helping farmers to procure 1200 seedlings of several different varieties of trees, irrigation pipes, a hanging steel system for growing grapes, an irrigation pool, and netting for the grapes. • Introducing high value mangos on 0.8 hectares (eight dunums) by partnering with Mr. Yousef Abu Thaher, a farmer in the Tulkarem District, to procure 336 mango seedlings, an irrigation system, fencing to protect the new trees, and receive technical assistance. The first crop will be ready for harvest next July. • USAID through the Compete project's partners, five strawberry farmers in Tulkarem and Jenin, upgraded 1.5 hectares (15 dunums) to produce high quality strawberries at competitive prices. • Working on a cost share basis, Compete assisted the strawberry farmers by procuring PVC canals, polystyrene containers, a computerized irrigation head control, and soilless culture. The strawberry farmers purchased the strawberry seedlings and the irrigation system and installed the hanging system and accessories. • The strawberry farmers took a training course with Netafim Co. focusing on the technical aspects of growing strawberries with hanging systems and new methods of fertilization and harvesting. The trainings took place in Jenin on the farm of Mr. Naiem Shukri. Netafim, who delivered the equipment for the upgrades, also	• Import substitution of processing vegetables with commensurate growth in employment and incomes. • Improve productivity, meet export quality, and facilitate access to new markets. • Lychees were chosen for their suitability to the climate and soil quality of the West Bank as a possible substitute to citrus trees. In addition to being a high profit fruit, lychees are an exotic fruit with high nutritional quality and a high export demand. • Increase the export potential in the Palestinian agriculture industry. • 3 new products were introduced: broccoli, cauliflower, and new type of onions for Al Furat Co. • 3 new products were introduced for Top Field Co.: classic eggplant, Tamar potatoes, and sweet potatoes. • Upgrading 16 dunums to produce high quality strawberries. • 8 dunums under new technology for a Mango farmer. Mushroom Training • The training creates the conditions necessary to produce mycelium and mushroom for the local and international markets.

trained the farmers on international pest management (IPM) requirements to support the growth of healthy crops with the least possible disruption to agro-ecosystems. • Helped establish an agro-enterprise to create a model lychee farm over 0.5 hectares (5 dunums) in the village of Jayyous, Qalqilya. The first crop will be harvested next summer. • Established a partnership with Mr. Ahmad Zaki, a farmer in Jenin who has dedicated one third of his farmland to introduce new trees for the future potential of his farm. The new fruit trees include: grapes, round peach, nectarines, black amber plum, black diamond, fig, cherry, and different varieties of pomegranate. • Supporting the establishment of the Mushroom House Company of Saffa, Ramallah and training of the technical team at the Mycelia Company in Belgium. The company plans to grow the first ever locally produced mushrooms in the West Bank.	

Export Manager for Hire for Several Companies

Description
　Hire an export manager for companies that have demonstrated a clear competitive advantage and access to international markets:

Achievements	Impact
Updates on Export manager for Canaan Fair Trade • Recruiting Whole Foods Market (WFM) for 6 products, such as: 　○ Organic Nabali Green Olives 　○ Olive Honey Spread 　○ Organic Green Olive Tapenade 　○ Sun-dried Tomato Caper Spread 　○ 2 carrying olive oils: NA, NE • Agreement with WFM to launch the four products at Whole WFM in all branches. The other two products were launched in two regions: North Atlantic and North East. • Canaan developed distribution channels with Associated Buyers region. • Canaan developed brokerage coverage through Haversack Sales. • Promotion plan with WFM in process. Other Updates for Canaan Fair Trade • Participated in Winter Fancy Food Show, January 19-21, 2014 in San Francisco. • Participated in Expo West in LA, March 6-9, 2014. • Listing and supplying the Organic EV olive oil (ShajaraTayyeba) to WFM nationwide, including auto-shipping. • Retailer recruitment through all channels, including trade shows and national target lists. • Demo group recruitment, training, and	• Increase exports of selected companies and their farmers. • As a result of Whole foods Markets, the Export Manager, and Fancy Food Show activities, Canaan Fair Trade secured a total export of $5,033,921 USD. • 12 new hires for Canaan Fair Trade; 2 are female and 10 are youth.

TABLE 1: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF AGRIBUSINESS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
management for national coverage. • New distribution development nationally and with specialty regional distributors. • Broker development in West Coast and Rocky Mountain regions. • Marketing materials development. • Advertisement placement. • Participated at Fancy Food Show 2014 in New York City from June 29th to July 1st.	

Updates for Other Agribusiness Activities in the Work Plan

- Held a ceremony to honor the winners of the first Palestinian StarPack Contest 2013, a contest for designing creative and innovative packaging for food products. The ceremony also aimed to shed light on the redesign of the packaging of 14 Palestinian food products.

TOR for Water Project Designs: Recruit a water expert to develop the terms of reference for company to assess the feasibility of six water projects designed to enhance access to water in Area C.
- Contracted a consultant to assess the feasibility of six proposed agricultural water projects. The analysis showed that all of these projects are economically feasible.
- Israeli Authorities have approved irrigation projects in different parts of Area C.
- The TOR for the design of 5 water projects and 1 road project is prepared; 2 of the water projects were announced and received price offers. The rest of the TORs are expected to be announced by the end of October.

Expanding Exports – The Compete agribusiness team organized a meeting between the USAID Trade project and 25 agricultural aggregators to explore the possibility of establishing a program offering logistical assistance and special arrangements for Palestinian agribusiness exporters at the crossing points with Israel. The meeting gave an opportunity for agribusiness companies to give feedback to the Trade project concerning impediments they face at the Israeli border.

Adopt International Standards: Assist Palestinian producers, processors, and service providers to adopt an appropriate mix of global standards to increase the competitiveness of their products and services.
- For the National Carton Industry Company, 100% of ISO 9001 system development have been accomplished and achieved full issuance for the system. The system implementation process is underway.
- In 2013 and FY3 and with GlobalGAP certification, Thimar Co. exported a total value of $2,328,156 USD, increased by 180 dunums, and added 10 new male workers (6 are youth).
- Nakheel Palestine exported dates with a total value of $601,423 USD.
- As a result of the Post-Harvest training that was conducted, 2382 dunums were tracked under new management practices.
- Celebration of Palestinian Quality Stars with MAK International through the Compete Project. USAID partnered with M.A.K International to organize an event celebrating the success that has been achieved in supporting Palestinian companies to obtain international certificates in fields such as quality, food safety, environment, occupational health, and social accountability. Over 50 certified companies from different sectors including health, trade, education, and agriculture were recognized for their compliance and achieving international certification.
- 16 farmers and technical staff from Palestinian agricultural companies including the Tubas Company for Packaging and Marketing, Green Qalqilya, and HEPPCO, the fresh herb association, took part in a three day training seminar in Tel Aviv. The training focused on topics connected to post-harvest handling systems such sorting, grading, cooling chain storage, and logistics.

Lessons Learned

To enhance agriculture development in the West Bank, there were lessons gained during FY3 regarding linking producers to international markets and increasing market share and competitiveness. These include:

- When purchasing lab equipment from several vendors for the same beneficiary, the project team should ensure better coordination between the vendors and the beneficiary to determine the compatibility of equipment.
- Mr. David Harden visited a number of the project's partners and beneficiaries this year. The project's agriculture team witnessed the importance of networking and building trust and credibility between USAID and these parties. Such events and visits allow USAID to have a good understanding and a true vision of the interventions implemented on the ground. It also opens the door for partners and beneficiaries to form real connections with USAID.
- Regarding the idea to establish a distribution hub in Dubai, it is imperative to do an on-site investigation and research in the target markets to evaluate the merits of any business idea. This cannot be done from a distance.
- The project held several bidders' workshops for companies interested in bidding on the procurement of equipment for packing lines. The companies had the opportunity to clarify the required specifications of the equipment and procurement procedures. This has proven to guarantee better submissions that meet the project's requirements, thereby reducing the time required for procuring equipment.
- Regarding delays that are characteristic of the USAID vetting process, the agricultural team has learned that for time sensitive projects, particularly involving international travel dates and trade show participation, there needs to be a clear cut-off-date for vetting of participating companies. While the Compete Project team works hard to ensure vetting applications are submitted with enough time for processing, it would be better to drop companies not vetted by the cut-off-date. This is due to the complications of arranging last minute participation, including samples, publications, and booth design.
- It is important to ensure that there are unambiguous milestones for beneficiaries with clear measurements of success. The indicators must reflect the sophistication of the beneficiary and the project.

TOURISM

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Tourism activities for FY3.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3
Tourism Sector Publicity and Networking Development
Description   - Develop market profiles for key source markets and key niche markets to improve access and product development for Palestinian tourism businesses.   - Develop a branding strategy focused on country brand messages customized to the key market segments as well as to develop a set of branding guidelines for the use of destination brands and to train tourism sector players on how to use them effectively.   - Support the competitive participation of Palestinian tour operators with innovative products in four key trade shows. Additionally, provide financial and organizational support for the organization of one Palestinian-focused roadshow at each of these trade events.   - Build HLITOA's internal capacity to manage and generate revenue from the developed Facebook leaderboard and two new web-enhanced applications so that key market segments are properly targeted.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
Achievements	**Impact**

• Marketing planning specialist hired.
• Participation in the Brazilian Travel Agencies Association (ABAV) show in São Paulo (Brazil) by seven HLITOA members completed.
• To support the capacity of tour operators, HLITOA identified four key market segments to profile: a) U.S. faith tourism, b) Mexico faith tourism, c) Brazil faith tourism, and d) adventure tourism.
• HLITOA presented four market profiles to its members and stakeholders in the tourism industry. The market profiles covered faith tourism markets in the US, Brazil and Mexico, and introduced a new market for Palestinian tour operators: adventure tourism.
• HLITOA submitted Tourism Market Roadshow Strategy to capitalize on opportunities for HLITOA members and their partners to meet outbound tour operators from target markets and conduct B2B meetings.
• HLITOA submitted the Market Positioning Strategy with recommendations in the following areas: branding, product development, and promotion.
• HILTOA conducted site visits with Palestinian tour operators to get feedback on the completed and planned rehabilitation of Palestinian tourist destinations and develop a commitment from the tour operators to incorporate these sites into their tours. The first visit was to the north of West Bank, including the Burqin Church, walking a small segment of the Abraham Path, and Jarar Palace. The second visit was to Jericho, including Hisham's Palace. The third visit was to Bethlehem, including our projects under CCHP contract.
• HLITOA has developed guidelines and a toolkit based on their market profiles to assist tour operators in developing new products. The toolkit includes an overview of global trends, HLITOA's market profiles, a checklist to build new products, tips to promote the new products, and resources for further learning.
• Preparation are under way for the following tradeshows :
   o ATTA Summit : October 2014
   o CULTOUR: December 2014
 	
Jericho Festival
• The month-long Jericho Arts Festival was launched in April and completed on May 24th with USAID partnering with the public and private sectors.
	• Enables and supports strategic market access which contributes to increased sales for Palestinian firms.
	• Contributes to increasing destination awareness among key market segments, also supporting an increase in sales for Palestinian firms.
	• HLITOA members' enhanced e-marketing presence will result in increased bed nights from key source markets as well as increased sales for supported Palestinian firms.
	• Assists in strategic decision making and for the first time enable targeting the most lucrative potential markets.
	• The Palestinian tourism industry will use a unified message to increase awareness of the Palestinian territories as a tourist destination and more accurately represent Palestinian tourist destinations.
	• Delivers clear and consistent messages on tourism products representing the Palestinian experience, resulting in a more compelling proposition to the target market and an increase in tourist expenditures, thus increasing sales of Palestinian firms.
	• Enables HLITOA/AHA to provide better services to their members and business partners, particularly through the four market profiles HLITOA is developing.
	• The destination brand supports Palestinian tour operators to organize road shows, actively sell new destinations and sites developed in collaboration with the Compete Project, and improve the digital presence of Palestinian tour operators.
	• HLITOA expanded its activities through an MOU signed with Solomon's Pools Tourism Project to include Solomon's Pools in official Palestinian tourism program. This indicates that HLITOA has succeeded in garnering the trust of the tourism industry to promote and organize activities for the benefit of the industry.
	• The roadshows are useful for connecting with target media, churches, religious leadership organizations, faith leaders, and other influencers in the key target markets.
	• The number of overnights was increased as a result of the Jericho festival by 26%.
	• The Jericho Festival successfully brought 105,701 visitors to the city, increasing revenues by approximately $1.1 million USD.
	• 3 new jobs created to support Jericho Festival; 2 of them youth.
	• Increase in exports for Jericho Festival of $392,669 USD.
	• Developing Jericho as a distribution hub for

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	visitors, leveraging its position as the gateway to the Palestinian Territories from Jordan and the ease of access from Israel through Route 1.

Hotel Classification

Description

Develop and implement a mandatory hotel classification system in the Palestinian Territories to ultimately support an increase in tourist numbers, length of stay and average expenditure per visitor.

Achievements	Impact

• To date, 59 hotels have been assessed according to the star rating system and have entered the classification system. More hotels have taken the initiative to apply for the star rating, which shows acceptance of the new classification system and acknowledgement that participating in the star rating system will improve business.	• The system provides assurance of the highest quality possible for the amounts paid by tourists, increasing the credibility of Palestinian products and services.
	• Increase in number of tourists, length of stay and average expenditure per visitor.
	• Ritz Hotel / Jerusalem has received the AWARD OF EXCELLENCE 2014 from Trip Advisor.
	• As a result of Hotel Classification:
	  o 30 hotels have received their quality star rating according to the Palestinian *Hotel Classification System*.
	  o 35 full time new jobs at hotels created as a result of the *Hotel Classification System*; 26 of them youth.
	  o 112 temporary workers renovated the hotels.

Beautifying and Improving Access to Tourist Destinations and Facilities

Description

USAID, through the Compete Project, has undertaken a targeted plan for site development as part of the strategy to develop world-class tourism destinations. In effect, archaeological and cultural products, particularly those related to sites of religious significance, constitute the main pull factor for international visitors to the region. The project will focus its historic/archaeological restoration and upgrading activities on adding value to sites already in use or those that could be leveraged by the private sector to increase visitor volume and length of stay. Activities under the destination development include:

- Upgrade and beautify priority sites to be functional and attractive to visitors and locals alike.
- Facilitate the access of international visitors to overcome challenges particular to the Palestinian destinations, including transportation, checkpoint and road access.
- Upgrade visitor information centers to link potential consumers with the range of businesses and attractions catering to their needs. In addition, existing museums and archaeological sites need better interpretation to enhance the visitor's experience.
- Fund the expansion of a local online reservation system (Yamsafer) to expand its services to small and medium hotels in our priority destinations. The project will support the development of market-based, commercial relationships between the reservation systems and the hotels and will facilitate the system's connection to international reservation engines thus maximizing the visibility of Palestinian hotels.

