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Jordan Tourism Development Project



Ministry of
Tourism & Antiquities



PLAN FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TAFILEH

2013 -2016



This copy was reviewed by partners and the local community of Tafleh

USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project
with

Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities

Coordination with
Ministry of Interior
Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
Jordan Tourism Board

PLAN FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TAFILEH

2013-2016

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ATTA	Adventure Travel Trade Association
CBO	Community Based Organization
DoS	Department of Statistics
GoJ	Government of Jordan
JEDCO	Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation
JITOA	Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Corporation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
TTU	Tafleh Technical University
VTC	Vocational Training Corporation

INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

USAID Jordan Tourism Development Project responded to a request by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA) to assess and suggest options for using tourism as an economic growth engine in the governorate of Tafleeh. To carry out the assessment, USAID tourism project partnered with staff from the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities (MOTA), Tafleeh Governorate and the Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) and conducted a rapid appraisal among local community members. This assessment is found under “Appendix B – Participatory Rapid Appraisal: Findings and Community View.”

To ensure a multidisciplinary review of the state of development in Tafleeh, the rapid appraisal was augmented through extensive consultations with a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders, including tour operators and tour guides, as well as the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation (MoPIC).

Following the appraisal, USAID tourism project collated the outcomes of the assessment to develop a Tafleeh Tourism Development Plan of action for MoTA feedback, because it is critical that each suggestion be viewed in context of the total solution.

The plan of action, however, should ideally undergo further investigation and validation through a wider stakeholder consultative process with the private sector tourism trade, NGOs, local community representatives and Government of Jordan (GoJ) stakeholders before it is adopted and finalized. This will ensure completeness, local buy-in and ground proofing of the proposed solutions. The agreed plan of action can then become an important resource for guiding and generating targeted development assistance for Tafleeh from the new Governorates Development Fund as well as other donors, and to catalyze private sector investors through a unified vision.

The proposed activities were informed by the private sector tourism trade and designed in collaboration with local community stakeholders, including both public and private sector individuals, ensuring local buy-in if and when the proposals are implemented.

Options for the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities to Support Tourism Development in Tafleeh

This document provides MoTA with a comprehensive list of viable and practical options to support tourism development in Tafleeh. Following the analysis, suggestions are presented in the section entitled “A Plan of action for Developing Tourism in Tafleeh.” A brief bullet-point summary of suggested activities is then presented in Appendix A. USAID tourism project is ready to respond to additional requests for information from MoTA as needed.

Timescale and resources

Using tourism as a poverty alleviation and employment creation solution in Tafleeh is a large-scale and complex initiative that is starting virtually from scratch. The scale, scope, and duration of the suggested Tafleeh activities require a multi-year undertaking. Yet, to achieve sustainable and effective results, a concerted effort to develop and match both the product (supply) and the market (demand) in what is effectively a new destination is needed and should be done with speed and intensity. The cost of the Tafleeh initiative will depend on MoTA's selection of the various activities discussed but a certain amount of front loading is required because of the significant desires and expectation of locals for quick action, which is challenged by the historic lack of planning and investment in previous years, and weak local capability, which requires substantial training and upgrading.

BACKGROUND

2. BACKGROUND

Lying north of Maan, south of Karak and one hour from Petra, Tafleeh is a southern governorate in Jordan with an area of 2,209 sq km and a population of 83,700¹ residents. The towns in the governorate are mostly located at elevations exceeding 1000m above sea level. As a result of limited planning and investment, tourism is virtually non-existent in the governorate, with the exception of the Dana Biosphere Nature Reserve² and its adjacent village. For these reasons, tour operators do not offer visits to Tafleeh and independent travelers are generally unable to find visitation options on offer. Local residents, therefore, are not benefitting from Jordan's tourism successes over the past decade, in spite of tourism being the country's largest industry and private sector employer.

The acute economic challenges of Tafleeh are in part due to the lack of significant economic activity as well as diversity and scale in the governorate. Other than phosphate mining, the private sector is weak and engaged primarily in small local trades and some agriculture. In private meetings conducted during the assessment, as well as in news reports and studies, residents of Tafleeh expressed a feeling of neglect, frustration and economic despair. Tafleeh was recently highlighted in local news when some of its residents vocally protested poor local conditions as a result of the economic challenges faced by local residents, which coincided with the impact of the Arab Spring.

Tafleeh Governorate Population		
District	Population	% of total
Tafleeh	52,150	62%
Bseira	21,510	26%
Hasa	10,040	12%
Total	83,700	

A. Historic Significance of Tafleeh

Situated on the Kings' Highway, Tafleeh was strategically located along a major ancient trade route and consequently holds important historic sites dating from biblical times. In 1984 a team of archaeologists from the University of Arizona discovered prehistoric stone tools, estimated to be 90,000 years old, excavated from caves in Ain Defla and Hasa, which provided scientists with important information about development in the Levant and its contribution to human civilization. The oldest known kingdom established on Tafleeh's soil was Edom, which existed during the Second Iron Age alongside Moab, its longtime northern ally (today's Kerak) and Ammon (today's Amman). The Edomite Kingdom stretched from Wadi Hasa in Tafleeh to Aqaba, with Bseira as their capital.

The records of the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses II showed his connections to the Edomites, and legend has it that his daughter married a local king in the Sela' Fort. Tafleeh was later annexed to the Nabataean Kingdom, housing several major caravan stations such as Tannur (discovered in 1936 by Nelson Glueck), Dharih and Al-Maaten. Later, the area came under Muslim rule and was for a brief period under Crusader rule. Two very well known early Muslim shrines are located in Tafleeh. Tafleeh was also the site of a famous battle at the beginning of the last century that is mentioned in Lawrence of Arabia's Seven Pillars of Wisdom.

1. According to the Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation (MoPIC) June 2011 Socioeconomic Analysis for Tafleeh Governorate.
2. Per RSCN Dana reserve management, the reserve hosts around 15,000 visitors annually.



Traditional houses in the renovated Dana village.

B. Socioeconomic Overview of Tafleh Governorate

The available statistics and studies clearly show that the Tafleh Governorate is one of the most impoverished in the Kingdom.

Almost half of all employed work in the public sector³. One third of the employed work in public administration and defense, followed by education, mining and transportation, respectively.

- Almost half of all employed work in the public sector . One third of the employed work in public administration and defense, followed by education, mining and transportation, respectively.
- The poverty rate is almost double the average poverty rate in the Kingdom⁴ standing at 21.1%, up from 19.1% in 2006. It is estimated that 2,350 families and more than 17,000 ⁵ persons live in poverty ⁶ .
- Among Tafleh's three districts, Bseira (ancient capital of the Edomite Kingdom) has the highest poverty rate (31.4%) and is listed as one of the kingdom's poverty pockets by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC).
- The average family income in Tafleh is estimated at JD6,378. Out of 14,300 families in the governorate, 21.9% are considered middle class.
- The Department of Statistics (DoS) 2009 study indicates that Tafleh has 15.6% unemployment, compared with 12.9% nationally. Among those interviewed for this assessment, the unemployment rate appeared higher.
- The governorate has one 120-bed hospital with 38 clinics and 13 pharmacies, a youth center, a Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) center, and a public university.
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Remains of the deserted old village in Maaten

3. The sum of those working in Public Administration & Defense plus Education, considering that the education sector is primarily comprised of government schools.

4. According to the Department of Statistics 2010 Poverty Status Report in Jordan, developed based on 2008 data, the most up-to-date and accurate data about income, expenditure and poverty in Jordan.

5. Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation (MoPIC) June 2011 Socioeconomic Analysis for Tafleh Governorate.

6. To put this in context, those in poverty in Tafleh are about half the entire population of the Petra Development & Tourism Region Authority.

Key Employment Sectors	
Public Admin / Defense	33.8%
Education	12.6%
Mining	9.6%
Transportation	8.1%

C. A Challenging State of Tourism in Tafileh

Tourism into Tafileh is scant, with the exception of the Dana Reserve and its immediate vicinity. A variety of reasons prevent Tafileh from attracting visitors, including:

Virtual absence of Tafileh from the “tourism map” – Currently, with the exception of the Dana Reserve and its immediate vicinity, the Tafileh governorate does not have visitor experiences or tourism opportunities on offer. Tour operators do not currently sell Tafileh due to the lack of tourism products, and individual visitors do not have access to information to learn about or arrange visits. The Jordan Tourism Board website does not mention Tafileh, except for the RSCN facilities. Major trade publications and tour operator brochures in both source and local markets rarely feature Tafileh. Online information on Tafileh tourism is virtually nonexistent.

Poor state of cultural heritage sites – Tafileh boasts a number of sites with cultural heritage significance, many dating back thousands of years. These sites are in a poor state of conservation and presentation. The Nabataean sites, for example, require substantial restoration and interpretation. Tafileh’s most famous fort, Sela', completely lacks any service, interpretation, or even signage. It also requires restoration work to the stairs leading to the attractions on top of the fort, where an Assyrian Obelisk installed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar stood. Visitation is currently at one’s own risk, and absolutely no spending opportunity exists, rendering the asset currently economically worthless to the community. This example is typical of the current state of Tafileh’s cultural heritage assets.

Derelict state of the hot springs wellness sites - The two main wellness sites, the hot springs of Afra, and the Burbeita park and pools, are among the stand-out assets of the governorate. However they are currently in a substantial state of disrepair and require significant physical upgrades and a complete visitor management system, service delivery planning and investment.



A view over Dana village.



The hot springs of Afra.



Both are prime assets for tourism and pose immediate targets for private sector management and investment. The therapeutic characteristics and size of Afra springs require a large and experienced operator able to manage the site to international standards. Burbeita, on the other hand, can be brought quickly to a state where it can appeal to the domestic market and requires lower investment and inputs than Afra. Accordingly, the site can be offered to local community investors per strict management guidelines coupled with capacity building assistance to ensure quality of service is maintained.

No tourism services – Another reason cited by tour operators for not selling Tafleeh as part of their tour programs is the lack of tourism services. There are no classified tourist restaurants or hotels of any category. Tour guides can only be found in the Dana Reserve or its immediate vicinity. Visitor or information centers are nonexistent and transport links for independent travelers are available only for self-drive visits, but route signage needs enhancement. Home-based stay or food services are unavailable, with rare exceptions, and what exists is not marketed and needs to be brought up to tourist quality levels.

Development projects have not focused on tourism – While tourism has the potential to be the leading engine of growth, government investments in Tafleeh have not focused on tourism. For example, MoPIC's June 2011 report on Tafleeh's development listed 19 community grants to local NGO beneficiaries - none of which were in tourism - who received between JD1,000 and JD10,000. The Governorate Executive Implementation Plan (2011-2013) lists ten projects valued at JD52.7⁷ million, again none of which are directed towards tourism. Recently, the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) awarded 16 local community grants in Tafleeh for projects other than tourism. That said, MoPIC is now planning to support several local organizations with grants for small community-based projects in tourism through the Governorates Development Fund. It is clear however from our appraisal that these projects lack proper tourism or sustainability planning or training for those involved. For example, previously MoPIC's Qudorat program, implemented with the Jordan River Foundation, provided furniture and other support for a community-managed visitor center in Sela' following MOTA investment



Sunset view over Sela'.

7. These projects range from JD 0.8 million to JD 9.7 million for infrastructure and social welfare,



in rehabilitation of the building. Currently, this is operated part-time, suffers from lack of hygiene and continues to decay because of poor maintenance.

Lack of tourism awareness and skills – Local residents are aware of tourism success in other areas in Jordan but do not have a fully viable understanding of how they can derive economic benefits from or become involved in tourism. In our contacts with the local residents, it was clear that they are not aware of how to start or develop tourism enterprises. Basic business skills, service delivery skills and tourism enterprise development skills are needed to improve private sector engagement in tourism. For example, in discussions with one entrepreneurial cooperative, its vision to develop ecotourism experiences is not in line with market requirements in that they envisage the use of concrete slabs as lookout points on nature trails, and to invest in building accommodation along nature trails as opposed to an eco lodge or a camp. Improved food handling and food preparation and service, handicraft development, and the creation of authentic experiences are all needed for tourism-based enterprises to take root and grow successfully.

Lack of qualified tourism and hospitality workers – In spite of the high unemployment rate and poverty levels, unemployed Tafleh youth avoid hospitality jobs. In the Dana area, for example, local hostels find it difficult to find Jordanian staff, forcing them to resort to expatriates. The current impression of youth regarding hospitality jobs has been an impediment to both entrepreneurship in tourism as well as to the youth themselves in training for potential jobs. The positive indicator now is that the majority of parents interviewed for the assessment and a growing number of youth expressed willingness and interest in pursuing tourism training and careers.

Absence of tourism and hospitality training programs – In addition to weak tourism awareness, the absence of tourism and hospitality training facilities in the governorate contributes to the virtual non-existence of hospitality workers from Tafleh who can fill existing positions or future ones. The Vocational Training Center in Tafleh does not have a hospitality program and the Tafleh Technical University does not teach or prepare students for careers in tourism or hospitality.

