

Country Name	Sustainable Community Tourism Development Project in As Salt City
Jordan	

I. Project Outline

Background	<p>In Jordan, the tourism industry was an important source of foreign exchange, and promotion of the industry was one of the major policy agendas for stability and development of the economy. JICA provided assistance to the tourism industry in As Salt City through activities such as promotion of the concept of the Ecomuseum*, opening of the Historic Old Salt Museum (HOSM), and development of the tourism promotion plan and tourism trails, etc. However, there were still several challenges such as vulnerability of implementing agencies as well as the absence of the tourism promotion plan required for materializing the Ecomuseum concept.</p> <p>* Ecomuseum is the concept to compare a certain area to “open-sky museum”, where the community members, on their own initiatives, preserve, conserve, present and utilize their inherited tangible and intangible heritages such as nature, culture and lifestyle in sustainable and scientific manners.</p>												
Objectives of the Project	<p>Through preparation of a mechanism to materialize tourism development based on the Ecomuseum concept, establishment of a mechanism to conserve historical urban townscape, establishment of a tourism system consisting of core museum, satellites and trails*, and development of tourism products which utilize and conserve local cultural resources and benefit local community in a sustainable way, the project aimed at promotion of tourism development which utilizes local cultural resources and benefits local community in As Salt City, Jordan, and thereby having the implementation of tourism development in As Salt City contribute to conserve historic townscape as well as to improve their livelihood.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Goal: The implementation of tourism development in As Salt City contributes to conserve historic townscape as well as to improve their livelihood. Project Purpose: Tourism development which utilizes local cultural resources and benefits local community is promoted in As Salt City. <p>*The Ecomuseum in the project consists of core museum (the core of Ecomuseum that functions as an information center), satellites (buildings and archaeological sites, etc. that comprise the story of the Ecomuseum), and trails (trails that display and explain stories about cultural heritage).</p>												
Activities of the Project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Project Site: Old Salt City (in As Salt City) Main Activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing tourism development plans, regulations and procedures, Implementation of awareness campaign for local community, Formulation, piloting and monitoring of a new Ecomuseum plan and an action plan, Summarizing experiences and lessons learned from aforementioned activities, etc. Review and update of the implementation area and the list of townscape resource developed by Greater Salt Municipality (GSM), Formulation of guidelines for Townscape management and pilot projects, etc. Decision of composition of trail stories and design satellites, Preparation of exhibition interpretation functions of HOSM, Training of museum staff members and others, Implementation of pilot project(s) utilizing the tourism system (core museum, satellites and trails). Formulation of Tourism marketing and promotion plans, Implementation of marketing activities and promotional activities. Inputs (to carry out above activities) <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Japanese Side</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Jordanian Side</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1) Experts: 9 persons</td> <td>1) Staff Allocated: 9 persons</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2) Trainees Received: 15 persons</td> <td>2) Office space</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3) Equipment: Computers and printers, Digital cameras/video cameras, DVD players, Digital monitors, Distance measurement device, etc.</td> <td>3) Expenses for Salt Festival and other project activities</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4) Local expenses</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> 			Japanese Side	Jordanian Side	1) Experts: 9 persons	1) Staff Allocated: 9 persons	2) Trainees Received: 15 persons	2) Office space	3) Equipment: Computers and printers, Digital cameras/video cameras, DVD players, Digital monitors, Distance measurement device, etc.	3) Expenses for Salt Festival and other project activities	4) Local expenses	
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Project Period	September 2012 – August 2016 (Extended period: September 2015 – August 2016)	Project Cost	(ex-ante) 275 million yen, (actual) 389 million yen										
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA)												
Cooperation Agency in Japan	Kaihatsu Management Consulting, Inc., Hokkaido University												

II. Result of the Evaluation

<Special Perspectives Considered in the Ex-Post Evaluation >

- The evaluation study was somewhat affected by the epidemic of COVID-19. In this Ex-Post Evaluation, the evaluation judgment was made by analyzing information acquired by sending and collecting questionnaires and through telephone and e-mail interviews with persons concerned. No field visit was conducted.
- The Indicator 2 of the Project Purpose is not appropriate to evaluate what was originally intended to assess, i.e., the level of understanding of local people about Ecomuseum. At the terminal evaluation, it was reported that the Indicator was not properly assessed and that the Indicator itself was not

appropriately defined. Also it seems difficult to collect sufficient data of local people through questionnaire in the ex-post evaluation, where survey resources are limited. Moreover, the status of promotion of tourism that benefits local people aimed by the Project Purpose can be assessed by other indicators. Therefore, the continuation status of the Indicator 2 was not assessed in the ex-post evaluation.