Achievements	Impact
Interventions under CCHP contract • Contract signed on the 27th of Nov 2013. • Kick off meeting held on the 2nd of Dec 2013 at the Compete Project's office. CCHP presented the planned interventions for site renovation and urban rehabilitation in Burqin, Bethany, and Bethlehem in order to agree with the project's tourism team on the work plan and schedule.	• Improve Bethlehem's northern entrance. • Link potential consumers with the range of businesses and attractions catering to their needs. • Improve the access of international visitors to overcome challenges particular to the Palestinian destinations, including transportation, checkpoint and road access. • Increase tourism sales, length of stay, and average

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
- CCHP organizational chart was approved on Dec. 8, 2013. - First project in Bethlehem: toilettes renovation project was advertised for bidding on the Dec. 31, 2013 in local newspapers. - CCHP urban rehabilitation project launched. - CCHP has begun substantive work on the project: - Signed a contract with Palestinian company Ali Abu Dayah and Bross to rehabilitate public sanitation facilities and improve the street lighting in Bethlehem, ensuring adequate services for tourists. - Submitted a concept design for the restoration of a historic building (Hosh Abu Jarour), which will operate as an information center and icon school. - Conducted its community meetings with stakeholders in Bethany to introduce the interventions they will be conducting as part of their sub-contract. - CCHP signed a contract with Al Aziz Company for Construction and Contracting for the rehabilitation of Dar Khater (Hosh Abu Jarour) in Bethlehem. - Advertised RFP for Rehabilitation of Qattan Stairway and Bus Station Stairway projects in Bethlehem. - CCHP advertised the RFP for the Rehabilitation of King David Street in Bethlehem. The importance of rehabilitating this street is due to its location within the old core of Bethlehem and is considered an important street connecting Star Street with Manger Street. - CCHP signed a contract with AlShaheq for Contracting to implement the Rehabilitation of Qattan and Bus Station Stairways project in Bethlehem. - CCHP completed its first intervention in Bethlehem under the contract The Establishment of Tourist Facilities in Bethlehem. - CCHP advertised the RFP for the first intervention in Burqin, the Rehabilitation of Jarar Palace, which will operate as a visitor information center. - CCHP advertised the RFP for the first intervention in Bethany, Street furniture and Creation of a Tourist Entrance for the Historic Town of Bethany. - CCHP had signed a contract with Alhelo Contracting Company to implement the rehabilitation of King David Street in Bethlehem. - CCHP completed its second intervention in Bethlehem, improving the street light	- expenditures per visitor. - Add value to our destinations and facilitate sales by the private sector. - Ensure key tourists sites are updated to enhance the visitor experience drawing more visitors and increasing length of stay.

network in the old town.
o CCHP advertised the RFP for the Rehabilitation of Bseileh stairway and parking in Bethlehem.
o CCHP advertised the RFP for Qattan Square/ landscaping in Bethlehem.
o CCHP had signed a contract with Ewan contracting Company to implement the Rehabilitation of Jarar Palace in Burqin.
o CCHP had signed a contract with Abu Thaher contracting company to implement Street furniture and Creation of a Tourist Entrance for the Historic Town of Bethany.
o Two interventions in Bethlehem have exceeded 50 % completion: Rehabilitation of Hosh Abu Jarour, and the rehabilitation Qattan and bus station stairways.

Historic Town of Burqin
- A workshop was held in An Najah University in Nablus. The meeting worked towards establishing a strategic Conservation and Management plan, identifying locations for future interventions in the historic town of Burqin.

Hishams Palace Site Interpretation, Museum Rehabilitation:
- The Oriental Institute of Chicago University's (CU-OI) first site mission: 25th of October to 31st of October 2013.
- CU-OI provided their feedback on Palestinian company Midmac's design for the museum's display cases.
- A meeting was conducted with MOTA/DACH, MIDMAC, and Al Nasher to finalize the design and to obtain approval from MOTA/DACH on the branding and the text for the informative panels.
- CU-OI submitted English text for site panels and museum panels on Dec. 7, 2013, MOTA approved it on the Dec. 11, 2013, and it was sent for Arabic translation on the same day.
- On the Dec. 24, 2013, MOTA approved the show cases design.
- MOTA approved the design of the museum display cases.
- Signed a contract with Palestinian company Al Nasher to deliver and install museum show cases at Hisham's Palace.
- RFPs for Hisham's Palace Historic site and museum renovation were advertised in local newspapers.
- Organized a site visit to Hisham's Palace for prequalified contractors bidding on the contract for the museum renovations. The visit gave the contractors a chance to view the site and fully understand the requirements before submitting their tenders.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
• Signed a contract with The Armenian Ceramics-Balian Ltd for the delivery and installation of ceramic outdoor interpretation panels at Hisham's Palace in Jericho. • Signed a contract with Palestinian company Al Nasher to deliver and install indoor interpretation panels for the museum at Hisham's Palace in Jericho to ensure a quality visitors' experience. • Signed a contract with Palestinian company New Dimension for the museum renovations. • Hisham's Palace re-opened the site renovation encompassing a wide scope of the work, including interior design, renovation of the artifact display and museum interpretation panels, retrofit of showcases, lighting, and ventilation improvements site, electrical and mechanical engineering and graphic design. USAID and the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities held a joint press conference to raise awareness about site renovation and urban rehabilitation activities throughout the West Bank. Burqin Church Sewage System: • Preliminary handover on the Dec. 9, 2014. • Substantial completion on the Dec. 24, 2014. • The church was re-opened in an official ceremony on March 13.	

Hospitality School

Description

To further institutionalize quality service and standards in the hospitality sector, USAID, through the Compete Project, is working with the Arab Hotel Association to establish a Palestinian Hospitality School to increase the skills and availability of well- trained service staff within the labor force; this includes comprehensive in-service training for front and back of house hospitality staff currently working in hotels.

Achievements	Impact
• Location of the hospitality school is identified. • Selected a contractor to provide a concept design and cost estimate for converting an existing building into a functioning four star hotel to serve as a hospitality school in Jericho. • The contractor submitted two preliminary design options; AHA and HLITOA reviewed and provided feedback for the final design. • The contractor has begun drawing sketches and developing the surveying and structural investigations. • Established not-for-profit company representing the private sector to lead the implementation. • The contractor submitted four technical deliverables: the conceptual design converting an existing building in Jericho into a functioning 4 star hotel to serve as a hospitality school: a structural investigation and assessment, a detailed survey assessment of the site condition, and the budget for equipping the first 40 (of 80) hotel	• The school will raise industry standards and the attractiveness of careers in the hospitality sector. • Increase employment over the life of the project.

rooms. • The contractor had submitted detailed seismic structural reports to meet the required safety measures, and detailed structural design. • The final structural designs reviewed by USAID / WRI Office. • Designs are under modification to incorporate USAID review comments.	

Support Development of Hotel Services and Quality Standards

Description
    Assist hotels in raising standards and hiring the appropriate number of staff to meet newly introduced hotel classification requirements.

Achievements	Impact
• Diyafa conducted the Certified Room Division Executive (CRDE) training. This is the most prestigious certification available to a rooms division executive (responsible for housekeeping and front desk management), which recognizes effective human resources and property management expertise. • Diyafa conducted the Pre-Certified Hospitality Administrator (Pre-CHA) training for managers of food and/or lodging in the hospitality industry. • Diyafa conducted the Certified Hospitality Administration (CHA) training for manager of food and/or lodging in the hospitality industry. • Diyafa conducted the Certified Hospitality educators (CHE) that is directed at faculty members who teach hospitality curriculum in colleges and universities. • 110 hotel managers that participated in the in-service training graduated in a ceremony attended by USAID Mission Director Dave Harden. The graduation recognizes their breadth of knowledge and experience in the hospitality industry. These in-service trainings contribute to improving services provided by the Hospitality Sector, and in particular to support the service and quality standards across the sector in line with the new Hotel Classification system. • Three training courses, the Certified Hospitality Housekeeping Executive (CHHE), the Certified Gold Service Professional (CGSP), and the Certified Food and Beverage Executive (CFBE) trainings were conducted. • In-service training for hotels completed. Eleven Palestinian hotels have qualified for the Property Gold Quality Service Certificate,. 300 hotel employees participated in the Gold Service Professional Course where 297 passed the exam, strengthening the tourism industry's ability to deliver a positive tourist experience in the West Bank.	• Raise the level and availability of service level employees. • Indirectly raise the exports in the tourism sector. • Improve services provided by the hospitality sector, and in particular supports the service and quality standards across the sector in line with the new Hotel Classification System. • A total of 6 hospitality training courses were developed (CRDE, CHHE, CFBE Pre-CHA, CHA, CHE, and the Property Gold Quality Service Certificate.) Leader Evaluation, Survey Analysis Summary of Findings, Nov 10-14, 2013 • Twelve participants of the CHS course complete this survey. • The majority of participants responded that the leader presented information clearly, encouraged and led discussions effectively, kept the discussion active and interesting, was well organized and presented clear examples of the topics presented. • The leader demonstrated flexibility, understanding and a sense of humor that was appreciated by the participants. Seminar Evaluation, Survey Analysis Nov. 10-14, 2013 • There were 12 respondents for the survey; 10 male and 2 female. • Overall, the participants rated the seminar very highly, with all of the participants agreeing that the seminar will help them become more effective supervisors. • The exercises and activities were rated as good to excellent and participants agreed that the material was clearly presented and easy to understand. • Half the participants rated the overall seminar as excellent, 40% as good, and one participant said it was fair.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Pal Clean

- The Arab Hotel Associations signed a contract with Pal Clean Company to improve cleaning services for the member hotels, aligning with the new grant signed by AHA and USAID through the Compete Project.
- A kick-off meeting took place with Pal Clean, the Arab Hotel Association, and participating hotels from Ramallah, Jericho, and the northern West Bank.
- Pal Clean will evaluate and inspect the standards of cleanliness at hotels, document the gaps, and deliver training programs for housekeeping staff. They will develop a manual that describes the cleanliness operating standards.
- Completed the hotel assessment for 12 hotels
- Developed a draft manual. This manual will be the hotelier's guide to providing and maintaining better and higher quality housekeeping and hotel cleaning services in the concerned hotel.
- Front line staff theoretical and practical trainings completed for 6 hotels.
- USAID is supporting the Institute of Hotel Management and Tourism of Bethlehem University, together with the University of St. Benilde in Manilla and Johnson and Wales University in the U.S., to develop curriculum for vocational training at certificate and diploma levels. So far 25 training modules were developed covering the 5 following five areas including: Front Office Management Cluster, Food Safety and Sanitation Cluster, Food & Beverage Cluster, Culinary Arts Cluster, and Communications Cluster.

- Aspects of the course that participants appreciated included time management, real life examples, learning how to deal with problems and conflict, and leadership.

Certified Hospitality Administration (CHA) Evaluation, December 16 – 21, 2013

- 13 participants of the CHA course completed this survey.
- The participants agreed the pre-workshop materials were good to very good.
- A strong majority agreed the format of the workshop was good or very good.
- Over 2/3 agreed that the workshop flowed well, and all agreed the instructor's presentation skills were good or very good.
- Learning outcomes were achieved, the content of the workshop was good, and the materials were appropriate.
- The instructor had strong teaching abilities and was able to engage the interest of the participants, and the group participation ratio was average to very good.

Certified Rooms Division Executive "CRDE" Workshop Evaluation, November 24 – 28, 2013

- 12 participants of the CRDE workshop completed this survey.
- All participants agreed that the training met their expectations and that they will apply what they learned.
- The majority indicated that objectives were well defined and met and that the material was useful, while all agreed that the content was well organized.
- Regarding the instructors, participants agreed that the trainers were knowledgeable, with high quality instruction and met all the training objectives.

Certified Food and Beverage Executive (CFBE) Workshop Evaluation, March 1 – 5, 2014

- 14 participants of the CFBE course completed this survey.
- 91% or participants agreed the content of the training was good or excellent
- 82% agreed that the training objectives were met.
- 73% agreed that the trainer was experience or very experienced.
- 91% said the content was clear and easy to follow, and all participants agreed that they would use the information in the future.
- 7 training courses were developed and delivered: CRDE, CHE, Pre CHA (Preparations for CHA), CHA, CFBE, CHHE, and Guest Service Gold.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
Improve Signage and Visitor Mobility at Priority Destinations	
Description • Finalize the production and installation of civic maps and information panels at key points throughout our destinations' main distribution centers: Bethany, Bethlehem, Nablus, Jericho, Burqin, and Sabastiyeh. • Support two ongoing private sector initiatives intended to create a Hop-on Hop-off Tour Bus in Nablus and Bethlehem, which could become a catalyst for distributing visitors and increasing expenditure in those destinations.	
Achievements	**Impact**
<u>Civic Maps</u> • Conducted a site visit with the contractor and Nablus Municipality and agreed upon the number and location of the maps within Nablus. • The SOW for the civic maps had been modified, reducing the number of cities that will receive civic maps from 10 to 6. • The contractor completed the map design and content development for Nablus, Jenin, Bethany, Taybeh, Burqin and Sabastiyeh. • During the next phase and new contract, Compete will work with the municipalities and village councils to install the civic maps in different location in each city and village. • Electronic files for civic maps had been handed over to all municipalities: Nablus, Jenin, Burqin, Sebastia, Bethany, and Taybeh, with MoTA attendance. <u>Hop-off Tour Bus in Bethlehem</u> • Design phase is completed	• Improve signage and mobility will contribute to increase length of stay and expenditure by visitors to priority destinations.
Attract Anchor Private Investment to Priority Destinations	
Description Work more closely with the private sector to attract large anchor investments that could become game changers for bringing the project's priority destinations to the next level.	
Achievements	**Impact**
• In planning phase.	• Anchor investment will result in increased arrivals from key source markets, additional sales for local suppliers, increased employment and a more competitive Palestinian tourism product.
Trail Development at Priority Destination	
Description Develop and launch two trails and begin phase one development of a third trail to contribute to expanded tourism offerings in the West Bank and to support the Palestinian tourism sector in attracting the soft adventure tourism market	
Achievements	**Impact**
• Approved the plan for Nablus-Jenin portion of Abraham's Path. • Abraham's Path Initiative introduced Palestinian Rozana staff to GIS technology and methods for	• Expanded tourism offerings in the West Bank and supported the Palestinian tourism sector in attracting the adventure tourism market. • Abraham's Path was featured in the National

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	

developing and mapping the trails.
• Rozana conducted two training workshops for community members
   o Hospitality training: 38 Women Association members were trained on food safety and housekeeping topics.
   o 5-day guide training (3 days in the field, 2 days theory) course with 16 participants that covered an introduction to wild plants, wildlife, local history, culture, architecture, and first aid.
• Rozana completed all works related to community outreach, guides and hospitality training's, route testing, and outreach inbound tour operators.
• Abraham's Path Initiative (API) in partnership with Rozana was able to successfully meet the benchmarks set out in the work plan. The below deliverables have been met :
   o Online Guidebook materials, including site descriptions, people portraits, and practical information.
   o The published Jenin area atlas, including detailed maps and turn -by-turn walking instructions.
   o Marketing materials for tour operators.
   o Thorough route, day stage, and accommodation analysis performed during a thorough walk of the five day trail.
   o Organized weekly walks and overnights for testing and tour development as well as to gather feedback from local and international hikers.
   o Organized Familiarization walk /FAM trip for outreach inbound operators.
   o GIS data for trails edited and shared with guides.
   o Produced marketing materials to offer tour operators.
	Geographic Cover Story for the April issue, listed as number one in an article called "10 of the Best New Walking Trails." The story highlights the "sense of immersion" that is part of the experience, particularly the "welcoming home stays."
	• The Abraham's Path Initiative obtained a two-year grant from the World Bank to further develop Abraham's Path/Masar Ibrahim in the West Bank, complementing the work being done through the USAID grant. The grant from the World Bank focuses on investment in people and institutions, path development, marketing development and action research regarding rural tourism and trekking in the West Bank.
	• 6 new jobs created as tour guides for Abraham's Path; 4 of them are youth.

