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## **AMIR 2.0 Achievement of Market-Friendly Initiatives and Results Program**

Contract No. 278-C-00-02-00210-00

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### **National Tourism Strategy Launch – Tour Guides**

By:  
Deidre Lennon

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Submitted by:  
Chemonics International Inc.

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## **NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY LAUNCH - Tour Guides**

### **Final Report**

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## **Executive Summary**

The objective of the consultant's visit to Jordan was to assist the AMIR program during the launch of Jordan's National Tourism Strategy. The AMIR program has been working together with the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, the Jordan Tourism Board & other Tourism Stakeholders for the support & the development of this important sector in Jordan.

Ireland was accepted as having similar features as Jordan in area, population, natural landscape, historic sites and political difficulties.

Mr Matt McNulty, former Director General of the Irish Tourist Board identified similar challenges that Ireland had experienced some thirty years ago. He recruited an Irish Team of Consultants to exchange their expertise and experiences with their Jordanian counterparts in the various tourism sectors. The team, were available to the AMIR office for meetings to formulate the best approach for the tourism sectors to accept and address the challenges.

Prior to the launch of the strategy, I spent time with JTGA's personnel Mustafa Kiwan Chief Executive Officer and Ayyad Ayyad Secretary, to compare procedures and practices in JTGA with associations in Ireland and Europe. Comparisons were made and they accepted the need to get their house in order. Their enthusiasm for change will come with the support of the partnership process.

## **Introduction**

The National Tourism Strategy is a private and public initiative backed by the Jordanian Government. The object of the National Tourism Strategy is to increase tourist numbers over a period of six years. The target figure of 12 million visitors would create 51,000 jobs and increase tax revenue, eventually double tourism receipts to 1.3 Billion JD in 2010.

JTGA needs a sound structure and good communication with its members and the public and private sectors in order to achieve the challenges and targets identified in the National Tourism Strategy.

JTGA and its members role is to give visitors correct and accurate information about Jordan, its people, it's culture and history. The Strategy requires professional and best practice for to-day discerning tourist.

## **Analysis**

### **The Author**

My background was in the airline industry and guiding in Ireland. I was involved in the foundation of the Federation of Irish Guiding Interest, and served as director and chairman. I introduced training, examination, identification and classification.

### **Interaction with J.T.G.A**

At the request of Mr. Matt McNulty and AMIR program in May 2004, I was asked to assess Jordan Tourist Guides Association and compare it to the practices of associations in Ireland and Europe. The purpose was to determine the best codes of practice that are necessary to maintain professional guiding standards. In August 2004 I meet with Mustafa Kiwan Chief Executive Officer and Ayyadd Ayyadd secretary. Proposals were made to improve the following areas.

- Governance of JTGA
- Certification
- Training and qualifications
- Categorisation of guides
- Business relationships
- Codes of ethics

Jordan Tour Guide Association should act on the proposals, to gain benefits and credibility as a professional body.

### **The National Strategy Challenges**

The Jordan National Tourism Strategy 2004-2010 document highlighted ten challenges that had to be addressed by the private and public sectors in the tourist industry. Seven challenges were chosen to present to JTGA and it's members at the launch of the strategy on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2004.

**1. Over coming the Fear Factor**

**Visitor perceptions is that Jordan is higher risk**

- How can you help to counter this?
- How often have you been asked questions that bear on visitors concerns on safety?
- How would you respond to such questions?
- Would you initiate a dialogue to release visitors minds that Jordan is a safe destination?

**2. Developing sectoral marketing effort**

**New Approaches to marketing the Tour Guide Services**

- How would you go about it?
- Keeping track of Jordan's key marketing efforts messages
- Organising JTGA to better support marketing efforts inside Jordan
- Marketing JTGA it's members and services

**3. Better distribution of visitors throughout Jordan**

- How would you motivate visitors to visit less frequented sites of interest?
- Suggest new sites for development
- Advise the authorities about shortcomings and feedback from visitors

**4. Increasing the value of visitors to Jordan**

- Can JTGA promote their services in Hotels?
- Can guides play a greater role in giving information to visitors in absence of Tourist information office

**5 Developing and Facilitating Access.**

- Suggesting improvements at airports, borders and ports.
- Signage
- Other recommendations

**6 Changing the over reliance of traditional attractions.**

- New trends in visitor requirements
- New focus on cultural traditions
- Support the promotion of Jordanian Crafts.
- Shopping information.

