

# The Story of SCHEP

Sustainable Cultural Heritage Through  
Engagement of Local Communities Project

**2019–2024**

2



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**ACOR**  
المركز الأمريكي للأبحاث  
AMERICAN CENTER OF RESEARCH

*The Story of SCHEP 2*  
**Sustainable Cultural Heritage  
Through Engagement of  
Local Communities Project  
2019–2024**

# Acknowledgments

**Prepared by:** Zaid Kashour, John Shearman, Shatha Abu Aballi

**Contributions:** Pearce Paul Creasman, Nizar Al Adarbeh, Hanadi Al Taher

**Photos Courtesy of:** The American Center of Research

**Design and layout by:** Shatha Abu Aballi

**Edited by:** Russell Adams

**Printed by:** National Press, Amman, Jordan

This content is owned by the American Center of Research (ACOR). No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

ISBN: 978-1-955918-14-5

©2024 *The American Center of Research*

## *Disclaimer*

The works described here are made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of ACOR and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



Pearce Paul Creasman  
American Center of Research  
Executive Director

2020 – Present



As we reflect on SCHEP's invaluable contributions to the cultural heritage of Jordan from 2018 to 2024, ACOR remains committed to facilitating its efforts. Together, we aim to ensure that SCHEP's legacy transcends the life of the project itself, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural heritage of Jordan.



John Shearman  
USAID SCHEP  
Chief of Party

2021 – 2024



As we conclude USAID SCHEP, we celebrate our collective accomplishments and anticipate impactful initiatives in the years ahead. We reflect on the shared achievements and dedication to preserving Jordan's cultural heritage and promoting its tourism landscape, with an emphasis on sustainability at every stage. Our objective is to empower cultural heritage institutions and actively participate in the realization of these pivotal initiatives with enduring effects. Our collaborative endeavors were focused on the development of sites, institutions, and tourism, striving not only to enhance economic opportunities, but also to foster community involvement and establish a sustainable and enriching cultural heritage environment for all, with particular attention to the active engagement of youth and women in sustainable heritage practices. As steadfast supporters, we offered ongoing guidance and collaboration, nurturing a diverse and dynamic heritage community of practice in Jordan with a sustainable perspective.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to USAID for their generous assistance and unwavering confidence in recognizing the significance of SCHEP's objective to contribute to the advancement of Jordan.





**Nizar Al Adarbeh**  
**USAID SCHEP**  
**Chief of Party**  
2015 – 2021



I am delighted to present in this publication the extraordinary story of SCHEP, a groundbreaking project that has revolutionized the concept of community participation in the preservation of heritage. As demonstrated in the following sections, in this long journey we have observed remarkable accomplishments over the past years at several project locations in Jordan. The SCHEP model for engaging communities has established a new standard for holistic approaches, effectively engaging people in different aspects, including the development, excavation, preservation, management, tourism promotion, marketing, and overall rehabilitation of sites. Our dedication also extended to offering practical training, capacity-building initiatives, and awareness campaigns, which have created numerous employment opportunities. Since the beginning, our main aim has been to transfer knowledge from project leaders and international team members to local communities, students, fresh graduates, and heritage professionals, with the goal of creating a lasting impact within the Jordanian heritage community. The SCHEP model has shown a unique and flexible approach, effectively combining local grassroots efforts with higher-level interventions. This comprehensive approach creates a supportive environment that promotes sustainable heritage preservation and encourages community involvement at every level.

We take great pride in acknowledging the achievements of our team in the different phases of the project, and we are enthusiastic about expanding our influence and reinforcing the long-term effectiveness of our outcomes through cooperation with our respected partners from both national and international levels.

# About ACOR

## SCHEP's Implementing Partner

Located in Amman, Jordan, the American Center of Research (ACOR) promotes research and publication across disciplines, with a special emphasis on archaeology in the Middle East. ACOR's main activities include archaeological excavation, conservation and restoration projects, a fellowship program for scholars, hosting public lectures, academic programs, and engaging local communities in cultural resource management through the implementation of USAID's Sustainable Cultural Heritage Through Engagement of Local Communities Project (SCHEP). In addition to this wide range of activities, ACOR has one of the best libraries for archaeology and Middle Eastern studies in Jordan. This library is open for public use and completely free of charge. ACOR also offers residential accommodations for fellows, researchers, and other interested parties.

Founded in 1968, ACOR promotes study, teaching, and increased knowledge of the ancient and modern Middle East, with Jordan as a focus. ACOR's permanent headquarters opened in 1986 near the University of Jordan. ACOR's dedication to this mission appears in all its activities:

- To provide a large library and residential facilities, creating a stimulating environment for researchers.

- To offer fellowships and scholarships to faculty and students.
- To connect foreign scholars pursuing research with Jordanian academic and government institutions.
- To sponsor public lectures mainly on archaeology and other outreach programs.
- To publish books and newsletters.
- To facilitate teaching and training programs.
- To assist archaeological field projects in Jordan.
- To undertake cultural resource management and conservation initiatives, as well as excavation and documentation projects.

ACOR is a private nonprofit academic organization registered with the government of Jordan and tax exempt as a 501(c)(3) organization, as determined by the United States Internal Revenue Service. ACOR is supported by grants, contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals, as well as by ACOR endowments.

### ACOR Contacts:

#### Jordan

Physical Address:  
8 Rashid Al Abadle Tla'a Ali  
Amman 11181, Jordan

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 2470  
Amman 11181, Jordan

Phone: +962-6-534-6117  
Fax: +962-6-534-4181

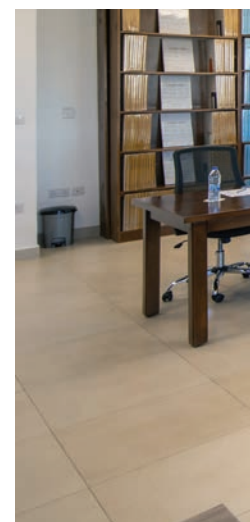
E-mail: [acor@acorjordan.org](mailto:acor@acorjordan.org)

#### USA

209 Commerce Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-2909

Phone: +1 703-789-9231  
E-mail: [usa.office@acorjordan.org](mailto:usa.office@acorjordan.org)

[www.acorjordan.org](http://www.acorjordan.org)









# Introduction

## THE SCHEP MODEL

The current model that was reached during the past six years was a logical result of many direct and indirect factors. The model was redesigned during the project's second phase (2019–2024) based on generating three combined pillars: improve economic stability; establish effective and sustainable cultural heritage; and create an enabling environment. The three pillars worked together in harmony by using top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top interaction, which aimed to involve government agencies and decision makers to support many activities and support the enabling environment, as well as to open the way for local communities collectively or individually to work from below to the top, which led to the intersection of these efforts and the production of distinguished models and projects.

This approach enables the environment to be strengthened through enhanced government leadership promoting the visibility and recognition of cultural heritage resources, which are enhanced to provide sustainable preservation and promotion of Jordan's cultural heritage resources.

The premise was that if SCHEP ensured that tourists' accessibility to the sites is facilitated, and the Jordan Antiques Law of the Year 1988 is updated with the national-level heritage strategy of 2023–2027 that was developed, then the enabling environment of Jordan's cultural heritage resources preservation would be strengthened. SCHEP was also predicated upon the premise that if cultural heritage public mandated entities, professionals, and local communities (the heritage community of practice) are technically and

financially supported, and if government leaders' knowledge and skills are enhanced, then the cultural heritage public mandated entities and leadership of Jordan's cultural heritage resources will be enhanced.

If Jordan's cultural heritage resources are promoted, and if heritage-related data and a knowledge portal are developed, then visibility and recognition of Jordan's cultural heritage resources will be improved.

In conclusion, SCHEP focused on ensuring and strengthening the relevant enabling environment, enhancing the cultural heritage public mandated entities leadership and improving the visibility and recognition of Jordan's cultural heritage resources. This will help achieve sustainable preservation and promotion of Jordan's cultural heritage resources in the long term.

To reach a workable model, the three project components needed to work in harmony. Tourism development, institutional development, and creation of open learning environments in selected cultural heritage sites were the focus of the project during the first phase (2014–2018). The goal of tourism development was to assess the tourism, both actual and potential, in the targeted work areas through specialized surveys that were built upon in the planning process to find opportunities, which resulted in the establishment

of many micro-enterprises owned by members of local communities. The success of these companies came as an added value to the project, especially after they were linked with cultural heritage sites close to these communities.

As for institutional development, it aimed to support the governmental entities, through developing strategies for preserving cultural heritage and legal amendments, which created a possible enabling environment that aimed to ensure the correct operation of the model. Furthermore, the archaeological awareness programs and the capacity building played a key role and contributed heavily in supporting the model and reached the goal of an open learning environment. Around the world many models have been tested to reach engagement through the use of different tools, but for each community/culture their own mentality is key to success. Our project, in principle, allowed sufficient flexibility and opportunities to customize a workable model applying different methods and strategies in the implementation phase to reach our target and the enact changes within the project as planned.

The target entities, NGOs, communities, stakeholders, and students all were part of the model and they contributed to its building, such that the model was not imposed on them, but, instead, allowed them to adapt it in their work.



Generations **4** Heritage  
أجيال تحافظ على إرثنا





# SCHEP-Supported Sites

32°35'52.46"N, 35°51'40.58"E

**Bayt Ras:** The painted walls of this tomb discovered at Bayt Ras in Irbid feature unique images depicting the founding of the city and the daily lives of those who lived there almost 2,000 years ago.

29°31'15.64"N, 35°25'25.88"E

**Wadi Rum Open Learning Environment:** The Wadi Rum OLE stands as a transformative initiative, serving as the cornerstone for training and capacity building. This project not only maintains and equips the center but also fosters synergies among diverse community members in the area and the surrounding villages.

31°43'0.60"N, 35°47'41.13"E

**Madaba:** The Madaba Archaeological Park West is a cross section of Madaba's past and present, including remnants from the Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman periods. This site is planned to become home to a regional archaeological museum.





32°00'31.7"N 35°52'04.7"E

**K**hirbat Salameh Rehabilitation: Khirbat Salameh was founded in the 3rd century BC and is located in modern Amman. This Roman-era agricultural settlement, with its unique fortified square building, is now safeguarded through a comprehensive preservation project. Following hazard assessment, safe trails were created with a lighting system, so that the initiative seamlessly integrates history into the urban landscape.

31°57'29.1"N 35°54'17.0"E

**D**eartment of Antiquities Circular Hall: The DoA circular hall hosts pivotal meetings, lectures, and workshops, fostering connections among institutions, professionals, universities, and local communities. The transformation aimed to elevate educational and research initiatives for Jordan's rich cultural heritage.

(31°57'12.5"N 35°56'11.0"E)

**U**rban Heritage Regeneration Project: The Urban Heritage Regeneration Project is a transformative effort revitalizing Amman's historic downtown. By creating a tourist attraction, fostering commercial activity, and developing vibrant urban spaces, it seamlessly connects ancient and contemporary history.

# Bayt Ras

## Bayt Ras Tomb Project

**B**etween 2018 and 2021,, many activities were carried out to protect this important discovery.

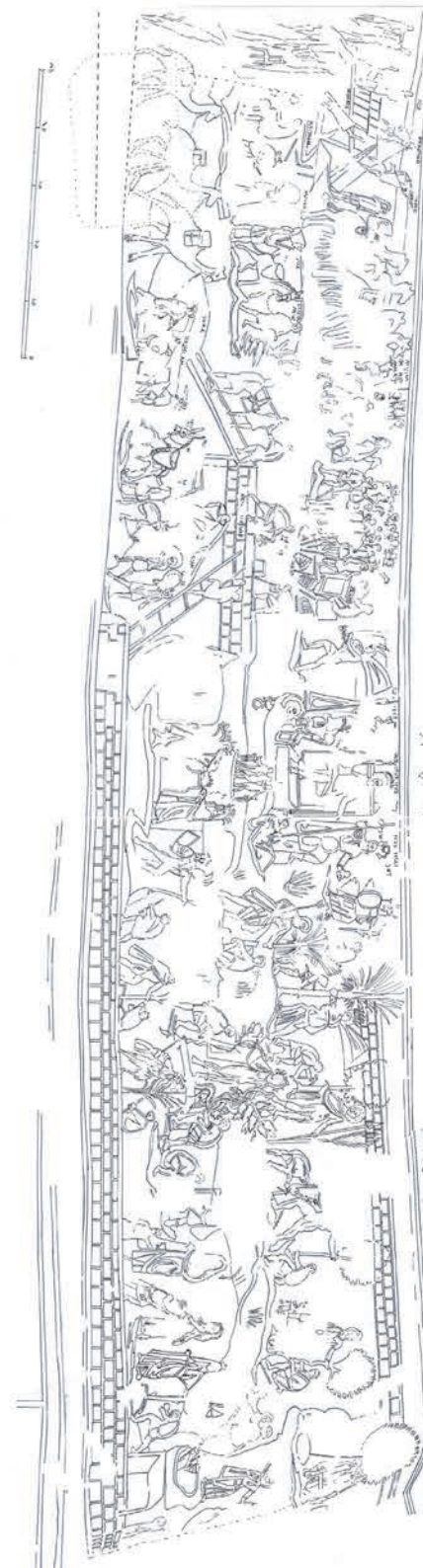
**1. Conservation and restoration:** one of the most prominent aspects of the Bayt Ras Tomb site are the colorful frescoes, which contain more than 250 depictions of daily life, in addition to 65 inscriptions. The priority has been to protect these paintings, through three conservation missions carried out by ICR (The Supreme Institute for Conservation and Restoration in Rome) to evaluate and conserve these paintings, in addition to training courses in first-aid conservation for the Department of Antiquities staff and graduate students on how to carry out rescue conservation for such rare paintings.