Support Sales of Equitable and Regional Tours into the West Bank

Description
   Expand tourism product offerings; extend tourism outside of key hubs, and encourage Israeli/Palestinian joint business development.

Achievements	Impact
• Breaking Bread Journeys, a joint Palestinian-Israeli tourism initiative, was officially launched at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London, Nov. 4-7, 2013. • Breaking Bread Journeys (BBJ), conducted their market research and business development and participated in Vakantiebeurs 2014, a trade show in the Netherlands, one of the most important touristic consumer events in the world with more than 1,400 exhibitors. • BBJ participated in the Germany Road Show,	Samara Tours • This activity will directly contribute to increases in sales and average lengths of stay. • Christian Samara and Elisa Moed were nominated by Conde Nast's German subsidiary, "Myself" magazine, as "Women of the Year" in the category of "Discovery" for the Breaking Bread Journeys project. IPCRI • Boosts the Palestinian economy by hiring

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

which included a radio interview with Das Reiseradio (broadcast direct to tour operators across Germany), meetings with over 10 tour operators, and leads with two tour groups.
- BBJ have also successfully confirmed two group bookings resulting from their participation in the World Travel Market in London last November.
- Participation in both the NTA and New York Times Travel.
- Conducted site visits for two US tour operators within the Palestinian Territories so they could understand the tourism product that is offered
- Website Design and Tracking: Created regular blog content for the website as well as daily postings via Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

- Samara tours complete all works and provided Compete with the following deliverables:
  1. Market Research Framework including: Market Assessment Overview from German Travel Market, Market Assessment Overview: Dutch Travel Market, and Market Assessment Overview: USA Travel Market.
  2. Marketing Plan and Action Plan Framework including; Tour Operator Target Markets and Travel Publications and Websites.
  3. SWOT Analysis pertaining to the Holy Land Product.
  4. How to Conduct a Road Show.
  5. How to Introduce Joint Products into Global Supplier and Media Market.
  6. How to Introduce Joint Products into a Single Country Market through a National Trade Fair.
  7. How to Introduce Joint Products into one of the World's largest and richest outbound Markets, the US.
  8. Marketing and Development Toolkit; A Step-by-step toolkit for Tour Operators seeking to develop and improve joint tourism products.

IPCRI
- Signed a grant agreement to support a new initiative that the organization Israel-Palestine: Creative Regional Initiatives (IPCRI) is undertaking to develop a new type of tourism targeted to Israeli citizens with families or friends and independent tourists. The idea is to bring them to major cities in the West Bank with tours focusing on historical, religious, cultural, and political narratives, as well as day-to-day aspects of Palestinian society.
- 5 tours were conducted, 3 in Ramallah, one in Jericho, and one in Bethlehem with 161 participants (68% of them Israelis).
- IPCRI delivered a 4 day seminar for eight

Palestinian guides, eating in Palestinian restaurants, paying entrance fees to museums and tourist attractions, and providing each tour's participants the opportunity to buy Palestinian products.

Testimonials from Participants:
- Keep doing this important work.
- Very mix of scenes and information.
- Eye opening and very informative.
- Very encouraging.
- Wonderful experience.

Joint Tourism Initiative
- Over 150 leads.
- Received excellent testimonials.
- Breaking Bread Journeys attracted high profile media attention.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
Palestinian guides to build capacities and enable them to work with different target groups.	

Value-Chain Development at Priority Destinations

Description
- USAID through the Compete project in the West Bank is implementing a destination-focused approach to support growth of the tourism sector, developing internationally recognized products to act as the pull factor for international, regional visitors and domestic tourism. A destination can be a city, a region, or even a country.
- Support local small businesses that are able and willing to offer services such as restaurants, gift shops and interactive tourism experiences.
- Renovation of the Arab Women Association building to create a Gallery where visitors and tourists would gain a greater awareness, understanding and education about the history, culture, heritage and faith of Palestine, and Bethlehem in particular.

Achievements	Impact
Christmas Festival - As part of its support for the Bethlehem Christmas Festival, the project team selected several potential musical groups to put on cultural performances that held appeal for a range of ages, interest and musical tastes. - Equipped Manger Square with the necessary equipment (stage, truss, sound system, etc.). - The Christmas Tree Lighting on Dec. 1 in Manger Square was a great success with thousands in attendance. An estimated 6600 people visited Bethlehem on the opening day of the festival. The Christmas Market, with 22 kiosks supported by USAID, ran throughout the week. - During the Bethlehem Christmas Festival the number of daily visitors increased by **50%** whiles the number of overnights increased by **64%** from 2012 to 2013. - Revenues increased by approximately $6 million Renovating and Equipping Bethlehem Gallery - Signed an MOU with the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF) to oversee construction to better equip the Bethlehem Gallery Center (formerly named Museum) for visitors. - HCEF had submitted three deliverables, including the business plan, tender documents for the construction works, and procurement of systems and equipment. - Compete project had revised the final tender documents and advertised the tender of the construction works for the Rehabilitation of Arab Union Building (AWU): Gallery, Restaurant and Giftshop. - Signed a contract with the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF) to supervise the renovation and furnishing works for Bethlehem Gallery.	- Expanded tourism offerings developed in a manner that ensures community benefit and expands investment at the priority destinations will lead to improved visitor experiences, increased tourism arrivals, and increased sales for supported businesses. - Visitors recognize the destinations as desirable geographical units they wish to visit. Christmas Festival - 5 new jobs created to support the festival. - Number of overnights was increased by 7%. - Increase in exports the festival of $4,185,104 USD. - Increase in revenues for the festival of $6,055,622 USD. - The Tourism Police report that an average of 600 people visited on weekdays, jumping to 1200 visitors on Saturday and Sunday. Bethlehem Gallery - The building, when complete will provide a focal point for cultural events and sales of handcraft souvenirs aimed at travelers and pilgrims from around the world.

TABLE 2: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF TOURISM USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
• Signed a contract with National Group Company to implement the construction and civil works for the Rehabilitation of the AWU Building - Bethlehem Gallery. • Signed a contract with MICROTECH to provide furnishings (carpentry and joinery works) for the newly renovated Bethlehem Gallery, Giftshop, and Restaurant. • Signed a contract with the Bethlehem based company Axizo to design and install the lighting fixtures to complete the equipping of Bethlehem Gallery.	

Lessons Learned

The Tourism sector had several key lessons learned this year.

- The tourism team should ensure clearer documentation of reasonable costs when evaluating proposals for advertised contracts in order to facilitate the approval process of selected contractors.
- Due to varying knowledge among stakeholders and beneficiaries on environmental requirements for any infrastructure or construction work, it would be useful to bring them together for an environmental mainstreaming session to ensure the work meets the environmental management plan standards.
- When planning events, it is best to choose a venue that highlights the theme of the tourism project activity. For example, the launch of the CCHP project on Urban Rehabilitation was held in the Armenian Hall of the Nativity Church, which is an excellent example of rehabilitation. Choosing this venue heightened the impact of the event and the urban rehabilitation project for participants.
- There are 17 CCHP urban rehabilitation interventions and USAID has requested in the past to review each design. Experience has shown that this is a time consuming process, especially if USAID has questions that CCHP need to answer. In order to ensure efficient implementation of activities, the project's tourism team proposes to advertise the RFP at the same time as USAID is reviewing the documents. Any changes required from USAID comments can be incorporated into the contract before it is awarded, allowing the processes to run in parallel. This will help save time in the overall implementation of the urban rehabilitation activities.

ICT

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of ICT activities for FY3.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Multinational Partner Development Program

Description

    Assist Palestinian software houses to partner with international companies, leveraging capacity and knowledge gained through these partnerships to ensure Palestinian IT companies meet international market standards.

Achievements	Impact
• Signed a grant agreement with Palestinian company Exalt to facilitate two new projects. Exalt has signed long term contracts to provide software development for American company Cisco Video Technologies (formerly NDS) and with Israeli startup Headbox. Cisco Systems recently acquired NDS, a global player in the video industry, which provides devices used to transmit videos to the end-user; Headbox is an Israeli social network startup. • FanarSoft completed a successful Pilot project for Amital; the Pilot project was for the Israeli Customs Authority. • Palestinian Startup AidBits completed the Microsoft acceleration program in Netanya, Israel for 3 months, where they received mentoring from top Microsoft employees as well as other industry leaders in Israel. • Palestinian company Jaffa Net signed a new agreement with Israeli startup Head Top. This is the first partnership of its kind, as Jaffa Net received 20% equity. • H&W MENA officially opened the first-ever female led software development center in Hebron, employing eight female software developers (all graduates from Polytechnic University and Hebron University) and a female supervisor. Currently, the team is working towards certification in Salesforce.com technology. Four are certified; they will begin work on projects for H+W Germany and many other companies. • ALTARIQ systems supported by USAID successfully completed the terms of their contract to implement new time attendance and library management systems in Libya and Oman. • ALTARIQ then signed partnership agreements worth a combined total of $203,000 USD with local IT companies in both countries to deliver support when needed. • Progineer, a local software development company and Thompson Reuters, major multinational organization, are receiving support to develop software on NLP (Natural Language Processing). The pilot is an exciting enterprise with the potential to expand into a long term partnership.	• Through partnerships and licensing arrangements, Palestinian partners can join in the bidding process of multinational companies to implement projects in the West Bank, the Arab region, and Israel, which increases exports and employment. • Based on the success of Platform Enablement Test Suite "PETS" and the assistance they received from USAID through the Compete Project, Intel contracted Jaffa.Net for a new project Setup and Configuration Software (SCS) • Exports increased by 304,903 USD for *Jaffa.Net*. • 3 new hires for *Jaffa.Net*. • *Jaffa.Net* will be the technical arm of the Israeli startup "Headup Trike ", with expected revenues of $2 Million USD in 2 years. • *Jaffa.Net* is in advanced stage of discussion with Intel to start a new project. • Since the start the PETS project, *Jaffa. Net's* engagement with Intel was increased by 60%. • *Jaffa.Net's* overall employment was also increased by 35%. • During their work with Intel PETS project, *Jaffa Net's* team gained more and more new skills and great experience in different areas. • *Jaffa.Net* became an experienced outsourcing provider to Intel, and in order to be ready to scale with hi-tech infrastructure, *Jaffa.Net* invested more than $1 million US by buying a new premises. • Exports increased by $15,128 USD for *Art Technologies*. • Exports increased by $93,861 USD for *FanarSoft*. • Exports increased by $231,251 USD for *iConnect*. • 3 new hires for *iConnect*; 2 are female and 1 is a male youth. • Exports increased by $153,200 USD for *Al Tariq Systems*. • Expansion in Libya for *Al Tariq Software*. • 2 new contacts with Libya and Oman for *Al Tariq Software*. • 1 new hire at *Al Tariq Software*; a male youth. • Exports increased by $87,144 USD for *Exalt Technologies*. • 7 new hires for *Exalt technologies*; 6 are male and 1 is a female youth. • 1 new contract for *Exalt technologies* with NDS, Cisco Video Technologies. • 31 new hires for *H+W Mena*; 7 are female youth

	in Hebron office.
	• Exports increased by $127,500 USD for *H+W Mena.*
	• 2 new contracts for *H+W Mena.*
	• Exports increased by $107,331 USD for *Progineer.*
	• AidBits has gained new skills that will have a direct impact on the startup's operations and will pitch in front of international investors from the globe.
	• Through Microsoft acceleration program, AidBits has acquired new sets of skills that allow them to change their business operations in terms of branding, marketing strategy, and sales. The impact of the training was made clear in their participation at Dubai's ArabNet Conference in June 2014, where they were named coolest startup.
	• Showcased the availability of software engineers in areas outside Ramallah, which will help in scaling up the ICT industry for the future. It is expected that other software companies will follow H+W and open in areas outside Ramallah.

Palestinian Business Innovation Center

Description

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

Achievements	Impact
• 3rd Hi Tech Hub had 6 startups present tourism and gaming applications and over 200 participants.	E-Zone:
	• Since the beginning of E-Zone, a total of 10 startups were created: FeeKash, Fadfid, eJameya, Asfar "Zoorna", SeenLab, Sufraty, Indiepush, Daleeli, Bareedi, and Red Crow.
Accelerating Startups :Leaders/ E-zone	• 1 new male hire at E-Zone.
• Signed a grant agreement with Leaders, an NGO aiming to build the capacity and leadership of Palestinian youth, to help create "E-Zone," a business accelerator to provide services for Palestinian startup companies.	• 6 startups by youth: Feekash, Fadfid, Seenlab, Sufraty, Daleeli, and Red Crow.
	• Number of employment opportunities created at startups: 28, with 16 male and 2 female youth
First E-Zone Selection Event	• $94,000 USD startup capital raised by youth at Bareedi and Red Crow.
• Three startups graduated from Leader's acceleration program "Fast Forward" and are ready with products and business models for investment.	• 5 startups developed products at E-Zone: Appiatech, Cube, Store-e, ATB, and Pinch Point.
Second E-Zone Selection Event	Startup Cup (Connect Me)
• Leader's held its second selection event, choosing four teams (out of 15) to enter the acceleration program and benefit from EZone: FeeKash, Ustaz, iPush, and Sofrty.	• Startup Cup aligns with USAID's strategy to create an enabling environment for a strong entrepreneurial environment.
• 9 new companies have been hosted at e-Zone.	• 2 new hires for ConnectME; 1 male and 1 female youth.
Third E-Zone Selection Event	• 6 startups created: 3T, Palovina, Rainbow Colors, Sukkar Cake, CBS, Tadweer and Baladna. CBS is the only startup related to Information and Communication Technology sector.
• Hosted in Ramallah on July 24th. Three companies were chosen to participate in the next round of the	

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
Acceleration Program. • Conducted a series of technical and entrepreneurship events. • E-Zone officially opened to accelerate startups Start Cup • Signed a contract with Connect ME, an American firm specializing in market development for the Middle East to run Startup Cup. Startup Cup is global network of locally-driven accelerators, with a focus on building the capacity of local mentors to mentorship and consultancy for startups through competition. • The Palestinian edition of Start Cup was launched. • Startup Cup selected seven (out of 16) finalist startups to participate in the final mentorship stage in the Startup Cup program before graduating. A group of judges made up of representatives from the Palestinian IT community and Startup Cup made the final selection. • Startup Cup final celebration.	• $78,650 USD startup capital raised by youth for CBS.