**7 Guaranteeing quality services and experiences.**

- Promoting speciality and niche markets
- Certification
- Professional identification (badges)
- Easy to book and arrange
- Competitively priced

## **National Tourism Strategy Launch - Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

Prior to the launch the AMIR program team gave the facilitators a briefing on the plan format of the launch day. The facilitators were assigned reporters. It was agreed to appoint a reporter from the attending members of JTGA to present the findings from the workshop at a plenary session. Presentation of it was deferred to a later date due to pressure of time.

### **Work shop for JTGA**

Approximately thirty members attended. They responded eagerly to the challenges. They recognised the need for change and good communication throughout the industry.

### **Key Issues**

- Certification
- Communication
- Acceptance as a professional organisation

### **Observations**

- More confidence in the important role JTGA play in tourism
- More enthusiasm to achieve change to make historic sites visitor friendly
- The need to be more aware of the terms and conditions of their work scope

## **Recommendations and Review**

Jordan is a country that is able to cater to the intellectual, adventurous and inquisitive tourist. It is people friendly, historic sites, landscape, spectacular, and history diverse.

Whilst Jordan is not yet fully developed in tourism needs, there is quaintness about the country, a first time visitor would love. Tourism should be embraced gradually and the people educated to the benefits of tourism revenues to themselves and their country.

## Appendix

Government group presentation suggested sectoral action from JTGA

Slide 1

**National Tourism  
Strategy Launch**

***Jordan Tour  
Guides Workshop***

*Lead by*  
**Mrs. Deirdre Lennon**



Slide 2

**Today's Program**

- 1. Discussion on selected strategic challenges**
  
- 2. Develop sector specific 2005 action plan for strategy implementation**
  
- 3. Proposed Action Plan to present from group 14:00 hrs.**

Slide 3

### **Challenge 1**

#### **➤ Overcoming the fear factor**

Visitor perceptions are that Jordan is higher risk

- How can you help to counter this?
- How often have you been asked questions that bear on visitors concerns over safety?
- How would you respond to such questions?
- Would you initiate a dialogue to relax visitors minds that Jordan is a safe destination?

Slide 4

### **Challenge 2**

#### **➤ Developing sectoral marketing effort**

New approaches to marketing the Tour Guide Services

- Keeping track of Jordan's key marketing messages
- Organizing JTGA to better support marketing efforts inside Jordan
- Marketing JTGA, its members and services

Slide 5

### **Challenge 3**

#### **➤ Better distribution of visitors throughout Jordan**

The JTGA members know where the assets for tourism are located

- Motivate visitors to visit less-frequented sites of interest
- Suggest new sites for development
- Advise the authorities about shortcomings and feedback from visitors.

Slide 6

### **Challenge 4**

#### **➤ Increasing the value of visitors to Jordan**

If current visitors could spend 25% more it would add 100Million JD's to Jordan's tourism economy

How can visitors to Jordan be encouraged to spend more?

- Can JTGA promote their services in hotels?
- Can the guides play a greater role in giving information to visitors in absence of tourist information offices?

Slide 7

**Challenge 5 ??**

**➤ Developing and facilitating  
Access**

Improving the welcome on arrival

- Suggesting improvements at: airports – borders – port – Signage
- Other recommendations

Slide 8

**Challenge 6**

**➤ Changing the over reliance of  
traditional attractions**

Traditional attractions decline without investment and upgraded interpretation

- New trends in visitor requirements
- New focus on cultural traditions
- Support the promotion of Jordanian crafts
- Shopping information

Slide 9

**Challenge 7**

**➤ Competitiveness**

**Guaranteeing quality services and experiences**

- **Promoting specialty and niche skills**
- **Professional identification (badges)**
- **Certification**
- **Easy to book & arrange**
- **Competitively priced**

Slide 10

**Next Steps**

- **The results of the workshop will be reported on at 14:00 hrs.**
  
- **Follow up meetings with sector representatives on actions implementation**