**2. Archaeological excavations:** Two seasons of archaeological excavation were undertaken inside the tomb in cooperation and supervision by the French Institute (IFPO). Their main objective was to reveal the history and architectural phases, excavate the interior of the sarcophagus, and undertake studies of the human bones and other analyses, including radiocarbon dating. Archaeological excavations and analyses revealed that the tomb passed

through four main stages, which began at the end of the 1st century AD, when the main room (hypogeum) functioned as a space for a variety of purposes, including banquets. Between the 2nd century, or maybe a bit earlier, and the end of the 4th century, it was used for burials, with a possible interruption in the mid 3rd century. The excavations need to be completed to reveal all the elements of the hypogeum and to finalize the architectural studies.

**3. Archaeological awareness and community participation:** Due to its location within a residential area and adjacent to a primary school, several archaeological awareness campaigns were conducted in the neighboring schools to raise the value of the site and discuss with the youth the importance of protecting it.

**4. Documentation and Interpretation:** One of the most important aspects of the work that took place was the documentation of the mural paintings and analysis of all the figures and daily life scenes, including the study of different paintings techniques. Advanced vectorization software was used to document and analyze the painting and their figures and identify the relationship among them. The work was supervised by our partner experts from CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique).









**5. Publication:** During this period, several scientific articles were published to define the history and importance of the site, including in the *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*, in addition to many press and television reports. There is a plan to publish a book that tells the story of this discovery in 2024.

**6. The initial results** were released in an international workshop that took place in Florence, Italy, in January 2019; the workshop was attended by hundreds of researchers from around the world.

The results extracted from this discovery hold a high scientific value due to the volume of information obtained through translating the inscriptions and interpreting the scenes, which contributed to shedding light on the cities of the Decapolis and the Roman period in Jordan at that time. The project also had an impact at the scientific level due to the new information that this discovery contributed in addition to opening new horizons for the development of the city of Bayt Ras as a tourist destination and linking it with other surrounding tourist sites such as Umm Qays.

*There were some challenges. The spread of the COVID-19 virus, along with the lockdown and travel restrictions, prompted SCHEP to postpone work inside the tomb and not complete the archaeological excavations.*









# Madaba

## The Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP)

The Madaba Archaeological Park West has seen numerous improvements and changes through the duration of the SCHEP grant cycles that started in 2017, and based on the importance and the expected outcomes and results, SCHEP supported the continuation of the project through different grants in 2019–2021, with the work focused on several areas. The entire park area was cleared and kept clean and partially excavated, and the late 19th-century settlement has been further interpreted and prepared for its role as the ground floor of the proposed new museum, including the consolidation of some of the traditional stone-walled buildings. Two virtual 3-D video tours of the proposed new museum have been produced. The two-minute version captures the basic location of the museum and access to the ground floor. It features animated characters exploring the museum and its grounds. The other video tour is a five-minute version in Arabic and English.

The official MRAMP website was initiated early in the project and has seen continued development throughout the grant cycles and even beyond. MRAMP project, in collaboration with SCHEP, created two large interpretive signs for the museum project. As part of the capacity-

building objectives of SCHEP/MRAMP, the project sponsored a series of three training sessions for museum and Department of Antiquities personnel on the various archaeological periods in Jordan and the role and forms of pottery. The training sessions were developed alongside the production of an illustrated comprehensive manual on the pottery of Jordan, which is available in print and digital format in Arabic and English. To ensure safe handling of artifacts from the excavations in the Madaba region, MRAMP involved personnel from the University of Jordan and elsewhere to conduct training sessions on the handling, conservation, restoration, display, and transport of archaeological artifacts. Approximately 14,000 artifacts were documented and photographed as part of a database that was created.







# Wadi Rum

## Wadi Rum OLE

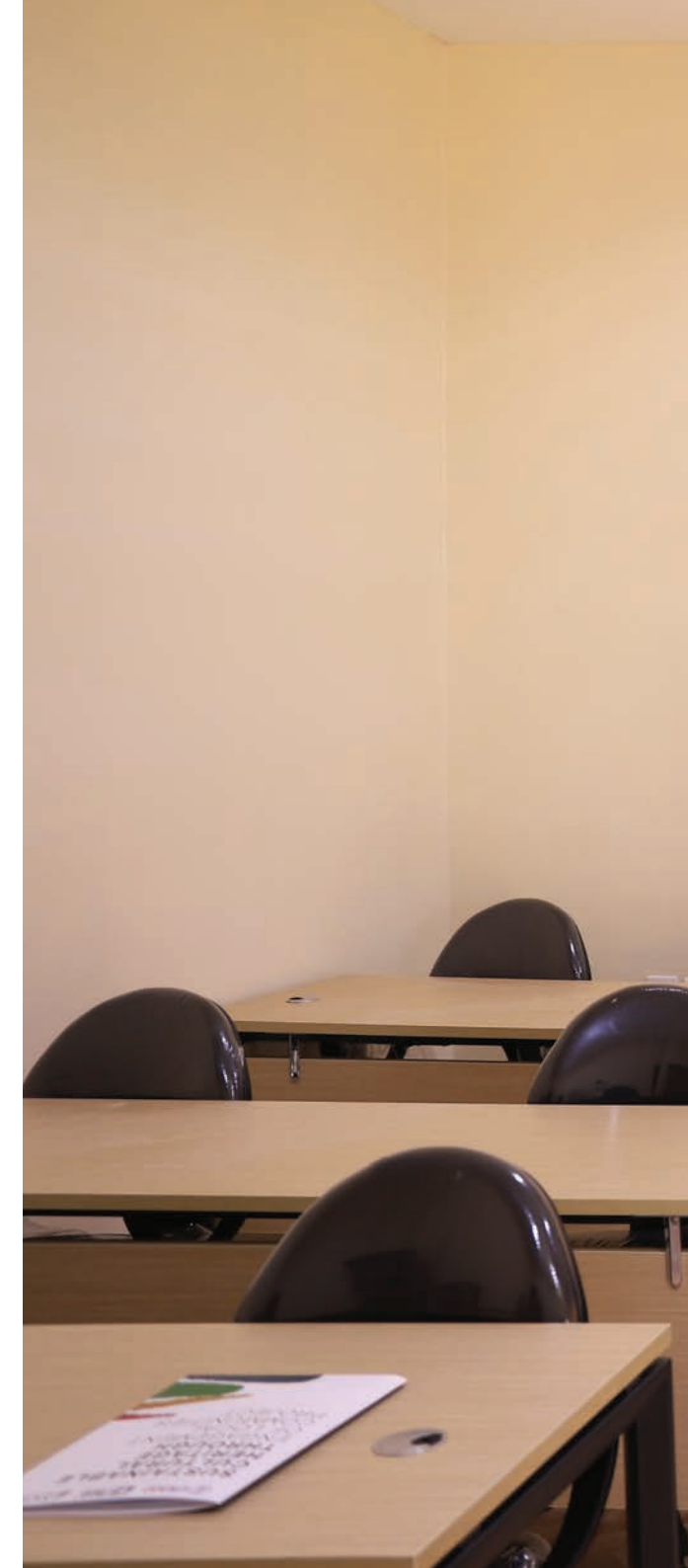
**T**he Wadi Rum Open Learning Environment (OLE) will be the basis for training and capacity building at the Human Rights Center, creating synergies between diverse community members in the Aqaba Economic Zone and the villages of Rum and the Disa Basin. The OLE has developed sustainable tourism products in the area, creating a new paradigm that will provide a sustainable focus and long-term economic impact for the institutions, resources, and communities of the CHR, which will have a positive effect on the local communities and individuals. This project included maintenance of the building and bathrooms, provision of IT equipment (desktop computers, camera and accessories, printer, tablets, smart TV screen). Furniture provided includes desks, chairs, cabinets, curtains, and air conditioners. The center is currently used as a permanent center for workshops and courses in the Wadi Rum Nature Reserve.

The OLE has focused on building a broad enabling environment that encompasses a range of stakeholders, from community members to CHR institutions, in order to deliver improvements to tourism and site visibility that will help economic

opportunities develop for local communities. It has provided an appropriate environment for learning through the courses and workshops held, as well as a suitable and well-equipped place for scholars and researchers who come to the region to use it in conducting research and studies related to the Wadi Rum region.

***This OLE serves a diverse set of scholars, students, and the public from Jordan and the region, and it fosters preserving and recording cultural heritage and the preservation and study of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in their natural environment as a core aspect of its mission, while advancing economic development and educational opportunities within the local community.***

• • •













# Department of Antiquities Hall

The Department of Antiquities is the mandated entity for the protection of Jordan's cultural heritage and the key stakeholder for educational and research institutions. The circular hall is the place where many of the major meetings, lectures, trainings, and workshops are held.

As part of the SCHEP institutional development objective to continue building a strong Jordanian heritage community of practice by formalizing connections and synergies between CHRs institutions, professionals, universities, and local community members, SCHEP renovated the circular hall of the Department of Antiquities. SCHEP sought to transform it to become an Open Learning Environment (OLE).

# Khirbet Salameh

## Khirbet Salameh Rehabilitation Project

Overlooking a fertile valley, Khirbat Salameh was an agricultural settlement founded in the 3rd century BC, during the Hellenistic period. The current building is a unique example of rural architecture dating to the Roman period, from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD. It has been fully documented and its elements revealed. The structure is a fortified square building built of limestone, measuring 24 by 24 meters. The main gate faces east, where the water and fertile agricultural lands once were located. There are 14 rooms around an inner courtyard. Arches were used in some of the rooms to support the ceilings.

The presence of modern buildings and urban development in Amman has become a danger to small agricultural settlements once spread throughout the Amman suburbs, especially those built during the Roman and Byzantine periods, so this project attempted to protect such places threatened with extinction and integrate them into their urban surroundings.

The main objectives were as follows:

1. Protect the site from modern urban development, which is only meters away.
2. Integrate the heritage site with the urban environment.
3. Create safe trails to facilitate visitation to the site.

The work was divided into several stages related to the priorities of protection and development within the site: 1) assessing of natural and human hazards on site; 2) backfilling areas of the site using international standards; 3) constructing a water drainage system around the site; 4) installing iron barriers and metal covers on open wells to protect visitors; 5) establishing of a nighttime lighting system for the site; and 6) rehabilitating of the ecosystem of the site by the planting of trees. The first phase consisted of building a stone wall along the site to protect it from landslides. Protection activity was completed at the same time other development and rehabilitation work on the site was performed. The project created a safe visitor trail and a lighting system inside the site that enhances the site experience and improves accessibility.

The presentation and interpretation of this micro-site is an exciting opportunity within urban Amman, which is undergoing daily developments that present a threat to such historic agricultural settlements in urban spaces. Accordingly, in late 2021 and early 2022, augmented reality and virtual tours were created to allow many more people to interact with the site and to better understand its historical context. An augmented-reality app can now be downloaded from Google the Play Store or Apple App Store and used at the site.









