

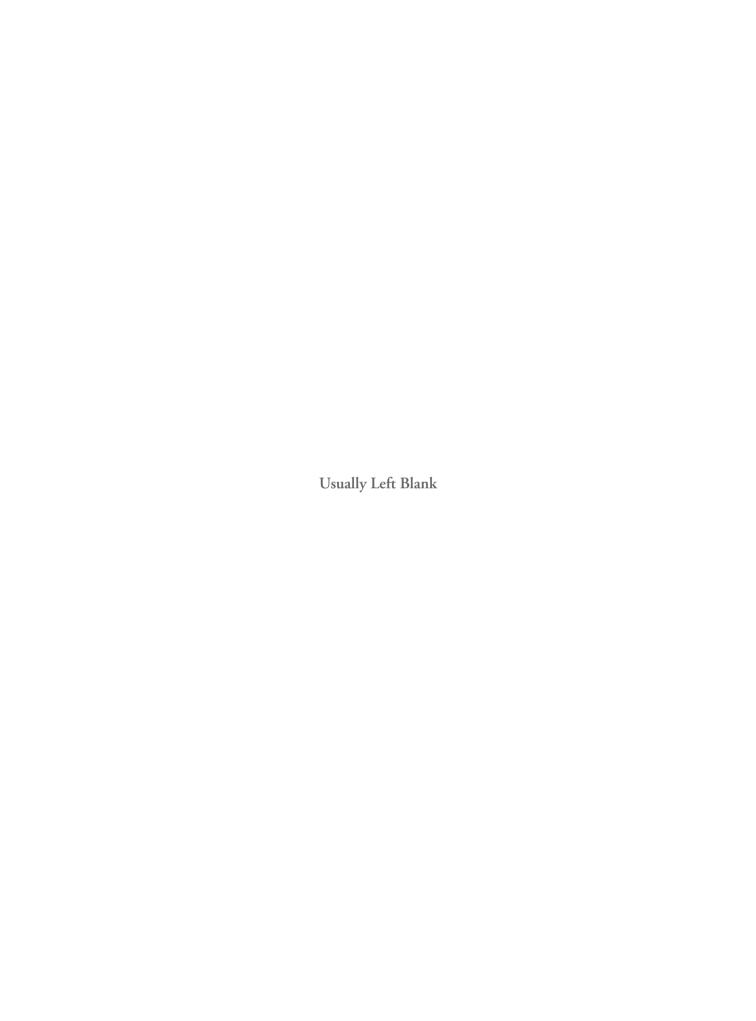


# Al Shou'la Municipality

Phase I of Planning for Local Economic Development:
Institutional Strengthening Action
Plan and Investment Opportunities

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## Acronyms

CVDB	Cities and Villages Development Bank
EU	European Union
GAFTA	Greater Arab Free Trade Agreement
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
HR	Human Resources
HU	Hashemite University
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IT	Information Technology
JD/ JOD	Jordanian Dinar
JIC	Jordan Investment Commission
JTB	Jordan Tourism Board
LENS	Local Enterprise Support Project
(M)LDU	(Municipal) Local Development Unit
MOMA	Minister of Municipal Affairs
MOPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MOTA	Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
RPC	Regional Partnership Council
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
TBD	To Be Determined
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

#### Statement from the Minister of Municipal Affairs (MOMA)

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

Planning for local economic development at the Shou'la Municipality is an ongoing effort which embodies the partnership between the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA) and the Local Enterprise Support Project (LENS) implemented by USAID, aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth.

Since its establishment, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has sought to coordinate municipal policies with the national policies outlined in the Jordan 2025 National Vision and Strategy, launched in 2015. These include:

- Increasing competitiveness through an export-oriented economic development strategy to boost GDP and reduce the budget deficit,
- Improving the business environment at the local level to attract investors and developers,
- Empowering Municipal Councils and improving local leadership, planning, and accountability to enhance governance,
- Increasing participatory planning by positioning Jordanian citizens at the heart of the planning and development processes,
- Supporting partnerships between the public and private sector to increase training and jobs,
- And improving citizens' lives and the services they receive, distributing gains, and decreasing poverty throughout the Kingdom.

MOMA has focused on integrating all factors to achieve comprehensive local economic, social, environmental and cultural development. I hope this action plan and proposed investment opportunities better prepares the Municipality to adopt local economic development planning efforts to improve community engagement, job creation, and investment opportunities, ultimately creating a more livable and prosperous community.

I extend my gratitude to our USAID partners and to the LENS project for supporting these efforts. I also thank His Excellency, the Mayor of Al Shou'la Municipality and the Local Development Unit's staff for offering their continuous support and best efforts to serve our people.