Social conservatism – Tafleh residents are socially conservative. This is not necessarily a detractor to tourism development but it does require a special approach to deliver authentic traditional experiences and products that respect local traditions while appealing to increasing numbers of tourists. Consultation with industry stakeholders showed a widespread impression that the residents of Tafleh are not interested in tourism or open to foreign visitors. However, the field assessment showed that there is community interest and a desire to participate in tourism development, though they lack the knowledge, skills and means to do so. The result is that Tafleh does not normally get considered in tour planning by operators.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR DEVELOPING TOURISM IN TAFILEH

I. PLAN OF ACTION FOR SUCCESSFUL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TAFILEH

A. The Traditional Challenge: Supply vs. Demand-Driven

USAID has partnered with the Government of Jordan (GoJ) over many years and has invested in tourism development in several locations in Jordan with substantial success. The formula for this success has, in part, been the result of careful product and market planning with technical support and capacity building, together with the careful selection of tourism areas in which USAID investments were made. The plan of action followed to date has supported existing destinations in a planned way through either enhanced supply measures (visitor experience products) or strengthened demand (marketing) in the context of national growth to avoid dilution.

Areas which successfully developed tourism have focused either on demand expansion or product enhancement. Doing both simultaneously (creating a new destination) is much more complex.

For example, when USAID began its Madaba tourism development support, the destination was already known (some demand existed), and the tourism products (cultural center, churches, Mt. Nebo, etc) were present and in use (supply existed). The need identified was to upgrade the town and the visitor experience by enhancing existing products and creating new ones to capitalize on the obvious potential. The approach, which has been successful, was to increase visitor spending and extend stays in a planned way.

The case of Tafleh is recognized as being particularly challenging. The current absence of market-ready tourism products and virtually no current demand requires a different and deeper approach to development in order to be effective. Methodical incremental change is necessary, but the approach should include substantive simultaneous multi-pronged interventions deployed in an accelerated manner. The focus should be on soft infrastructure for tourism development (awareness and skills), local community engagement, and creating visitor experiences. These should be deployed together with a focus on raising industry awareness through marketing and increased publicity.

For tourism development to succeed in Tafleh an accelerated intense and comprehensive effort is required, an approach different to what has been deployed elsewhere in the past.

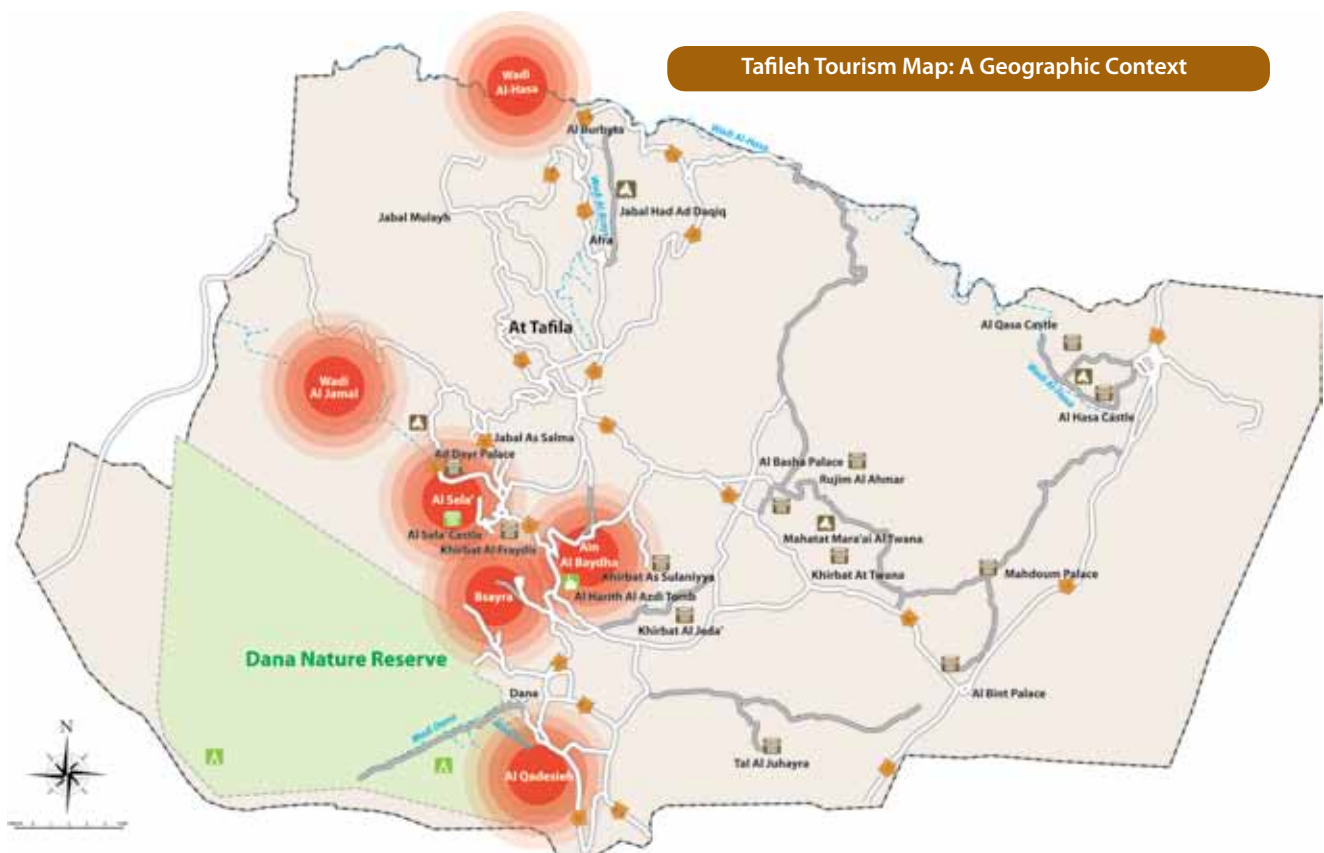
B. Summary of Recommended Approach

The below summarizes an approach that will achieve high impact results in a cost-effective manner.

No large scale construction – It is recommended to avoid large scale construction to ensure compliance with sustainability principles, minimize cost, and fast-track implementation.

Capitalize on the local culture of respect and conservatism – The conservative nature of Tafleeh residents, which many view as a detractor to tourism, can in fact serve as a key pillar of success. Celebrating the traditional lifestyle of its residents, Tafleeh can rise to fill a desire to experience traditional culture that is not spoiled by urbanization. An example of traditional lifestyle that is a resounding tourism success is that of the Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Amish community in the United States, which maintains a conservative tradition as the bedrock of its life and a magnet for tourism. This experience underscores the opportunity of celebrating the conservative nature of Tafleeh residents rather than attempting to change it.

Build on the appeal of Dana reserve – The Dana Reserve is known worldwide among nature and adventure enthusiasts. Tafleeh can appeal to this market by capitalizing on Dana's popularity and extending the visitation options in the area from just the reserve by adding several complementary experiences rooted in Tafleeh's natural landscape and cultural heritage.



Link with Petra – With almost one million annual visitors and only an hour away, Petra can serve as a base for tours into, or through, Tafleeh.

Create new experiences – Several new attractions can be created in Tafleeh with distinguishing features not available in other parts of Jordan. These can include rural tourism, immersion in traditional culture, and history-flavored adventure tourism experiences.

Focus on quick-to-market initiatives – The quickest initiatives to market are those that are ready to promote with minimal investment. With some short-term enhancements, the Dana Village hotels, for example, can be promoted as a unit immediately. New product creation can also focus on authentic experiences to be promoted to the domestic market in the short-term, and internationally in the medium to long-term.

Differentiate – Product differentiation is essential for success. With many rural landscapes closer to Amman, Tafleeh must develop differentiated products in order to succeed. This needs to be reflected in the motif of lodging, the packaging of cultural experiences, and the brand messages communicated.

Plan for international excellence - By drawing on world-renowned organizations such as the Adventure Travel Trade Association⁸ (ATTA), the British Mountaineering Council⁹ and similar international bodies, both credence and renown can be gained more quickly than through traditional paths. These may be drawn in early in the process, not only to experiment and promote new trails and experiences, but to help design them from the outset.

Spread the benefits by focusing on communities in various geographic areas – This plan suggests tourism initiatives that create attractive experiences throughout Tafleeh to spread the benefits to as many villages as possible. These include:

- Ein Al-Beidha Village (Sela'and Maaten communities)
- Dana Village
- Qadisiyeh Village
- Afra and Burbeita

Tour operators and guides stressed that Tafleeh should be developed as a nature and adventure destination.

C. The Great Possibilities for Tourism in Tafleeh

Contrary to common view, with guidance, technical assistance and investment Tafleeh can be developed into a distinctive new tourism destination that is unique in its own right among the various sites in Jordan.

The potential to develop engaging tourism experience in Tafleeh is evident, as its setting, location and landscapes encompass several little-known tourism gems that are far off the beaten track. Tafleeh sits quietly amid scenic valleys and mountains, dotted with friendly villages and relics of millennia past.



Community members from Tafleeh in traditional dress.

It is almost midway between Madaba and Petra along the King's Highway, an ancient route that has been continuously used for thousands of years. From high altitudes to depths below sea level, Tafleeh boasts a distinguished terrain prime for nature and adventure tourism. Tafleeh has a number of fascinating historic sites and the area has strong scope for nature and adventure-based experiences, as the landscape lends itself to hiking, trekking, canyoning, bird-watching and more.

The area's villagers are traditional and welcoming. Jordan's "rugged countryside"¹⁰ is one way to view Tafleeh, whose attraction can be boosted by an unadulterated countryside community hosting an authentic rural experience.

This has the potential over time to create hundreds of tourism and hospitality jobs, and develop tens of tourism-based MSMEs with low barriers to entry. Food and drink are an integral part of

8. <http://www.adventuretravel.biz>

9. <http://www.thebmc.co.uk>

10. Tafleeh as Jordan's Rugged Countryside may serve as a starting point for a discussion on the destination's positioning and brand messaging.



Jordanian life throughout the country, and these experiences and related traditions can be woven in special ways into any Tafleleh experience.

Furthermore, while some are unsure of the readiness of Tafleleh residents to welcome tourists, the assessment found otherwise: Tafleleh residents stated an eagerness to receive tourists and expressed a desire to develop tourism-based livelihoods.

TAFLEH'S UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

Jordan's rugged countryside

Features of the Tafleleh product:

- Welcoming villagers
- Authentic traditional rural experiences
- Countryside living
- Distinguished landscape with varied ecosystems
- Deep history blended with adventure



II. ESTABLISHING VISION AND MOMENTUM FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN TAFILEH

A. Ensure Tafileh Stakeholder Agreement on Destination Vision and Plan of action

To kick-start economic growth in Tafileh through tourism, it is critically important to obtain local stakeholder buy-in. Tafileh's diverse stakeholders (families, business owners, community leaders, organizations and public sector partners) must agree on a common vision for the future of the Tafileh destination and how tourism should be developed. A series of community stakeholder meetings should be held to obtain input in forming the strategic vision, which culminates in a governorate-wide conference to agree and endorse it. The agreed plan of action should be published and signed at a public event by the various parties to ensure public and private endorsement, community awareness and to facilitate future collaboration.

B. Build Tourism Awareness among Local Communities and Youth

Raise local community's tourism awareness – While members of the local community in Tafileh expressed interest in tourism development their knowledge of the industry is currently weak. An awareness program is needed to raise their appreciation of the area's tourism potential and how they can benefit as communities and individuals from tourism and engage with it. An understanding of the tourism industry is needed, including market (customer) requirements, and quality standards as well as how international visitors select and book experiences and how tour operators promote experiences and areas to tour groups and individuals. Some of the challenges that need to be overcome include insufficient information about the industry and a lack of understanding of western culture, values, and traditions as well as the role Tafileh residents can play in promoting their area and welcoming visitors.

Generating awareness among the general public and enhancing local perceptions of tourism will contribute greatly to the launch of tourism development in the area. The benefits that tourism has brought to other parts of Jordan should be highlighted to the different segments of the society in Tafleh including: policy makers, community influencers, students and teachers, parents, media, career influencers, local business owners and the general public.

Promote business collaboration – An issue that emerged from the rapid appraisal is the need to promote the benefits of collaboration for the common gain of the local tourism scene. For example, joint promotion and linkages among lodging establishments should be seen as a benefit to all, as opposed to competition.

Campaign Implementation - For an awareness campaign to succeed and yield the desired results, it must be intensive and comprehensive and have the backing of local leaders. Tafleh will need more innovative methods of implementation. Most important to the campaign is that it must be locally led and driven. Accordingly, it needs to be planned with local opinion and religious leaders from Tafleh who should lead the awareness campaign from its formation and throughout its deployment. Since the awareness campaign aims at attitudinal changes, it will require persistence, consistency, and longevity.