Cross-Sector Technology Program Tourism Sector

Description

Introduce digital tourism into the Palestinian market, beginning with the selection and qualifying of ICT partners to build and support solutions for the tourism industry through the development of websites, Facebook applications, booking and reservation platforms, and systems integration with key tourism organizations.

Achievements	Impact
• Facebook Application for tourism sector finished and handed over to HILTOA.	• New business opportunities developed between ICT and tourism sector. • Capacity built in ICT sector to serve local market needs for international business. • Demand for digital tourism created. • Exports and employment expanded.

Export Manager –Market Expansion Program

Description

Support an Export Manager/Overseas Agent to penetrate specific markets to sell Palestinian products or obtain outsourcing contracts especially in the Gulf, Saudi Arabian, and North American markets.

Achievements	Impact
• Al Andalous software has achieved 8 business deals; 7 in KSA and1 in Iraq.	• Palestinian IT exports increased. • Employment increased. • New markets established. • Palestinian IT sector positioned as advanced industry. • Exports increased by $265,306 USD for Al Andalous Software Co. • 1 new employee was hired at Al Andalous Software Co. • 8 agreements were signed with Al Andalous Software Co: 7 in KSA and 1 in Iraq. • Expansion in KSA and Iraq for Al Andalous

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	Software C.

Microsoft IT Academy

Description
- Enable educational institutions to offer market-need driven trainings on fundamental technology skills and relevant technical courses to efficiently meet the IT sector's skill demand.
- The ITA will initially be launched in one Palestinian university as a pilot project but will implement the Training of Trainers model to promote future sustainability

Achievements	Impact
• 29 participants completed the mobile software development component of Microsoft IT Academy program. • Android and Apple iOS7 Training completed. • Held a Mobile Apps Boot Camp: a short, intensive, 2-day training in Sebastia in the Northern West Bank. 78 phone programmers certified from four Palestinian Universities (AAUJ, An Najah University, Al Quds University, and PPU) have graduated from the Microsoft IT Academy. They will develop mobile applications for multiple devices such as iPhone/iPad, Android, Windows Phone.	• The Microsoft IT Academy (ITA) activity will offer industry-leading technology skills to efficiently meet the IT sector's skill demand. • ITA will allow educational institutions to offer market driven trainings on fundamental technology skills and relevant technical courses to students, faculty and staff who are interested in pursuing a career in IT. Microsoft Certified Phone Developer Training, Microsoft IT Academy, January 1 - March 29, 2014 • 29 participants completed the evaluation. • The training content was largely judged to be good or excellent, and the majority of participants agreed that the content was clear and easy to follow. • The most useful courses were: "Fundamentals of XAML and Microsoft expression blend" and "Introduction to web development with Microsoft visual studio 2010." • Over 70% agreed that the format of the training was good to excellent and 97% said they would use the knowledge gained in the future. • Participants said the knowledge gained would help develop their career path or contributed to their personal development. • The top two answers how participants would apply the knowledge gained were: 1) as an asset to their university, and 2) transfer the knowledge to other university students. • Overall, 97% of participants were satisfied with the MCPD training. Android Training, May 2014, Summary of Findings • Eighteen participants in the Android training completed this survey. • 95% of participants said the content was good or excellent and 84% agreed that the subject matter was clear and easy to follow. • The Training of Trainers section and Android Application Development Basics were the most useful courses. • 83% said the trainer was experienced or very experienced.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	• One area for improvement was the format of the training, which 60% said was fair or poor. • All participants agreed they would use the knowledge gained in the future; most participants said the training would help them develop their career path, create a startup, or transfer the knowledge to university students. • 94% said they were satisfied with the overall Android Training program. Apple iOS7 Training, April 2014, Summary of Findings • 28 participants completed this survey. • All of the participants agreed the content of the training was good or excellent and 93% agreed that the content was clear and easy to follow. • Participants said that iOS7 Application Development Basics was the most useful course. • 89% agreed that the trainer was experienced or very experienced and the majority of participants were satisfied with the format of the training. • Most participants said the training would help them develop their future career and some said they would use the knowledge to start their own business. • 75% of participants said they would transfer the knowledge gained through the course to university students. • 14 % said they would use the knowledge to create a startup. • 11% said they would work to change the academic curriculum to include this knowledge. • Overall 97% were satisfied with the training program.

Gaming Animation Industry Development

Description

Capitalize on the Palestinian ICT geographic location and highly skilled ICT workforce to enter into the gaming and animation industry.

Achievements	Impact
• In design phase	• Develop new skills in the Palestinian ICT sector. • Increase Export and employment. • Create new multinational partnerships.

Business and Technical Skills Development

Description

Identify and engage private companies, introduce case competition programs, and support an Executive Development ("Mini-MBA") series in cooperation with leading U.S and Israeli universities for course content tailored for private ICT sector needs.

Achievements	Impact

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

- The second round of the Mini MBA completed; 19 participants from both the Ag and ICT sectors.
- Signed a program grant with the Palestinian Internship Program, a registered NGO in the US, to organize a unique ten week internship for ten young people at Israeli hi-tech companies (including Intel and Google) based in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.
- The Palestinian Information Technology Association (PITA), who implemented the specialized training program designed to improve the employability prospects of young University graduates, reported that 33 of its 50 trainees successfully attained long term employment contracts.
- A team of experts from Intel Jordan delivered a three-day Intel Entrepreneurship training of Trainers "TOT" workshop to 20 professors from 4 Palestinian universities.
- Signed a grant with Infinite Tiers Software Development, a Nablus based company to support the creation of a major internship program. The company is relocating their offshore development program from China to Nablus which will centralize their international operational requirements.
- Organized a training series and supported the participation of 21 from four Palestinian universities, enabling them to disseminate the knowledge through accredited Introductory Entrepreneurship courses to their students. Additional beneficiaries attended the trainings from Palestinian based incubators including Leaders, PICTI, and Arabrenuer. The five working days included an awareness workshop, in addition to discussions and meetings with involved stakeholders.
- Organized Intel Entrepreneurship Program Training and supported the participation of 20 professors from five Palestinian universities, enabling them to disseminate the knowledge through accredited Introductory Entrepreneurship courses to their students. Additional beneficiaries attended the trainings from Palestinian based incubators including Leaders, PICTI, and Arabrenuer. The three days training focused on enhancing entrepreneurship and innovation skills among young students, educators, and communities
- Signed a grant with H+W Mena Technologies, a software provider in cloud services based in Ramallah, to hire 45 interns and 15 experienced employees for seven months. The new employees will be primarily focused on developing healthcare software for the Gulf Cooperation Council market.

Mini MBA Evaluation-: Summary of Findings
- Participants agreed the program was well organized and 94 % agreed it was extremely valuable (the other 6 % moderately valuable).
- Presenters allowed about the right amount of time for questions, handouts were clear and useful and helped to deepen understanding of the topics.
- All the participants agreed their skills had improved, ranging from a moderate amount (31%) to a great deal (69%), and everyone was willing to apply what they learned in the Mini MBA.
- The top three most useful topics included operations, pricing, and power & influence simulation.
- The overall satisfaction level was high, 63% were very satisfied, while the remaining 37% were satisfied.

PITA Employability Program, Business and Technical Skills Development, October, 2013
- About 75% agreed the program was well organized and 92% agreed that the subjects covered in the training were valuable.
- The top three most useful technical topics were: web application development, software development, and database development and maintenance; the most useful non-technical topic was communication.
- About 75% believed there was just the right amount of time for questions, and 92% said the materials were clear and useful.
- 71% have been able to use the skills they acquired and 55% are enrolled in an internship program.
- 81% are satisfied with the employability program and 90% recommend it for new graduates, indicating that the employability program gave fresh graduates additional skills and experience, interview practice and insight into current needs in the market.
- 33 recent computer science graduates have landed long-term employment after completing the employability program managed by the Palestinian IT Association (PITA.)
- The interns have reported excellent results and Intel managers have indicated high regards to the Palestinian interns' capabilities and indicated that one of them will be offered a full time job.

Grant with Infinite Tiers
- Supports 120 internships, 40 of which will concentrate on mobile development on iOS.
- The internship program, which is the largest of its kind in the West Bank, works to generate essential skill development and work experience for fresh graduates as well as strengthening Nablus as a northern software development

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	location.
	Mobile Apps Boot camp
	• The event generated a wealth of ideas and connections among participants. The winning team from Hebron presented 'iStar,' an online platform for aspiring singers and dancers to showcase their talents and connect with managers, agents, and the public.
	IP Policy Training, August 24-28, 2014 Summary of Findings
	• 21 participants of the IP policy training completed this survey.
	• 57.1 % of participants reported that the format of the training was good and 57.1% also agreed that the training content and subjects were clear and easy to follow.
	• Strategies & techniques for generating inventions & acquiring patents were tied as the most useful courses.
	• 71.4% strongly agreed that the trainer met training objectives.
	• All participants agreed they would apply the knowledge gained in the future; 79% of them will apply it by transfer to university students as accredited academic course of the curriculum. 71.4% said they were very satisfied with the overall IP policy training.
	Grant with H+W
	• Graduates are enabled to develop skills and experience of the global healthcare IT industry.
	Intel Entrepreneurship Program Training, August 19-21, 2014, Summary of Findings
	• 16 participants completed this survey.
	• The respondents reported high satisfaction levels with the training focus and content.
	• The facilitator was also rated as very experienced, with a high majority of respondents reporting they consider the training beneficial to their respective interests.
	• All participants reported that they will use the information and skills gained through the program in a variety of ways - almost all participants said they will transfer the knowledge gained to university students. The remaining respondents were spilt between using the knowledge to create their own startup and those looking for Ibdaa connected startups to connect with them as a partner.
Seed Fund for Start-up Companies	

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Description

Support risk-sharing associated with a "Seed Fund" for startup companies. This fund is a fundamental element in creating a pipeline of startup companies with the potential to attract venture capital investment

Achievements	Impact

First Arabreneur Pitching Event
• 6 companies successfully pitched their ideas at the first Arabreneur pitching event.
• A fund was created.
• Investment in 4 startups complete.
 	
Second Arabreneur Pitching Event
• Arabreneur announced investment in 3 more startups, bringing the total number of startups supported through Arabreneur to 7.
• 5 Palestinian startups participated in the ArabNet Digital Summit in Dubai, the hub for Arab digital professionals and entrepreneurs to connect and learn. The startups pitched their businesses and products in front of investors and a crowd of about 1000 visitors.
 	
Third Arabreneur Pitching Event
• 7 start-ups pitched to the judges: 2 from Gaza, My Mic and DWBI Solutions; 1 Arab-Israeli start-up, Adsite Group; and 2 Canadian-Palestinian start-ups, Urban Arabia and Camerama.
• Arabreneur announced the winners of the third pitching event. The winning startups are; Photolour, a native application to search and label photos on smartphones; Urban Arabia, a mobile application to help residents of smart cities communicate with the real estate management; and WeziWezi, a social entertainment portal for Arabic speaking youth that just started to crowd invest on Eureeca. The startups won a combined investment total of $225,000 USD and will benefit from Arabreneur mentorship, a Ramallah based workspace, and business support.
• Hosted the Ramallah leg of SeedStars World search for the best start up in emerging markets. Four start-ups pitched to a panel of judges.
• The winning start-up, AidBits, will travel to Switzerland to represent their initiative and country. They will meet with European investors and develop connections to expand their businesses. The final event will be held in Geneva, Switzerland from February 4-6th 2015, where the wining startup will receive an equity investment of up to $500,000 USD.
	• The Seed Fund is a necessary step to create a pipeline of startup companies that are attractive to venture capital investment.
	• Startups will be able to receive investments in the range of $50,000-150,000 USD and benefit from the portfolio of business services Arabreneur has developed for startups. This is in addition to a regional and international business acceleration network that will add value in terms of international exposure for these startups.
	• Arabreneur invested in four startups with a total of $440,000 USD ($80,000 to $150,000 per startup). The pitching event also generated interest among several other investors outside the Arabreneur circle. All the startups that participated in the Arabreneur pitching event were approached by different investors including banks, leading to more than 30 pitching sessions for the participating startups.
	• Road shows like the ArabNet Summit enable Palestinian startups to connect with new investors and expand into new markets.
	• Arabreneur Venture Fund decided to invest $340,000 in three startups.
	• 5 new startups developed products at Arabreneur: Blue Engine, Prunuestate, Mobibox, isurface and Social Dice
	• 2 new hires at *Arabreneur.*
	• The injection of the investments in the selected companies from the rounds started to show progress as shown below :
	  1. AidBits
	    o Arabreneur facilitated AidBits acceptance to the Microsoft Ventures Accelerator and was the first and only Palestinian company to be accepted to this program.
	    o AidBits graduated the Microsoft Accelerator.
	    o AidBits hired 5 new employees to fill the position of a Front-End Developer.
	    o AidBits acquired new skills that allow them to change their business operations in terms of branding, marketing strategy and sales. The impact of the training was made clear by their participation in Dubai's ArabNet Conference.
	    o AidBits signed an agreement with Care International and Première Urgence.
	    o AidBits is selected for the Web Summit in Dublin, a technology industry conference held in Dublin, Ireland.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
	o AidBits hired 2 new employees; one developer and one female professional.
	2. Karaz
	o Karaz hired a full time Marketing Manager and two freelancers for content creation.
	o Karaz created a blog and working on enhancing the English and Arabic website with content.
	o Karaz signed an MOU with Web Teb, a Palestinian startup that provides health information. Also have partnerships with international organizations like Mayo-Clinic.
	o On the technical side, Arabreneur helped Karaz to immigrate to Amazon Web Services.
	o Karaz hired 4 employees to fill the positions of Developer and content creator.
	o Karaz announced that they left the Arabreneur accelerator
	3. Fariqak.com
	o Fariqak.com was selected to participate in the spring 2014 Blackbox Connect powered by Google for Entrepreneurs, which took place in Silicon Valley from March 17th to the 28th, and resulted in getting a lot of experience and exposure.
	o Fariqak is in the process of building a partnership with Arabia CELL for SMS billing.
	o Fariqak signed up with Tap2 Pay, a service which allows users to pay via the mobile phones.
	o Fariqak was mentioned on Wamda as a Palestinian start-up to tackle global fantasy football market.
	o The total number of Fariqak users is more than 37,500 while more than 3,000 play Fariqak's World Cup Game with 2,000 downloads of the mobile app.
	4. Edu-Nation
	o Released mobile app for Edu-Nation.
	o Edu-Nation expanded their Sales & Marketing team in Jordan, KSA, Iraq, Australia, Canada, and Egypt.
	o Edunation hired 12 employees to fill the position of front-end developers.
	o Edunation signed an agreement with Ibn-Khaldun Education Co. in Saudi Arabia and Modern American School in Jordan.
	o 150,000 USD capital raised by youth for Edunation.
	o 2 new markets accessed by startups: Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	

	o Edu-Nation reached to 70,000 subscribers.
	o Edu-Nation is in final contract negotiations with Hasad Schools "5,000 students."
	o Edu-Nation is in negotiation with 20 other schools in Jordan, 5 schools in West Bank, 1 school in Dubai, and 1 in Canada.
	o Edu-Nation selected for the Web Summit in Dublin, a technology –industry conference held in Ireland.
	
