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Workplan for Aqaba Tourism Marketing Project

AQABA COMMUNITY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ACED) PROGRAM

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This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Tim Bartlett, Expatriate International Tourism Marketing Expert, AECOM International Development under the Aqaba Community and Economic Development (ACED) Program.

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DISCLAIMER

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

ACED Program Frequently-Used Acronyms and Abbreviations

(Not all of the following will appear in every ACED Program document)

ACED Program	Aqaba Community and Economic Development Program (USAID)
ACT	Aqaba Container Terminal
ADC	Aqaba Development Corporation
ADS	Automated Directive Systems
AIDAR	USAID Acquisition Regulation
AIIE	Aqaba International Industrial Estate
ANREPCO	National Real Estate Projects Company
APC	Aqaba Ports Corporation
ASEZ	Aqaba Special Economic Zone
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority
ASRI	Aqaba Skills Readiness Index
ASYCUDA	Automated System for Customs Data
ATASP	Aqaba Technical Assistance Support Program (USAID)
AUC	Aqaba University College
AZEM	Aqaba Zone Economic Mobilization Project (USAID)
AGDTF	Aqaba Garment Development Task Force
BAFO	Best and Final Offer
BDC	Business Development Center
BDS	Business Development Services
CAI	Changi Airports International
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CMT	Cut-Make-Trim
CO	Contracting/Contracts Officer
COB	Close of Business
COP	Chief of Party
CP	Cost Proposal
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
D&G	Democracy and Governance
DCA	Development Credit Authority
EG	Economic Growth
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EO	Economic Opportunities
EOI	Expression of Interest
EPC	Executive Privatization Commission
ERfKE	Education Reform for a Knowledge Economy (USAID)
EU	European Union
ETF	European Training Foundation
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment

FDR	Fixed Daily Rate
FHR	Fixed Hourly Rate
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
FTZ	Free Trade Zone
FZ	Free Zone
FZC	Free Zones Corporation
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Entrepreneurship Markets
GIS	Geographic Information System
GOJ	Government of Jordan (the central governing entity of Jordan)
GPS	Global Positioning System
HR	Human Resources
ICDL	International Computer Driving License
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
INJAZ	Economic Opportunities for Jordanian Youth Program
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
ISP	Internet Service Provider
IS-ASEZA	Institutional Support to ASEZA (EU funded project)
IT	Information Technology
JD	Jordanian Dinar
JITOA	Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
JIB	Jordan Investment Board
JNA	Jordan National Agenda
JNCW	Jordanian National Commission for Women
JSCED	Jordan Standard Classifications of Education
JUSBP	Jordan-United States Business Partnership
JUSFTA	Jordan-United States Free Trade Agreement
KOJ	Kingdom of Jordan (the country within its physical boundaries)
KSA	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
LCDD	Local Community Development Directorate (ASEZA)
LCL	Less than Container Load
LECP	Local Employee Compensation Plan
LOE	Level of Effort
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MIS	Management Information System
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOL	Ministry of Labor
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSME	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
NCHRD	National Center for Human Resources Development

NDA	Neighborhood Development Activity
NDC	Neighborhood Development Committee
NET	Neighborhood Enhancement Team
NICRA	Negotiable Indirect Cost Rate
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTS	National Tourism Strategy
PACE	Participatory Action for Community Enhancement
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PR	Public Relations
PSD	Private Sector Development
R&D	Research and Development
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
RFQ	Request for Quotation
SABEQ	Sustainable Achievement of Business Expansion and Quality (USAID)
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
SIYAHA	The Tourism Project (USAID)
SFU	Satellite Factory Unit
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOW	Scope of Work
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
SWOT	Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threads
TA	Technical Assistance
TBD	To Be Determined
TO	Task Order
TOT	Training of Trainers
TP	Technical Proposal
TRIDE	Trilateral Industrial Development
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VTC	Vocational Training Center
WAEDAT	Women's Access to Entrepreneurial Development and Training
WEPIA	Water Education and Public Information for Action
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTTP	Workforce Technical Transformation Program

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Aqaba Tourism Marketing Project

Background

Since the establishment of ASEZ in 2001, there has been strong emphasis on realizing Aqaba's international tourism potential. To facilitate this, 50% of planned investments have been geared towards tourism, and much expert advice has been provided, including comprehensive tourism marketing strategies developed by the EU and updated by the USAID-funded Seyaha Program.

Aqaba currently faces a difficult marketing environment. Worldwide economic problems have severely impacted the international tourism industry. Competition, particularly from other Red Sea resorts and also from Syria and Turkey, has intensified; earnings are under pressure. Further planned expansion of hotel rooms in Aqaba could damage occupancy and profitability unless strong and targeted marketing can deliver vigorous growth over the next five years.

But if Aqaba takes the necessary steps to improve its accessibility, enrich its product, strengthen its brand differentiation, and professionalize its marketing, then there is no reason why the spectacular success achieved in attracting resort investment cannot be matched in the future by the overall health of its incoming tourism industry.