1 Relevance

<Consistency with the Development Policy of Jordan at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

In the Executive Development Plan (2011-2013), based on the National Agenda (2006-2015), tourism development was one of priority areas of development of investment environment, among seven important pillars.

<Consistency with the Development Needs of Jordan at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

Jordan embraces cultural heritage as well as natural heritage. However, with the economic center moved to Amman, local people also moved to Amman and the large part of the historic buildings were abandoned or occupied by people who did not understand the historic value, leading to the devastation of the historical buildings and negligence of indigenous culture.

<Consistency with Japan's ODA Policy at the Time of Ex-Ante Evaluation>

In the "Country Assistance Policy towards Jordan (2012)", one of the three priority areas was to support for self-reliant, sustainable economic growth, including the tourism sector, where foreign currency acquisition was expected.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, the relevance of the project is high.

2 Effectiveness/Impact

<Status of Achievement of the Project Purpose at the time of Project Completion>

The Project Purpose was achieved by the project completion. The number of residents who wanted to have more tourists increased from 71.3% to 96.1% (Indicator 1), and at least 30 models of historical buildings utilized for tourism were realized as satellites of trails, including mosques, churches and schools (Indicator 3). In addition, the number of visitors to HOSM increased by 266% from 3,277 in 2012 to 12,000 in 2015 (Indicator 4), which was regarded as notable given that the number of visitors to Jordan as a whole was on a downward trajectory during the same period. Moreover, the survey conducted by the project verified that the level of satisfaction of tourists was high (Indicator 5). Three families applied to MOTA for "home visit" and received permission (Indicator 6).

<Continuation Status of Project Effects at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

The project effects have continued to the time of ex-post evaluation. As many tourism projects started to take place in As Salt City, local people have become engaged in tourism business, therefore it is of interest for them to continuously receive tourists in the City (Indicator 1). According to the survey conducted by a member of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV)¹, the percentage of Jordanian people who recommend visiting As Salt City to friends was 87.6% (total number of respondents: 165). The model of historical buildings utilized for tourism is continuously realized. MOTA and Salt Development Corporation (SDC) rehabilitated historical buildings and newly opened them as satellites such as restaurants and cafes. The number of satellites included in trails in As Salt City increased from 30 in 2016 to 39 in 2019 (Indicator 3). The number of visitors to HOSM has also been continuously increasing (Indicator 4). According to the feedback data received from the tourists in the information center after the tours, more than 75% of tourists have been satisfied (Indicator 5). The number of families to receive "home visit" has been maintained as three, at the same level as the project completion (Indicator 6).

<Status of Achievement for Overall Goal at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

The Overall Goal has been achieved. The registered townscape resources including historical buildings have been well conserved in the same condition as the time when registered, and the rehabilitation works are in a way to restore historical landscapes (Indicator 1). It is reported by the implementing agencies that the income from tourism industry has been increased as there are more employment opportunities and new businesses were established. The income through home visit is not very large but contributes to the increase of income of local people (Indicator 2).

<Other Impacts at the time of Ex-post Evaluation>

There have been positive impacts on female participation in tourism activities as 10 women have been newly trained and permitted as local interpreters and employment opportunities for women have been enhanced, including restaurants and handicrafts. No negative impact has been observed.

<Evaluation Result>

Therefore, the effectiveness/impact of the project is high.