The methodology should also include:

- Identifying target groups to include all generations (including parents and grandparents);
- Provision of tourism facts and information
- Showcasing success stories from other parts of Jordan

Each segment should be targeted through a variety of methods with specific key messages as illustrated in the Community Tourism Awareness Campaign Plan table.

Community Tourism Awareness Campaign Plan		
Target	Method	Message
Policy makers and opinion leaders (sheikhs, parliamentarians, government officials, and community leaders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops / town hall meetings • Collaterals • FAM trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight economic value of tourism in Tafleh • Promote enabling policy reform • Expand financial support through MOTa, DOA and JTB for Tafleh
Local business owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Collaterals • FAM trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight tourism potential in the area • Explain the economic value of tourism in Tafleh • Encourage entrepreneurial thinking towards tourism opportunities • Broaden the thinking of business owners on available opportunities in the area and potential • Encourage friendly and hospitable attitudes towards tourists
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training sessions for more than 50 teachers to transfer knowledge to over 25000 students • Collaterals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight tourism potential in the area • Mitigate the taboo view of the tourism industry • Embrace the benefits of tourism careers and enterprises

Community Tourism Awareness Campaign Plan		
Target	Method	Message
Students (secondary, high school and colleges)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaterals • Radio/TV interviews • Competitions and interactive activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage friendly and hospitable attitudes towards tourists • Highlight tourism potential in the area • Mitigate the taboo view of the tourism industry • Embrace the benefits of tourism careers
Parents / grandparents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Collaterals • Radio/TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate the taboo view of the tourism industry • Embrace the benefits of tourism careers • Encourage friendly and hospitable attitudes towards tourists • Encourage entrepreneurial thinking towards tourism opportunities
Career influencers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Collaterals • Radio/TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight economic value of tourism • Encourage friendly and hospitable attitudes towards tourists • Mitigate the taboo view of the tourism industry • Encourage tourism to become a career of choice
General public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaterals • Radio/TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate the taboo view of the tourism industry • Highlight economic value of tourism • Embrace the benefits of tourism careers and enterprises • Encourage friendly and hospitable attitudes towards tourists • Respect nature and archeology
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Collaterals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve understanding of tourism value • Increase understanding of tourism economic and social significance • Encourage balanced and positive coverage

C. Tourism Capacity Building of Local Stakeholders

Tourism development for MOTA, governorate and MOPIC teams in Tafleeh – MOTA's tourism directorate in Tafleeh has three staff members whose tourism development skills can be supported and enhanced with some training and familiarization visits to other successful sites. Additionally, the governorate has a local development unit tasked with supporting SME and other economic development. Its staff can also add to their competence by engaging in tourism training and awareness. Other stakeholders in Tafleeh that require tourism capacity building are the local IRADA staff, who help cooperatives and entrepreneurs develop project feasibility studies. Municipal staff from across Tafleeh can also be included to ensure proper services and to appreciate the importance of public space cleanliness and maintenance. One illustrative example is the creation of a quality assurance and monitoring unit to audit hostels, restaurants and campsites to ensure compliance with quality, safety, and other essential classification standards of operation.

Tourism capacity building for community-based organizations - There are several local community-based organizations (CBOs) in the Tafleeh region that are currently engaged in very limited tourism activities, mainly in Al-Maaten, Al-Sela', Dana/Al Qadisiya, and Bseira villages. To ensure effective tourism offerings and sustainability of these organizations, these CBOs should undergo a comprehensive program to strengthen their overall institutional and



The Visitor Experience

The visitor experience begins with planning a trip and involves everything a visitor does and sees while at the destination and ends when they return home. Everything from transportation to accommodation to food and beverages, physical and emotional engagement, the venues and attractions visited, and the memories formed are all part of the overall experience.

A positive visitor experience is the hallmark of a successful tourism industry and can lead to repeat business and invaluable word-of-mouth advertising. Several elements can contribute to creating a positive visitor experience. These include the quality of services offered, the uniqueness of attractions, how information is presented, positive interactions with locals, and their culture, and available activities and entertainment.

organizational capacity and ensure their sustainability. Capacity building programs extended to CBOs should include strategic business and work planning, access to finance, proposal writing, financial management, project management, community mobilization and empowerment, communications skills, and other training programs according to the specific needs of each CBO.

III. DEVELOPING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AND PRODUCT OFFERING

Currently, Tafileh does not offer much in the way of visitor experiences that meet market and customer requirements, but it does have the potential to offer something unique that can appeal to a range of markets. The tourism assessment of Tafileh revealed three key attributes:

- 1. Friendly traditional communities with a rich local culture***
- 2. A fascinating ancient history***
- 3. Dramatic natural landscapes***

These facets can work together in various ways to create a tourism experience in Tafileh that really appeals to visitors and encourages them to spend time and money there.



Handcraft showroom in Bseira.

If Tafleeh is going to become competitive in attracting visitors, the visitor experience offered must be engaging and memorable in a positive way. To achieve this, the following is needed:

1. Create authentic experiences based on the local culture and history
2. Develop nature-based and adventure activities to take advantage of the landscape
3. Provide and improve the needed skills and training to operate such experiences, products, and services
4. Provide the necessary infrastructures and facilities to support the tourism experience
5. Develop tourism support services and improve the quality of existing ones
6. Plan for other unique assets (Afra hot springs) with proper investment in the longer term

A. Create Authentic Cultural Experiences Based on Local Culture and History

The area of Tafleeh has been continuously inhabited since the Bronze Age and is located on one of the oldest trade routes in Jordan and the region. Relics from several ancient civilizations have been unearthed there and history is an inherent part of the local fabric of the area. The communities of Tafleeh live around and near many of these historic sites and therefore can benefit from their development.

Living culture - The communities living in the city and villages of Tafleeh adopt a traditional lifestyle which is of great interest to increasing numbers of “cultural” visitors. With training and capacity building there is considerable scope here to develop simple experiences and to provide services that are based on local culture that involve interacting with the communities. Such activities can include food-based experiences such as:

- Enjoying meals prepared and cooked in the traditional manner with local families, and even learning local cooking skills and methods;
- Traditional tea or coffee stops in homes or at traditional local venues/cafes;
- Tasting local dishes and street food in various ways, such as stopping at bakeries, fruit and vegetable markets, local sweets shops or the establishment of picnic sites at key areas in the valleys, or tasting fresh fruit and preserves at farms and homes ;
- Agritourism activities, such as picking olives or fruit at family farms. This experience can be further developed into a festival added to Jordan’s national calendar of events adopted by MOTA;
- Participating in the process of making locally-available food products such as olive oil, olives, preserves and others, with the option to purchase;
- Food-based activities could even be combined in a regular culinary festival that is based on local foods and dishes.

Local customs and traditions can be shared with visitors in various simple ways:

- Many customs revolve around food, so this can be combined with food-based experiences, such as mansaf, to welcome guests, Tafileh-specific sweets for celebrations, tea and coffee, etc.
- Stopping to observe wedding convoys or taking part in local wedding celebrations
- Learning local dances such as dabkeh and dihhiyyeh
- Traditional music performances and learning how to play a basic tableh drum, etc.
- Diwan of Maaten – recreate the Diwan experience at the visitor center or another venue where people of Maaten and supporting areas can come each night and exchange talks and stories.

Historical re-enactments and associated merchandising - The Jordan Heritage Reenactment Company created and runs the Roman army re-enactment in Jerash and Petra and is working elsewhere in the kingdom, including Shobak and Wadi Rum. It is possible to partner with them to develop historical re-enactments in Tafileh; for example one based on Edomite history in the Sela' area. This can especially benefit the retired army officers and could be implemented in collaboration with the Retired Army Officers Association.

B. Develop Nature and Adventure-Based Experiences

Taking advantage of Tafileh's scenic landscapes and natural features, which offer great tourism experiences, is something that can be achieved over a relatively short term, as it requires minimal infrastructural development or investment.

Walking trails and canyons - The area has three wadis that are popular with hikers and local weekenders:

- Wadi Hasa, Wadi Khanzireh, and Wadi Ghweir.
- Wadi Hasa is one of the loveliest wadis in Jordan and offers a truly unique, fantastic, and often unexpected experience, with canyons wading and swimming through it, along water slides, pools and narrow gorges. There are three canyoning routes within Wadi Hasa.
- Wadi Ghweir is also a popular canyon, longer and more demanding, along which hikers will pass through landscapes with three different rock types, each blending into the other, demonstrating the natural diversity and geology of the area. This wadi ends near Feynan, so there is the potential to create that link.
- Wadi Fifa is another interesting trail that has deep sandstone canyons, dripping springs, hanging gardens and a year round stream. It involves rappelling off two cliffs, each of which is around 20 meters high. If properly developed and marketed, the Tafileh attractions can be a lucrative source of economic benefit for local communities. (See Appendix C - Preliminary Assessment and Opportunities of Tafileh Trails) for a more detailed description of possible trails and development opportunities.

Examples of Possible Cycling Trails

Wadi Hasa–Dana Cycling Trail

One such cycling route can be developed from Wadi Hasa to Dana Nature Reserve, travelling along small agricultural roads and single tracks including various hilly terrains up to 1600 m above sea level, then descending to Dana village. The route is around 45km with elevation gain of 660m and elevation loss of 750m.

New Village-Themed Cycling Trails

Sela', Maaten and Bseira villages can offer cycling experiences around the villages, which pass differing scenery and are coupled with authentic cultural experiences.

Cycling trails - Cycling is another unique way to experience the magnificent landscapes and natural beauty of the region. There is great potential for introducing cycling routes for mountain, hybrid, and road bikes. These routes can be part of a cycling holiday across Jordan or as a day cycling activity specifically around the Dana Reserve and other villages in Tafleeh. These cycling routes can also link the touristic villages together and pass through the highlighted attractions of each village.

To develop these new products, research into possible cycling trails should be conducted along with a survey of the area for mountain, hybrid, and road bikes. A plan for developing and promoting the trails is also needed. Local job opportunities can be created by building specialized technical, communication and guiding skills and capacities of new cycling guides. Additional services required along the trails include first aid and food and beverages. Jordan has many cycling clubs and specialist operators which can become partners in this initiative. They can be recruited to support in assessing and developing trails as well as promoting them to their current and new customers.



This is a challenging project and likely to require a large investment. It is critical to begin with a feasibility study to ascertain its economic viability.

Currently there are no biking stations around the area or in the region of Tafleeh and that makes the transportation cost high. Yet, this can be easily converted into an investment opportunity supported through a grant scheme to set up and operate a biking station in one of the areas that is close to existing or potential biking trails.

Paragliding and hang-gliding – This is a new and growing product in Jordan and worldwide. There are areas in Tafleeh that are ideal for paragliding, with mountainous terrain and strong western winds. The US Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association can be a strategic partner in developing this new activity in Tafleeh and overcoming the challenges of ensuring the presence of qualified human resources and technical equipment. These are extreme sports with inherent risk factors, so it is crucial to ensure that the right operating procedures, safety measures and response mechanisms are in place.

Further research would be required into possible locations for paragliding and hang-gliding. It is also critical to secure clearance from the relevant security agencies, as gliding sites are close to Jordan's western border.

Horseback trails - The area can be explored on horseback, and during the assessment a

suggestion was made by one of the local community organizations to offer a horseback trail in Sela'. This can be a unique way of enjoying the landscape and interacting with the community. In addition, horseback riding lessons can be offered by locals. A relatively easy experience to set up and operate, it can also contribute to creating new employment opportunities, such as for local guides and service providers including locally-made food.

Research should first be conducted to determine the feasibility of this experience, possible locations, trails for horseback riding and which communities or cooperatives can best offer this experience. If viable, mapping out trails will be needed along with ensuring availability of proper equipment, safety measures and local capacities to provide this experience in an attractive and profitable manner.

C. Development of Al-Sela' Village

This traditional village overlooks the eastern side of the historic Sela' castle and the dramatic landscape that surrounds it. The village is one of several local examples that illustrate effective vernacular construction methods based on the local environment. Ownership of the village is fragmented; it was abandoned around 40 years ago and villagers, who moved to Ein Al Beidha and dismantled parts of most of the houses for firewood and other materials. MOTA rehabilitated an old school nearby, which was converted into a visitor center. MOTA owns and is planning to rehabilitate eight village units, as a pilot accommodation project. This will take some time as most of the units are severely damaged and require substantial rebuilding or rehabilitation. With further private sector investment the village can be transformed into a charming old style village, similar to Dana village. Services do not currently exist, and rehabilitation of the entire area is needed to ensure the units sit on an integrated site that is viable and safe to receive visitors. Basic infrastructure amenities are also needed, such as water and waste disposal.

To develop the village, ownership and property rights within the village must be identified. Then a comprehensive site master plan that is compliant with Jordan's Heritage Preservation Law (Law No. 5 of 2005) is needed along with an adaptive re-use plan and a design and landscaping





A focus group in Bseira with members of the community along with MoTA and JTB representatives

plan for the entire area. An investment promotion plan focusing on how the village can attract investors or operators to partner with local community owners and consider how various owners can join in a unified project with proportional stakes should also be developed.