# Urban Heritage Regeneration Project

The Urban Heritage Regeneration Project of the southern slope of the Amman Citadel (Jabal al-Qalaa) is one of the most important elements in the process of developing and rehabilitating Amman's historic downtown area. The project started in August 2021 and aimed to make a qualitative leap by turning the site into a tourist attraction and enhancing commercial activity in the vicinity by providing new investment opportunities. Additionally, the project created new urban spaces with a vibrant environment that magnifies the city center, highlights its historical and heritage status, and enhances the role and position of the archaeological site of Jabal al-Qalaa as an important destination for visitors to the city of Amman by creating an integrated service system that meets the varied needs of the tourist. It also aimed to make the site a vital outlet for the residents of Amman, and an important link that connects the ancient and contemporary history of Amman through access to the various historical eras, leading to the modern city. Through the development of the new tourist trail that connects the archaeological southern gate of the site with the site of the Roman Amphitheater in the center of Amman, the old staircase that connected the upper city and the lower city in the Roman era was rehabilitated

and used to connect the ancient and modern Amman.

SCHEP successfully implemented a comprehensive capacity-building program in collaboration with the DoA, conducting a 13-week archaeology field school aimed at transferring valuable knowledge and experience to DoA employees. This multifaceted program seamlessly integrated lectures and practical fieldwork, situated in an area featuring a prominent archaeological site on the southern slope of the Amman Citadel. Beyond academic pursuits, SCHEP engaged with local businesses and individuals through workshops, providing crucial support to enhance existing ventures and fostering opportunities for the establishment of micro-businesses. Subsequent focused workshops and training sessions were developed based on the initial study findings, empowering residents to strengthen their micro-businesses. Targeting specific established businesses, the program not only aimed at improving their attributes for increased tourist appeal but also cultivated partnerships wherein these businesses served as outlets for micro-business products and provided sustained support and mentorship. The job creation aspect was exemplified by the archaeology field school, comprising twelve

individuals, female (42%) and male (58%), who gained enhanced training with potential for career advancement. Simultaneously, the Amman Citadel Tourist Trail supported six micro-businesses, representing eight individuals (75% female, 25% male), by providing essential materials and equipment for sustainable growth. The integration of QR code-equipped signage outside business places,, linking to dedicated webpages with information on micro-businesses and established businesses, facilitates effective communication with tourists. Complementing this, a strategic approach involving social media and engagement with influencers was pursued to amplify awareness and promote the overall success of the initiative.









# Technical and Financial Support to Refill the Roman Bath Discovered in Downtown Amman in 2021

During the implementation of a new water-channeling tunnel in downtown Amman, a Roman bath was discovered close to the Roman Theater. The Department of Antiquities started working at the site on September 9, 2020. SCHEP supported the documentation and conservation of the site, and also provided technical assistance to the DoA. As part of the documentation process, SCHEP utilized drone photography of the site.





# Petra Siq Entrance Rehabilitations

This project was part of a wider conservation and tourism management initiative for the Petra Archeological Park (PAP), that aimed to rehabilitate and maintain the Siq's entrance area, which suffers from a rocky landscape and threats of seasonal floods. The Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA) intends to implement an environmentally friendly shuttle through the park (electric golf carts seating 8) as a means to enhance preservation, heighten the overall visitor experience, and provide safety and protection.


The work was implemented through a cooperation agreement between SCHEP and PDTRA and an agreement for services with Ahmed Al Saqqa and Partners Co. (engineering company) as their representative for the purposes of preparing all necessary engineering plans and bills of quantities (BOQ), monitoring the progress of the work, and supervising the PDTRA implementation of work. The rehabilitation and maintenance of the Siq entrance area facilitates visits to Petra, enhances the visitor's experience, and provides safety and protection for pedestrians and electric vehicles.











One of SCHEP's missions was to build the sustainability and self-reliance of Jordan's cultural heritage sector. In order to support local heritage organizations and institutions, SCHEP conducted trainings in key skills for heritage professionals and worked closely with local entities such as the Department of Antiquities (DoA), Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA), and the Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority (PDTRA).

# Institutional Development

## Institutional Development

# Memorandum of Understanding with Jordanian Heritage Institutions

## Department of Antiquities

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the DoA and SCHEP. SCHEP provided professional training courses and programs to enhance the skills, knowledge, and performance of the DoA cultural heritage resources (CHR) professionals and recent graduates and to establish a CHR open learning environment (OLE) to help grow hands-on experience in CHR management and preservation with the engagement of community members and young graduates.

SCHEP provided the DoA with the necessary equipment to improve their work and performances and provided scholarships and internships to new graduates at the DoA that enable them to gain knowledge and experience. In return, the DoA committed to facilitating the mission of SCHEP, providing the necessary staff for follow-up, and providing the necessary places and equipment for training, activities, and workshops.



## Petra Development and Tourism Region Authority

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed among the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA), Petra Archaeological Park (PAP), and SCHEP. The document clarified the commitments of each party and the areas of cooperation. Through this MoU, SCHEP was able to achieve its plans, programs, and objectives in creating an environment encouraging institutional performance and staff skills in managing and preserving a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The MoU agreement indicated that SCHEP would offer professional training courses and programs to enhance the ability and performance of the PDTRA staff in preserving and managing cultural heritage resources, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site in particular, and to engage the community members and young graduates. It also provides the PAP with the necessary equipment to improve their work and performances, and to provide technical support in managing a World Heritage Site. The agreement specifies that all World Heritage Site requirements will be followed, and that assistance would be provided in compliance. The MoU provided scholarships and internships to new graduates at PAP that enabled them to gain knowledge and experience. In return, the DoA committed to facilitating the mission by providing the necessary staff for follow-up and providing the necessary places and equipment for training, activities, and workshops. The MoU enhanced the capability and skills in managing and preserving a World Heritage Site, organizing the relationship between the entities, and assisting in preserving Petra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.





## Institutional Development

### Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority | Wadi Rum Protected Area

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed among the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA), and SCHEP. The understanding centered around SCHEP professional training courses and programs that would 1) enhance the ability and performance of the WRPA staff in preserving and managing a World Heritage Site, 2) establish an online learning environment (OLE) as a training hub, 3) provide technical support in cultural heritage management in conjunction with the standards of the World Heritage Center (WHC), 4) develop the Ayla historic site in Aqaba, 5) market cultural heritage resources, and 6) provide internships. In return the WRPA provided professionals, workers, spaces, data, and information to facilitate implementing of this MoU.

Through this MoU, SCHEP was able to achieve its plans, programs, and objectives in creating an enabling environment through equipping a place for training and workshops and enhancing institutional performance and skills of Wadi Rum staff in managing and preserving a World Heritage Site. The MoU also allowed the development of a comprehensive database and assisted in regulating the relationship between SCHEP and WRPR.



## Institutional Development

# Supporting the New Antiquities Law

At the request of the Department of Antiquities (DoA), SCHEP has supported the DoA in the review and translation of the new proposed Jordan Antiquities Law, formulated by the DoA team. The new law strengthens the management and protection of Jordan's archaeological heritage and keeps pace with the development of archaeological work and the changes that have occurred in the management, development, and use of archaeological sites.

SCHEP contracted Barghouthi, Khirfan and Hattar (BKH) Advocates to perform the following tasks: 1) review the wording and legal drafting of the Arabic version of the new proposed law, 2) provide proposed amendments and recommendations related thereto, and 3) provide English legal drafting of the law after the approval of the amendments. The revised copy of the new proposed law received from BKH Advocates was reviewed by SCHEP and DoA teams before proceeding with translation into English. A bilingual version of the proposed law was prepared by the Institutional Development Team, consisting of Hanadi Al Taher and Farah Abu Naser. The document was submitted to the DoA and sent to the cabinet for approval.





## Institutional Development

# Strategy for the Management of Jordan's Cultural Heritage 2023–2027

The project provided technical and financial assistance to the DoA and CHR institutions to formulate a new heritage strategy entitled “Strategy for the Management of Jordan’s Cultural Heritage 2023–2027.” This initiative was led by SCHEP and the DoA in partnership with all CHR institutions and relevant stakeholders. The strategy was initially prepared after analyzing documents such as a previous heritage strategy 2023–2027. The analysis was performed on the realities and challenges facing the management and preservation of archaeological heritage, in partnership with all stakeholders.

Several workshops and discussion sessions were held to make sure that this strategy is compatible with government plans and organizational culture. Research included reviewing government priorities and plans regarding management of archaeological heritage and the associated tourism sector. This also included the Jordan 2025 National Vision and Strategy documents, which were adopted to define the main pillars and strategic objectives of this new strategy.



### The strategy relied on two main strategic pillars:

1. Developing the management of archaeological heritage resources in such a way as to accommodate all variables at the international and regional levels in terms of sustainability and competitiveness; and
2. Providing a supportive environment through financial, administrative, and human resource assistance and organizing all efforts in managing archaeological heritage.

### The strategy focused on two main pillars:

1. Developing the management of archaeological heritage resources internationally and regionally for sustainability and competitiveness; and
2. Providing a supportive environment through financial, administrative, and human resource assistance.

This comprehensive approach covered cultural heritage resources, research, studies, museums, awareness, education, and an enabling environment. The strategy, approved by all parties, included a five-year implementation plan, supported by performance indicators. SCHEP facilitated the process, providing technical and financial assistance. The anticipated outcomes aimed to preserve archaeological resources, maximize economic returns, raise awareness, create an effective legal and institutional environment, and enhance sector performance through coordination.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between ACOR and the DoA to formalize the collaboration. The strategy and its implementation plan guided CHR institutions, identifying priorities, timelines, and measurable outcomes within a monitoring and evaluation framework. The initiatives demonstrated a commitment to balancing heritage preservation with economic development in Jordan's cultural heritage sector.





## Institutional Development

# Support for Management of World Heritage Sites

## Wadi Rum Protected Area Management Plan and GIS Training

As part of supporting the World Heritage Sites in Jordan, particularly preparing the heritage impact assessment (HIA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) reports for the tourism activities in the Wadi Rum Protected Area as required by the World Heritage Center, three missions were conducted under the supervision of natural and cultural heritage experts. The experts consisted of Mr. Tarek Abulhawa, Mr. Ehab Eid, and Mr. Ahmad Lash, in cooperation with the SCHEP staff. The experts worked with 6 team members of the WRPA staff and local community members. The missions included field visits and educational workshops to train WRPA staff and the local community members on evaluating field work and preparing HIA and EIA reports in theory and practice.

**First Training:** A training course entitled “Introduction to Wadi Rum as a Protected Area and a Mixed World Heritage Site—Cultural and Natural” was held at the Wadi Rum visitor center on October 7, 2020. The

training was organized by SCHEP and WRPA and implemented by Mr. Tarek Abulhawa. Several WRPA staff, new trainees, and local community members working in the tourism and services sector participated in this course. The course dealt with several topics, such as the history of Wadi Rum, the cultural and natural assets of Wadi Rum, the management of protected areas and Wadi Rum as a case study, and the World Heritage Convention and its relationship with the Wadi Rum region.

**Second Training:** A course for WRPA entitled “Identifying and Analyzing the Factors Affecting the Protection and Development of Wadi Rum as a World Heritage Site” was held at the Wadi Rum visitor center on October 22, 2020. The course started with a review of the first training and with a discussion of the importance of the Wadi Rum area at the national and global level and a theoretical analysis of Wadi Rum as a protected area. The workshop included practical exercises on analysis of factors affecting the Wadi Rum Protected Area. It ended with a brainstorming session on the relationship of the analysis output to the management process of WRPA.







Third Training: A course titled “Participatory Management and Integration of Local Communities in World Heritage Site Management” was held at the Wadi Rum visitor center on November 5, 2020. The training course started with a theoretical introduction about the importance of the participatory management process and the integration of local communities in management, followed by a discussion about methodologies for analyzing stakeholders at protected areas and World Heritage Sites, and methodologies for the integration of and communication with local communities and stakeholders. The session ended with a practical exercise. The training course ended with strategies, mechanisms, and tools for integrating local communities in the management of World Heritage Sites.

In 2018, the first complete revision process of the Wadi Rum Protected Area Management Plan was undertaken by ASEZA, including the management zoning plan, the buffer zone configuration, and the revision of the tourism development strategy and visitor management plan. The WRPA includes one of the world’s richest collections of rock art and epigraphy, going back to at least 10,000 BC.

Study here has shown that drawing and writing were just as important a preoccupation for the ancient nomads as herding. The nomads used these to express their thoughts and emotions, to record their commemorations, and for various other purposes. Writing and drawing were also associated with spirituality. This training program was designed by SCHEP to enhance the capacity of the WRPA staff to meet international standards to protect and preserve this rich heritage as mandated by UNESCO World Heritage.