Achievement of Project Purpose and Overall Goal

Aim	Indicators	Results
(Project Purpose) Tourism development which utilizes local cultural resources and benefits local community is	(Indicator 1) No. of people who want to have more tourists is increased in the project area to 75%.	Status of the Achievement: achieved (continued) (Project Completion) • The number of residents who wanted to have more tourists was as follows. Baseline survey: 71.3%. Endline survey:96.1%. (Ex-post Evaluation) • The majority of people are more interested in having more tourists, according to GSM and SDC. Percentage of Jordanian people who recommend visiting As Salt City to friends was 87.6% (total number of respondents: 165, Survey conducted by JOCV).

¹ "A study of visitors' satisfaction in HOSM 2019", conducted by one of JOCVs

promoted in As Salt City.	(Indicator 2) No. of people who want to tell stories about Salt is increased by 10%.	Status of the Achievement: unable to verify (N/A) (Refer to “Special Perspectives Considered”) (Project Completion) • Could not be properly assessed (Ex-post Evaluation) • N/A											
	(Indicator 3) The model of historical buildings utilized for tourism is realized at least one case.	Status of the Achievement: achieved (continued) (Project Completion) • At least 30 models of historical buildings utilized for tourism were realized as satellites of trails. (Ex-post Evaluation) • MOTA has rehabilitated buildings and opened the new areas for local activities. Some of the historical buildings have been used for new tourism projects, such as restaurants and cafes. • Satellites included in trails in As Salt City are as follows.											
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Total</th> <th>Detail</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2016</td> <td>30</td> <td>Mosque:2, Church:4, House:4, Gathering place:1, Office:1, Shop:15, School:3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2019</td> <td>39</td> <td>Mosque:2, Church:4, House:3, Gathering place:2, Office:1, Shop:18, School:3, Restaurant and cafe :4, Visitors center:1, B&B facilities:1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Total	Detail	2016	30	Mosque:2, Church:4, House:4, Gathering place:1, Office:1, Shop:15, School:3	2019	39	Mosque:2, Church:4, House:3, Gathering place:2, Office:1, Shop:18, School:3, Restaurant and cafe :4, Visitors center:1, B&B facilities:1		
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(Indicator 4) No. of visitors to HOSM is increased by 15%.	Status of the Achievement: achieved (continued) (Project Completion) • The number of visitors to HOSM increased by 266% from 3,277 in 2012 to 12,000 in 2015. (Ex-post Evaluation) Number of Visitors of HOSM												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>2015</th> <th>2016</th> <th>2017</th> <th>2018</th> <th>2019</th> <th>2020</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>12,000</td> <td>13,500</td> <td>14,300</td> <td>19,000</td> <td>19,753</td> <td>5,322*</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*as of June 2020. The annual number of visitors is likely to be less than previous year due to the impact of the epidemic of COVID-19.</p>	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	12,000	13,500	14,300	19,000	19,753	5,322*
2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020								
12,000	13,500	14,300	19,000	19,753	5,322*								
(Indicator 5) Satisfaction level of tourists to As Salt City is improved to 75%.	Status of the Achievement: achieved (continued) (Project Completion) Satisfaction level of tourists												
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(Indicator 6) No. of families to receive continuously “home visit” is increased.	Status of the Achievement: partially achieved (continued) (Project Completion) • Three families applied to MOTA and received permission. (Ex-post Evaluation) • Number of families to receive “home visit”: 3												
(Overall Goal) The implementation of tourism development in As Salt City contributes to conserve historic townscape as well as to improve their livelihood.	(Indicator 1) Registered townscape resources including historical building are well conserved in the same condition as the time when registered. (Indicator 2) People’s income from tourism industry is increased.	(Ex-post Evaluation) achieved • The registered townscape resources including historical buildings have been well conserved (85% of stairs were rehabilitated, landscaping works were implemented in multiple locations including parks and graveyards). (Ex-post Evaluation) achieved • Examples to show the income increase are as follows. - Five local interpreters and 24 staff members were employed for 10 months and their contract was further extended. - There are more local businesses established.											

Source: Terminal Evaluation Report, Project Completion Report, Questionnaire and interview to MOTA Balqa, GSM, SDC, Survey by JOCV

3 Efficiency

Both the project cost and the project period exceeded the plan (ratio against the plan: 141% and 133%, respectively). It took time to complete activities as requested by MOTA, including the consolidation of exhibit functions of HOSM and training of heritage guides. The outputs of the project were produced as planned. Therefore, the efficiency of the project is fair.