D. Presentation, Management and Visitor Servicing of Sela' Fort

Tafleleh's most famous historic site is the Sela' Fort. Located in the southern part of Tafleleh, this Edomite fort is made up of various relics carved into sandstone rocks from an elevated hill overlooking the surrounding wadis. This site includes a gate, caves, wells, stairs, religious structures and, more importantly, an Assyrian Obelisk installed by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar some 2,500 years ago. This site sheds light on the ancient political history of the area, including links to the Pharaohs and to Babylon. This site also offers breathtaking vistas of inspiring natural landscapes and is reached via a very narrow passage of steps leading upwards.

To become a viable visitor attraction, it requires interpretation, signage, trained local guides and some restoration work to the stairs leading to the top of the fort. Further, some enhancements on the road leading to the fort are needed.

Several business opportunities can be created at the base of the fort where the visit will begin, such as local vendors in wooden kiosks to avoid intrusion on the site. An eco campsite with an Edomite era theme can be developed in the open piazza immediately after the narrow siq leading to the stairs. It can serve as an anchor attraction, creating opportunities for locals, such as retired army officers. Local guides versed in the history and legend of the area will be needed. Properly planned, this can become a significant catalyst for international and local visitors and add markedly to Jordan's product offering, especially with the addition of historical re-enactments at the campsite.



Rummana campsite in the Dana reserve

E. Development of Tourism Support Services

Lodging and camping - There is a need to upgrade and support the marketing and sales of existing lodging services in selected areas in Tafleeh, like Dana Village. There is also a need to develop new lodging and camping facilities in certain specific areas to enable extended stays for visitors to experience the product and all it has to offer. Renovating old homes and developing nature-friendly camp sites are proven, viable and cost-effective ways to achieve this in order to attract tourists and visitors to Tafleeh.

Improve tour guiding - There is a shortage of properly trained guides for some of the existing trails. It is anticipated that the need will grow for more trained local guides based on the product offerings mentioned above. Two types of guides are needed for an effective visitor experience:

- a) **Trail guides** are needed to guide guests and visitors along new and existing hiking, canyoning and cycling trails. They need to receive training in tour guiding as well as training related to adventure, nature, communication and language.
- b) **Community guides:** This is another new area and guides need to be trained to escort visitors in areas around the villages, showcasing sites of importance including historic sites and linking the area with its surrounding region, telling folk tales and historical anecdotes.

Visitor information centers - The current visitor centers at Maaten and Sela' need improvements to and fine-tuning of services being offered there. Information and interpretative signage, upgraded kitchen facilities, enhanced toilets, and external settings are required. They need to be equipped with proper information and staff trained to deliver the information in an appealing engaging way. Training similar to the Concierge Destination Training can be developed and delivered.

Road signs and signage - There is a shortage of properly marked directional signs to connect the different areas of Tafleeh with each other and with other nearby attractions such as Petra. Signage is also required to clearly waymark and identify the various products that are available within each area.

Cleanliness and public realm maintenance - Local municipalities need to pay extra attention to and enhance the cleanliness level of the streets leading to and inside the targeted villages and close to attractions as well as within the public realm overall.

IV. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

Once Tafleh's tourism offering is developed, implemented and market-ready it will need to be promoted through an effective marketing plan to attract visitors to the area, and to highlight its uniqueness. The Jordan Tourism Board will play an important role in supporting the marketing of Tafleh, as well as the local community and tourism trade. In order to market and sell Tafleh as Jordan's rugged countryside and attract niche market segments interested in culture and adventure tourism, there is a need to develop a comprehensive and integrated marketing and communication plan of action for Tafleh that positions it within the desired tourism market niches and targets domestic, regional and international audiences.

Specifically, the following activities need to be implemented:

Develop a 2012-2015 Marketing and Communication Plan of action - The development of a robust marketing and communication plan of action is critical to the success of Tafleh as a region, to deliver on the opportunity arising from the visitor experiences to be created. The plan of action must introduce Tafleh as a unique destination and communicate the product offering and visitor experience in an appealing way. It should also change any negative perceptions of Tafleh, where they exist, as unwelcoming and unattractive. The plan needs to address the actions that must be taken to market Tafleh throughout the purchase cycle: awareness, consideration, preference, intention, booking, and visit. It should also define the role of Jordan's tourism industry in helping to boost visitor numbers to Tafleh.

Develop a Tafleh Brand - A clear and recognizable Tafleh brand needs to be developed, along with brand messages and logos, templates and guidelines. This will be based on the unique selling point of Tafleh as a tourism destination, which is a combination of its people and culture, its history and nature and adventure. The brand and its messages need to achieve the desired positioning of Tafleh among the target audiences and differentiate it from other Jordanian destinations.

Create Tafleh web presence - A website with strong content, architecture and functionality that is customer-centric and intuitive is now imperative to providing a solution that will communicate what is available in a motivational way. This will help engage the visitor, and provide information on the breadth and depth of experiences available in Tafleh. It should also create awareness of the variety of nature, adventure, and cultural experiences Tafleh offers and how they can be booked. Moreover, it can create linkages and present expanded visitation options with other attractions within close proximity, such as Shobak and Petra. This is particularly important for Tafleh as a niche market destination that is of particular interest to individual travelers who plan their trips themselves. The website created for the destination of Tafleh needs to be designed as a portal that can accommodate all communities that wish to participate in the tourism offering. The Tafleh destination web site should be connected with the main websites of MOTA, JTB and the Jordan Inbound Tour Operators Association (JITOA). In addition, between 10 and 20 websites can be created for specific tourism cooperatives, MSMEs, and businesses, and these can be linked to the destination site.

Production of marketing and servicing brochures – There is a need for printed marketing material to present and interpret local attractions. The first priority is to create and publish a

governorate map and brochure with GPS coordinates for the range of attractions in Tafleleh. Additionally, a variety of specialized themed brochures listing the various products and experiences are needed, including trails and maps, food and beverage outlets, and services offered by local tourism MSMEs. A general brochure about the key tourism sites and attractions within Tafleleh is needed, along with information about the living culture. Such material can be distributed at locations with high tourism traffic, such as hotels and visitor centers in Amman and Petra. Examples of these include:

- **General Tafleleh brochure** with map covering key attractions and local culture
- **Tafleleh trails** - Trails developed within the area, linking sites and villages can be mapped in a simple and attractive way to guide visitors and include contacts of local guides to use and eateries along the way.
- **The culture and people of Tafleleh** - A brochure about the culture and people of Tafleleh will give visitors an idea of what to expect and some insight into the typical traditional Jordanian lifestyle they will encounter there. It will list local experiences that can be undertaken to learn more about this. It should also offer guidance on meeting and interacting with locals, key sites, activities and services, as well as local customs and traditions.

Media familiarization trips – To get the message out to the desired audiences about developments in Tafleleh and provide information about its new visitor experiences, a series of familiarization trips for foreign and Jordanian journalists and media must be organized. The objective is to develop articles for tourism trade publications in Europe, the US, and other key markets, including the domestic market. Travel journalists primarily from adventure and nature tourism print, online, and broadcast media should be invited, as they represent the best link with the target market for Tafleleh tourism. Jordanian journalists should also be invited to encourage domestic tourism into Tafleleh as a means of fast-tracking business into the area. Up to 25 journalists can be invited in one year to cover existing attractions, and describe the natural landscape that may be developed by attracting specialist adventure companies, groups, trekking publications, among others reached.

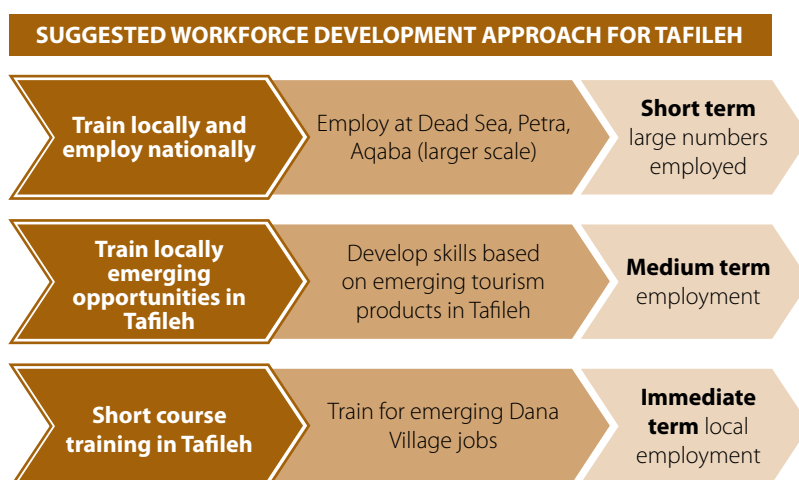
Tour operator familiarization trips – A comprehensive familiarization campaign for Jordanian tour operators needs to be conducted to include Tafleleh in their product offerings. As Tafleleh as a tourism destination would be new, such familiarization should be intense and include managers of tour operator companies, the tour consultants who design itineraries and deal with tourists, and staff who promote tours. The trips would entail experiencing Tafleleh's tourism products and sampling accommodation and food. Familiarization to Tafleleh can also be added to trips of foreign tour operators coming to Jordan for other purposes.

Geo-tagging key sites and trails – Geo-tagging will further support having Tafleleh's products and experiences readily available on the web so that they are more easily found by independent visitors. Recording and publishing GIS coordinates on the web and in brochures will help visitors in trip planning and self-guided tours post-arrival.

Social media engagements – The need to develop social media activities to grow awareness of the destination is now a crucial part of modern marketing. Partnering with JTB and local tour operators to promote Tafleleh through their channels is essential, as is development of targeted social media campaigns that specifically reach out to the various niche audiences, both regional and international. In addition, local business owners and cooperative personnel need to be trained to continuously update their social media presence.

V. JOB CREATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Opportunities for employment in close proximity to Tafileh - It is estimated that in the coming four years 13,000 jobs will be created within Tafileh's employment catchment area of Aqaba, Petra and Dead Sea. These include opportunities within hotels, restaurants, fast food outlets, water-based activities, various forms of tourist transport, tour guiding, and sports and leisure activities. Over the same period, it is estimated that of these job opportunities about 3,000 posts will need to be filled at supervisory and management levels.



Creating job opportunities

for Tafileh youth - There is a clearly identified need to quickly create job opportunities for unemployed Tafileh youth in the short term to combat poverty and inherent unemployment in the longer term. This requires innovative solutions that will impact a large number of youth in a reasonably short period of time. The recommended approach for workforce development in Tafileh is threefold and for impact should ideally run concurrently:

1. Create hospitality skills in Tafileh for unemployed youth and place them within established employers in vibrant tourism clusters such as Aqaba, Dead Sea and Petra. This presents an opportunity to absorb the largest possible number of the unemployed and requires the creation of a new vocational training center in hospitality.
2. Develop tourism and hospitality skills to fill new opportunities in Tafileh in specific disciplines based on the emerging products.
3. Conduct short-course training for locals to fill new hospitality jobs in Dana village.

A. Develop a new hospitality, bakery, and Arabic food training center

Vocational level training offers the greatest potential for training youth who can be absorbed within the tourism and hospitality sector. Vocational training in hospitality, therefore, is ideal to materially contribute to alleviating unemployment among Tafileh youth.

The existing Tafileh VTC is in an excellent physical state with capacity to accommodate and train at least 500 students at various disciplines attending efficiently timetabled training programs. However with 165 male and female trainees registered in 2012, the Tafileh center facilities and its staff are seriously under-utilized. Programs are outdated and do not reflect sector requirements for employment opportunities in a broader range of new industries with promising demand for jobs, such as tourism. This suggested introduction of a new hospitality program at the Tafileh

vocational training center aims to capitalize on the existence of the center and its resources, and to train young Tafleeh residents and help them acquire jobs in the growing tourism sector in Amman, Aqaba, Petra and Dead Sea.

Develop 2 centers and 4 programs targeting 200 graduates annually (ages 17-30 years)

- For large student intake and to create opportunities for unemployed females, the VTC can develop two vocational training centers in Tafleeh, one for males and the other for females, in partnership with key industry firms as follows:

1. **Hospitality Center for Males** (*combining hospitality, bakery, and Arabic food*)
2. **Handcraft Center for Females** (*combining sewing, basket making, and jewelry*)

**Short term employment
plan of action: Train locally,
employ nationally**

All programs will impart real-life work skills and experience through experiential learning in:

- Communication skills
- Arabic language
- English language (hotel and restaurant standard)
- Work ethic and professionalism
- Skills and theory in: hospitality and guest service, food production, food and beverage service, and housekeeping (where appropriate)
- Skills and theory in: tourism handcrafts (where appropriate)

As the program requires successful completion of on-the-job training, it will be necessary to establish industry partnerships to host Tafleeh students and ensure they are provided lodging during the training period.