## Wadi Rum Documentation Project

This project aimed to produce a comprehensive database of all cultural elements in Wadi Rum, including the rock inscriptions, rock drawings, and archaeological sites and elements scattered within the area. These data will be used as a reference for scholars and researchers in general and as a reference tool for the staff and inspectors of the Wadi Rum Protected Area and to monitor and follow up on the state of preservation of these elements. It will also greatly assist in managing the park and will provide the decision-makers with invaluable data for making appropriate decisions to preserve the cultural heritage in the Wadi Rum, especially in developing future strategies in terms of promoting tourism, designing tourist paths, and granting licenses for tourism facilities such as desert camps.

This project completed the field survey of the cultural elements at Wadi Rum that started in 2016 and continued to 2018. It established an integrated database for the Wadi Rum Protected Area (WRPA). SCHEP contracted Mr. Ahmad Lash through a fixed-term cooperation agreement.

A GIS program was created that includes all documented cultural elements within the boundaries of the park, as well as the distribution of old and new tourism camps and the expansion of housing in Wadi Rum village. The program indicates the year of documentation for each

element, brief description, dating, coordinates, and the number of cultural elements at each point with an assessment of the state of preservation, as well as the nature and level of perceived threats.

*A total of 5,609 cultural elements  
have been documented,  
distributed as follows:  
4,406 rock drawings  
999 rock inscriptions  
204 architectural features*

• • •





## Institutional Development

### Petra Cultural Center

Based on the memorandum of understanding signed between SCHEP and the Petra Development and Tourism Regional Authority (PDTRA), the project provided support to the Petra Cultural Center by supplying it with essential equipment and materials that included personal computers, smart screens, tablets, and a multi-functional printer. This support is considered one of SCHEP's main objectives for enhancing institutional performance through human resources development and training and building the capacity of cultural heritage institutions by creating appropriate environments and sustainable opportunities for learning, communication, and knowledge sharing.

The center was established by PDTRA in 2020 under the direction of the Commission of Local Development and Environment, headed by Dr. Maram Fraihat. It was formed to be an incubator for cultural activities in the region by empowering the local community in the Petra. The center aligned with the overall mission of the PDTRA in developing the region economically, socially, and culturally, and strengthening knowledge within the region's local community by creating a public library, children's library, and art gallery within the Petra Cultural Center's building. The center

also provides programs and activities aimed at enhancing national identity and investing in leisure time for youth and children, enabling them to acquire new knowledge and skills that develop their capabilities on a personal and practical level.

The project created an appropriate environment and sustainable opportunities for learning, communication, and knowledge sharing for local communities in Petra.



### Umm Al Jimal Management Plan

SCHEP, the Department of Antiquities (DoA), and the Umm al Jimal Archaeological Project, in a partnership with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) and the Umm al Jimal local community, developed a comprehensive management plan that strengthens and develops the organization of the archaeological site and its state of conservation, regulates the process of site operation and use, creates an organizational structure and an operating plan to manage the site, defines the roles and responsibilities of all partners and stakeholders, and schedules priorities for conservation work, interventions, and development, all of which will strengthen its candidacy on the World Heritage List. Work on the management plan started in the first phase of SCHEP in 2018.

The project processed the initial nomination filing that was submitted to the World Heritage Committee to evaluate the possibility of adding the site of Umm al Jimal to the World Heritage List. The submission was accepted, and preparations were made to start the nomination file for the site. The process of filing provided an opportunity for the DoA, MoTA officials, and Umm Al Jimal

local community members to train and learn how to prepare site management plans and prepare the initial nomination file. The final draft of the management plan has been delivered officially to the DoA to be printed.









## ICOMOS-Jordan

ICOMOS-Jordan is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization, and is part of the worldwide ICOMOS network of people, institutions, government agencies, and private corporations that support the conservation of the world's heritage sites. SCHEP signed a grant agreement with ICOMOS-Jordan to enhance and develop ICOMOS-Jordan's capabilities in terms of human resources, administration, technical, and financial support, increasing its publicity and visibility, and expanding its engagement and outreach in Jordan and its membership within diverse disciplines.

Activities in this agreement focused on organizing workshops and seminars related to World Heritage Sites and serious issues of managing and preserving Jordanian cultural heritage. This entailed creating communication and media strategies, and producing a scholarly book entitled *"World Heritage Sites in Jordan."* Two workshops held in association with Wikimedia aimed to enrich the content of entries for World Heritage Sites in the Levant in the Arabic-language version of Wikipedia. Experts in the field of cultural heritage were included to have specialized dialogue sessions to further enhance and develop ICOMOS-Jordan's capabilities. The subjects

included human resources, administration, technical and financial support, how to increase publicity and visibility through social media advertisements, and expanding the membership base within diverse disciplines. This assisted in the sustainable growth of the organization. Included in the SCHEP support was the publication of a book entitled *Documentation of Jordanian World Heritage Sites*.

As a partner of ICOMOS-Jordan, SCHEP provided significant support for the event, helping to organize and advertise the launch and designing a variety of materials.

Following the fruitful results of the first grant, a second one was signed between SCHEP and ICOMOS-Jordan in which the latter received a grant to enhance and develop its capabilities, in terms of human resources, administration, technical and financial support, increasing its publicity and visibility, expanding its engagement and outreach in Jordan, and membership within diverse disciplines. Activities in this agreement focused on organizing workshops and seminars related to World Heritage Sites and serious issues related to managing and preserving Jordanian cultural

heritage, creating communication and media strategies, and producing a scholarly book entitled *World Heritage Sites in Jordan*, with certain specifications. ICOMOS-Jordan held 2 workshops focused on Wikimedia to enrich the content of the Arabic-language World Heritage Sites in the region on Wikipedia. Included in the workshop was a specialized dialogue session that brought experts and specialists in the field of cultural heritage.

SCHEP continued its support in 2023 to include the successful launch of the book *Unique and Outstanding: Jordan's World Heritage Sites*, increasing membership numbers from 40 to 80, and enhancing the ICOMOS-Jordan website with multi-language capabilities. ICOMOS-Jordan conducted awareness workshops and designed a membership-sustainability implementation plan. Recommendations included training for ICOMOS-Jordan staff and emphasizing pursuit of grants, marking a substantial contribution to the organization's growth and sustainability.





## Friends of Archaeology and Heritage (FoAH)

FoAH is a voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that promotes a greater understanding of archaeology and the importance of preservation and conservation of national heritage by introducing members and guests to various issues related to archaeology and heritage. This is achieved by organizing field trips to archaeological and cultural sites inside and outside Jordan, in addition to hosting lectures related to this sector in both Arabic and English.

SCHEP previously partnered with FoAH in 2017–2018 for a variety of awareness activities, including the first Archaeology Festival. SCHEP also supported FoAH in a variety of programs that introduced Jordanian youth to the concept of preserving cultural heritage in a way that is both educational and fun. Financial support was also provided in purchasing equipment and tools to further develop FoAH capacities with communication tools, and with supporting their activities, programs, and events.

The program promotes a greater understanding of archaeology and the importance of preservation and conservation of Jordan's national heritage by introducing members and guests to the many issues associated with archaeology and heritage.



Institutional Development

## Internship Program

Many internship opportunities were given to fresh graduates and young professionals in Jordan. Interns were placed in partner institutions and have been mentored and supervised in various projects. The main goal of the internships was to help and support the partner institutions in building a strong heritage community by strengthening skills and knowledge and creating opportunities in the cultural heritage sectors in Jordan. The project also assists these individuals in gaining applied experience in cultural heritage preservation and management, and twenty opportunities for internships to gain applied experience in the field of cultural heritage preservation and management were created. These opportunities also helped the institutions themselves to build their capacity and develop their programs.

Host institutions included the Department of Antiquities (DoA), Petra Archeological Park (PAP), Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration. (MIMAR), Wadi Rum Protected Area/ Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (WRPA/ASEZA), American Center of Research (ACOR), micro- and small enterprises (MSEs), Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project (MRAMP), and university-sponsored projects.





## Jordan Cultural Heritage Portal

The Jordan Cultural Heritage Portal (JorCHP) is a comprehensive resource hub for all cultural heritage resources (CHR)-related information and knowledge in Jordan.

This portal enhances knowledge transfer and dissemination of project results in Jordan, work and internship opportunities, and scholarship and fellowship announcements, and it shares important documents, manuals, publications, and CHR charters and legal documents with bilingual/ multilingual content. The portal is infused with international resources from a range of organizations.

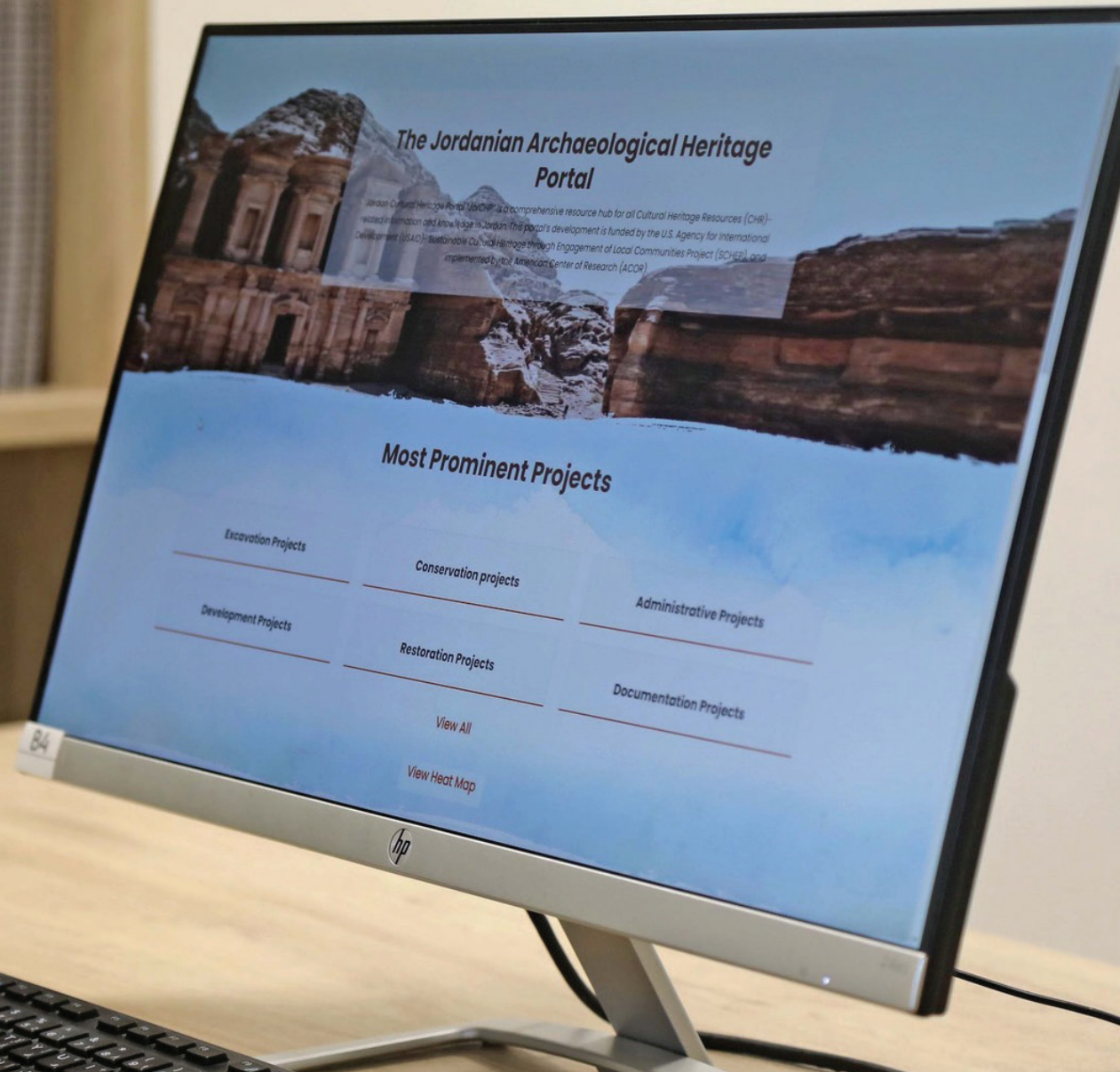
JorCHP includes the profiles of the main foreign institutes, such as ACOR, the French Institute of the Near East (IFPO), the Council for British Research in the Levant (CBRL), and other organizations that would give portal users an idea about their areas of expertise, such as previous work, interests, publications, and other specialties.