Eng. Waleed Al Masri Minister of Municipal Affairs

#### Statement from the Mayor of Al Shou'la

In its efforts to implement His Majesty King Abdullah II Bin Al-Hussein's vision and the government's program represented by the Municipality of Municipal Affairs (MOMA), Al Shou'la is keen to build partnerships with the private sector and improve its investment environment through effective and efficient Local Economic Development (LED) planning.

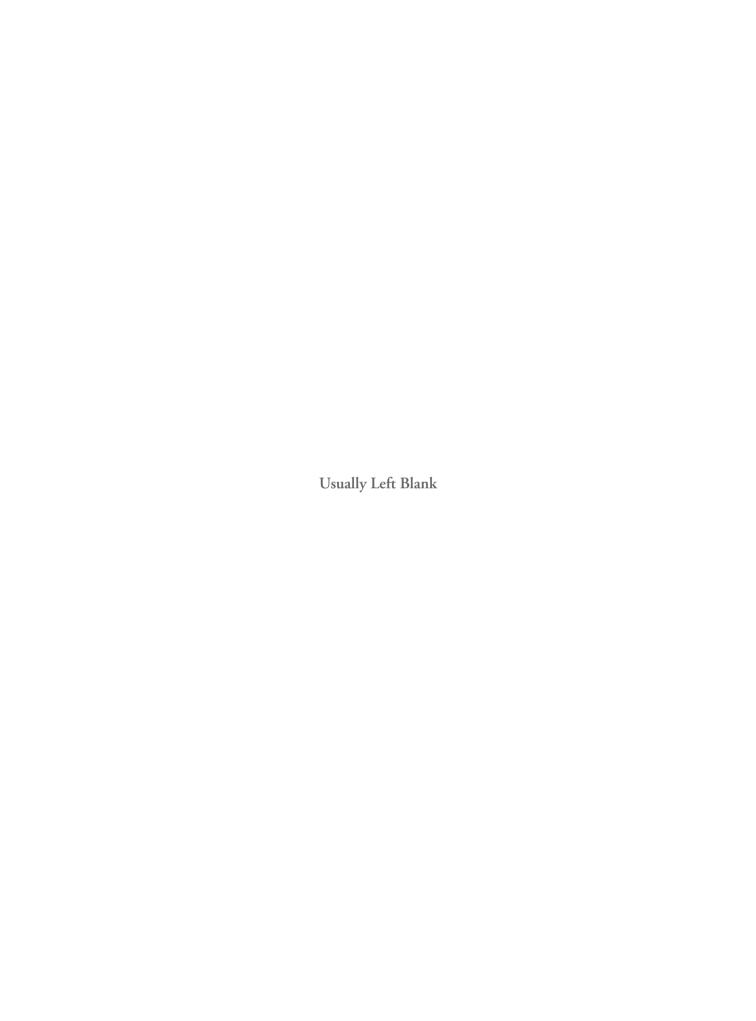
The municipality will continue to be a safe, welcoming place for its residents, and we will work with our community and investors to train our municipal staff and improve our public services.

Competitive cities and municipalities around the world balance economic development with environmental sustainability and social equity to responsibly grow their communities. We will reduce bureaucratic obstacles and increase competitiveness by expanding opportunities for investment in agriculture and tourism (rural, agri-, eco-, or nature-based), while simultaneously cleaning up the environment.

We will work with the private sector to develop a growth coalition in the form of a Public Private Partnership Council to increase investment. With the combined efforts of our dedicated municipal staff, municipal council, local businesses, and ministries, we will successfully facilitate our industries and agriculture to create jobs, enhance productivity, and increase our citizens' income in order to make Al Shou'la a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant place to live and to do business.

Welcome to Al Shou'la!

Musa Al Mashaara Mayor of Al Shou'la



### BACKGROUND

Local Economic Development plans pave the way for increasing the economic potential of a region and provide a guide for decision-makers to ensure community and economic prosperity. The Municipal Local Development Unit (LDU) at Shou'la Municipality, in cooperation with the USAID Local Enterprise Support Project (USAID LENS), has begun the process of planning for local economic development.