	5. Jobreneur
	   o Jobreneur hired 4 employees.
	   o Jobreneur met with the World Bank team for "Online Outsourcing for jobs and youth Empowerment Project."
	
	6. Sooshef
	   o Sooshef will start fundraising for global marketing plan.
	
	7. Imagry
	   o Imagry declined the investment from Arabreneur due to the need for more funding than what the Arabreneur fund offered.
	
	8. B-Eye
	   o B-eye has developed a platform for business intelligence targeting chief level.
	   o B-Eye first target market is the financial industry.
	   o B-Eye is now targeting some banks in the UAE.

Tech Transfer Company

Description
    Support the creation of a company that will facilitate the relationship between the private sector and the universities, this company will then channel R&D projects between both parties, and lay down the foundation for R&D in the Palestinian territories.

Achievements	Impact
• Facilitated a meeting between 4 Palestinian universities (Palestinian Polytechnic University, Najah University, American University in Jenin, Al-Quds University) and USAID to discuss the creation of a tech transfer company that would foster projects between the private sector and the academia, creating a true R&D industry in the Palestinian Territories. • Study tour to Amman and Dubai for TTC called Ibdaa completed. The study tour was conducted to explore existing modules of research oriented institutions and look at examples of most successful R & D entities. • Ibdaa has selected a General Manager, signifying an important milestone in the development of the technology transfer company. The GM will be	• Academia/industry gap bridged. • Employment increased. • Number of startups increased. • New markets accessed through the development of new products. • Understanding of the value and application of R&D increased in Compete sectors and partner Palestinian universities. • This tour will help lay the groundwork for launching the TTC in the Palestinian Territories. • Ibdaa will facilitate commercialization of R&D to local and international markets, help the private sector address market problems, and capture opportunities through innovation and creativity. • 1 new hire at Ibdaa.

TABLE 3: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF ICT USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
- responsible for the launch of Ibdaa, runing the first round of projects, and managing the relationships between partner universities and the private sector. - Ibdaa incorporated in April, registering with the Palestinian Ministry of Economy. - Conducted several meetings with the key players in the niche to discuss the strategic plan of Ibdaa and how Ibdaa will work with them together to complete each other. - Strategic Plan is progress; it will be finalized and discussed with board members on 20th of October. - A proposal with a financial component on how to utilize the money donated from USAID under Compete has been reviewed by DAI; modifications are undergoing which will have to be approved by Ibdaa board members during the upcoming meeting. - A set of forms were developed for applying to Ibdaa project competition (Project Concept Application Form and Business Plan Form). - Selection Criteria for project concept paper were developed. - Selection Criteria for Projects' business plans were developed. - Met with 18 PPU project teams. Najah project teams to see their potential for Ibdaa. - A five-day workshop was held in Ramallah for professors from 4 Palestinian universities to promote better understanding of intellectual property rules and regulations, especially in the MENA region. Also addressed Ibdaa can benefit from creating a similar system in the Palestinian Areas. The 25 professors who participated in the workshop described it as important training that will certainly help protect new innovative ideas at their universities.	

Microsoft Research Center

Description

Based on the success of the USAID-sponsored Microsoft Research center Israel incubation Project at PICTI, Microsoft is expanding the project to include more Palestinian employees who will work out of the ASAL company office in Ramallah. To ensure that the project goes forward, Compete will provide a cost-sharing grant to ASAL to off-set risks to Microsoft Israel.

Achievements	Impact
- Microsoft increased the size of the contract with ASAL by opening a new team of 5 employees. - The Project has been concluded from USAID side in Q2, the project was a success in terms of employment and exports, the creation of new teams, and new skills obtained by the engineers.	The grant will eventually create needed Palestinian talent to open a full-service Microsoft R&D center in the Palestinian Territories.

Lessons Learned

- It has proven difficult to increase the number of multinationals working with Palestinian companies. The project team believes that a more strategic campaign targeting multinationals and employees within multinationals can facilitate participation. The project team recommends targeting companies that have diaspora working on a C-level, such as CIO, CFO, or CEO, and have a yearly IT spending of between $3-5 million USD, as companies with this spending portfolio will be a better match for the Palestinian ICT companies.
- In order to streamline the growth of multinational jobs, a diversified strategy is needed to tap into all potential avenues for job creation and help make it a success. For example, solutions could include supporting customized internship programs or opening new leads with industries, such as animation, while simultaneously fostering skill development in animation.
- Each year there are 2000 Palestinian university graduates with computer science degrees, yet only a very small percentage are able to find gainful employment upon graduating. The success of PITA Employability program in matching 98% of graduates with jobs and internship programs demonstrates that his type of specialized capacity building program is an effective method of ensuring the skill set of graduates to meet the requirements of the job market.
- The Hebron Gender project has ensured job opportunities for unemployed female developers in Hebron and overall growth in the IT sector. It is expected that HW will increase the number of resources over the next few months, which will likely attract other similar businesses to do the same. Continuing to encourage companies to invest in areas outside Ramallah will be a key development approach for the future of the ICT strategy.

STONE AND MARBLE

Progress toward Indicators

The following chart outlines key achievements, impact and evaluation of Stone and Marble activities for FY3.

TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
Trade Show Participation	
Description Assist Palestinian producers to participate at leading trade shows to enable opportunities to learn about new equipment, technology advances, and attract buyers and distributors.	
Achievements	**Impact**
Dubai Big 5 • Six companies exhibited their products at Dubai Big 5 trade show. Verona and Tresorelle • Verona for Marble and Industrial Investment, a Palestinian company located in Bethlehem, signed a cooperation agreement with Tresorelle Company, an international company located in Italy, with two main branches in Taiwan and US. This will establish a mutual commercial office between the two companies.	• Participating in international exhibitions enable Palestinian stone and marble producers to learn about new equipment, technology advances and to expand their international networks for new business opportunities. • Supporting export ready SME's with new products will increase exposure to international markets, develop long term relationships with buyers which will lead to an increase in exports, market penetration and employment. Evaluation Dubai Big 5, Summary of Findings

- The main goal of the agreement between Palestinian company Verona and Italian company Tresorelle is to market natural Palestinian stone and marble extracted from Verona's quarries.
- This marketing process is a mutually advantageous and profitable agreement. The agreement includes: 1) that Tresorelle buys $150,000 worth of Verona products; and 2) Tresorelle markets and sells the products of Verona to other customers.
- Cooperation between Verona Company and the following local companies:
    o Fairoz Co.
    o Maher Mefreh.
    o Nazeh Al Shrabati.
    o Al-Rashdoon CO.
    o AL-Sohba CO.
    o AsrafShehada

Al-Waleed
- Palestinian stone company Al-Waleed has established a marketing department in their Jordan operations.
- Al-Waleed participated in Marmomacc 2012 (a trade show in Italy) with support from USAID through the Compete Project.
- Al-Waleed Stone continues to develop their market vision where they expanded their existing office in Jordan to include a small showroom.
- Al-Waleed Stone also started their new intervention of expansion into the Gulf market. Their current investment includes renting space in Al-Ain Industrial City to establish a future show-room, offices and a finishing production line down the road. Future support might include supporting the establishment of an international location in Al-Ain, UAE for distribution and processing.

Coverings Trade Show
- Participation at the Coverings trade show in Las Vegas took place the last week of April. Participation includes Holy Land Stone Group exhibiting and emphasizing more decorative items by Fonoon and a second participant, Al-Omraniya Company, which specializes in exterior decorative elements and tiles. The project's stone team had coordinated with the Coverings contractors regarding booth design, quality booth construction, logistics, shipping products and with the participating companies /marketing consortiums to make sure developed marketing materials meet the targeted market and required information is been prepared in advanced.

- 4 respondents for the survey, which included 2 individual companies and 2 group marketing consortiums; one consortium represented 4 companies and the other represented 6companies. Participants rated the assistance from the Compete Project as good to very good. The rating for the assistance of PalTrade was more varied, ranging from moderate to very good. Booth design was one area that received more moderate ratings, indicating there may be some room for improvement.
- During the trade show, participating marketing consortiums and companies met a total of 55 potential customers, made 115 business leads and signed 11 contracts.
- The individual companies indicated that they would participate in Big 5 without donor assistance, while the marketing consortiums said they would not participate without donor assistance.
- Respondents indicated that they could improve their marketing in international markets by investing in capacity building in marketing for their staff or infrastructure improvements to ensure their products meet international standards, as well as more actively pursuing business relationships with potential clients and following up with potential leads after the trade shows.

Verona and Tresorelle
- This is considered as an opening agreement and other agreements between the two companies are expected, enabling Verona company to reach Tresorelle 45 branches with Palestinian marble exports.

Al Waleed
- Prior to USAID interventions with Palestinian stone companies to improve the image of "natural stone from the Holy Land" marketing was almost nonexistent in the sector.
- Increase in Exports for *Al Waleed* Co of $43,050 USD as a result of Verona Marmomacc tradeshow.
- $506,260 USD for Al Waleed Co. as a result of Dubai Big 5 tradeshow
- 5 new male hires; 4 of them are youth.

Coverings Trade Show 2014, April 29 – May 2, 2014, Summary of Findings
- The Coverings Trade Show presented an opportunity to participating stone companies to learn and expand their exports.
- Participating companies reported about 30 business leads, with interest from USA, Mexico, Brazil, Columbia, India and China.
- The companies reported an estimated future sales value of $1 million as a result of the trade show.
- Two of the three companies plan to participate in Coverings next year without assistance from USAID,

TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3	
• Supported two stone producers, Sukhour Al-Quds and Verona Group, to exhibit and market their products at the Marmomacc trade show from 24th to 27th of September in Verona, Italy. Compete together with the partners undertook intensive series of business meetings on the 25th; meeting with 18 potential new buyers. • The Compete team attended a stone recycling workshop that presented new technology for utilizing stone waste whether powder or processed "sludge". Compete met with company machine producers to support the development of stone waste into new products.	illustrating their growing independence. • They also learned that beyond tiles and slabs, there is a strong market in the US for custom built pieces, including fire places and wash basins. • To capitalize on what they learned the companies plan to increase marketing and to have more finished, value-added products. The companies also plan to branch out into more unique offerings, including pairing Palestinian natural stone with olive wood or Palestinian stained glass. Holy Land Group (Verona, Fonoon & 2nd Tier Producers • Increase in Exports for Holy Land Stone Group of $3,731,530 USD as a result of Verona Marmomacc, Dubai Big 5, USA Coverings and Brazil Vitoria Tradeshows. • 6 new market accessed for Verona: Jordan, KSA, Brazil, South Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam • 2 new markets accessed for Fonoon Co.: Jordan and USA. • 14 new workers for Verona Stone and Marble Co; 3 are youth. • 5 new workers for Fonoon Co.; 3 are youth. Jerusalem Stone • Increase in exports for Jerusalem Stone Group of $977,758 USD as a result of Dubai Big 5 tradeshow. • 13 new workers for Jerusalem Stone; 5 female and 7 youth. Sharabati • $1,526,500 USD for Sharabati Co. for Marble and Stone as a result of Verona Marmomacc and Dubai Big 5. • 1 new worker for Sharabati Co. for Marble and Stone.

Filter Press Evaluation and Upgrading

Description
  Facilitate proper maintenance and upgrading of filter presses to increase their overall effectiveness; produce higher quality products; extend the lifecycle of cutting tools; comply with environmental regulations, and capture slurry produced during the cutting process.

Achievements	Impact
• Hired an engineer for monitoring. • Filter press maintenance in the Hebron Industrial Zone. • Maintenance of 16 filter presses successfully completed and activity completed.	• Enables stone producers to transform slurry to sludge to meet environmental requirements, recycle water and increase cutting tool lifecycle. • Will increase effectiveness, higher quality products are produced, short the lifecycle of cutting tools, recycle water for the stone producers, comply with environmental regulations and capture all slurry produced during the cutting of stone.

Sludge New Product Development

TABLE 4: ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF STONE & MARBLE USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

Description

As part of project efforts to support the sustainability and transformation of the Stone and Marble sector there has been a great focus on the sludge issue or more specifically the ability to transform slurry to sludge that has further economic value. Compete conducted a pre-feasibility analysis and will be assisting potential investors in developing a comprehensive sludge new product full feasibility study "business plan" to develop further interest, trigger investments in new products that could be produced from slurry/sludge.

Achievements	Impact
• For the 1st time in the stone sector history, liquid slurry and dry sludge samples were sent to Italy for product development, testing and producing actual samples. • The pre-feasibility study for developing new products from dry sludge had been completed. • Presentation on findings of pre-feasibility study December 10th, 2013. The Compete Stone team hosted the "Sludge New Product Symposium" in cooperation with UNIDO and the Palestinian Stone & Marble Union. Experts in the properties of the industry's sludge byproduct presented ways to turn waste into profit with nearly 20 samples of commercial products made from stone sludge. • The sludge pre-feasibility study findings were distributed and presentations conducted during January 2014.	• This activity has attracted investors interested in new product development using dry sludge. Activities will focus on targeting stone producers throughout the stone industry as potential investors. This program will be open to potential investors in other industries. • The new products offer business opportunities for Palestinian stone producers and interested investors. • 95 people attended the event, which, according to the Union of Stone & Marble, "is by far one of the best, if not the best event, in the history of the Palestinian stone industry." USAID Mission Director, Dave Harden congratulated the industry on its success, saying: "the Palestinian people have an opportunity to really make something from nothing."

Updates for Other Stone & Marble Activities in the Work Plan

- **International Show Rooms and Hubs:** Support the establishment of up to 3 international show rooms or hubs under a cost share model. The project will use strict selection criteria to identify participating companies. Through this activity, the companies will also identify an export manager for hire to increase the net value of the activity's goal to attract international buyers and increase sustainable exports.
    o Two companies, Al-Waleed Company and Verona Industrial Investment, have expressed interest and will be submitting proposals by mid November 2014.