Aqaba was recently chosen to be the Arab Capital for Tourism in 2011. This is a timely opportunity to raise its profile, review its marketing, and put in place comprehensive Promotional Action Plans aimed at placing Aqaba more prominently on the international tourism map.

Introduction

Aqaba has the base ingredients for tourism success. In addition to its beautiful underwater environment and excellent climate, it has, unlike other Red Sea Resorts, its own history, heritage and character. Moreover it benefits from proximity to a world famous attraction – Petra – and to the desert splendor of Wadi Rum.

Aqaba has hitherto been held back by lack of accommodation capacity, but this phase is coming to a rapid end. Aqaba now urgently needs to improve its marketing performance.

It faces two key challenges:

- To improve and diversify its product offer, especially in the historic city centre - visitors must be given good reasons to stay longer and spend more.
- To build demand.

Both of these elements are vital to successful marketing, which needs to embrace the full cycle from research and product development through to promotion, with research then feeding back into product development and modification.

This USAID funded project focuses on the second challenge - building demand by utilizing the promotional techniques of marketing. It will tackle the immediate need to increase Aqaba's visibility by planning and implementing detailed actions aimed at maximizing the impact of Aqaba's nomination as the Arab Capital of Tourism in 2011 and at maintaining a strong promotional momentum for subsequent years.

The project's stated objective is as follows: "To help ASEZA and tourism stakeholders in Aqaba to market Aqaba as a tourism destination and to prepare Aqaba to become the Arab Capital of Tourism in 2011". Key outputs will be:

- An updated Marketing Strategy
- Detailed Promotional Action Plans
- An Events Plan for 2011

Methodology

The overall methodology underlying the project:

- starts with knowledge of the existing product;
- is based on research to identify key target market segments;
- is driven by international Best Practice and by proven tourism return-on-investment (ROI) criteria;
- emphasises partnership with the industry (PPP); and
- is focused on action.

The final section of the project (weeks 27 to 33) concentrates almost exclusively on implementation of the Promotional and Events Plans, and on achieving concrete results. The project ends with evaluation.

Notes on Workplan

- Required outputs are in bold. All other dates are flexible and can easily be changed to accommodate evolving ACED and ASEZA priorities.
- The timing of some activities will depend on other people (for example assisting the establishment of the new Aqaba Welcome Centre – provisionally scheduled in week 21 below).
- The Events work will be influenced by ACED's decisions regarding the appointment of an Events Expert and/or a specialist company.
- The original TORs need some clarification with regard to the new Marketing and Promotion Plan. At one stage, this appears to focus on what is left of this year and particularly on 2011. At others, a five year timescale is stipulated. From discussions with the Chief Commissioner it appears that he is looking for an action-oriented plan, not another long-term strategy (we will be updating the current five year Tourism Marketing Strategy anyway as a separate exercise, and this will include medium to long term marketing recommendations). Destination Marketing Organisations seldom produce Action Plans for more than one year, since markets change so rapidly. I would therefore recommend that we do a very detailed Marketing and Promotion Action Plan for 2011 and 2012 at most, then tactical marketing recommendations for the following three years. This would avoid overlap with the Strategy. We could then also carry out staff training/mentoring on how to produce annual action plans and how to keep them updated in response to changing circumstances.

Workplan

Week	Principal Activities	Days	Methodology	Outputs
1 July 5-8	Prepare Workplan.	4	Meetings Chief Commissioner, ACED, ASEZA Tourism Dept. Reading/research.	
2 July 11-15	Prepare Workplan. Meeting Airport. Modify Workplan.	2,5 0,5 2	Reading/research. Start to analyse accessibility problem. Meetings with ACED, ASEZA Tourism Dept.	
3 July 18-22	Tourism Executive Committee (TEC) meeting. Planning discussions with ACED, Jordanian expert, and ASEZA Tourism staff. Reactivate ATMC (PPP) proposal.	1 2 3	Attend 17 July. Modify Workplan as necessary. Study proposal, resume meetings with stakeholders, modify plan if appropriate.	Deliver Workplan – 20 July. Workplan endorsed by ACED and ASEZA – 22 July.
4 July 25-29	Present Workplan, and discuss ATMC proposal.	1	At stakeholders meeting on 26 th July in Aqaba	

	Review brand evolution USAID e-tourism event: Tala Bay.	3 1	Discussions with staff, stakeholders, analyse materials. Assess assistance available and steps needed to improve Aqaba e-marketing.	
5 Aug 1-5	Product visits: Aqaba centre, South Beach, Petra, Wadi Rum (Southern Dead Sea?).	5	Review product improvements since last visit (2006). Compare against previous product needs assessment. Meetings Soraya and ADC.	
6 Aug 8-12	Work on preliminary plan for 2011. Continue ATMC and brand discussions. Start revising current Marketing Strategy.	3 2	Individual meetings with key stakeholders and Associations. Assemble comments, check content.	Assessment of brand performance, consistency, impact, and recommendations for improvement.
7 Aug 15-19	Continue to develop 2011 plan. Assist assessment of new website bids.	3 2	Research and identify key markets, segments and promotional channels. Benchmark against main competitors. Advise on functionality.	