Proposed VTC Training Programs			
Program title	Level	Duration	# students / Year
Certificate in Hospitality Skills	Foundation Level	1 year – 6 month/ center – 6 month/ industry	100
Certificate in Bakery, Pastry & Confectionery	Foundation Level	1 year – 6 month/ center – 6 month/ industry	25
Certificate in Arabic Food & Service	Foundation Level	4 months in center	25
Handcraft Skills	Foundation Level	6 months in center	100
Potential for Total Trained Annually			250

B. Short Course Training for Local Workforce and Communities

The following presents a portfolio of training courses needed to prepare local community cooperative members and entrepreneurs for MSME opportunities in tourism and hospitality, such as home stay, food service and preparation, as well as supporting the provision of visitor experiences. It also provides basic skills for entry-level jobs for youth.

Course title	Course content
Customer Service	Training on how to deliver customer service and gaining an understanding of tourist expectations, and a practical knowledge of how to provide answers, and control and close customer transactions.
Basic First Aid	Designed to develop basic first aid skills that will enable participants to deal with situations that they may encounter during the day-to-day function of their duties. On completing the course, participants will be able to apply basic first aid practice.
Hospitality skills	Combines theory and practice to highlight the advantages of self-presentation and social interaction, and help participants develop their skills in complaint handling procedures and guest courtesy.
English for Tourism	Develop essential English skills needed to function within the tourism industry and deal with international customers. As the tourism industry is customer focused, the main goal of this course is to enhance effective listening and speaking skills.
Costing and Pricing	Examines and illustrates the principles and techniques of costing and pricing.
Housekeeping Procedures	Designed to enhance participants' knowledge of basic housekeeping functions such as hygiene standards, safety rules, method of cleaning and cleaning schedules, cleaning and servicing a guest room.
Food Production	Trains in the processes of food storage, preparation and cooking techniques, cooking meat, poultry and fish as main dishes, and preparing soups and sauces for main dishes.
Food Presentation	Methods of garnishing food in dishes allocated to various meals.
Food and Beverage Service	Main types of foods and beverage services, basic serving skills, table setup, equipment rules and etiquette of hospitality.
Safe Food Handling	Introduction to safe food regulation, food protection techniques, and good hygiene and facility sanitation.
Menu Planning and Pricing	How to develop a menu card, list of food and beverage items, food combination, food portions and pricing.
Adventure & Nature Tourism	Knowledge related to adventure and nature tourism and focuses on key considerations.
Local Guides (Escorts)	Designed for participants planning to work as tour guides or adventure escorts. The course includes topics in tour operations, tour management, guiding techniques, characteristics of a tour guide, communications skills. Information booklets need to be prepared offering an overall brief on key historic events, the area's flora and fauna, the Dana Reserve, and the local culture.



C. Develop Tafleh Technical University Tourism and Hospitality Program

In Jordan there are 12 universities offering hospitality and tourism programs. In the southern region, three universities offer tourism, hospitality, and archaeology. Spanning four-year programs, approximately 500 students study at all three universities. If attrition and student drop-out from programs is taken into account, the graduate output from these universities falls far short of the workforce needed.

Current status of Tafleh Technical University - Tafleh Technical University (TTU) was established in 2005, replacing Tafleh Applied University College. The university consist of five faculties, one technical community college and six continuous education centers. Approximately

4,500 students are enrolled in Tafleh University programs, 75% are in the Faculty of Engineering and Science, 15% in the Faculty of Administration and 10% in the Faculty of Art.

Tourism and Hospitality Programs in the South of Jordan	
University	Bachelor Degrees offered
Mutah, Karak	Archaeology and Tourism
Al Hussein Bin Talal, Maan	Archaeology, Tourism, Hotel Management
Jordan, Aqaba	Tourism Management, Hotel Management, Food and Beverage Management

Developing a new program in Tourism Management - The university president indicated strong interest in opening a tourism program at Tafleh University, especially since the university has available on-site accommodation. The

following two challenges were cited:

- Financial limitations - TTU is unable to finance establishing laboratories and workshops.
- Difficulties in recruiting qualified professors to relocate to Tafleh and teach tourism specializations.

<i>Suggested Structure of Tourism Bachelor Program at TTU</i>		
<i>University requirements</i>	>	<i>27 credit hours</i>
<i>Faculty requirements</i>	>	<i>21 credit hours</i>
<i>Specialization requirements</i>	>	<i>79 credit hours</i>
<i>Elective subjects</i>	>	<i>6 credit hours</i>
<i>Total Credit Hours</i>	>	<i>132 credit hours</i>



Youth from Sela' village participate in a focus group.

Instead of starting a complete new faculty of tourism, a new program could be developed under the existing Faculty of Administrative & Financial Sciences to teach tourism management as a new major with a focus on tourism marketing. The structure of the program should be developed per the adjacent table. To establish the program, TTU will need to provide the following laboratories and training facilities:

- IT laboratory- equipped with minimum of 20 computer units and specialized tourism/travel software
- Travel agency laboratory - equipped with counter, barriers, information stand, display shelves, name signs, computer with Galileo, data show projector, and screen

Initially, the program can register 20 students annually, building to a full cohort of 80 students over a four year program.

VI. TOURISM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

A. Supporting Tourism Enterprise Development

The majority of Tafleh residents are employed in the public or defense sector. The assessment clearly showed an eager entrepreneurial drive among Tafleh residents. It is necessary that targeted support be provided to help translate such an enterprising spirit into viable, profitable and sustainable businesses, whether owned individually or by the community in the form of cooperatives.

Supporting the creation and growth of locally owned tourism businesses will contribute to creating jobs and improving the welfare of the local community by increasing the income of owners and their families. It is estimated that there is the potential to create at least 100 new job opportunities through small business start-ups.

Approach to Building Tourism MSMEs in Tafleh	
1. Promoting entrepreneurship	
Objective	Actions required
To promote an ethos of entrepreneurship and encourage local entrepreneurs to establish a range of start-up businesses in tourism, including accommodation, restaurants, and entertainment activities.	1. Highlight economic benefits of tourism to the community through awareness sessions.
	2. Identify tourism business opportunities with local community participation via focus groups and brainstorming sessions.
	3. Promote identified business and investment opportunities to local community investors.
	4. Identify and publish a list of available technical and financial support from government and donor agencies.
2. Building capacities	
Objective	Training programs to include
To build on and improve the business management and technical skills of local entrepreneurs through a comprehensive 'Start Your Own Business' training program.	Generating business ideas
	Small business planning
	Managing the business cycle: supply and demand, reaching the market and managing a diversified business.
	Small business management including: marketing, purchasing, stock control, costing, record keeping, and cash control.
	Customized tourism training as per business needs in: communication skills, hospitality skills, customer service first aid safe food handling, food & beverage services; and online promotion.



Nawatef campsite in Al Qadissiyeh, which overlooks the Dana reserve

B. Promoting Access to Finance

Securing finance for small businesses, especially in remote areas, is not easy. It requires an ability to plan, forecast, and articulate how a business will operate and make a profit. Many sources of finance exist in Jordan and some microfinance products are available in Tafleh. A new lending program for Tafleh is not needed, but better information about sources of lending must be provided at community level to support start-ups or expansion. Private microfinance institutions (MFIs), the Development and Employment Fund, or revolving credit facilities can be better matched with those in need to help them achieve their business goals.

A series of information sessions and fairs may be facilitated between prospective borrowers and MFIs to help bridge the gap between financing needs and knowledge of seeking credit.

C. Developing Local Tourism Handcraft Enterprises in Tafleh

Overview of current levels of handcrafting in Tafleh - The handcrafts business in the different parts of Tafleh is not well developed or organized. There is limited production of handcrafts, which is either home-based or through the existing four handcraft cooperatives located in Dana, Qadisseyh, Maaten, and Ein Al-Beidha. Home visits revealed some very interesting common and traditionally inherited handcrafts that are produced by local families, including basket making and trimmings for the Jordanian hatta (tahdeeb al-shmagh). Other lines of handcraft production that are being organized through cooperatives include silver jewelry, accessories, embroidery, and copper art.

With the exception of Al-Qadissieh Women's Cooperative, which received external funds to purchase equipment in addition and technical assistance, no meaningful support has been extended to the handcraft sector in Tafleh. Most of the producers work on an order basis and there is a lack of outlets for showcasing products, with the exception of occasional displays at bazaars in the region.

Developing local tourism handcraft enterprises - Given the nature of the handcraft business and its potential for home-based work or working at workshops, the women of Tafleh are receptive to engaging in the handcraft business. If supported, handcrafts can be a lucrative source of income and employment. To lay the foundations for a sustainable local handcraft sector, a multi-faceted development program is needed, as per the table below.



Handcraft showroom in Bseira.

Support Needed to Develop Local Tourism Handcraft Enterprises
Enhance quality and design of existing products
> Extend technical assistance to improve the designs and material of existing products
> Introduce new designs and products specific to the culture and nature of Tafileh
> Deliver training to the local community (home-based) and cooperatives on newly introduced designs
Support marketing activities
> Create a collective marketing plan of action to promote Tafileh handcrafts
> Identify marketing channels and assist locals to establish market linkages
> Identify outlets for display and support local outreach to such outlets
> Develop a mechanism to collaborate with the RSCN to promote Tafileh handcrafts
Build the capacity of handicraft cooperatives and MSMEs
> Facility upgrade and provision of equipment
> Design packaging for products
> Support training on cost control, pricing and quality systems

D. Dana Village Hostels Upgrade Needs

Hostels in Tafileh, as elsewhere in Jordan, are subject to licensing requirements of MOTTA. Other than the RSCN hotel, Dana Village hotels are owner-managed by the local community. Two are individually owned and two are owned by cooperatives. USAID, working through RSCN, is supporting some minor physical works in one of the hotels and improving the exterior of another in the Dana village. The project is also improving the interior of a restaurant. MoPIC, through Jordan River Foundation, is in discussions to provide some additional limited support.



A room at Dana Hotel

Challenge - The quality and standards of these operations are below the requirements for quality and hygiene. While one new hotel, Dana Castle, plans to open soon, it has not yet identified employees and its premises under construction suffers from flawed design that is destined to render it inoperable as an approved lodging facility. All establishments lack management, operation, or marketing plans. Food handling and guest safety are especially troubling.

Support needed - In order to bring these businesses up to a minimum tourism standard, significant support is needed in training, capacity building, and possibly improvement grants. Support is specifically required in the following areas:

- Menu planning and design
- Upgrade of guest bathrooms
- Compliance with basic fire safety requirements and guest security
- Compliance with food safety and hygiene
- Housekeeping and food preparation skills
- Skills of owners need improvement in customer service and accommodation management

Lodging at Tafileh Hotels and Camp								
Name / Accommodation		Capacity			Employees			
Name	Classification	Rooms	Beds	Tents	Jordanian Male	Jordanian Female	Non Jordanian	Total Employees
Dana	Unclassified	19	70	25	7	2	1	10
Dana Moon	Unclassified	5	10	0	2	0	1	3
Nawatef	Campsite	4	25	7	1	0	2	3
Dana Tower	Unclassified	11	30	0	3	0	1	4
Dana Castle	Under construction	9-10	18	0	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total		48	153	32	13	2	5	20

E. Tafileh Tourism Enterprise Development Grants

In order to catalyze local micro and small enterprise development, the proven combination of technical assistance, training, grants and access to finance should be utilized. Properly deployed, grants can be used to support existing enterprises transform their businesses to become tourist-oriented or enhance businesses already in tourism. Cost-sharing grants can also be used to catalyze new business start-ups, both individually-owned or for local cooperatives. A Tafileh tourism grants fund may be used to support the following:

- Start up or upgrade of tourist restaurants, lodges, home-stay, and other hospitality establishments.
- Support new camping experiences, both stationary and mobile, as distinguished experiences, especially in Al-Maaten or Al-Sela' areas.
- Launch Tafileh-based training programs with local centers.
- Support product development, design, packaging, and marketing of handcrafts.
- Transform the two vistas in Al-Maaten and Al-Sela' through enhancements to the premises and installation of equipment and furniture.
- Create a new visitor interpretation center at Al-Sela' managed by the local community.
- Support creation of visitor services kiosks in Al-Sela' and other areas.
- Support Tafileh promotional activities, both at the destination and enterprise levels.
- Support the development of new, interactive, and engaging visitor experiences, such as night events, adventure trails, and rural experiences designed to attract visitors to stay longer in the area and benefit the local economy.
- Women's cooperatives are especially important for Tafileh's development in the area of handcrafts, as well as other new services. Grants can support development of income-generating projects for home-based production.

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APPENDIX A
SUMMARY OF POSSIBLE USAID TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN TAFILEH

Potential Visitor Experiences and Products to Support

1. Authentic Cultural Experiences

Develop culture and food-based experiences:

- Assess the most effective options in coordination with the local communities and other key stakeholders (guides, tour operators) to determine products and services they are interested in offering and where.
- Training to enhance local capacity to develop product and services concepts, and implement and operate.
- Provide grant and technical support to local communities to develop and implement concepts and package experiences for tour operators and independent travelers.
- Support marketing efforts.