4 Sustainability

<Policy Aspect>

The National Strategy of the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (2018-2020) focuses on sustainable development and revenue increase through tourism, by increasing the number of tourists. The Salt Heritage Trail is indicated within the Strategy as one of the tourism products providing opportunities for developing various comprehensive tourism.

<Institutional/Organizational Aspect>

Tourism promotion has been conducted under the collaboration among MOTA Balqa, SDC and GSM and there is shared understanding among the local actors on their roles and responsibilities. MOTA Balqa has sufficient number of staff while SDC needs at least two more staff members to meet the digital marketing needs and GSM is in short of service delivery staff. The Salt Ecomuseum (SEM) Management Committee established by the project is still functional, as the Committee meets occasionally, though not regularly, when needed and they work together, although the major challenge is funding.

<Technical Aspect>

The majority of staff involved in the project are still engaged in tourism promotion. The SDC staff have skills necessary to implement their duties but they need to further improve the skills. As the staff members are occupied with the daily work load, it is challenging to acquire new knowledge or polish their skills during official working hours. At GSM, the staff have only limited knowledge and skills related to tourism management and would like to enhance it. Regarding local guides/interpreters, the number of the guides increased to 12 (female guides also increased) after the project completion. According to MOTA Balqa, the local people have the key skills necessary to be engaged in tourism, such as interpretation skills, culinary skills, and hygiene/food safety, as they are taking necessary training programs.

<Financial Aspect>

Both MOTA and SDC have problems of budget insufficiency. The economy has been severely affected due to global crisis of COVID-19 and the tourism sector was heavily affected due to strict measures of lockdown and curfews. However, expected tourism activities are being implemented without major problem and SDC is trying to secure necessary budget through Jordan Tourism Board and donor agencies.

<Evaluation Result>

In light of the above, some problems have been observed in terms of the institutional/organizational, technical and financial aspects of the implementing agency. Therefore, the sustainability of the project effects is fair.

5 Summary of the Evaluation

The project achieved the Project Purpose, i.e., tourism development that utilizes local cultural resources and benefits local community, as satellites of trails for tourism were developed and the interest of local people toward tourism was enhanced. At the time of the ex-post evaluation, new tourism areas have been developed and the number of visitors to HOSM is increased. Therefore, the project effects have been continued. The Overall Goal of contributions to conservation of historic townscape and to improve people's livelihood through tourism has been achieved as the registered townscape resources have been well conserved and the income of local people has been increasing. Sustainability is high in the policy aspect but some problems have been observed in the institutional/organizational, technical and financial aspects, because of insufficiency of manpower and financial resources. In the efficiency, the project cost and the project period exceeded the plan. Considering all of the above points, this project is evaluated to be satisfactory.

III. Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Recommendations for Implementing Agency:

- It is recommended that MOTA Balqa, GSM and SDC further strengthen the functioning of SEM Management Committee. This can be done by creating more steady momentum of regular joint meetings among the Committee members to exchange ideas and challenges. If the Committee refunctions in more effective manner, it will be an effective tool especially during and post COVID-19 pandemic. It will help identifying the financial gaps as well as challenges encountering local community working in the tourism sector in As Salt City.

Lessons learned for JICA:

- The project made a good foundation of tourism development in As Salt City, involving local communities and introducing the concept of "Ecomuseum". The project established an organizational structure (SEM Management Committee obtained official approval by Decision No.5-26, in March 2014), and provided capacity building for the committee members. These experiences of the project may serve as good practice in promoting sustainable community tourism.
- One of the Indicator of the Project Purpose (Indicator 2) was not appropriately assessed at the terminal evaluation and was not assessed at this ex-post evaluation. To assess the project effects appropriately during and after the project and derive useful recommendations/lessons learned, it is necessary to define indicators that precisely assess the intended effects. Also the feasibility to collect data during and after the project should be taken into consideration.



MOTA Balqa Tourism Directorate and Historic Old Salt Museum Facade



Tourists (Guest House)