JorCHP is an important website, as it contains all the Jordanian archaeological sites and CHR resources, as well as many other beneficial topics.



*Discover the Arabic and English version of the  
Jordan Cultural Heritage Portal  
<https://www.jorchp.com>*





## The Jordanian Archaeological Heritage Portal

Jordanian Archaeological Heritage Portal (JAHP) is a comprehensive resource hub for all Cultural Heritage Resources (CHR)-related information and knowledge in Jordan. This portal's development is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-Sustainable Cultural Heritage through Engagement of Local Communities Project (SCHTEL) and implemented by the American Center of Research (ACR).

### Most Prominent Projects

Excavation Projects

Conservation projects

Administrative Projects

Development Projects

Restoration Projects

Documentation Projects

[View All](#)

[View Heat Map](#)







In the dynamic landscape of cultural heritage preservation and sustainable tourism, human resources development and capacity building emerged as critical cornerstones for fostering meaningful impact. SCHEP has been at the forefront of initiatives dedicated to nurturing the skills and capacities of individuals engaged in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. Through tailored programs and strategic partnerships, SCHEP empowered individuals and communities, ensuring they are equipped with the expertise needed to not only safeguard their cultural heritage but also to harness these assets for sustainable economic development.

# Human Resources Development and Capacity Building



## Needs and Skills Assessment

**1** The main objective of this evaluation was to present the needs assessment plan for Jordan's cultural heritage entities, including the DoA, PDTRA/PAP, and ASEZA/WRPA. The assessment targeted the three entities and their technical directorates in the various governorates. The assessment involved selecting personnel from their main departments, including HR, all the institutions' directorates, and the financial departments. Meetings with department directors assisted in selecting individuals for the team. This created a space for sharing and discussing ideas without any constraints. The main approach used in the assessment process was interviewing and following up on the consultation meetings to set up the institution's priorities and training topics.

The purpose of the needs and skills assessment was to strategically improve Jordan's institutional capacity for managing and preserving its cultural heritage via advanced technical skills and planned actions. This comprehensive approach involved the provision of specialized training courses covering a spectrum of themes. This included archaeology, communication, conferences, awareness raising, MSEs development, museums, publications and research, tourism development, and other relevant courses in the fields of archaeology and tourism.

## Archaeology-Based Courses

**2** Archaeological excavations, conservation, and documentation are vital components of safeguarding cultural heritage. Over the past six years, SCHEP has implemented 26 impactful archaeology-based courses spanning diverse themes and topics reflecting a comprehensive approach to HR-development capacity building. These courses included: All About Drones, Applied Capacity-Building Program at Ain Ghazal, Archaeology Field School, GIS, Archaeology in Practice, Art of Mosaic Production, Ground-Penetrating Radar, Heritage Conservation and Documentation, Introducing Mapping, Spatial Data and GIS (Online), Islamic Art and Architecture, Maritime Archaeology, Photogrammetry, Preparing State of Conservation Report, Remote Sensing, Roman Pottery Reading, Wadi Rum Integrated Management Plan Training, First Aid Conservation, and Women's Leadership in World Heritage Sites.







## Human Resources Development and Capacity Building

### English Courses

SCHEP and AMIDEAST have been working together to offer a specially designed English-language capacity-building program to Jordanian professionals in the fields of cultural heritage management and tourism. It was evident that the MSEs and CHR community of practice lacked effective English communication skills, thus limiting the ability to improve relationships with English speakers such as tourists and archaeologists. AMIDEAST's English-language program was designed to enhance the participants' English-language skills and their ability to work in English-demanding environments. Implementation of the program began in January 2020, and despite setbacks presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, 15 training sessions were held throughout Jordan, reaching a total of more than one hundred participants by the middle of 2023. Through courses held in Amman, Wadi Rum, Petra, Ghawr as Safi, and Tafileh, these Jordanian professionals gained new skills in communication, technical writing, and the provision of tourism services in English.

This program is aligned with SCHEP's second component: to continue building a strong Jordanian heritage community of practice by formalizing connections and synergies between CHRs institutions, professionals, universities, and local community members.

This was achieved through building local and global capacity for CHR institutions, facilitating strategic planning and implementation, expanding shared online resources, and sharing of skills and knowledge through conferences, workshops, and programs. Support, mentoring, and recognition were provided for current and future professionals through scholarships and internships.

### International Conferences

Under the patronage of HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal, the Department of Antiquities of Jordan and the University of Florence successfully organized the 14th International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan (ICHAJ) in Florence, Italy. ICHAJ 14 aimed to highlight the role played by the historical communities attested in Jordan in the development of the Euro-Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilizations. The theme chosen for 2019 was "Culture in Crisis: Flows of People, Artifacts and Ideas." This conference added value to the scientific commitment to interpret "crisis" as an accelerator of historical processes and as a release and spread of creative energy among social/cultural groups. In this framework, ICHAJ aspired to integrate scientific knowledge and the civilizing mission of science as a tool for regional and global

participation, and to contrast all instrumental and propaganda uses of history.

USAID SCHEP was delighted to participate in this conference by holding two major workshops and providing scholarships for 14 people who presented papers at the conference on different topics related to Jordan's cultural heritage resources.

Under the USAID SCHEP Scholarship Program, SCHEP and the DoA reviewed the participants whose papers were accepted at the conference to select potential candidates to receive funding for their participation. The total number of accepted abstracts was 270, with 80 of them from Jordanian participants.

ICHAJ 15 was held at Yarmouk University in Jordan, from July 18 to 21, 2022, under the theme "Thoughtful Archaeology in the Ecosphere and Sociosphere." SCHEP was pleased to support the conference by producing the conference bags and facilitating sessions. Recognizing the importance of women in World Heritage Sites, SCHEP aimed to empower local women while enhancing their economic benefits from CHR resources. The Women Leadership in World Heritage Sites program was designed in cooperation with the ASEZA/WRPA, involving the Al Disi Women's Association. SCHEP targeted women at 6 different communities to provide equal opportunities for women in the surrounding area. The program included three major courses: English-Language Skills, Women's Leadership, and Introduction to GIS Data and Processing.

## Human Resources Development and Capacity Building

### Women's Leadership in World Heritage Sites

Women's empowerment was a key factor for SCHEP. The program targeted 20 women from six local communities of Wadi Rum, providing them with training courses aimed to enhance the trainees' communication and writing skills in English. The objective of the first training session was to cover the essential skills of effective communication, focus on the common communication mistakes in English, encourage effective participation, and develop listening skills in English. Women's Leadership aimed to benefit the participants through a holistic overview from different local experts on what a World Heritage Site means. This entailed a trip to Wadi Rum and a site visit to Petra.









Supporting the establishment of local companies is not the only way SCHEP has worked to achieve sustainable growth in tourism at 11 affiliated sites to ensure that they are included on the national tourism map. The team has also worked with organizations such as the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association (JITOA) and the Jordan Tourism Board to introduce tour operators to the lesser-known sites and produce materials that introduce curious potential visitors to what they have to offer. The project also offered training courses and workshops on site promotion, offering local stakeholders the knowledge and skills they need to turn their local sites into national and international destinations.

SCHEP played a crucial role in tourism capacity building by actively engaging in initiatives that enhance the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of local communities and tourism actors involved in cultural heritage. Along with its support for local MSEs, SCHEP provided several capacity building programs leveraging the upward trajectory of Jordan's tourism sector.

# TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



## Amman Citadel Local Businesses

The Urban Heritage Regeneration Project focused on a tourist trail and changed the circumstances by providing opportunities to community members to participate in the tourism sector by marketing local products and services to the visitors of Amman Citadel and Downtown Amphitheater.

The tourist trail showcases a collection of cultural and culinary establishments, contributing to the preservation of Jordan's cultural heritage and fostering community development. The Amman Panorama Art Gallery, founded in 2008/2009, beautifully integrates Roman opulence with local culture, featuring artwork from 24 talented Jordanian artists. Owner Ayyad Ayyad, a tourist guide, extends his commitment to heritage through the Amman Panorama Heritage House, which provides a panoramic view of the Roman Theater. Ayyad also owns the Downtown Juice Shop, combining refreshments with local art.

Laith Press, established in 1980, crafts unique souvenirs and publications, emphasizing its use of recycled materials. The Dagger Shop, run by Abu Rashid, preserves a five-generation tradition of crafting Al-Muhaisini daggers. Egaili Restaurant, founded in 1920, provides an authentic

gastronomic experience, maintaining its legacy in Jabal Al-Qalaa. Together, these establishments celebrate Jordan's cultural richness, supporting local artists and artisans while inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the country's history and flavors.

The tourist trail also offers unique products and services, enriching the experience for visitors. The Amman Panorama Art Gallery, besides its 24 artists, introduces new products, such as Citadel Soaps, Sweets, Savories, Salads, and Jewelry, crafted with love by the local community. Additionally, the gallery showcases the artistic charm of Burhan Phone Image, a unique addition to its offerings. While exploring these cultural gems, a visitor can also indulge in local flavors at the Eqaili Restaurant, offering Traditional Breakfast and Meals.









# Aqabawi Foundation

**S**CHEP recruited a member of the local community, Mr. Mustafa Al-Ajlouni, to work on this project based upon his participation in community awareness programs and tourism activities and his knowledge of people in the Aqaba area. He realized the need to invest in diversifying the tourism sector and engaging local community members to create and promote new tourist activities. He was inspired to establish the Aqabawi Foundation to achieve these goals and promote the marine and cultural heritage of Aqaba, thus improving the community's income and creating real employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups such as women and people with disabilities.

The foundation was established in response to the low-cost flight agreements between the Government of Jordan and Ryan Air, set to commence in October 2018. New flights to Jordan are almost a daily event, coming from several prominent European cities. The Ryan Air routes to Amman are from Milan, Budapest, Bologna, Krakow, Bucharest, Paphos, Prague, Brussels, Vilnius, and Warsaw. The Royal Jordanian Airlines routes to Aqaba include Athens, Rome, Cologne, and Sofia.

At the time, the foundation expected around

500,000 new visitors to Jordan annually. The Jordanian economy depends heavily on tourism, which contributes about 12% of the GDP. An increase in visitors has the potential to boost local economies significantly. There is a great opportunity to enhance tourists' experience and prolong their stays in Jordan by providing exceptional tourism services to match the increased number of visitors, at a cost that meets their budgets.

The establishment of a small foundation based on the efforts of the local community to develop the tourism sector would have a positive impact on the leadership of future tourism, awareness, and investment projects in the Aqaba region. It is intended to serve as a launching pad for the local community to benefit from grants and loans aimed at developing tourist services and increasing employment opportunities for women.

The foundation focused on visitors who will rely on low-cost airlines to lengthen their stays in Jordan, thus increasing their spending, and on providing unique experiences based on the culture and heritage of the community. This category of visitors tends to rely on social networking platforms, mobile applications, and websites to choose experiences with

appropriate costs and services. The foundation studied the market and developed new tourism products that are made with local NGOs and the local community. The foundation also has reached most of the main stakeholders and introduced this new market niche, which had been absent. This assists the local community to preserve its cultural and natural heritage and increase the socioeconomic level of the community.





## Jordan Southern Ghawr Company

SCHEP coordinated with Sawwah Jordan to prepare a new promotion for the Busayra Foundation for Cultural Heritage and the Southern Ghawr Company. Sawwah is a travel and tour booking platform that promotes tourism experiences offered by local communities. Through this platform, MSEs (micro- to small-scale enterprises) can promote and market all their services and products.

This promotion platform aims to expand exposure for their products and services, and consumers will learn about all that the MSEs have to offer.



## Tourism Development

### Busayra Cultural Heritage Foundation

The Busayra Cultural Heritage Foundation continued the work of previous SCHEP support. Besides their duties associated with the archaeological site of Busayra (maintenance of the tourist trail, the Heritage Lab, the mural at the entrance, and the interpretive panels), the foundation also conducted awareness activities with local students. The project funded the foundation to move beyond its initial stage and build its capacity in promotion and marketing to become self-sufficient. This entailed: 1) a move to a larger building capable of hosting all the foundation's activities, such as a place to eat or to experience local food, a workshop for creating local pottery, a calligraphy studio, and other activities that can enrich the experience of the visitor and prolong their stay in Busayra; 2) conducting capacity-buildings programs for local communities packing heritage-awareness kits, which contain what is needed to make a mosaic, reconstruct broken pottery, and make new Edomite-style pottery; 3) producing local products—such as food and handcrafts—that would help increase income for the local community; and 4) conducting touristic activities and programs targeting visitors by utilizing social media or brochures in the Dana Reserve and other centers run by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN).