Develop historical re-enactments and associated merchandising

- Conduct historical research on the lifestyles and traditions of ancient inhabitants.
- Recreate a cluster of lifestyle products and activities for visitors .
- Develop costumes and recreate utensils and a historic market.
- Marketing and sales support.
- Develop quality souvenirs that reflect historic eras for sale to visitors.
- Provide grant support to a potential operator to help implement the themed experience.

2. Develop Nature-Based and Adventure Experiences

Walking trails and canyons

- Conduct a basic study and survey on existing and potential trails.
- Improve existing trails.
- Develop new trails.
- Capacity building of local guides in canyoning, guiding, language, first aid, courtesy and communication.
- Develop a proper, detailed visitor safety plan does not exist for trails (existing and new) .
- Provide basic search and rescue equipment should be made available.

Cycling trails

- Conduct research into possible cycling trails and survey the area for mountain, hybrid and road bikes.
- Map out trails and develop an implementation and promotion plan.
- Develop cycling trails.
- Build capacity for specialized cycling guides in area, including for technical and sports cycling, first aid, best environmental practices and communication skills.

Paragliding and hang-gliding

- Conduct research into possible locations for paragliding and hang-gliding.
- Map out gliding areas and prepare needed infrastructure and equipment.
- Build local capacity for running such activities.

Horseback trails

- Research feasibility of this experience and possible locations and trails for horseback riding and which communities or cooperatives can offer it.
- Map out trails, prepare needed infrastructure and equipment.
- Build local capacity for running such activities.

3. Development of Al-Sela' Village

Transform the village into a charming traditional village, similar to Dana

- Identify ownership and property rights within the village.
- Develop a site master plan compliant with Jordan's Heritage Preservation Law (Law No. 5 of 2005).
- Develop an adaptive reuse plan, along with a design for the entire area and a landscaping plan, that articulates the desired visitor experience to be promoted.
- Develop an investment promotion plan that focuses on how the village can attract investors or operators to partner with local community owners, and consider how various owners can join in a unified project with proportional stakes.

4. Presentation, Management and Visitor Servicing of Sela' Fort

- Develop a site management plan in coordination with MoTA and the Department of Antiquities. The plan should include both preservation and presentation aspects, including visitor management. Establish fees for site visits.
- Train local guides on the trails within the fort and its history, stories, and legends .
- Develop a proper, detailed visitor safety plan.
- Develop Interpretation material, both in signage and brochures .

5. Development of Tourism Support Services

Lodging and camping

- Determine what accommodation offerings exist and possible options for increasing this, whether home-stays, B&Bs, small hotels or camps.
- Introduce a tourism business development program to support the community to improve existing and create new accommodation MSMEs that fall within the area's tourism plan of action, and provide grant and technical support (HR development, marketing, sales, etc) for implementation.

Improve tour guiding: two types of guides are needed

- Trail guides: to escort guests and visitors on hikes, canyoning, cycling trails, who are trained in these areas as well as training related to adventure, nature, communication and language.
- Community guides: this is another new area and guides need to be trained on escorting visitors in areas around the villages, showcasing other sites of importance and linking the areas with its surrounding region, telling folk tales and historical anecdotes.

Visitor information centers

Upgrade current visitor centers at Maaten and Sela' as followd:

- Provide information and interpretative signage.
- Upgraded kitchen facilities.
- Enhance toilets and external settings .
- Train staff to efectively deliver information about the area to visitors.

Road signs and signage: directional signs to connect the different areas of Tafileh are needed, along with signs to clearly mark the different products available in each area.

- **Cleanliness:** local municipalities need to pay extra attention to the cleanliness level of the streets leading to and inside the targeted villages.

Potential Marketing and Communications Activities to Support

1. Marketing Campaign

Develop a 2012-2015 Marketing and Communication Plan of action

Develop a Tafileh brand

Create Tafileh web presence

- Create Tafileh website / trails.
- Create websites for SMEs and cooperatives.

Production of promotional brochures

- General Tafileh brochure.
- Tafileh trails.
- The people of Tafileh.

Press familiarization trips

Tour operator familiarization trips

Geo-tagging key sites and trails

Social media engagements

Potential Job Creation & Workforce Development Opportunities to Support

1. Vocational Training Centers

Develop two vocational training centers in Tafileh:

- Hospitality Center for males (combining hospitality, bakery, and Arabic food).
- Handcraft Center for females (combining sewing, basket making and jewelry).

Develop and implement four programs to provide high quality tourism and hospitality training through the centers:

- Develop and launch a Hospitality Skills program.
- Develop and launch a Bakery, Pastry & Confectionery program.
- Develop and launch Arabic Food & Service program.
- Develop and launch Handcraft Skills .

2. Training for Local Work Force and Communities

Conduct short course training to prepare the local workforce and communities for tourism job opportunities such as:

- Customer service.
- Basic first aid .
- Hospitality skills.
- English for tourism.
- Costing and pricing .
- Housekeeping procedures.
- Food production
- Food presentation and garnishing.
- Food and beverage service.
- Safe food handling.
- Menu planning and pricing.
- Adventure and nature tourism.
- Specialized adventure tourism training for tour guides (escorts).

3. Tafileh Technical University Tourism and Hospitality Program

Developing a New Program in Tourism Management

- Develop IT laboratory equipped with at least 20 units and travel software.
- Develop travel agency laboratory.
- Furnish and equip two classrooms.
- Capacity building for faculty.

Potential Tourism Enterprise Development Opportunities to Support

1. Building Tourism MSMEs

Promoting entrepreneurship

- Awareness to promote value of tourism.
- Identify tourism business opportunities .
- Promote business ideas to local community.
- Business development support.

Building capacities

- Start Your Own Business.
- Business specific trainings.
- Communication skills.
- Hospitality skills.
- Customer service.
- First aid.
- Online promotion.

2. Access to Finance

Create enabling environment for entrepreneurs and small businesses to access finance:

- Identify the range of microfinance institutions that will facilitate loans to tourism businesses, the conditions and requirements.
- Train entrepreneurs in preparing feasibility and viability proposals.
- Train in negotiation techniques to empower entrepreneurs work with finance agencies.

3. Developing Local Tourism Handcraft Enterprises

Enhance quality and design of existing products

- Extend technical assistance to improve the designs and material of existing products .
- Introduce new designs and products specific to the culture and nature of Tafleeh.
- Deliver training to the local community (home-based) and cooperatives on newly introduced designs.

Support marketing activities

- Create a collective marketing plan of action to promote Tafleeh handcrafts.
- Identify marketing channels and assist locals to establish market linkages.
- Identify outlets for display and support local outreach to such outlets.
- Develop a mechanism to collaborate with the RSCN to promote Tafleeh handcrafts.

Build the capacity of the handicrafts cooperatives

- Facility upgrade and provision of equipment.
- Identify handicrafts products in the region.
- Mentoring on design, production and sales.
- Support training on design and product development, market readiness, communications and hospitality skills, cost control, and technical training.

4. Dana Village Hotels Upgrade

Physical Upgrade

- General presentation and upgrade of facilities.
- Upgrade of guest bathrooms .
- Kitchen hardware.
- Room furniture.

Capacity Building

- Menu planning, design and pricing.
- House keeping.
- Safe food handling.
- Safety and security.
- Customer service .
- Accommodation management.

Technical Support

- Hotel operations software (point-of-sale, reservations, check in/check out, others).
- Marketing collaterals and printed materiel (brochures, menus, promotions).
- On-line presence (websites, booking) .
- Coalition of hotel operators .
- Visitor programs and experiences.

5. Enterprise Development Grants

A Tafileh tourism grants fund may be used to support the following:

- Start-up or upgrade of tourist restaurants, lodges, home stay, and other hospitality establishments
- Support new camping experiences, both stationary and mobile, as distinguished experiences, especially in Maaten or Sela'.
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- Support Tafileh promotional activities, both at the destination and enterprise levels.
- Support the development of new, interactive and engaging visitor experiences, such as night events, adventure trails and rural experiences designed to attract visitors to stay longer in the area and benefit the local economy.
- Women's cooperatives are especially important for developing handcrafts, and other potential new services, in Tafileh - grants can support income-generating projects for home-based production.

Potential Small Tourism Business Opportunities to Support

1. Accommodation

- **Eco lodge camps:** serving hikers and bird watchers to enjoy the nature in the area.
- **Bed and breakfast:** should an extra room or level be available at any of the local houses in the area it can be designated for visitors to the area who wish to experience living in a local household.
- **Mobile tent:** rented to visitors who wish to hike on their own past for more than one day .
- **Rest house:** along the Kings Highway.
- **Mobile camps:** including mobile utilities, camping equipment, portable toilets, etc.).
- **Rest houses** along the Kings Highway.

2. Food

- **Traditional restaurants:** serving local dishes including madgoga, ragaga, mjalleh in authentic setting.
- **Home cooked meals at local houses** families can be trained to serve meals to visitors at their houses to have an authentic experience with the local community.
- **Take-away snack shops:** snacks/light meals can be packed in heat resistance bags for hikers that wish to take meals on their trips.
- **Local produce market:** ladies producing jams, pickles olives cheeses and daily products can unify their production methods and sell their products under one brand, at one outlet.
- **Take away snack shops:** snacks/light meals can be packed in heat resistance bags for hikers that wish to take meals on their trips.

3. Services

- **Mountain bike rental:** rental outlets at the start and end of cycling trails.
- **Adventure operators:** these operators can lead tourists to the interesting trails depending on their interests, in addition to providing them with the required equipment .
- **4x4 rentals** To link villages and starts of trails.

4. Tourist Entertainment

- **Dairy produce festival in spring:** tourists will be able to buy and learn how cheese, ghee, yogurt and other local foods are produced, among other related local community activities .
- **Local singing/dance group:** local community youth can be trained to perform local songs and folkloric dances.

APPENDIX B
PARTICIPATORY RAPID APPRAISAL:
FINDINGS AND COMMUNITY VIEW

The assessment of tourism in Tafleeh is based on consultations with members of the local community in four areas across the governorate. It employed one-on-one meetings, focus groups, desk research, field visits, and inspection of key attractions, trails and wadis. Meetings and focus groups were held with over 100 persons from the following stakeholders:

- Families in the areas of Maaten, Sela', Bseira and Qadisiya (teams visited numerous homes)
- Focus groups with cooperatives to understand tourism potential and investment inclination
- Focus groups with youth to understand views on employment, tourism and training needs
- One-on-one meetings with local business owners and entrepreneurs in Dana and other areas
- Public sector consultations including MoTA personnel in both Amman and Tafleeh, and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) heads of the Enhanced Productivity Program and Governorates Development Directorate.
- Meetings with academic and vocational institutions (Tafleeh Technical University and Tafleeh Vocational Training Center)
- Meetings with tour operators and tour guides
- Consultations with Jordan River Foundation and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

The inclusion of tour operators, guides and the JTB was deemed essential to ensure the suggested initiatives would reflect potential market preferences. The above consultations were preceded by an exploratory trip and local meetings in Tafleeh conducted by MoTA and USAID tourism project in coordination with the Governorate of Tafleeh.

A. Rapid Appraisal Team

This latest intensive appraisal was conducted in the field between the 16th and 17th of June by a team of 28 professional organized by USAID tourism project and MoTA and comprised the following:

- Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities – 6 (3 from Amman and 3 from Tafleeh Directorate)
- USAID tourism project – 19
- Jordan Tourism Board (JTB) – 1
- Tafleeh Governorate – 1
- Ministry of Labor / Vocational Training Corporation - 1

The team was also accompanied by the Tourist Police for the majority of the field research.

The rapid appraisal team was divided into sub teams of 4-5 persons each. Each team that was selected to participate in the appraisal process was briefed to conduct the interviews with care, respect, and concern to the gender of the participants. A special orientation on the appraisal process, its objectives and intended outcomes was done prior to execution. In addition, teams were made up of various age groups and different professional foci in order to relate to the diverse groups interviewed.

Consultations with tour operators, guides and Jordan Tourism Board were essential to ensure the suggested initiatives reflect market demand

B. Participatory Rapid Appraisal Design and Methodology

Starting the participatory rapid appraisal, on May 30, 2012, USAID tourism project and MoTA conducted exploratory meetings with Tafileh tourism stakeholders and field visits to key tourism attractions and cooperatives. This continued on the 16th and 17th of June 2012 with an intensive two-day field-based assessment conducted in four areas across the Tafileh governorate. The one-on-one meetings, focus groups and interviews involved dialogue with more than 100 community members. These included community based organizations (CBOs), small and medium enterprises (SMEs), families, women, youth, vocational training center and the university. Also during the field visit, key attractions, trails and canyons were inspected.