The first phase of creating a local economic development plan focused on bringing relevant community stakeholders and investors to the planning table. It employed the first stages of the World Bank methodology that integrates the City Development Strategies (CDS) approach into long-term local economic development efforts. The process focused on participatory planning in which public and private sector actors and civil society organizations (CSO) jointly create the best conditions to support economic growth and job creation. This process consisted of:

- A Steering Committee headed by the Mayor and members of the public and private sectors, as well as Technical and Media Committees comprised of LDU and municipal technical experts.
- Collection and analysis of information from the municipalities.
- Strategic planning workshops.
- The strategic planning workshops were held over the course of two days and were attended by 75 individuals who represented public and private sectors, and CSOs. During the workshop, participants discussed economic realities, analyzed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis), and then weighed

priorities. The results of the questionnaire and SWOT Analysis were reviewed and discussed, and then a vision, mission, and strategic goals were developed. Finally, investment projects were identified.

Identification of potential projects based on leveraging local strengths and opportunities. During this stage, Steering Committee meetings were held to vet the outcomes of each phase, and advisory meetings were held with the private sector.

The outcomes of this phase emphasized two important aspects which support economic prosperity and sustainability:

- the institutional needs of the municipality, shared across all municipalities in Jordan; and
- investment opportunitites in each municipality.

The institutional strengthening action plan encompasses the results of phase one, which has a particular focus on the municipality and outlines the actions required to prepare and implement local development in the best possible manner. Along with the institutional action plan, this plan proposes investment opportunities identified by the municipality and stakeholders. The opportunities described in this document will be used to seed investor commitments, in conjunction with the Jordan Investment Commission and institutions at the governorate and national level.

The second phase will consist of an in-depth economic sector, sub-sector and value chain analysis of the priorities identified in this document and will lay the ground for practical actions and activities to increase private sector partnership and investment, and in turn lead to an increase in jobs and competitiveness of the municipality.

## AL SHOU'LA AT A GLANCE

#### Location

Al Shou'la is located in northwestern Jordan along the east bank of the Yarmouk River in the Governorate of Irbid, 25 km from the city of Irbid. The area enjoys two climates - the area towards the Jordan Valley is warmer, while the picturesque hills are cooler. The springs and wadis run with water year-round. Both present favorable conditions for agriculture and tourism.

### **Demographics**

In 2014, the population of the municipality measured 14,500 people according to DOS, plus approximately 3,000 refugees (UNHCR). Al Shou'la Municipality includes three villages: Samar, Sahan, and Al Eshah. It is one of 18 municipalities that comprise the Governorate of Irbid, and it is located in the Bani Kinanah District, one of nine districts in the Governorate. Regarding the workforce, the average age is very young, as it is throughout Jordan (75% of the population is under 35), and most residents work in agriculture.

#### Medium Household Income

Average household size in the Bani Kananah District, which includes Al-Shou'la, is 5.5 individuals per household. This is slightly higher than the national average of 5.4 and slightly lower than the Irbid Governorate's average of 5.6. Medium household income is JOD 7,640. The cost of living is significantly lower than that of Amman, especially for housing costs. The

poverty rate in 2012 was 13.5 % which was lower than the national average of 14.4%, but unemployment rates are slightly higher at 17% compared to an average of 13% in the Irbid Governorate and 12% nationally.

In the Governorate generally, the largest household expense is food (36.2%), followed by housing at 23.4%, education/health at 18.1%, and transportation at 15.4%.

#### **Public Services**

**Transportation** In general, road networks are well-maintained and cover most the municipal areas serving the local population and linking it to nearby cities and Amman. The municipality has requested that the Governorate pave some of its rural secondary roads which lead to agricultural land.

The transportation network consists of a few buses distributed throughout the municipality, but there is no bus station within the municipality's boundaries. The closest airport is Queen Alia International Airport, which is approximately 140 km from the municipality. No railroads or train lines serve the area.

**Health Care** There are two primary health centers in Saham and Samar, and each has a dental clinic and pharmacy. Al Shou'la has one privately-owned dental clinic and one pharmacy, but no health center. Al Shou'la has requested that the governorate construct one health center in Bani Kinanah.

**Public Safety** There are no police and fire protection stations in Al-Shou'la, but there is one located approximately a five-minute drive away within the Bani Kananah district.

**Solid Waste** 100% of solid waste is collected daily (eight tons of pickup), and it is mostly composed of organic waste. It is disposed of at the Al Akeeder landfill, which is owned by the Common Services Council.

**Sanitary Waste Disposal and Treatment** There is no sewage system (neither underground nor above-ground pipelines) in Al Shou'la. The community depends on cesspits for wastewater disposal, which contaminates groundwater. The municipality is part of a group of municipalities which has requested that the Ministry of Water and Irrigation prepare studies for supplying them with lines, lifting stations, and a treatment plant.