8 Aug 22-26	Review all available consumer research (Aqaba 2006 + JTB).	5	Analyse strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.	Updated SWOT analysis Proposals for future research programme, including TSA development.
9 Aug 29- Sep 2	Revise the tour operator incentive scheme. Review tourism materials. Write trip report.	3 1,5 0,5	Assess efficacy, compare with competitors e.g. Egypt. In line with industry Best Practice.	Recommended improvements to tour operator incentive scheme. Deliver trip report by 9 Sept.
10 Sep 5-9	No activity – Consultant out of country.			
11 Sep 12-16	Visit Amman Assess cruise performance.	3 2	Meetings with SIYAHHA, JTB, tour operators, RJA, Tourism Assocs. Visit port and cruise related stakeholders.	Cruise development action sheet.
12 Sep 19-23	Stakeholder consultations. Adapt tourism materials.	2 3	Town Hall meetings and brainstorming sessions.	Materials development plan in line with identified key segments.
13 Sep 26-30	Update Marketing Strategy.	5	Restructure and refocus. Reinforce the positive.	

14 Oct 3-7	Finish update Marketing Strategy.	5		Deliver update of current Marketing Strategy - 5 Oct.
15 Oct 10-14	Start writing Marketing Plan.	2 1 2	Desk and internet research (UNWTO, ETC ++). Market and segment analysis. Stakeholder consultations.	
16 Oct 17-21	Guide work of events expert or events company appointed. Evaluate events proposals.	3 2	Meetings with key personnel. Brainstorming. Rate using an estimated ROI chart.	Prioritised provisional list of events for discussion, with ideas for additions.
17 Oct 24-28	Write Marketing Plan.	5	Organise material into a clear, action-oriented plan.	
18 Oct 31- Nov 4	Finish Marketing Plan.	5	Final identification of marketing actions, specifying targeted countries and segments, including detailed section on 2011 event.	Deliver detailed Marketing and Promotion Plan – 4 Nov. Start continuous production and implementation of SOWs and RFPs for marketing, product development and events – 4 Nov.
19 Nov 7-11	Finalise all materials	3	All materials for 2011 ready to be produced by mid-December.	

	Facilitate recruitment service providers for implementing Plan and events.	2	Assessment of proposals, interviews with candidates.	
20 Nov 14-18	Establish roles and responsibilities ASEZA staff. Assist staff in preparing to implement Marketing and Events Plans.	5	Interactive staff seminar followed by individual meetings. Individual on the job training.	Revised staff priorities and responsibilities.
21 Nov 21-25	Work with events specialist or advisor. Assist in establishing new Welcome Centre.	3 2	Further meetings and brainstorming sessions. Based on Best Practice examples from elsewhere.	
22 Nov 28- Dec 2	Finalise events plan.	5	Establish final list and clear with key stakeholders.	
23 Dec 5-9	Staff training sessions.	5	In preparation for implementing Marketing and Events Plans.	Deliver 2011 Events Plan – 5 Dec. Training Power Points.
24 Dec 12-16	Detailed planning with ASEZA staff Visit Amman	1.5 3	To establish targets and priorities for 2011. Discuss Marketing Plan with SIYAHA, and key	Individual action sheets.

	Write trip report.	0,5	stakeholders.	Deliver trip report by 23 Dec.
25 Dec 19-23	No activity – Consultant out of country.			
26 Dec 26-30	No activity – Consultant out of country.			
27 Jan 2-6	Implement Marketing and Events Plans.	5	Work with staff on specific objectives.	Delivery of planned activities.
28 Jan 9-13	Implement Marketing and Events Plans.	5	Work with staff on specific objectives.	Delivery of planned activities.
29 Jan 16-20	Implement Marketing and Events Plans.	5	Work with staff on specific objectives.	Delivery of planned activities.
30 Jan 23-27	Implement Marketing and Events Plans.	5	Work with staff on specific objectives.	Delivery of planned activities.
31 Jan 30-Feb 3	Evaluate project outputs and achievements.	5	For incorporation in final report.	
32 Feb 6-10	Discuss draft final report with key stakeholders.	3 2	Interactive seminar. Individual meetings. Agree final modifications.	
33 Feb 13-17	Complete final report Wrap up meetings. Write trip	3 1.5	Incorporate modifications. Debriefing with key contacts.	Deliver Final Report + printed materials, handouts, presentations etc. – 17 Feb. Deliver trip report by 23

Feb 17	report	0.5		Feb. Project ends.
		150		
Ongoing during whole project.	Staff mentoring and training. Liaising between USAID programmes. Support PPP initiative and trade associations. Provide other services as requested by the COP.		An integral part of the project at all stages. To avoid overlap or duplication, especially with SIYAHA As required.	
From 4 Nov onwards	Produce SOWs and RFPs.		As needed.	