## Tourism and Community Engagement

Several workshops aimed at engaging and empowering local communities were conducted. Community Engagement in Tourism involved members of the Amman Citadel community in designing a new tourist trail, encouraging interactive experiences and exhibitions. Entrepreneurship for Local Communities provided a one-day training session, fostering key entrepreneurship principles and addressing common challenges faced by entrepreneurs. The Visitor-Focused Communication Training workshop in Aqaba focused on improving interpersonal skills and storytelling abilities to enhance the overall guest experience.

These initiatives signify a commitment to involving local communities in heritage projects and fostering sustainable economic opportunities. Health and Safety Measures | Ghawr as Safi provided training for company staff and local community members on health and safety protocols, aligning with COVID-19 guidelines. Life and Visitor Management Skills equipped participants with essential abilities for efficient site operations and positive visitor interactions. Covering crowd management, safety, and effective communication, the training aimed to create a harmonious environment for preserving cultural heritage while ensuring a safe and engaging experience for visitors.

## Marketing and Promotion

The capacity-building programs under this theme focused on the crucial aspect of promoting cultural heritage. Beginners in Creative Video emphasized the significance of effective presentation through videography, imparting creative techniques to enhance public appreciation of archaeological sites. Content Marketing equipped participants with fundamental knowledge and skills for effective content marketing, covering customer psychology, user engagement tactics, and social media marketing.

Heritage Site Promotion included workshops on public speaking, social media, and extreme photography, enhancing the promotion skills for cultural heritage sites. Sales and Pricing Strategy provided specialized training for SCHEP-supported MSEs, contributing to their sustainability. Social Media Marketing and its sequel offered comprehensive training on the importance of social media, marketing strategies, and practical application and evaluation of campaigns. These efforts collectively contribute to raising awareness and promoting cultural heritage effectively.





## Tourism Development

### Skills Development and Training Programs

**S**ilk-Screen Training focused on enhancing the employability of trainees in job markets through the utilization of silk-screen printing. Soap Production engaged the local community at the Amman Citadel, promoting heritage skills through soap production. String Art Experience introduced Islamic string art, promoting historical awareness and artistic skills. These programs collectively contribute to skill enhancement, community development, and the promotion of heritage-based crafts. A dedicated training session was organized for the local community of Amman Citadel under the theme “Customer Service.” Participants engaged in a program designed to enhance their interpersonal skills and foster positive interactions with visitors.

### Sustainable Tourism

**U**nder the theme of sustainable tourism, the Sustainable Tourism Training Program I and II offered scholarships for online courses, introducing the basic principles of sustainable tourism in collaboration with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC). These programs aimed to educate tourism professionals and entities on sustainable practices, contributing to responsible and long-

term growth in the tourism sector.

“Tour Guides’ Lecture Promoting Awareness of Lesser-Known Sites within Petra was a targeted effort to increase awareness among tour guides about lesser-known archaeological sites. This initiative included a study day on the Temple of the Winged Lions at Petra College for Tourism and Archaeology. By enhancing the knowledge of tour guides, these programs contributed to the responsible exploration of archaeological sites, ensuring a meaningful and informed experience for visitors.

Our coordination with Sawwah aimed to prepare a new promotional package for the Busayra Foundation for Cultural Heritage and the Southern Ghawr Company. Sawwah Jordan Travel and Tours is a booking platform that promotes tourism experiences offered by local communities. Through this platform, MSEs are able to promote and market all the services and products offered by the company.

These themes collectively represent a holistic approach to the promotion of cultural heritage community engagement, skills development, sustainable tourism, and awareness promotion, showcasing the multifaceted efforts of SCHEP and its partners in Jordan.









SCHEP evaluated the needs of the heritage and tourism sectors in Jordan and, based on the results of the analysis, set the outline for 10 themes to be supported. They include site development and cultural resources management, museums, research and publication, communication and PR, archives and inventories, tourism development, natural heritage, intangible heritage studies, capacity-building, and risk management.

# Small Grants Program



## Small Grants Program

# Museums

## National Heritage Museum at the University of Jordan

SCHEP signed a fixed-term cooperation Agreement with the University of Jordan to support the rehabilitation of the National Heritage Museum, which is located on its campus. To preserve the museum collections from damage and deterioration, the project entailed developing the museum displays, expanding the museum exhibition spaces, and adding more sections. Air-conditioning and devices to control temperature and humidity were also installed in the museum to provide a suitable environment for the collections.

SCHEP also supported the establishment of a digital database for museum collections. SCHEP produced promotional materials, such as posters, brochures, and videos to publicize the completed project, and participated in its launch. The project enhanced students' and community members' knowledge of Jordan's history, Bedouin and rural life, and jewelry and traditional costumes and assisted students and researchers in their studies.



Small Grants Program

## Museums

### Al-Hussein Bin Talal University Natural Science Museum

The idea of establishing a natural science museum at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University was created out of a desire to highlight the treasures of biodiversity and natural heritage in Jordan. The goal was to create an educational tool for the university campus, targeting students of the Faculty of Science, as well as students from the university's other diverse colleges.

Moreover, the museum will be a destination for learning and discovery incorporating the local community and students of all ages from throughout the Ma'an Governorate. The funding and technical support that SCHEP provided began with developing the idea visually, utilizing a three-dimensional approach. Initially, geometric drawings were created as a planning tool to formulate the layout of the museum. These included spaces allocated for display cabinets and stands, visitation routes and circulation, and a gallery area. Preservation guidelines were

also developed to maintain the museum's holdings, thus ensuring its sustainability.

Another important goal was to control temperature and humidity within the museum environment.

There was significant participation by the university faculty highlighting the cooperation between academia and SCHEP.





## Small Grants Program

### Intangible Heritage

#### Mallol Project

Tajalla for Music and Arts Society, in partnership with the Politics and Society Institute, received a grant to implement a project named “Mallol,” the focus of which is to preserve and revive the intangible heritage of Jordanian folk songs in the Governorate of Jarash. The project transferred the lyrics and history of songs from the elderly generation to the younger. In addition to this, the project integrated the efforts of cultural and tourism associations in the governorate and created a network among them. The Mallol project helped to preserve the local cultural identity and presented it as an attraction to encourage domestic tourism.

The Mallol project performed a closing ceremony to promote and preserve intangible heritage in Jarash. This ceremony presented 17 folk songs that the participating youth had memorized; the young singers performed accompanied by traditional instruments. This has cultural significance, as it passes down traditions that bind the generations. Jarash was the first place in Jordan where the local community transmitted their folk songs from the memory of the elderly to the younger generation by means of such a project.





Small Grants Program

## Tourism

### Development of a Dog Shelter for New Tourism Experience

**A**l Rabee Society for Nature and Animal Protection (RSNAP) is a Jordanian nonprofit organization that aims to encourage compassionate and thoughtful conduct towards nature and animals in general and to promote a more humane treatment of stray dogs. The society also serves stray dogs and helps to protect them from adverse human contact. Al Rabee Society is also promoting the Canaan dog breed as an original local animal and raising awareness of the importance of keeping this ancient variety of canine.

The society provides a suitable place for people to interact with local dogs and learn more about them. The local government, under the auspices of the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority (ASEZA), negotiated with the RSNAP to relocate to a larger location.





## Tourism

### Aqabawi Kitchen

Foad Isam Ibrahim Aklouk submitted a proposal to SCHEP to support and develop his kitchen to attract more visitors for experiential tourism in local culinary arts after the success he achieved with very small groups of visitors, usually consisting of four to five individuals. With the demand to provide interactive local dishes, he requested funding to support expanding his kitchen capabilities while at the same time keeping a local house atmosphere. SCHEP provided the expansion, and Aqabawi Kitchen is now able to entertain up to 25 individuals with an authentic home-based experience in Aqaba.

### Development of Ashrafieh Trail

The Harra Association is a local neighborhood group formed in about 2007, developing from a social initiative to valorize and improve the community. The founder and owner of the association had put forward a grant application to continue developing the local area by the

creation of an interactive trail that intersects with the diverse community of Ashrafieh. The grant provided financial support to continue building and strengthening its institutional tourism development to establish long-term tourism sustainability. The project concept narrates the story of the neighborhood through informative pathways that start from the Abu Darwish Mosque in Ashrafieh, one of Amman's most famous landmarks, and continues through the neighborhood of Ashrafieh, with the visitor able to interact with the history of the area and its population. Throughout the journey, opportunities exist for residents to experience economic benefits, utilizing new urban tourism products and handcrafts.

The program achieved the following objectives: 1) building a sustainable interactive cultural tourism route that has an economic impact for the local population; 2) building the capacities of the people in the neighborhoods with the concept of environmental heritage tourism and creating a space for dialogue within the same framework; 3) providing sustainable job opportunities for the people of the Harra path; and 4) promoting community participation.

### String Art Experience

The aim of the project is to preserve local arts culture and provide an alternative cultural experience for the young generation, one that is not normally provided in schools. The experience taught young local women how to create string art, in which thread or string is wound around nails hammered into a wooden board to form geometric patterns or representations, such as a sailing ship. String art is often combined with other artistic materials.

Although the target number was small, the lessons learned made a big impact on the youth involved. They expressed an interest in doing the experience again, and some expressed an interest in making pictures for their homes.

## Small Grants Program

### Tourism

#### Tourism Association for the Development of Archaeological Sites—Al Smakieh

The Tourism Association for the Development of Archaeological Sites is a Jordanian nonprofit organization that aims to promote and preserve the heritage in the town of Al Smakieh. As part of the development, the association works to encourage tourism here by involving the local community in various tourism operations coupled with several specialized training courses. A logo and branding plan was established as part of the development. Further support from SCHEP included furnishing the association building with a computer and printer.

Spreading tourism awareness in the local community and gaining the support of the townspeople and other stakeholders, especially youth, is important for preserving cultural heritage and exploiting it as an important economic resource.







SCHEP recognizes the importance of research and publications. The collection of our 16 publications highlights and provides comprehensive insights into various cultural heritage aspects, offering valuable information.

# Research and Publications



## Publications

**V**isit *Safi: Community-Based Tourism* serves as a detailed resource for planning a visit to the southern Jordan Valley, offering essential information to make the most of the experience. Meanwhile, *Aqabawi: Community-Based Cultural Experiences*, a youth-led enterprise, introduces readers to the rich culture and history of Aqaba, inviting them to explore numerous cultural, culinary, and nature-based experiences.

*Zoara, the Southern Ghor of Jordan: A Guide to the Landscape and Heritage of the Lowest Place on Earth*, authored by Konstantinos D. Politis, delves into the environmental and historical aspects of Zoara, illustrating efforts to preserve this unique Jordanian treasure.

Other publications focus on the study and handling of pottery finds in Jordan, the proper handling of museum artifacts, and mosaic floors and panels in Madaba, contributing to the professional development of local heritage and museum professionals.

The engaging photography book, *Documentation of World Heritage Sites in Jordan*, sponsored by ICOMOS-Jordan, explores 20 heritage sites throughout the country, combining artistic and documentary

styles to showcase the beauty of Jordan's cultural heritage. Additionally, projects such as *Aqabawi Marine Heritage*, *Atlas of Jordan's Snakes*, *The Archaeological and Tourism Reality in the Eastern Desert*, and *Traditional Jordanian Cuisine* continue to contribute to the holistic approach of preserving and promoting Jordan's cultural heritage.

To ensure the dissemination of SCHEP's impactful interventions, the project produced two volumes on the project. The first volume covers the projects first phase from 2019 to 2024 and second one covers the second phase, including an extension, from 2019 to 2024, highlighting the significant role ACOR made in preserving and promoting Jordan's cultural heritage through engagement of local communities.

research of the archaeological heritage of Jordan and neighboring regions. The journal includes reports and results of archaeological fieldwork in Arabic and English.

SCHEP contracted Dr. Alexander Wasse for 3 months to edit and review the articles of *ADAJ* 60, which was composed of 39 English articles. The editing included the references and list of captions in accordance with the editorial system of the DoA. Besides submitting the edited articles, annotated for review by the department, Dr. Wasse also submitted a report with recommendations to improve the quality of DoA publications.