- **Sludge Processing Factory and New Product Development:** This activity will support potential investors though advanced sample product development, including field visits to Italy to investigate new technology and meet with experts in the field. Upon receiving significant additional funding, Compete will support the establishment of processing facilities.
    o The Compete Project announced moving into phase two of this activity which involves investors to conduct full feasibility studies targeting product development from dry sludge.
    o 8 investors / companies submitted proposals to undergo the sludge new product full feasibility study March 6th, 2014.
    o Grant agreements signed with four Palestinian investors for full feasibility studies to develop new products from stone waste.
    o Compete team met with the Czech Technical University in Prague to investigate potential new technology and product prototyping development related to construction materials.

- **Union of Stone and Marble – Industrial Modernization & Promotional Unit:** Support the establishment of a service unit at the Union of Stone & Marble that will provide stone producers with marketing support, BMS, and administration/HR services. This activity will include support for upgrading IT management systems.
    o Meetings took place with the executive staff at the Union of Stone & Marble (USM) to discuss the establishment of new services within the USM for stone producers. The services will include administrative support, financial support, marketing support and other services, with a focus on "Marketing Development" and "Marketing Support to Reach Global Markets".

  o Compete signed a grant agreement to support the new service unit with the first intervention includes a business to business event at the Big 5 trade show in Dubai.

- **New Product Development Targeting Women:** Support stone producers with new product development and manufacturing using residual stone. This will include the recycling of odd-shaped stones produced during manufacturing into new products while building production lines where women employees are involved in either management or operations.
  o The Compete Project started preparations for this activity during the second quarter of 2014.
  o The Compete Project has received proposals from Al-Itikal Modern Company, Fonoon Arts of Carved Stone and Rasha Traditional works.

- **Supporting Fonoon – Arts of Carved Stone:** The Compete Project is supporting a new Palestinian company Fonoon—Arts of Carved Stone in Bethlehem. Leading members of the group marketing consortium (supported by Compete) observed at recent tradeshows the need for specialty stone production (such as outdoor decorative items, sculptures, mosaics and tiles),and joined forces with Fonoon to meet this gap with an initial investment of $2 million USD. Fonoon has applied to Compete for a grant to support hiring a predominantly female team, including designers, Auto-CAD engineers, technical and mechanical engineers, marketing managers, and an administrative staff. An international export manager will follow in either the Gulf or US market to facilitate an increase in exports. The company will be the first of its kind in a state of the art facility, and the first stone company to hire predominantly female staff in a traditionally male-dominated industry.
  o Compete signed a small grant with Fonoon as phase 1 to support 3 new women employee's salaries for the next 4 months. This will help off-set the risk and provide an opportunity for women employees to enter the stone industry. Compete will keep a close eye on this type of essential development and will look into providing additional support.
  o The USAID-Compete team has decided to add decorative stone products as a new specialization to the current Stone and Marble portfolio that has great export potential. This conclusion came as result of a two-day intensive field visit to nine producers of decorative items including mosaic, pottery and Ceramics. The team believes a pilot project is needed to assess the possible interventions and test the export readiness of this important subsector. Research is showing that stone decorative items possess great export potential

- **Glass, Ceramics, and Wood Industries:** Compete is undertaking research and conducting meeting with producers in the glass and ceramics and wood industries in Hebron and Bethlehem. The research is aimed at mapping the needs of these industries, obstacles in reaching international markets and identifying the areas where future interventions can bridge these gaps to support export potential.

Lessons Learned

During FY3, the Stone and Marble Sector learned several lessons relating to developing new products from sludge, trade show participation:

- Palestinian stone companies have varying levels of capacity, particularly in marketing their products internationally. Trade exhibitions play a crucial role in reaching international markets and companies should be encouraged to attend specialized trade shows. However, assistance through the Compete Project should be attuned to the capacities of companies that have strong marketing capacity, or demonstrate a commitment to build capacity through their experiences at trade shows.
- As the stone team has met with potential investors for new product development, they learned that while interested investors exist, it will require some work and encouragement to ensure these investors are ready and capable of undertaking the project. Investors will need to be connected with research consulting firms to collaborate on the full feasibility study. The stone team will need to be vigilant in ensuring forward momentum.

- The Stone team recognized the importance of developing the service division of the Union of Stone & Marble in order to strengthen the industry. The USM plays an essential role in the sustainability of progress within the Palestinian stone sector because its ability to provide enhanced services to its members, particularly in the area of marketing, will lead to further growth in the industry. The USM needs to be sustainable, to ensure continuity of this support to the industry, and by offering needed services to their members they will generate income for the union, guaranteeing that sustainability.
- The visit to Beit Fajjar revealed how important it is for the industry to ensure access to new quarries; this will provide large quantities of raw material which will decrease production costs and increase competitiveness and profit within the industry.

SUMMARY OF PROGRESS TOWARD INDICATORS

The following table is a report of all indicators specified in the PMP for the period of October 2013 to September 2014.

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
	TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3											
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-36	OP Indicator	Agri	Value of exports of targeted agricultural commodities as a result of USG assistance	Decimal	35,926,562	FY12	$20,000,000	$23,681,626[2]	$23,300,000	$23,300,000
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	20	22	30	30
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	6	6	7	7
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C02	OP Indicator	Tourism	Percent of hotels adopting nationally-adopted, USAID-introduced hotel classification	Percentage	100	FY12	70%	34%[3]	70%	100%

[2] The outcome from trade shows far exceeded expectations. The increase in exports is primarily derived from successful activities which support Palestinian firms to participate in trade shows and assistance provided to firms in the negotiation of forward contracts.

[3] More than 68% of hotels have been visited and assessed by the hotel classification committee and 30 have been fully classified. Despite the fact that all legally registered hotels have already adopted the new Palestinian Hotel Classification system, the hotels still need to renovate and refurbish the buildings to achieve a certain star status. This process can take up to a year (in few cases) to achieve the required standards; thus, the final classification of most of the hotels is expected within the next 18 months. This process can take more than a year and in few cases, up to two years.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
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	$6,000,000	$6,785,098[4]	$6,500,000	$6,500,000
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C05	OP Indicator	Agri	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Integer	0	FY12	10000 dunums 1000 hectares	10355 dunums 1035.5 hectares	1500 dunums 150 hectares	1500 dunums 150 hectares
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C02	OP Indicator	Agri	Number of new or improved Palestinian products produced by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Integer	0	FY12	50	61[5]	60	60
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-7	OP Indicator	Agri	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	Integer	N/A	FY13	200	218	300	300
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	24%	22%	46%	46%

[4] With the increase in exports among participating companies, several large projects yielded higher exports.
[5] Due to high market needs identified during trade shows and contract negotiation.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C02	Management Indicator	Agri	Percentage increase in exports of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	35,926,562	FY12	56%	59%	65%	65%
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C03	Management Indicator	Tourism	Percentage increase in exports of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	Percentage	56,674,923	FY12	8%	8%	5%	9%
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C04	Management Indicator	ICT	Percentage increase in exports of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	5,075,600	FY12	7%	27%[6]	10%	10%
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C05	Management Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percentage increase in exports of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	20,573,475	FY12	29%	33%[7]	32%	32%
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C06	Management Indicator	ICT	Percentage increase in sales of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	8,308,269	FY12	7%	17%[8]	10%	10%
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C07	Management Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percentage increase in sales of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	30,046,475	FY12	20%	23%[9]	22%	22%

[6] Contracts facilitated by USAID Compete between Palestinian software companies and multinationals grew after the USAID assistance ended.
[7] With the increase in exports among participating companies, several large projects yielded higher exports.
[8] Contracts facilitated by USAID Compete between Palestinian software companies and multinationals grew after the USAID assistance ended.
[9] With the increase in exports among participating companies, several large projects yielded higher exports.

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PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C08	Management Indicator	Agri	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Integer	7.00	FY12	4	13[10]	5	5
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C09	Management Indicator	ICT	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Integer	2.00	FY12	5	5	5	5
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C10	Management Indicator	Stone & Marble	Number of new markets accessed by assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms.	Integer	6.00	FY12	5	8[11]	6	6
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C13	Management Indicator	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Integer	0	FY12	10	16[12]	16	16
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C14	Management Indicator	Tourism	Percentage increase of overnight stays in Palestinian hotels from key tourism source markets	Percentage	252,574	FY12	10%	18%[13]	10%	10%

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[10] The number of new markets accessed was measured through the new geographical markets accessed by beneficiaries.

[11] Branding modern booth designs and positioning at international trade shows attracted more buyers and secured more exports.

[12] Contracts facilitated by USAID Compete between Palestinian software companies and multinationals grew after the USAID assistance ended

[13] An increase of 18% between April to September, 2013 and April to September, 2014 due to the four market profiles completed and presented by HLITOA.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C01	Management Indicator	Agri	Percentage increase in sales of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	103,000,000	FY12	29%	28%	33%	33%
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C03	Management Indicator	Agri	Percentage increase in area under cultivation for export crops (hectares)	Percentage	360	FY12	25%	53%[14]	20%	20%
4.5.2	Agricultural Sector Productivity	4.5.2-C06	Management Indicator	Agri	Number of new agribusiness contracts executed with international buyers/firms for Palestinian products or services	Integer	0	FY12	15	15	20	20
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C01	Management Indicator	Tourism	Percentage increase in number of bed nights in Palestinian hotels	Percentage	863,947	FY12	9%	33%[15]	9%	9%
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C01	Management Indicator	Agri	Percentage increase in employment of assisted Palestinian agribusiness firms	Percentage	1,690.00	FY12	10%	12%[16]	10%	10%
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C02	Management Indicator	Tourism	Percentage increase in employment of assisted Palestinian tourism firms	Percentage	2,251	FY12	4%	2%[17]	2%	4%

[14] Due to the success of forward contracting, additional area was needed to comply with contracts and thus exceeded expectations.

[15] PCBS data reveals an increase of 32% between October to June, 2013 and October to June, 2014. 7% was a result of the Bethlehem Festival and 26% was a result of the Jericho festival.

[16] The outcome from forward contracting activity far exceeded expectations; primarily seasonal workers were employed as well other activities.

[17] A delay in implementing the hotel classifications due to renovation issues and heavy investments by hoteliers has impacted the current hiring growth. It is expected to achieve good results within FY2015 as a result of targeting selected markets.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C03	Management Indicator	ICT	Percentage increase in employment of assisted Palestinian Information and Communication Technology (ICT) firms	Percentage	339	FY12	25%	42%[18]	37%	37%
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C04	Management Indicator	Stone & Marble	Percentage increase in employment of assisted Palestinian stone and marble firms	Percentage	471	FY12	13%	8%[19]	10%	10%
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C06	Management Indicator	Tourism	Number of training courses developed and delivered through the USAID - established hospitality school	Integer	0	FY12	4	7[20]	5	10
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C07	Management Indicator	Tourism	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)	Integer	0	FY12	10	1[21]	-	-

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[18] Contracts facilitated by USAID Compete between Palestinian software companies and multinationals grew after the USAID assistance ended; startup employment was also captured.

[19] Despite activities designed to target women and increase employment, it was not launched in this year. We expect employment after implementation next year.

[20] More in-service training courses provided to the hotel staff.

[21] Compete has delayed implementation of activities related to this development for several reasons: only 20% of the hotels were classified, major hotel refurbishing projects are still ongoing, and the war on Gaza affected the overall investment in tourism industry.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C09	Management Indicator	ICT	Number of new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) start-up companies established	Integer	0	FY12	15	12[22]	14	14
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C03	Management Indicator	All Sectors	Number of assisted private sector organizations and private sector service providers receiving USG assistance	Integer		FY13	15	32[23]	10	10
4.6.2	Private Sector Capacity	4.6.2-C04	Management 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		FY13	4	34[24]	6	6
4.7.3	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	4.7.3-C11	Management 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		FY13	10%	10%	10%	10%

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[22] Some pitching events were rescheduled due to logistical issues.

[23] Compete underestimated the quick return of its activities with Service Providers based on historic responses of the market. However, enabling service providers to reach the market directly quickly unlocked new opportunities, particularly servicing untapped needs.

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TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C15	Management 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		FY13	20%	115%[25]	30%	30%
MEP0040	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0040	Management Indicator	ICT	Number of business started by youth with USG assistance, disaggregated by sex of founder.	Integer		FY14	10	9	10	10
MEP0041	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0041	Management Indicator	ICT	Total number of start-up capital raised by youth	Integer		FY14	120,000	$332,650[26]	240,000	240,000
MEP0042	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MEP0042	Management Indicator	All Sectors	Number of youth gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded program	Integer		FY14	113	322[27]	226	226

[25] Compete underestimated the quick return of its activities with Service Providers based on historic responses of the market. However, enabling service providers to reach the market directly quickly unlocked new opportunities, particularly servicing untapped needs.

[26] Few startups had accelerated growth, therefore received more than one round of investments

[27] The impact of the FY3 Workplan activities resulted in creating more jobs that far exceeded conservative expectations.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY OF INDICATORS
USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3

PE Code	PE Name	Indicator Code	Indicator Type	Sector	Indicator Name	Indicator Format	Baseline Value	Starting Fiscal Year	Planned Value for FY3	Actual Value for FY3	Planned Value for FY4	Planned Value for FY5
MRP0 039	Strengthen Micro-Enterprise Productivity	MRP0039	Management 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	[28]	8	8
6.3.1	Gender	6.3.1 C	Management 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		[29]	-	-
6.3.1	Gender	6.3.1 D	Management Indicator	ICT and Tourism	Number of women participants in training and capacity building courses that improve skills in the ICT and Tourism sectors.			FY14		508	-	-
4.2.2	Trade and Investment Capacity	4.2.2-C15	Management Indicator	Tourism	Economic impact as a result of festivals/events activities organized/ supported under the tourism sector across the West Bank by USAID through the Compete Project			FY14		$7,216,748	-	-

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[28] It has been less than a full year since startups were established therefore this indicator cannot be measured yet.

[29] Will be captured in FY4, currently working with 2 cooperatives in addition to a business women developing a mushroom factory.

M&E ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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

Methodology

The USAID Compete Project's M&E team conducted a series of field visits and interviews across the West Bank to collect systematic and timely performance information to quantify results for FY3 of the project. The technical teams supported these visits in lending their first-hand knowledge of sector-specific activities and resulting impacts. This ensures data is collected from the most appropriate and knowledgeable people at the targeted companies, farms, etc. M&E also employs the use of online surveys for events, trade shows, etc., to get feedback directly from participants.

Key Accomplishments

The following are select accomplishments for the M&E team this quarter.

