



USAID | JORDAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SUCCESS STORY

Aqaba Hotels Association is officially established

The Association will benefit forty hotels in Aqaba



ACED Program

"AHA is one of its kind in Aqaba, and aims to organize the work mechanisms in hotel industry and enhance the level of customer service and increase their competitiveness. We are aspiring to promote Aqaba's hotels as touristic institutions with high standards."

Salah Bitar
Chairman of Aqaba Hotels Association
(From Al Rai Newspaper, May 18, 2010)

In April 2009, the USAID-funded Aqaba Community and Economic Development (ACED) Program started working to establish business associations to better enable the business environment in Aqaba to attract more investments and economic opportunities.

The ACED Program began working with Aqaba hotels to create an official umbrella to provide support and overcome obstacles for hotels, especially hotels in the 1-4 stars category. The efforts led to the establishment of the Aqaba Hotels Association (AHA), which will organize the sector and benefit tourism in Aqaba.

The Association founders received technical assistance from the ACED Program which provided them with consultants who prepared the Association business plan and helped them to apply for official registration at the Ministry of Social Development. In April 2010, the AHA was registered officially under the umbrella of the Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities. The Association now has twelve members, and is looking to expand to 27 members by the end of 2010.

In mid-May 2010, the Association had its first General Assembly meeting and eight members were elected as the board of directors. The first mission of the board focuses on getting 100 meters of beach front allocated from ASEZA for non-beach hotels. By obtaining this beach property, the non-beach member hotels can expand their services and provide more value-added services to their customers.

The ACED Program will continue to support the Aqaba Hotel Association. An ACED Program grant to AHA will cover its operational expenses for the coming two years, including four permanent staff, and to provide value-added services for the members, such as Quality Labels and Hygiene systems. By the end of the grant, the Association will become financially and operationally sustainable, provide more value-added services for its members, and support the development of hotels in Aqaba.