## Supporting DoA Publications

**A**t the request of the Department of Antiquities (DoA), SCHEP supported and assisted in producing its publications, particularly the *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan (ADAJ)*, volume 60. The journal has been published by the DoA since 1951 and is devoted to studies and

## Atlas of Jordan's Snakes

Snakes have been always a topic of great discussion among people, and they are mentioned in holy books, local folklore, myths, and rumors. It might be the lack of awareness and inability to distinguish between venomous and nonvenomous snakes that result in the common fear and negative perceptions of them, which leads to indiscriminate and unprovoked killing of snakes on a continuous basis. Despite such perceptions, snakes are an integral part of Jordan's natural heritage, and they are closely linked with cultural and historical heritage. In Jordan, 37 species of snakes have been documented, of which seven are venomous, and they are distributed all over Jordan depending on their habitat preferences and niche areas. This atlas sheds light on each species by providing a detailed description, high-resolution photos, illustrations, habitat preferences, and range represented by maps. In addition, it provides a comprehensive background on the links between snakes and Jordan's cultural and historical heritage.

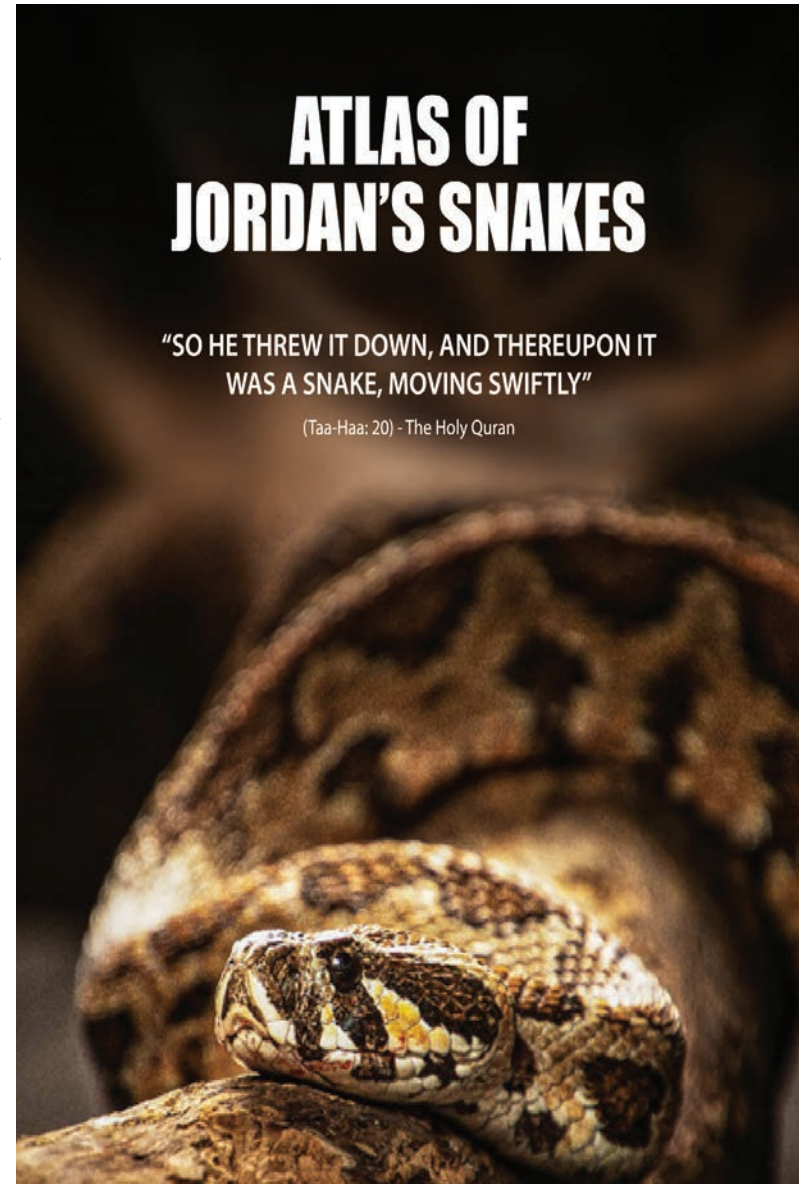
The author engaged communities in data collection, recording their traditional knowledge

about snakes and what cultural aspects they recognize. This will aid the communities in understanding many facts about the snakes in Jordan. Climate-change modeling for each snake species was conducted to understand the future distribution of these reptiles. This will allow academics, conservationists, and governmental entities to benefit from knowledge of expected distributions. The atlas, which was published in Arabic and English editions, is distributed for free to raise knowledge and awareness of snakes and to educate people and visitors about these animals to aid in conservation efforts.

## ATLAS OF JORDAN'S SNAKES

"SO HE THREW IT DOWN, AND THEREUPON IT  
WAS A SNAKE, MOVING SWIFTLY"

(Taa-Haa: 20) - The Holy Quran





## Documentation of Mosaic Floors and Panels in Madaba

Mosaic art constitutes one of the most important archaeological elements that attract visitors to the city of Madaba, which is known as the “city of mosaics.” One of the challenges facing professionals who work in the field of protecting, preserving, and documenting mosaic floors and panels is the lack of a database that could facilitate and monitor the state of conservation of these important artworks. The Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration (MIMAR) is an academic institute for preserving mosaics and providing skilled and professional graduates for employment in the restoration and production of mosaics. MIMAR realized the importance of documenting this art and decided to produce a scientific study with the goal of providing a reference to the public in the form of a book.

MIMAR submitted a proposal to SCHEP to support research in cooperation with Basem Al Mahamid entitled “Documenting Mosaic Floors and Panels from Madaba.” The research documented 40 mosaic floors and panels from Madaba, through intensive studies and analysis.

The resulting book, *Madaba Mosaic: An Analytical Field Documentary Study*, is a reference for those generally interested in this art form, as well as specialists and academics. The book identifies mosaic features, characteristics, problems, and the mechanism of preservation. The project produced an inventory of the mosaic floors and panels in Madaba (whether in their original location, displayed in museums, or held in DoA warehouses) and evaluated the condition and state of conservation of these floors so they could be preserved. The publication set priorities for maintenance according to the condition of the floors and their need for direct intervention and maintenance. Together with the data, the book includes color photos, drawings, and plans for all these mosaic floors and panels.

*Madaba Mosaic: An Analytical Field Documentary Study* provides solutions that focus on the best practices for the preservation, intervention, and maintenance of mosaic floors and panels. The book clarifies the methodology associated with mosaics and serves as a reference to protect and preserve mosaics in Madaba and elsewhere.

## Documentation of World Heritage Sites in Jordan

This project produced a bilingual (English–Arabic), noncommercial photography book for ICOMOS-Jordan.

The volume explores 20 heritage sites located throughout Jordan and includes both photography and text. The sites are either listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in the UNESCO submission and review process, or registered on the tentative list. The photographic content combines artistic and documentary styles, with an overall goal of featuring the most beautiful representation of Jordan’s heritage sites.

## The Pottery of Jordan: A Manual

The purpose of *The Pottery of Jordan: A Manual* is to provide museum personnel in Jordan, Jordanian archaeologists and archaeology students, and other specialists a concise but thorough treatment of the country's pottery repertoire in illustrated online and print formats. The hope is that it becomes the standard reference resource (in Arabic and English) on Jordanian pottery for ongoing archaeological research and cultural heritage preservation.

The development of pottery manufacturing during different periods in Jordan's history provides a window into the variations in material culture representative of each archaeological period. This, in turn, has contributed to systematizing the history of pottery and linking the evidence with each different historical period. So, it can be argued that pottery has become one of the most representative markers of cultural identity of previous civilizations and nations. Given the ubiquitous presence of pottery sherds almost everywhere archaeological sites are found, the study of ceramic remains enriches immeasurably attempts to understand ancient chronology, cultural

expressions, trade and industry, social structures, and everyday life.

Since the first archaeologists began to visit the Levant in the 19th century, many different and sometimes contradictory theories have appeared due to the scarcity of tools and scientific skills related to the history of archaeological ruins. With the advent of the careful analysis of pottery, it has become the most reliable material evidence for researchers to date archaeological ruins and link them to periods of cultural expression.

## A Study for the Natural Heritage Museum in Petra

The Anbaat Capital Society is a local community-based organization (CBO) in Ma'an, in the Petra region. The community consists of six villages with approximately 3,000 families.

The Anbaat Capital Society submitted a proposal to SCHEP to support a study for a natural heritage museum in Petra. The study was to provide a full research investigation for the establishment of the museum in

a virtual area of approximately 150 m<sup>2</sup>, including infrastructure, decoration, and the type and placement of the display items. The long-term goal is to share knowledge of the biodiversity in Petra and southern Jordan, with an additional focus on the ecotourism sector.

## Jordanian Traditional Cuisine

The project involved collecting and documenting the intangible cultural heritage of traditional dishes from the past in Jordan, as well as documentation of unwritten memories related to traditional dishes and archiving this according to contemporary scientific methodologies. The project relied on field collection from the northern, central, and southern regions, through interviews with individuals with culinary knowledge of the past. The information was used to reexplore heritage dishes of Jordan. The project collected local narratives about everything related to traditional dishes: names, components, preparation techniques,



## Research and Publications

and the occasions during which they are presented. This information will be available for anyone interested in Jordan's traditional dishes. The project also revived traditional dishes that are either no longer prepared or prepared less often. In addition, the project encouraged tourist restaurants to focus on presenting them as basic meals on their menu for visitors. To achieve the objectives of the project, SCHEP trained a local research team on oral-history methodologies and techniques for collecting oral heritage. SCHEP produced a documentary film about the project, as well as a book on the history of traditional foods with recipes.

### Documenting Local Phrases and Common Proverbs Related to the Marine Heritage

The city of Aqaba is the only coastal city in Jordan. It is distinguished by its diverse community, its mountains and beaches, and its history. The city embraces a rich, unique heritage that expresses the community's connections to the sea. The project's primary aim was to reveal an important aspect of marine community heritage: local

phrases and common proverbs related to the sea. SCHEP supported the Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) in this endeavor. JREDS implemented research activity and engaged the local community to document its linguistic heritage. The researchers documenting the response from the community also provided ideas for introducing new concepts of tourism products related to products and services provided by the local community.

With the research and documentation completed, JREDS was able to produce a book, *Aqabawi Marine Heritage*. This publication records one important aspect of Aqaba's marine community heritage.

### Cultural Heritage Studies for Undergraduate Students in Jordanian Universities

Cultural heritage is considered an important aspect of intercultural communication and social cohesion, both in local communities as well as on the regional level. The focus of this project was to present the status of

cultural heritage education at Jordanian universities. Researchers also aimed to better embed cultural and built heritage values in archaeology and architecture education. The available studies of cultural heritage education in Jordan are mainly limited to primary and secondary school education; limited resources are found for higher education, whether in humanities or engineering faculties. Therefore, this project explored if and how cultural heritage in Jordan is visible in study plans in archaeology, architecture, and tourism faculties. It also looked at collaborative projects between universities and other institutions to understand the landscape of cultural heritage pedagogical practices and expected outcomes in higher education in Jordan. Researchers offered recommendations for academics and decision makers at universities to enhance cultural heritage education in the short and long term. Researchers also initiated cooperation among scholars, professionals, and local communities in various Jordanian cities to promote cultural heritage education.

SCHEP hired a research assistant with experience in cultural heritage to conduct the research and interviews, and they supported the research team in organizing the project workshop (Impact on Local Employment

and Opportunities). The project integrated the academic community through semi-structured interviews that were conducted by the research assistant. The pilot research, if continued through further stages, can have a long-term impact on the local community economy.

### Conservation Guidelines for All

The project sought to produce conservation guidelines that would act as a framework for sustainable and long-term conservation of historic sites and would include lessons in conservation philosophy and day-to-day management rules. The project was carried out jointly with stakeholders of the Umm Qais Archaeological Site (UQAS), who are active on the site. The stakeholders included the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA), Department of Antiquities (DoA), Municipality of Umm Qais (MUQ), German Archaeological Institute (GAI), Gadara Friends of Archaeology (GFA), community members formerly of the traditional village of Umm Qais, and community members of the modern town of Umm Qais. The training was led by Turquoise Mountain (TM), a nonprofit enterprise that connects families with their heritage.

The goals and objective of the TM project was to improve the preservation planning, development, and protection of the ancient and historic heritage at the UQAS.

USAID had been previously involved at Umm Qais, a very important historical site, and this project highlighted its commitment to this location and community. Having conservation guidelines for the site will reduce the risks and conflicts resulting by the misuse of conservation standards. Furthermore, the local community will be much more involved in decision-making on the site that was once their home and continues to be an important part of their cultural heritage and social history.