- Produced Compete Work Plan for FY3;
- Produced Compete Gender Strategy;
- Developed of the PMEP for FY3, including the list of indicators and targets;
- Attended the intensive field procurement training provided by DAI to improve our skills as part of the Compete Grant Committee;
- Conducted a series of field visits and interviews across the West Bank to collect, capture, and verify data, as well as ensure quality of data collected in a systematic and timely manner to achieve quantifiable targets;
- Employed the use of online surveys for events and trade shows to get feedback directly from participants;
- Continued opening and updating activities and interventions in the West Bank on Geo-MIS, TraiNet and TAMIS;
- Attended the intensive gender training provided by USAID regarding USAID regulations;
- Attended the data quality assessment "DQA" refresher training provided by USAID DAI to improve our skills in this regard;
- Led a Data Quality Assessment "DQA" to ensure that the Compete Project has met USAID DQ standards in accordance with ADS 203.3.5.1 by preparing for the audit and gathering all required support documents for the auditors;
- Facilitated a Compliance Review of the Compete Project with regard to Mission Order No. 21 under the new protocols for the period of March1, 2013 – March 31, 2014;
- Facilitated the Compete Project Mid-term Evaluation;
- Worked closely with component leads and the technical staff to make sure that USAID regulations are met;
- Worked with the communications team to submit project progress reports; and,
- Captured ongoing data on Private Sector Investment Leverage.

- The M&E team has allocated part of their time in the field to capture the value of investments leveraged by the private sector as a result of USAID interventions through the Compete Project. A key lesson learned from this is that it is useful to know the size of funds that have been initiated and pumped in the market as a core for economic growth.
- The M&E team attended the field procurement training. It was clear that more knowledge in this area will reflect positively and significantly on M&E performance.
- Attending the USAID gender training has had a great effect on improving the skills and knowledge of M&E team. Ensuring awareness of gender while designing any activity, as well as of how to capture gender participation in the project activities will reflect positively and significantly on M&E performance.
- Attending the USAID DQA training has had a great effect on improving the skills and knowledge of M&E team; it was clear that more knowledge in this area will reflect positively and significantly on M&E performance.
- Having an economist on the M&E staff adds significant value to the M&E SOW; 43 economic analyses are now provided for most of the project's interventions.
- Having an M&E engineer as one of M&E staff adds a significant value to the M&E scope of work, enabling the M&E team to follow up on environmental issues, installation of equipment, and any construction work in the activities and interventions. This will ensure that USAID regulations have been met in this regard.
- Having a clear gender strategy for the Compete Project will enable the M&E team to highlight and capture gender participation in the project's myriad activities and interventions.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

In FY3, the communications team carried out a number of activities to create and maintain dialogue and positive perception in the media and other channels around USAID. The communications team efforts included a number of public relations, outreach, and media activities, issuing 34 press releases and planning 12 events where media was present. Media coverage represents an alternative measure of impact, as it is responsible for positioning USAID Compete and telling the story of its social, human, and economic impact.

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

- Newspapers: Al-Quds Newspaper, Alayyam News, Al Hayyat Al Jadideh
- News agencies: Wafa News agency, Maan News agency, PNN News Agency, Shasha
- News webpages: Panet.co.il, Wamda.com, alwatanvoice.com, Amwal.ps,palestineafree.com , zamnpress.com, alwasattoday.com, salam-tv.ps, nablustv.com, palpress.co.uk, shfanews.net, rb2000.ps, alfajertv.com,sheraatv.com, mawwal.ps, samanews.com, anbaanet.com, asdaapress.com, arbindex.com, elaosboa.com, eqtesadia.ps, madafm.com, sahafaty.net, motaded.net , wam.ae/ar/news/emirates, feneeqnews.com, jenintv.net , media24.ps
- Radio interviews: Raya fm, Radio Ajyal, Maan News Network, Road of love, Bethlehem 2000.
- TV coverage: Wattan TV, Maan Mix TV, Palestine TV, Al Falastenyeh

- TV interviews: Palestine TV (in-studio interview), Shashat TV, Maan TV, Maan Mix, Wattan, Palestine TV (News), Hebron TV.
- YouTube: Hi Tech industry; Arabrenuer

On September 23, Compete's communication team organized a press tour to draw media attention to interventions in the agriculture sector and the growth that is taking place in the date sub-sector in the Jordan valley. The tour included visits Al Zaraon Al Arab Company and Nakheel Palestine Company, whereby Maan News Agency interviewed Compete's beneficiaries and published success stories from the point of view of the beneficiaries in the form of TV report, YouTube and Internet.

USAID Compete's communications team arranged another media tour on September 18th inviting Wafa News Agency to visit farms of Compete's beneficiaries in the Qalqilyia area. Wafa reporters and multimedia staff interviewed beneficiaries and produced several reports about the successes of the farmers through USAID support in further developing the Agricultural sector. The reports were captured by several local newspapers and other media outlets.

- Maan:http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=729575&MARK=%D9%85%D8%B2%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%B9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AE%D9%8A%D9%84
- Wafa: http://www.wafa.ps/Arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=184043
  http://www.wafaimages.ps/album.aspx?id=13344
  http://www.gazaalan.ps/53243/
  http://www.al-ayyam.ps/pdfs/21-9-2014/p22.pdf
  http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=184169

ONLINE

Compete is focused on creating an online presence to reach people interested in learning more about how USAID works with the Palestinian private sector. Following last year's launch of Compete's website, http://www.competeproject.ps, the team focused on ensuring regular updates and continued improvements to make the site more dynamic and user-friendly

EVENTS

The Communications team oversaw and managed public events carried out by the four sectors, ensuring proper branding, media coverage, and relations. Support provided during these events included:

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

PR and Branding

- Jericho Arts Festival

- Christmas 2013/2014
- International exhibitions and tradeshows
- Ibdaa: marketing campaign and press conference
- Arabrenuer pitching events
- Startup Cup
- Boot Camp for Mobile Applications Development
- Hi Tech competitions
- Inauguration Hisham's Palace museum and press conference
- Graduation of In-Service Trainees
- MAK celebration
- New product development "from waste to profit" workshop

Production

- 5 minute video about the Stone & Marble sector
- Video about Arabrenuer
- Christmas festival radio spots
- Jericho Arts Festival radio spots

PUBLICATIONS

- Booklet for Berlin tradeshow
- Booklet for Gulf food tradeshow
- Booklet for Moscow World food tradeshow
- Ibdaa brochure
- Christmas festival booklet
- Jericho Arts festival booklet

REPORTING

As a key vehicle to communicate project progress, impact, and evaluation, the communications team works closely with M&E to produce meaningful monthly, quarterly, and annual reporting. During fiscal year 3 the team produced the following project reports:

- 42 weekly reports
- 8 monthly reports
- 3 quarterly reports
- 1 annual report

The Communications team wrote 12 success stories this year to highlight achievements in the four sectors.

1. Women join the Cloud in Hebron
2. National Geographic Ranks the Abraham path in the West Bank
3. Serving up success in Tourism
4. Growing a fresh herbs Association
5. Farmers invest for growth
6. Expanding profits from local to global
7. Exceeding all expectations

8. Better institutions to expand Palestinian tourism
9. Breaking Boundaries
10. Case study: A better way of doing Business
11. Partnerships with a Difference
12. Palestinian ICT sector going Mobile

ISSUES THAT MAY INHIBIT OR ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

VETTING

Engagement in partner relationships with established and start-up Palestinian companies are the surest method for USAID to help build a growing economy and create job opportunities for young people that could result in a lasting and peaceful Palestinian society. Underpinning these potential partnerships is the willingness and success in adhering to Mission Order 21 in a timely business-like manner.

As the tables below and the tracking graphs reflect, the first six months of 2014 saw an improvement in the processing of vetting applications for Mission Order 21, with the trajectory for rapid vetting all pointing in the right direction. Quarter 2 of the calendar year in particular saw a continued positive trend in first three months of 2014, with marked improvement in the processing of vetting applications for Mission Order 21. As seen below the trajectory for rapid vetting crossed a threshold where for the first time more companies have received vetting with 30 days compared to those that take 60 day or more.

That trend changed somewhat in July with a 5.5% increase in the number of companies with a vetting time of 31-45 days. However, the number of companies with a vetting time of 60 days or more dropped by 5.4%, which is welcomed and should be the outlook for continued improvement.
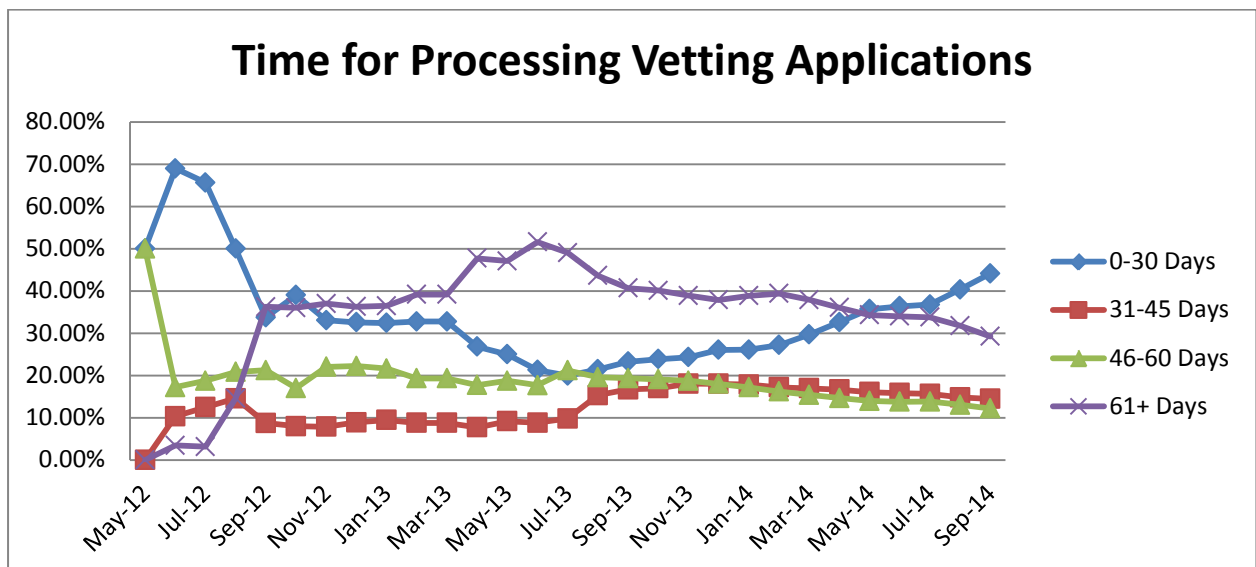
SUBCONTRACTS AND GRANTS

During the third year of the project (October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014), the compliance and grants team worked closely with the technical staff to ensure technical activities were

implemented in a manner compliant with USAID regulations and the special requirements of the Mission.

Achievements during Year 3

One hundred and thirty-two (132) field-based purchase orders, blanket purchase agreements, and subcontracts for operational and project activities were executed. Examples include the expansion of the project offices on the operational side, the Bethlehem Christmas and Jericho Festivals, training courses for IT professionals, urban site rehabilitation, and equipment procurement for agricultural demonstrations.

Thirty-five (35) grants totaling $2,547,436 USD were executed in the third year. Examples include equipment procurement in agriculture for the introduction of new crops, hiring export managers, and feasibility studies for new products from sludge.

As part of ongoing USAID oversight of contractors, the compliance and grants team with significant support from the finance team managed the process of the Partner Contracted Audit (PCA) of the second year of the project. Four subcontracts and two grants were included in the audit scope of work. The audit has been finalized with the Regional Inspector General in Cairo and there were no significant findings.

As of September 30, 2014, 2,366 requests for vetting had been submitted to USAID for individuals and organizations. Eligibility Notices have been received for 2,274 of these requests.

The contracts and grants team oversaw the recruitment, approval, and hiring process for five full time professional and support staff, as well as 15 CCN short term consultants. In addition, the team coordinated with the USAID Mission Project Support Unit on permitting and USAID identification issues.

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. With the activation of the option period of the contract, activities with a longer lead time will be implemented and there will be significant efforts from the team to ensure a smooth implementation.

In Year 4, the compliance and grants team anticipates supporting international trade shows, renovation and rehabilitation of select tourist sites, and continuing grant support in all sectors.

The compliance and grants team will work in coordination with the monitoring & evaluation team to perform site visits for grantees, pilot projects, and other project sites and events to resolve any compliance issues that may arise.

LEVEL OF EFFORT SUMMARY

TABLE 6: LOE SUMMARY (PERSON MONTHS) USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3												
Item	**Contract Budget – Year 3**			**Year 3 Actuals**		**Contract Budget**						
Labor Category	Person Months	Number of Long Term Professional Employees	Total Person Months	Number of Long Term Professional Employees	Total Person Months	Year I	Year II	Year III	Year IV	Year V	Total	Remaining
All	12	14	235	14	246.8	238	233	235	233	233	1172	591.2

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

TABLE 7: FINANCIAL OBLIGATION SUMMARY USAID COMPETE PROJECT FY3			
Current Obligation	**Obligation Spent**	**Obligation Remaining**	**Per Cent Obligation Remaining**
$36,163,000	$ 25,728,087	$ 10,434,913.25	28.86%
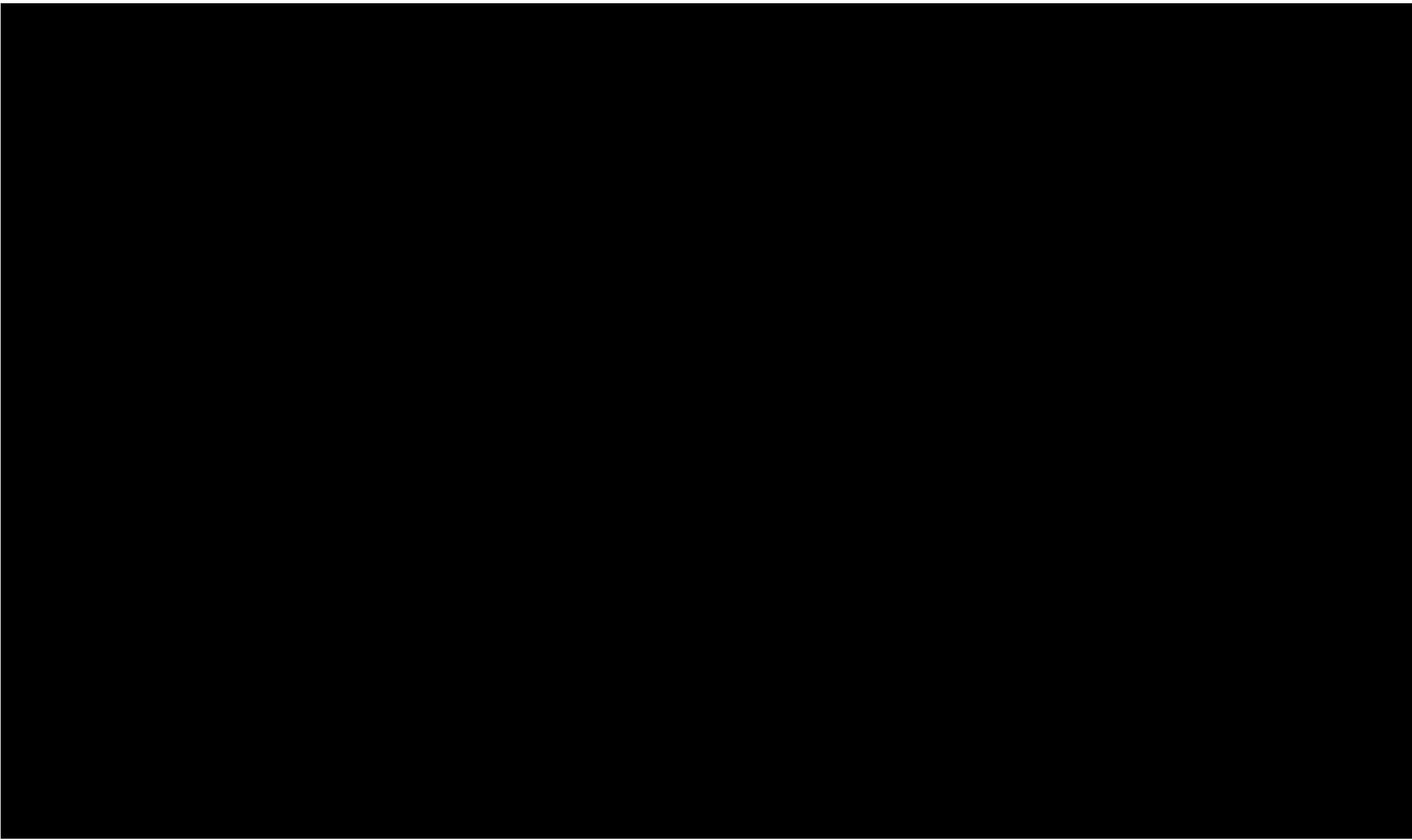
ANNEX

ANNEX 1: MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

The following report details the 34 press releases that were produced this year, in addition to ensuing media coverage.