Prior to the PRA, the team conducted secondary research to gain an understanding of the prevailing socioeconomic state of Tafileh and the tourism situation. The research included desk research, meetings with tour operators and tour guides, consultations with Jordan River Foundation, public sector consultations including MoTA

C. Stakeholders Consultation

Focus groups conducted: The team conducted seven focus groups, two of which were with specific cooperatives, one with women, two with youth, one with representatives from several Tafileh cooperatives from various geographic areas and hotel owners, and the final one with representatives from governmental and nongovernmental organizations. The focus groups were conducted in Al Maaten, Sela', Bseira, Al-Qadisiya and Dana villages. The community's perspective on the potential of tourism in Tafileh, women in tourism, youth and tourism job opportunities in addition to roles of cooperatives in the tourism sector were discussed.

Interviews with families: Twenty three interviews with families were conducted in Ein Al Beida, Dana, and Al Qadisiya villages to assess their perspective on the tourism sector, aptitude to engage in tourism activities in Tafileh, and their views on tourism jobs. Families visited consisted of a variety of income levels and have children from both genders.

Small business owners: The team also conducted twenty one interviews with small business owners in Ein Al-Beidha, Dana, Al-Qadisiya and Bseira. The businesses visited included supermarkets, bakeries, restaurants, butcheries and other businesses. Additionally, one-on-one meetings were held with three hotel owners and one camp worker in Dana.

Education: Meetings with two vocational centers (VTC) and with the Tafileh Technical University were conducted to assess tourism education offered in Tafileh and the needs.

Meetings with VTCs and the university

1. Tafileh Technical University
2. Tafileh vocational center for females
3. Tafileh vocational center for males

Meetings with hotel and camp owners

1. Dana Hotel
2. Dana Moon Hotel
3. Dana Tower Hotel
4. Dana Castle Hotel
5. Nawatef Campsite

Stakeholders represented in the focus groups and meetings

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Tafleh Rehabilitation Foundation | 2. Tafleh Governorate |
| 3. The Syndicate of Enterprisers | 4. The Cooperative Association |
| 5. Al Rai' Newspaper Office in Tafleh | 6. Qadisiya and Dana Ladies Cooperative |
| 7. IRADA | 8. Tafleh Development Foundation |
| 9. Women's Union | 10. Labor Directorate |
| 11. JOHUD | 12. Vocational Training Corporation – Tafleh center |
| 13. Jordan River Foundation | 14. Tafleh Technical University |
| 15. Al-Baqee Tourism Cooperative / Al- Maaten | 16. Bseira Municipality |
| 17. Al Sela' Village Cooperative | 18. Public Works Directorate |
| 19. Dana Castle Tourism Cooperative | 20. Directorate of Development |
| 21. Abna' Dana and Qadissieh Cooperative | 22. MoTA Tafleh Tourism Directorate |
| 23. General Union for Voluntary Societies | 24. Families |
| 25. The Cooperative Union | 26. Small businesses |

Appraisal Activities According to Geographic Areas

Area	Focus Groups	Families Visited	Businesses Visited	Hotels/Camps Visited
Al Maatan	2	7	6	
Al Sela'	2	6		
Dana / Al-Qadisiya	1	10	10	4 hotels 1 campsite
Bseira	2	-	5	

Focus Groups and Meetings Conducted

Focus Groups	Focus Groups	Families Visited	Hotels/Camps Visited
Al Maaten Village Focus Groups			
Focus group 1: Al Baqee Tourism Cooperative	28	14	14
Focus group 2: Women	8	8	
Al Sela' Village Focus Groups			
Focus Group 1: Al Sela' Village Cooperative	18	1	17
Focus Group 2: Youth	13		13
Dana Village Focus Groups			
Focus Group: Cooperatives and hotel owners			
Bseira Village Focus Groups			
Focus Group 1: Cooperative representatives	28	5	23
Focus Group 2: Youth	6		6

D. Key Findings

Community members and cooperatives

- Cooperatives are not pursuing revenue generating options that could improved their economic situation.
- Cooperatives suffer from weak institutional capacity.
- There is a general weakness in access to finance, particularly among women.
- The local community is not well aware of the tourism potential in Tafleeh.
- Community members strive to utilize the natural and cultural assets at Al Sela' but do not possess the know-how nor funds to embark on tourism projects that could become marketable.
- A group of local community members at Al Sela' created a center for human resource development in an attempt to upgrade the skills of members of the local community, however participation is quite limited due to transportation costs and training fees.
- Members of Al Sela' community see opportunity in renovating abandoned traditional village units and transforming them into lodging for visitors.
- Professions that are acceptable to local women are limited, but families are open to women taking up jobs in hospitality, such as a production kitchens, home-based handicrafts, and even part-time housekeeping.
- There is a perception that the mandate of RSCN is restricted to the boundaries of the Dana Reserve and that there is limited or no attention given to other parts of Tafleeh outside its immediate vicinity such as Sela', Maaten, and Bseira.
- There is a recognition that trails/areas in the Tafleeh governorate outside the reserve (Al-Sela', Al Maatan, Bseira, etc) are not considered by RSCN for joint promotion or activities because of the lack of services and amenities (especially lodging).
- RSCN showed interest in introducing trails outside the reserve that include areas like Sela' and other less popular areas, provided some basic services are introduced by locals, most importantly food and eco camps.
- A need exists for evening tourism activities, particularly traditional food and entertainment.
- Most families expressed willingness to work in the tourism sector, if job opportunities exist.

- Some families in Ein Al Beidha and Al Qadisiya are open to renting a separate room for visitors for home stay or bed and breakfast.
- Women are willing to work in tourism activities related to handcrafts and cooking.
- Most families expressed that the current tourism sites (such as Afra and Burbeita) require substantial development.
- New trails in Al Maaten and Al Sela' could be developed, such as:
 - Sela', Maaten, Gharghour, Rummana, with accommodation at Sela'.
 - Maaten to Basateen trail.

Businesses and services

- All businesses depend on the local community with minimal business from outsiders/tourists.
- Hotels and camps are being managed ad hoc without training or preparation in visitor reception, service, food, or lodging management.
- There are no facilities or services that address tourists needs in Al Maaten, Sela' and Bseira.
- There are no trained local tour guides qualified to deal with tourists in Al Maatan, Sela', and Bseira. A few local guides are available in the Dana Reserve trained by RSCN.
- Transportation between the villages in Tafiheh is difficult.
- There is a need to develop handcraft skills, design, marketing and production, such as those produced by Al-Qadisiya Womens Cooperative.
- In order for tourism to develop, there is a dire need for tourism-related businesses such as food and beverage outlets.
- Hygiene and cleanliness need to be improved at existing food and beverage outlets and customer service skills strengthened.
- There is a need for developing the hotels and campsite in Dana and training owners and staff on hygiene, food safety and preparation, and the provision of equipment and furniture.
- Marketing of hotels and campsites is needed and training on promotion is required.
- There is an apparent sense of dissatisfaction by hotel owners in the Dana village regarding RSCN referrals for lodging to hotels in the vicinity, with some being excluded.

Economy and education

- The unemployment rate is very high (among those interviewed, it appeared to significantly exceed official published figures at the governorate level)
- General frustration was sensed concerning the lack of economic opportunities
- The majority of families visited have members educated at the university level
- Financial resources are limited and access to finance is weak
- Previous support to Dana village primarily focused on construction/restoration works that are channeled through RSCN, but the perception is that benefits to the local communities have been limited
- Maintaining cleanliness in the city is a problem
- The main employers in the governorate are the military and government
- Youth and retired military servicemen have difficulties finding jobs
- Most women are unemployed
- Vocational training centers require developing programs for hospitality and bakery
- There is potential to develop a tourism management program at Tafleh Technical University

E. Tourism services mapped

Accessibility	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
Bicycle and motor bikes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Car	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Van	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Caravan vehicle	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coaster bus	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Medium and large bus	✗	✗	✗	Up to spring area 70-90m towards village	✓	✓

Telecom Services	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
Internet	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Fax and land line	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗
Mobile	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Street Signage	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
Highways	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓
Main streets	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓

Human Resources	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
Tourist police	x	x	x	✓	✓	x
Local guides (trained & possess language skills)	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓
Local guide without training & language skills	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓
F&B staff local	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

F&B Services and Lodging	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
Hotels	x	x	x	✓	✓	x
Camps	x	x	x	✓	✓	x
Home-stay (a potential based on interviews)	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓
Meals restaurant	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Meals families	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other Services	Sela' Village		Maaten Village	Dana Village	Qadisieh	Bseira District
	Fort Area	Visitor Center Area				
ATM	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Pharmacy	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Clinic	x	x	x	x	✓ Small scale (basic clinic)	✓ Main clinic
Exchange	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Shops	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Souvenirs	x	x	x	✓	✓	✓

APPENDIX C
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT AND
OPPORTUNITIES OF TAFILEH TRAILS

A. Walking Trails and Canyons

The area has three wadis that are extremely popular for hikers and local weekenders: Wadi Hasa, Wadi Khanzireh, and Wadi Ghweir. Wadi Hasa is one of the loveliest wadis in Jordan and offers a truly unique, fantastic, and often unexpected experience, with canyoneers wading and swimming through it, along water slides, pools and narrow gorges. There are three canyoning routes within Wadi Hasa. Wadi Ghweir is also a popular canyon, longer and more demanding, along which hikers will pass through landscapes that have three different rock types, each blending into the other, demonstrating the natural diversity of the area. This wadi ends near Feynan, so there is the potential to create that link. Wadi Fifa is another interesting trail that has deep sandstone canyons, dripping springs, hanging gardens and a year round stream. It also involves rappelling off two cliffs, each of which is around 20 meters high. If properly developed and marketed, the Tafleeh attractions can be a lucrative source of economic benefit for local communities.

Challenges: Overcrowding on the weekends, particularly Fridays and in Wadi Hasa, along with extensive littering are major issues that need to be dealt with. Also, the wadi is environmentally challenged due to the agricultural activity around the wadi that causes pollution from the fertilizers and water depleting from the over pumping. Some of the Wadis have surrounding areas with very jagged topography that need special 4x4 trucks to reach the head of the trail, which can be converted into an opportunity. There is also a need for additional trained local guides, especially for Wadi Ghweir; again, a potential for an opportunity for employment.

B. Cultural and Historic Sites Trails

Due to its location along the Kings Highway, which in the early 2nd century AD Trajan used to build his Via Nova Trajana, the area of Tafleeh hosts major unexploited historical sites from hot mineral springs (Afra and Burbaita) to a variety of archaeological attractions representing different eras (Edomite and Nabataean), which are very well known worldwide. Cultural and natural attractions include:

Primary sites	Secondary sites
Tafleeh Castle (Crusader/Ottoman)	Al-Nasranieh (Nabataean)
Afra Hot Springs (Nabataean/Roman/Byzantine/ Natural Landscape)	Qasr Ad-Deir (Nabataean)
Burbaita Hot Springs (Nabataean/Roman/ Byzantine)	Dhba'a (Edomite)
Dharieh (Nabataean)	Had Ad-Dakik (Historical site that witnessed Ottoman/Arab battle)
Tannur (Nabataean)	Al-Hamma (Neolithic)
Sella' (Edomite)	Al-Tayyar Tree (A tree with historical association)
Al-Ma'tan (Nabataean)	Al Hareth Shrine Islamic Shrine – Prophet Mohammad period
Busaira (Edomite)	Farwa Shrine (Islamic Shrine – Prophet Mohammad period)
Dana (Natural landscape/ Calcolithic & Neolithic)	Al-Rashadieh (Edomite / Nabataean)
Twana (Nabataean)	Gharandal (Roman / Byzantine)
Al-Hassa Castle (Ottoman)	

Despite its rich history and cultural significance the attractions and sites in Tafleeh do not form a complete tourism product if promoted individually. A potentially successful approach to create a rich tourism product is to combine history with adventure (trekking and hiking). Inevitably, there is a pressing need to create tourism services and amenities around these trails. All of the above

mentioned cultural attractions are poorly maintained, under-developed, and lack minimum visitor services and amenities. If properly developed and marketed, the Tafileh attractions can be a lucrative source of economic benefit for local communities.

C. Trails Development – Approach and Recommendations

To leverage other sites in the region, the proposed themed trails below should combine some of Tafileh attractions with sites that are more developed in terms of tourism product and experience, like Petra. Attractions can be combined in themed packages of cultural and natural experiences as follows:

PRIMARY TRAILS

Al Sela' trail - This hike begins from the foot of Sela' and leads to the top of the mountain and back. The trail is surrounded by sheer cliffs and deep abysses. High up the mountain water pipes, cisterns, towers, and stairs are carved out of the rock mesa, the top of which offers a spectacular view of Wadi Araba. The trail is around 2km long with 100m of descent and ascent. Potential experiences:

- Guided tours by locals;
- Geocaching and treasure hunting;
- Camping: A campsite at the foot of the Sela' mountain is ideal for a short hike to the top of the mountain to visit and then return to the visitor center;
- Develop a panoramic lookout at Wadi Araba, where interpretation can be introduced to give an overview of the Sela' area and the main attractions within it, particularly the Edomite area;
- Sunset hikes.