### Guidelines for Safe Tourism

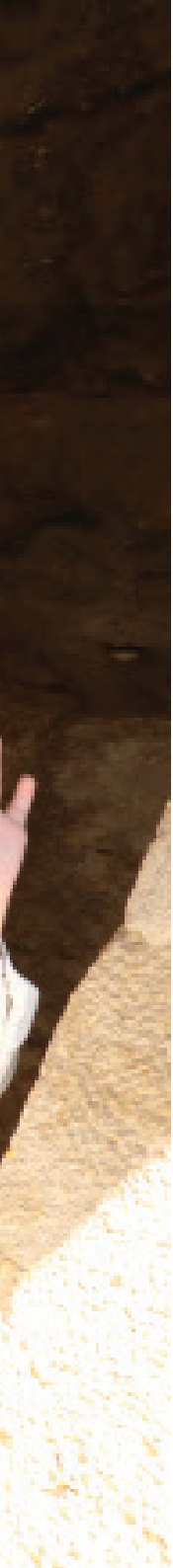
The Friends of Dead Sea Martyrs Initiative is a group that includes parents who lost their children in the catastrophic accident at the Dead Sea in 2018. The project conducted a series of awareness sessions to promote safe destinations for children and to begin the process of collecting data for the accreditation of safe destinations. This data will eventually be used to create an official set of guidelines for

the accreditation of destinations throughout Jordan that are safe for children and youth to visit.

SCHEP worked with the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in combination with the Ministry of Education. It was an ideal situation, highlighting the importance of safe tourism, especially preparing children and students for unexpected events.







Host communities determine whether a project will succeed or fail, so building relationships with them was one of the most important aspects of SCHEP. SCHEP was committed first to bringing these stakeholders on board, encouraging all our project directors to engage with key members of the community and clearly explaining the goals and methods of the project. Once these relationships were created, SCHEP began its awareness campaign with the rest of the communities, largely targeting youth and families. By sharing with them the value of these sites, both for their history and the material benefits they can provide to the community, the project was able to enlist them as active partners. SCHEP endeavored to foster a close relationship with the site, by organizing and supporting visits and providing information relating to the historic and cultural uniqueness of the sites. This reinforces many of the values the project worked to develop while also associating the site

with a time of enjoyment and education. SCHEP worked to develop kinesthetic learning at each site, helping students to connect to the significance of the site, whether through writing Thamudic (ancient Arabian) inscriptions, making mosaics, or reconstructing pottery. Awareness campaigns partnered with local communities as part of the project staff, helping SCHEP guard against vandalism, and encouraging visitors to share the story of these important sites.

# Awareness Raising



## Awareness Raising

### Our Identity Our Heritage Campaign

SCHEP sponsored “Our Identity Our Heritage,” an activity that provided Jordanian students the opportunity to engage directly with heritage attributes by recording a 1-minute video presenting an archaeological site using their own interpretation. The students could choose any subject about a site, including history, architecture, small objects in museums, importance, and other related characteristics. SCHEP also established the Generation for Heritage program as part of a new awareness initiative. This program included all generations but with a focus on youth and children. The first step included creating a Facebook page under the name “Generation4Heritage أجيال تحافظ على إرثنا”.

The aim of this Facebook page was to create a network for those who are interested in heritage and archaeological sites and offer an opportunity to learn about and become more connected to the sites. The goal was to promote the awareness, appreciation, and protection of Jordan’s history.

The program raised awareness among Jordanian students about the importance of archaeological, cultural, and natural heritage

sites that strengthened the national identity by highlighting Jordanian cultural heritage, and it also supported the creative skills of students and their abilities to express themselves through diverse forms of media.

### Karameh Camp Activities

SCHEP participated in a Ministry of Education Forum for Boy Scouts and Girl Guides at Al Karameh Camp in Balqa Governorate. SCHEP organized a series of mosaic workshops for nearly 280 camp attendees, including 39 students with hearing and speech difficulties. The aim of the workshops was to teach the participants about the history of mosaics in Jordan and give them the opportunity to make their own works of mosaic art and to build understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage.

On the final day of the camp, HRH Princess Basma bint Talal visited the camp and witnessed the workshop in action. SCHEP was honored by Her Royal Highness alongside the

organizers of the camp. SCHEP’s Education and Awareness program specifically engages future female leaders, such as the Girl Guides, to encourage them in taking a leading role to protect and promote Jordan’s rich heritage.

### Twenty-Third Arabian Camp for Girl Guides

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Madaba Institute of Mosaic Art and Restoration, and the Jordanian Association for Boy Scouts and Girls Guides, SCHEP organized three-day awareness-raising sessions on mosaic making, aiming to enhance the skills 150 female participants from 11 Arabian countries.







# Impact

SCHEP, which focused on engaging local communities, made noteworthy progress in preserving and promoting Jordan's cultural heritage between 2019 and 2024. Through the development of institutional frameworks, SCHEP has successfully implemented a strategic vision and updated the antiquities law of the year 1988, displaying its dedication to ensuring the long-term sustainability of cultural heritage in Jordan. Additionally, capacity-building programs have been effective in empowering 739 individuals (361 males, 378 females) and nurturing a competent workforce responsible for the management, preservation, and promotion of Jordan's cultural heritage.

The provision of \$2.4 million in funds has played a crucial role in the restoration of 11 archaeological sites, resulting in the creation of 444 jobs (323 males and 121 females). Additionally, it has led to the development of 697 enhanced employment prospects (361 males and 336 females). Moreover, the establishment of five micro- and small enterprises (MSEs) has also contributed to sustainable development, effectively combining economic growth with the promotion of cultural heritage.

SCHEP's activities, aimed at reaching out globally, have resulted in the establishment of connections among 1,571 individuals spread across 93 organizations in 8 countries. These efforts have successfully facilitated the exchange of knowledge and skills required for the efficient preservation of Jordan's cultural heritage. The effectiveness of these initiatives can be substantiated by the

extensive documentation, which comprises 68 press releases, 54 articles, 21 books and booklets, 20 blog entries, 20 presentations, 15 lectures, 8 TV shows, and 13 academic papers disseminated globally, providing valuable insights to a wide audience.

SCHEP, in the field of infrastructure development, has established two open learning environments, refurbished three museums (Jordan University Museum, Hussein Bin Talal University Museum, and the Museum at the Lowest Place on Earth), and provided numerous cultural heritage institutions and professionals with necessary technology and office materials.

SCHEP's success is greatly attributed to its dedication to engaging the community. Over 5,500 students from 12 governorates and 41 municipalities have been involved in interactive programs, promoting local understanding and admiration for archaeology. The focus on disadvantaged and marginalized communities highlights SCHEP's commitment to inclusivity and making cultural heritage appreciation accessible to all.

To sum up, SCHEP has achieved concrete outcomes by employing various strategies such as institutional development, providing financial aid, expanding international connections, enhancing infrastructure, and, more importantly, involving the community. As a result, Jordan's cultural heritage is being preserved in a sustainable manner, contributing to its economic growth and gaining recognition worldwide.









# Team Members



**John Shearman**  
Chief of Party  
(2021–2024)



**Hanadi Al Taher**  
Deputy Chief of Party  
Institutional Development Lead  
(2019–2024)



**Jihad Haron**  
CHR Development Lead  
(2016–2024)



**Zaid Kashour**  
Monitoring & Evaluation  
Specialist (2016–2024)



**Shatha Abu Aballi**  
Communications Manager  
(2016–2024)



**AbedalFatah Ghareeb**  
Creative Producer & Editor  
(2017–2024)



**Dina Al Majali**  
Marketing & Promotion  
Officer (2017–2023)



**Hisham Al Majali**  
CHR Field Manager  
(2019–2024)



**Nora Al Omari**  
Digital Projects Assistant  
(2022–2024)



**Emad Abu Ras'**  
Financial Manager  
(2022–2024)



**Maen Al Omari**  
Senior Accountant  
(2022–2024)

# Previous Team Members

Nizar Al Adarbeh Chief of Party (2015–2021)

Hussein Khirfan Tourism Development Lead (2017–2022)

Balqees Al Mohaisen Capacity-Building Manager (2017–2021)

Raneen Naimi, Awareness & Outreach Coordinator (2017–2020)

Farah Abu Naser Institutional Development Coordinator (2019–2022)

Rawan Abu Salhie Accounts & Administration Manager (2019–2020)

Starling Carter Communication Specialist (2019–2021)

Ala'a Al Badareen Architecture & Design Officer (2019–2021)

Ahmad Al Doar Accounts & Administration Manager (2021–2022)

Amal Al Faouri Communication Specialist (2021–2022)

---

## Steering Committee



Pearce Paul Creasman  
Executive Director of  
ACOR  
(2020–2024)



Nisreen Abu Al Shaikh  
ACOR Deputy Director & CFO  
(2014–2024)



Barbara A. Porter  
Former Director of ACOR  
(2014–2020)



John D. M. Green  
Associate Director  
(2018–2020)



# Acronyms

ACOR	The American Center of Research	EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ASEZA	Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority	FOAH	Friends of Archaeology and Heritage
ASOR	The American Schools of Oriental Research	GIS	Geographic Information System
BKH	Barghouthi, Khirfan and Hattar	HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
BCHP	Busayra Cultural Heritage Project	ICHAJ	The International Conference on the History and Archaeology of Jordan
CB-RAER	The Community-Based Rock Art and Epigraphic Recording Project	ICOMOS	The International Council on Monuments and Sites
CBRL	The Council for British Research in the Levant	Ifpo	Institut français du Proche-Orient
CHR	Cultural Heritage Resources	ISCR	Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro (The Institute for Conservation and Restoration)
DoA	Department of Antiquities of Jordan	JITOA	The Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association

JREDS	The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan
MIMAR	Madaba Institute of Mosaic Art and Restoration
MOE	Ministry of Education
MRAMP	Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project
MSEs	Micro & Small Enterprises
OLE	Open Learning Environments
PDTRA	Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority
RASI	The Rock Art Stability Index
SCHEP	Sustainable Cultural Heritage Through Engagement of Local Communities project

TWLCRM	Petra Temple of the Winged Lions Cultural Resource Management Initiative
UJAP	Umm el-Jimal Archaeological Project
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WRPA	Wadi Rum Protected Area
WHC	World Heritage Center



# Our Partners

## Main Project Partners

United States Agency for International Development  
American Center of Research  
Department of Antiquities of Jordan  
Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities  
Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority  
Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority  
Wadi Rum Protected Area  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Culture

## Other Partners

The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan  
Madaba Institute for Mosaic Art  
ACOR's Petra Temple of the Winged Lions Cultural Resource Management  
Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association  
The Children's Museum Jordan  
Madaba Regional Archaeological Museum Project  
Istituto Superiore per la Conservazione ed il Restauro  
Council for British Research in the Levant  
Institut français du Proche-Orient  
Istituto Superiore per la - Protezione e la Ricerca Ambientale  
Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique  
Umm el-Jimal Archaeological Project  
Friends of Archaeology and Heritage  
AMIDEAST Jordan  
Madrasati Initiative  
Hashemite University  
Yarmouk University  
Al Bayt University

University of Jordan  
Mutah University  
German Jordan University  
Hussein Bin Talal University  
Jordan University of Science and Technology  
Petra University  
American University of Madaba  
Center for Near Eastern Archaeology (La Sierra University)  
University of Arkansas  
Queen's University  
The College at Brockport  
Gannon University  
Mesa Community College  
American University at Rome  
Calvin College  
University of Lausanne  
University of Southampton  
University of Colorado  
Sapienza University of Rome  
University of California, Berkeley  
Perugia University  
La Sapienza University  
Hellenic Society for Near Eastern Studies  
George Washington University  
Kent State University  
Northeastern University, Boston  
Studium Generale Civitatis Perusii  
Exegesis Spatial Data Management  
Humanity & Inclusion in Jordan (Handicap)  
Open Hand Studios  
infoGraph  
Harra Initiative  
Turquoise Mountain for Heritage Preservation Training

Hussien Bin Talal University  
Bayt Alturath & Funon Association  
Tajalla for Arts and Music Society  
University of Jordan  
Alanbat Capital Society  
Tourism Association for Development of Archaeological Sites / Al-Smakyeh Village  
Applied Science Private University  
Al Rabee Society for Nature and Animal Protection







The Story of SCHEP (Sustainable Cultural Heritage  
Through Engagement of Local Communities Project)  
**2019-2024**