Event/initiative: Intercontinental Hotel Celebrates Being Classified as the 1st 5 Star Hotel in Bethlehem.
Sector: Tourism
Date: 9/10/2013
Media Coverage:
http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/69240
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=637261
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/840283.html
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=161448
http://www.shasha.ps/more.php?id=80475#.UlUgn1OiM7o
http://baladnafm.ps/?p=23713
http://ps.aliqtisadi.com/%D8%AD%D9%81%D9%84-
%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%8A%D9%8A-
%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%86%D8%AF%D9%82-
%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AC%D8%A7%D8%B3%D8%B1-
%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%83%D9%88/
http://www.alhayat-j.com/details.php?opt=7&id=217893&cid=3092

Event/initiative: Acknowledging winners in the Starpack competition 2013
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 24/10/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/24-10-2013/p21.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/10/24/page18.pdf
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/841356.html
http://www.raya.ps/ar/eye-on-event/841358.html
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=162108
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=640536
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2013/10/23/450379.html
http://www.fatehwatan.ps/page-66471-ar.html
http://www.wattan.tv/new_index_hp_details.cfm?id=a4595865a8284569&c_id=1
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edSDIz8UPQk
http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-729384,110,111.html

Event/initiative: Palestinian hotels benefit from the program "reliable cleanliness for better classification"
Sector: Tourism
Date: 28/10/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=641990
http://www.amwal.ps/?page=details&newsid=81&cat=1
http://samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=176113
http://www.wafa.ps/Arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=162380

http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/29-10-2013/p20.pdf
http://www.palestineafree.com/index.php?id=6289

Event/initiative: Third Hi Tech Hub
Sector: ICT
Date: 6/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/843745.html
http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/473915
Al-Ayyam Newspaper Nov 7, 2013
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=644971
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=162848
http://www.zamnpress.com/ar/content/36341
http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-733482,110,111.html
http://www.alwasattoday.com/ar/news/21525.html
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2013/11/06/455840.html
http://wattan.tv/ar/video/79340.html
http://zamnpress.com/ar/news/36340
http://zamnpress.com/ar/content/36341
http://www.wafaimages.ps/album.aspx?id=11025
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/11/7/page12.pdf

Event/initiative: USAID Administrator visits agricultural business initiatives in the West Bank
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 7/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://wattan.tv/ar/news/79413.html

Event/initiative: "Arabreneur" launches a program that supports the Palestinian entrepreneurship
Sector: ICT
Date: 10/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/11/10/page8.pdf
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/10-11-2013/p11.pdf
http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/culture/72130
http://zamnpress.com/ar/news/36657
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=645806
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/content/print/456994.html
http://www.salam-tv.ps/ar/news/52187.html
http://www.raya.ps/ar/eye-on-event/842471.html

Event/initiative: Start Up Launch
Sector: ICT
Date: 20/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/21-11-2013/p22.pdf
Al-Quds Newspaper Nov 21, 2013 Start Up Launch
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=649480

http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=163768
http://www.nablustv.net/internal.asp?page=details&newsid=124684&cat=14
http://www.palpress.co.uk/arabic/?Action=Details&ID=101491

Event/initiative: Palestine Start Up Cup
Sector: ICT
Date: 24/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2013/11/24/463514.html
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=650606
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/844253.html

Event/initiative: "Creativity" Initiative
Sector: ICT
Date: 28/11/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/28-11-2013/p22.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/11/28/page21.pdf
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/74086
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=651817
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=164149
http://www.shfanews.net/index.php/2012-02-13-06-11-09/2012-02-13-11-16-21/29447-i

Event/initiative: Christmas Celebrations in Bethlehem
Sector: Tourism
Date: 1/12/2013
Media Coverage:
https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasinBethlehem
http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-741298,110,111.html
http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/475468
http://hr.ps/ar/news/42743.html
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/pnn-select/74217
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/29-11-2013/p02.pdf
http://www.beth-tv.com/ar/?p=33771
http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/96107.html
Orient Radio Dec 1, 2013 Christmas Celebrations in Bethlehem
Nativity TV Dec 1, 2013 Christmas Celebration in Bethlehem
http://www.panet.co.il/online/articles/110/111/S-742003,110,111.html
http://www.alfajertv.com/news/110652.html
http://wattan.tv/ar/news/81003.html
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/74491
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=164392
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/844947.html
http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=228686&date=
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/2-12-2013/p05.pdf
http://www.rb2000.ps/ar/news/96297.html
http://www.sheraatv.com/?p=60059

Event/initiative: Sludge New Product Symposium
Sector: Stone and Marble

Date: 11/12/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/11-12-2013/p22.pdf
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=164956
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/12/11/page22.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/12/31/page20.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=224421&cid=3167

Event/initiative: Signing a memorandum of understanding to support the initiative, 'National First'
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 11/12/2013
Media Coverage:
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=165020
http://www.maannews.net/Arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=656561
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/12-12-2013/p18.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/12/12/page9.pdf

Event/initiative: Christmas Celebrations in Bethlehem 24/12/2013
Sector: Tourism
Date: 24/12/2013
Media Coverage:
https://www.facebook.com/ChristmasinBethlehem
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=164805
http://www.nablustv.net/internal.asp?page=details&newsID=127676&cat=14
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/9-12-2013/p08.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2013/12/9/page7.pdf
Al-Hayat Newspaper Dec 22, 2013 Christmas Celebrations in Bethlehem
http://illumemagazine.com/zine/articleDetail.php?U.S.-Aid-Money-For-Palestinian-Christmas-Causes-Controversy-14569
http://wamc.org/post/little-town-bethlehem-us-aid-display-christmas-market
https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/articles/middle-east/8763-christmas-greetings-from-bethlehem
http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/little-palestinian-town-of-bethlehem-wants-its-tourists-christian-residents-to-come-back/2013/12/21/dac0d310-65b3-11e3-997b-9213b17dac97_story.html

Event/initiative: HiTech Industry
Sector:
Date: 9/12/2013
Media Coverage:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-luE8GYG1Bk

Event/initiative: A kick off meeting for the participants of Fruit Logistica 2014
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 16/1/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=665605
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/01/16/484830.html

Event/initiative: Arabreneur Invests in 4 Palestinian Entrepreneurs
Sector: ICT
Date: 27/1/2014
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: Graduation of Hotels' Executives
Date: 30/1/2014
Media Coverage:
Al Hayat Newspaper
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=167663
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/31-1-2014/p21.pdf
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2014/1/31/page10.pdf

Event/initiative: USAID Launches Urban Rehabilitation Project in Bethany, Burqin and Bethlehem
Sector: Tourism
Date: 19/2/2014
Media Coverage:
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: Maayah Meets with USAID Mission Director
Sector: ICT
Date: 26/2/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=676495
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/02/25/500408.html
http://www.anbaanet.com/feed/513587.html
http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/local/82427

Event/initiative: USAID Delegation Visits Projects in Burqin, Qabatia and Illar
Sector: Agriculture + Tourism
Date: 13/3/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/home/pnn/services/website/2012-01-11-16-33-28/84041-من-وفد-
الوكالة-الامريكية-للتنمية-يتفقد-مشاريع-في-برقين-وقباطية-وعلار
http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=235464&Date=3/15/2014
http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=949
http://www.wafaimages.ps/album.aspx?id=11955
http://nasfm.ps/?p=23732
http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=935

http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=170153

Event/initiative: Inauguration of Chives Farm
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 18/03/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=682727
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/84531-بدعم-من-usaid--الصيني-الاخضر-للبصل-مزرعة-افتتاح
في-طوباس
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/19-3-2014/p21.pdf
http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=1090

Event/initiative: First Women-Led Software Development Center in Hebron
Sector: ICT
Date: 27/03/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=685394
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/85404
http://www.narlove.com/95714.html
http://archive.donya.ps/link/42212
https://arbindex.com/C17y26
http://www.anbaanet.com/feed/925319.html

Event/initiative: Launching of four Microsoft academies in partnership with local universities
Sector: ICT
Date: 29/3/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=171214
http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/local/85524-ÈÏÚã-ãä-usaid-ÅäÔÇÁ-ÃÑÈÚÉ-ÃßÇÏíãíÇÊ-ãÇíßÑæÓæÝÊ-Ýí-Ìäíä

Event/initiative: Arabrenuer held second angel pitching event in Jerusalem
Sector: ICT
Date: 6/4/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=688222
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c9ADBcZbl9g
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2013/11/09/456994.html
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/842814.html
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=171848
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/856273.html
http://www.elaosboa.com/show.asp?inalnews#.U0OyHVd4SYs
http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=237034&date=
http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/498209
http://www.masress.com/elaosboa/148937
http://www.pnn.ps/index.php/economy/86313

Event/initiative: A press conference was held to launch "Ibdaa Company"
Sector: ICT
Date: 13/4/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=172238
http://www.eqtesadia.ps/top/19520.html
http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/499200
http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/90935.html

Event/initiative: Jericho Spring Festival Launched
Sector: Tourism
Date: 30/1/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/858147.html
http://www.wattan.tv/ar/news/92046.html
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/04/28/529530.html
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/04/28/529385.html
http://madafm.com/news.php?action=view&id=4841
http://madafm.com/news.php?action=view&id=4842
http://www.wafaimages.ps/album.aspx?id=12291
http://pbp.pna.ps/?p=24097
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=173056
http://media24.ps/ViewDetails-13036.html

Event/initiative: Workshop in Bethlehem Recommends Developing Tourism
Sector: Tourism
Date: 1/5/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/2-5-2014/p21.pdf
http://www.wafa.ps/arabic/index.php?action=detail&id=173479
http://samanews.com/ar/index.php?act=post&id=198530
http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=234713&cid=3289
http://www.alhayat-j.com/pdf/2014/5/2/page6.pdf
http://www.al-ayyam.com/article.aspx?did=238600&date=
http://arabic.pnn.ps/index.php/local/88437

Event/initiative: MAK International celebration
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 10/5/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.alfajertv.com/news/1076383.html
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=695955
http://pnn.ps/index.php/economy/89051-%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%83-
%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%B1%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B4%D9%88%D9%86%
D8%A7%D9%84-%D8%AA%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%85-
%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-
%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%A1-
%D9%85%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%81%D8%B8%D8%A9-

[%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%82%D8%AF%D8%B3-%D8%B6%D9%85%D9%86-50-](#)
[%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D8%AD%D8%A7%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%A9-](#)
[%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%89-%D8%B4%D9%87%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-](#)
[%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%AF%D8%A9](#)
http://www.asdaapress.com/?newsID=2542
http://www.alquds.com/news/article/view/id/503270
http://www.alhayat-j.com/newsite/details.php?opt=7&id=235223&cid=3297

Event/initiative: Jericho spring festival celebrates entrepreneurship
Sector: Tourism+ ICT
Date: 10/5/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=696381
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/news/2014/05/11/535627.html
http://sahafaty.net/news975546.htm
[http://www.jadeednews.com/2014/05/%D9%81%D8%B9%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D8](#)
[%A7%D8%AA-%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%B9%D9%85-](#)
[%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86-](#)
[%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%A8%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%B9-](#)
[%D8%B6%D9%85%D9%86-%D9%81/](#)
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/859281.html

Event/initiative: Jericho spring festival marathon
Sector: Tourism
Date: 11/5/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.alarab24.com/sport/2014/5/11/76741/
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=696622
http://sahafaty.net/news982148.htm

Event/initiative: Startup cup celebrates winners in local competition
Sector: ICT
Date: 27/5/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=700247
http://www.eqtesadia.ps/local/22884.html
https://arbindex.com/C1jfpy
http://www.sahafaty.net/news1119107.htm
http://motaded.net/show-2891406.html
http://www.sahafa.com/newspapers-and-magazines/palestine/maan-news-agency
http://www.alwatanvoice.com/arabic/category/85.html

Event/initiative: Arabreneur Selects 3 Palestinian Startups to Receive $300K
Sector: ICT
Date: 4/6/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=702401
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/861199.html
http://www.narlove.com/266100.html
http://www.wam.ae/ar/news/emirates/1395260551196.html

https://arbindex.com/C1l0ic
http://motaded.net/show-2976001.html

Event/initiative: A Dinner Made with Palestinian Ingredients at the US Consulate
Sector: Agriculture
Date: 13/6/2014
Media Coverage:
http://maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=704522
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/861820.html
http://www.feneeqnews.com/?p=cat&cat=11
http://www.nablustv.net/internal.asp?page=cat&cat=14&Page1=1
http://jenintv.net/?articles=topic&topic=8688
http://www.elaosboa.com/show.asp?id=73959&page=internationalnews#.U52GUNIW1ds
http://www.al-ayyam.com/pdfs/13-6-2014/p04.pdf

Event/initiative: Third Arabrenuer pitching event
Sector: ICT
Date: 18/9/2014
Media Coverage:
http://www.maannews.net/arb/ViewDetails.aspx?ID=729362
http://www.raya.ps/ar/news/872979.html
http://www.raya.ps/ar/eye-on-event/872688.html