Development and economic opportunities

- Equip the visitor center with GPS and peniculars;
- Introduce signage : directional, way finding and interpretation;
- Animal transportation (camels, horses, donkeys) from the fort to the visitor center;
- Shuttle buses from the fort to the visitor center to be owned and operated by locals at Al Sela'.

Maaten Village, Ramsis (I & II), Sela' - A trekking trail with natural and cultural diversity can be developed. The trail starts at the old village of Ma'ten going through dramatic canyons at Ramsis (I & II) then descending down to Wadi al Jamal that includes unique rock formations, botanical cover and indigenous trees (such as the Sider tree and Juniper tree) reaching Sela' fort. The trail takes around six hours to the visitor center of Al Sela'. Potential experiences:

- Camping: Campsite to be owned and operated by the locals at Al Sela';
- Tourism services along the trail (retail activities, banqueting);
- Performances by the local band, re-enactment).

Development and economic opportunities

- Upgrade toilets and amenities at Maaten and Sela' Visitor Center;
- Introduce signage such as directional, way finding, and interpretation ;
- Animal transportations (camels, horses, donkeys) from the Fort to the visitor center;
- Shuttle buses from the fort to the visitor center to be owned and operated by local at al Sela'.

Maaten Village - Sela' - Wadi Al Sayadeen – Rummana/Dana Reserve - The trail combines the natural beauty and landscape of the area around the Maaten, Wadi Al Sharee'a and Dana Reserve with the historical significance of Al Sela'. It is a long trail (17km) that requires camping out along the way.

Development and economic opportunities

- Tourism services along the trail as stationary and mobile;
- Animal transportations (camels, horses, donkeys);

- Onsite development:
 - Site signage and information points at Al Maaten
 - Upgrade of toilets and amenities at the visitor center in Al Maaten
 - Develop camping site at Khirbit Al Cola

SECONDARY TRAILS

Al Maaten Village Trail - Nabataean Caves - The Al Maaten Village trail combines intriguing archeology with amazing nature beauty. It starts at the old village of Al Maaten to the Nabataean Caves, going through various terrains and farms. The trail is very easy and takes around two hours to complete.

Development and economic opportunities

- Tourism services along the trail (retail activities, banqueting);
- Potential for retail activities around the sites (refreshments, gifts, souvenirs, etc);
- Onsite development:
 - Site signage and information points at Al Maaten
 - Upgrade of toilets and amenities at the Visitor center in Al Maaten
- Develop panoramic lookout at caves and Wadi Al Sharee'a.

Bseira – Jargour – Rummana Camp Site/Dana - The trail starts from the archological site of al Bseira for sightseeing to reach Dana Natural Reserve. The trail runs through Wadi Jargour and it's unique botanic cover and lanscape reaching Kherbet al Cola (old village and magnificent vistas) then to Wadi al Sayareen reaching al Ruman camp area at Dana Reserve. The trail takes around 10 hours to complete. Potential experiences:

- Develop an Edomite pottery workshop at Bseira village (introduction of a handicraft line that is unique to the area and the Edomite culture)
- Introduce re-enactment activities at Bseira hill (being the capital of Edom Kingdom) with Edomite soldiers

Development and economic opportunities

- Pottery workshop and showroom owned and operated by the locals, with the possibility of displaying products at the Petra visitor center;
- Campsite to be owned and operated by the locals. Food supply and catering from the nearby villages;
- Potential for retail activities around the sites (refreshments, gifts, souvenirs, etc);
- Onsite development:
 - Site signage and information points at the three sites
 - General site upgrade and presentation

Sahabas "the companions" Shrines trail - Tafleh hosts two shrines of Muslim Sahaba, companions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that are of religious significance. If combined with other shrines in the south of Jordan, a themed religious trail can be created and promoted as a unique tourism product for Muslim pilgrims (particularly during the Hajj season). This trail can start in Karak passing through Tafleh Shobak, and ending at Adroh north/west of Maan.

Kerak	Tafleh	Shobak	Adruh
Shrines of Ja'far bin Abi Talib Abdullah bin Ruwahah Zaid bin Harithah	Shrines of Farwa Bin Amr in Tafelih Harith Bin Omay Alazdi Al Meleh Spring	Shrine of Abu Suleiman	Arbitration mountain between 'Ali bin Abi Taleb and Mu'awiya Bin Abi Sufian

Development and economic opportunities

- Tourism services along the trail (rest houses and cafés);
- Potential for retail activities around the sites (refreshments, gifts, souvenirs, etc).

APPENDIX D

KEY TAFILEH ATTRACTIONS

Archaeological Sites

Tafleh Castle



Located within the western part of the city of Tafleh, this castle overlooks the southern part of the Dead Sea basin. It was built by the Crusaders on a site originally used by the Edomites who dug tunnels that connect the castle to nearby springs. The castle was re-used several times, including during the Islamic periods that followed. Today only a very small part of the original structure remains intact, and the site is part of Tafleh's ancient urban fabric.

Hasa Castle



Located along the Islamic pilgrimage route (Haj) 60km northeast of the city of Tafleh, a structure was first built here as a stop for pilgrims and was later further developed into this castles during the era of Sultan Mustafa the Second (1757-1774). The square building has two stories and offered accommodation to passing pilgrims. The building lies within a complex that housed a mosque and water cisterns, and was linked to Wadi Hasa via a bridge and connecting paths.

Rashadiyah



This archaeological site lies on the King's Highway, 24km south of Tafleh on the way to Petra. Traces of occupation date to many periods, including Edomite, Nabataean, Byzantine and Islamic. The main features unearthed there include a church with mosaic floor and a winepress that dates back to the 6th century A.D.

Bseira



Lying some 23km south of Tafilah, this is an important site: it was the political and administrative capital of the Edomite kingdom, which stretched from Wadi Hasa to Aqaba. Bseira lies within a naturally fortified strategic location, surrounded by wadis on three sides. It was mentioned in the Old Testament and Assyrian annals as the site of Busra. The site is made up of two parts: the Acropolis, which included the government administration, and a lower plateau that includes multipurpose structures, such as public baths and a temple. The lower part was enclosed by a 2.5m wide fortification wall.

Dhareeh



20 km northeast of Tafleeh, the site of Dhareeh overlooks Wadi La'aban, which runs parallel to the Kings Highway. Its name, which means 'shrine' in Arabic, stems from the large number of tombs and religious buildings found within the site. This was a Nabataean village along the main caravan route leading into Petra. Remains found in the area also date back to the Neolithic period, and there is evidence of the Edomite, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic periods. This is one of the largest caravan cities outside of Petra. There is a Nabataean temple there, along with olive and wine presses, residential buildings, administrative buildings, and a Byzantine church.

Gharandal



This lies 23km south of Tafleeh. During Roman times it was known as Arandela, which in the Byzantine period it was Aradela. During the Islamic periods it became Gharandal. The site dates back to the Nabataean period, and a Byzantine church with mosaic floor was also found there.

Tawanah



This was a station along the caravan route during the Nabataean and Roman periods. The site has several architectural remains, including a Nabataean temple and Islamic era relics.

Himmah



This Neolithic site lies along the road between Karak and Tafleeh, near the Tanour Dam.

Nasraniyah



About 5km south of Buseira, remains have been found here that date back to various eras from Roman to late Islamic. It has many churches that have mosaic floors decorated with 6th century geometric forms.

Deir



A few kilometers north of the village of Ein Al Beidha, Deir was built on a high hill overlooking the historic site of Sela'. This square-shaped site dates to the late Islamic era. There are several Nabataean vaults, rooms, wells and tombs.

Religious Sites

Lot's Cave (Ain Abata)



Lot, the nephew of Abraham, features repeatedly in the colorful annals of the Dead Sea's southern shores. Lot's Cave, just past the Lisan Peninsula, is where he and his daughters apparently lived after fleeing the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Lot's wife famously turned into a pillar of salt after looking back at the smoldering city and his grandsons/sons with his daughters, were the forefathers of the Moabite and Ammonite peoples. The cave is surrounded by the ruins of a small Byzantine church (5th to 8th centuries), a reservoir and some mosaics, which were excavated by the British Museum. Remains from the cave date to the early Bronze Age (3300–2000 BC) and an inscription in the cave mentions Lot by name.

Farwa Al Juthami Shrine

Farwa Al Juthami was employed by the Romans at the beginning of the 7th century. He heard of the message of the Prophet Mohammad (PBIH) and sent him a mule as a gift and converted to Islam. When the Romans found out they tried to convince him to deny the new religion. Farwa refused and was killed. This shrine commemorates him.

Harith Ben Omayir Shrine

This Islamic leader was sent by the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) to deliver a message to the King of Busra. He was killed along the way by Roman enemies and his shrine marks this spot.

Medical and Wellness Sites

Afra Hot Springs



These therapeutic springs lie 37km north west of the city of Tafleleh. The water is rich in minerals and water temperatures reach 49 degrees centigrade. The site was developed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities more than 10 years ago to basic services, including accommodation and swimming pools. The site attracts local tourists from Karak, Tafilah and Ma'an. There is further need for development.

Burbaita Hot Springs



Burbaita is located 28km northwest of Tafleleh on the road leading to the Afra Hot springs. The water temperature here also reaches 49 degrees centigrade in summer and has therapeutic properties, helping to heal many muscle and bone diseases. MoTA developed the area more than 9 years ago, providing basic facilities and swimming pools. The site attracts local tourists from Karak, Tafilah and Ma'an and is in need of further development.

Heritage Sites and Vernacular Villages

Dana Village



The vernacular architecture of this village makes it an attractive tourism destination, combined with its magnificent position providing spectacular views over Wadi Dana. The village was built around 400 years ago and inhabited throughout the Ottoman Period; was abandoned in the 1970s. The RSCN is implementing a rehabilitation project to preserve this unique vernacular structure that reflects human innovation, using indigenous building materials and construction methods.

Sela' Village



This vernacular village overlooks the eastern side of the historic Sela' castle and the dramatic landscape that surrounds it. The village is one of several local examples that illustrate effective construction methods based on the local environment. It was abandoned around 40 years ago and villagers, who moved to Ein Al Beidha, took apart materials from most of the houses to obtain wood for fires. MoTA rehabilitated an old school nearby, which was converted into a visitor center. Management of the village was then handed over to a local NGO. The site needs further development.

Sela'



This historic site is located in the southern part of Tafilah. It is an Edomite fort made up of various structures carved out of the sandstone rocks of a high hill overlooking the surrounding wadis. The site includes a gate, caves, wells, stairs, religious structures and, more importantly, Assyrian inscriptions that shed light on the ancient political history of the area. This site also offers breathtaking vistas of terrific natural landscapes and is reached via a very narrow passage of steps leading upwards.

Maaten Village



This is 3km southwest of Ein Al Beidha, lying on a hill opposite Bseira. The name is thought to mean the place where camels kneel to rest, thus demonstrating a link to the caravan routes, possibly due to the abundance of water here. It was an agricultural area. The village is surrounded by several important archaeological sites with evidence of the ancient civilizations that resided here. Sites include Ramsis I and II and Nabataean caves. It was also abandoned and houses taken apart for materials, and recently it was converted into a visitor center run by a local community NGO.

Tafleh Old Souk



Several traditional commercial buildings are located here, along the road leading to Tafleh castle. MoTA has plans to rehabilitate this souk and convert it into a tourist attraction to serve the castle and the town of Tafleh.

We have to check with MoTA on the status of this project.

Entertainment Sites

Tannour archaeological site and dam



The dam is located in Wadi Hasa near the famous Tannour archaeological site. There is a 1st century AD Nabataean temple here called Khirbet Tannour, which was probably dedicated to the god Atargis. There is great potential to develop the site as a tourism attraction connected to Afra and Burbaita.

Nature and Adventure Sites

Dana Nature Reserve



This is the largest reserve in Jordan (308 square kms) and offers a world of natural treasures. It is composed of a chain of valleys and mountains, which extend from the top of the Jordan Rift Valley down to the desert lowlands of Wadi Araba. The beauty of the Rummana mountain, the mystery of the ancient archaeological ruins of Feynan, the timeless serenity of Dana village and the grandeur of the red and white sandstone cliffs of Wadi Dana will awe the visitor to this area. The reserve contains a remarkable diversity of landscapes that range from wooded highlands to rocky slopes, and from gravel plains to dunes of sand.



Moreover, Dana supports diverse wildlife, which includes a variety of rare species of plants and animals; Dana is home to about 703 species of plants, 38 species of mammals and 215 species of birds. The Dana village area, which overlooks the scenic Wadi Dana, has witnessed human settlement since about 4000 BC (6,000 years ago!). Evidence unveiled by archaeological exploration shows that Paleolithic, Egyptian, Nabataean and Roman civilizations were drawn to the area by the fertility of the soil, the water springs and the strategic location. The people who inhabit Dana village today are the Al-Ata'teh tribe. They settled and built the village during Ottoman times about 400 years ago.