**Water** There is a piped water network, but it needs to be renovated. The loss ratio is high. The Bani Kinanah District has requested that the MWI launch a tender to bring water from the Al Wehdeh Dam to the area. (Additional municipal supply and revenue could be obtained from conservation practices, including pricing water closer to its actual value and re-using gray water for irrigation.)

**Power** The electricity network covers 100% of the area. A broadband network is in place.

#### **Educational Opportunities**

There are nine public schools – five for girls and four for boys. The average number of students per classroom is approximately 30. There are also kindergartens. There is no vocational training institute, but it is a twenty-five minute drive to Irbid University and vocational training programs in Irbid.

The Ministry of Higher Education is planning for a university college in Shou'la; it is listed on the Governorate's plan for 2016 - 2018.

#### Recreational and Cultural Opportunities

The district offers two sports clubs and football fields. There are no cultural facilities.

#### Jobs and Economic Activities

The largest employers are the government and agriculture. There are no other industries, although within the broader Governorate there is the Al Hassan Industrial Estate which provides 21,292 jobs. Al Shou'la offers a competitive advantage in agriculture. The area has the largest number of olive trees in Jordan, and Al Shou'la's producers are also prolific planters of high quality guava. The area also has many citrus trees and beautiful undeveloped landscapes, representing a competitive advantage for rural tourism (agri-, eco-, family).

The agriculture industry is comprised of four olive oil extraction operations (presses, mills, and grinders). One of the four operations is jointly owned by a local resident and the municipality. Many women work in informal food processing, including home-based businesses, and they use local fruits and vegetables to produce jams, pickles, and other products such as soap.

#### Governance

Al Shou'la has an elected Council consisting of seven members, and a municipal budget of 1,033,879 JD. The budget does not have a deficit. Revenue is collected from professional licensing, taxes (property and projects), and other sources, which yielded 890,425,000 JD in 2014. Municipal taxation and other fees will be strengthened by sound economic development. Approximately 45% of the budget goes towards salaries. (MOMA provides

funding for infrastructure and construction planning, and the Ministry of Interior provides fiscal transfers from the Ministry of Finance for infrastructure review and training, but municipalities are still responsible for preparing their budgets.)

The municipality has 77 staff members, including 23 administrative and technical employees, 18 messengers, 20 sanitation workers, 10 drivers, and 14 other staff members including guards. Five hold university degrees, six have high school diplomas, and the remaining employees have below high school education. The percentage of female employees is 15%. The head of the LDU is an engineer. Two other employees in the LDU work with other technical departments.

Al Shou'la has 16 computers which employees use, but the municipality lacks a computer network, website, or social media. The LDU would like to electronically link their departments to improve work flow and the services provided to citizens.

Street lighting is very expensive, and the municipality is planning to partner with the Irbid District Electricity Company LTD (IDECO) to save money on their energy bills. The municipality recognizes that this negatively impacts capital expenditures or funds left over for improving public services and facilities.

The Al Shou'la Municipality participated in a project similar to USAID LENS that was sponsored by GTZ (Poverty Alleviation through Municipal Development from 2003-2007). Under that project, an earlier LED Plan was prepared with MOMA, but not fully implemented due to a lack of resources. The themes were similar and focused on improvements to Good Governance, Municipal Finance, Attracting Investment, Poverty Alleviation, Gender Mainstreaming & Economic Participation of Women, Improving the Environment including Air and Water Pollution, and Physical Development. Many of the community's needs illustrated in that plan a decade ago are still true today.

#### Land Use

There is no Comprehensive Plan / Master Plan (land use blueprint) to direct investors to specific appropriate parcels and investment opportunities, whether on public or private land. As is true with all municipalities, zoning form of zoning exists. The municipality owns 40% of an olive oil extraction business, which is successfully generating revenue, creating jobs, and encouraging other investment. It also owns other facilities managed by the private sector, such as the football/soccer stadiums. The municipality also owns five buildings on five dunams of land (5000 m2), as well as pastures, forest land, footbills, and valley paths, including over 400 dunams. The municipality plans to invest part of its available land in a solar energy project being undertaken in partnership with IDECO.

#### Agricultural and Forest Area

Approximately 49% of the land is agricultural and 51% is covered by forest land. Although much is forested, deforestation is a problem in the north. One of Jordan's most important national assets is the Yarmouk Nature Reserve which is managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) and is located near Al Shou'la. The reserve was established in 2010 at the border with the Golan Heights, and it overlooks the Yarmouk River. Its 20 square km land area includes up to 85% of Jordan's surviving deciduous oak forest, two species of rare orchids, and mammals (otters, hyenas, wolves, and mountain gazelle).

#### Commercial and Industrial Areas

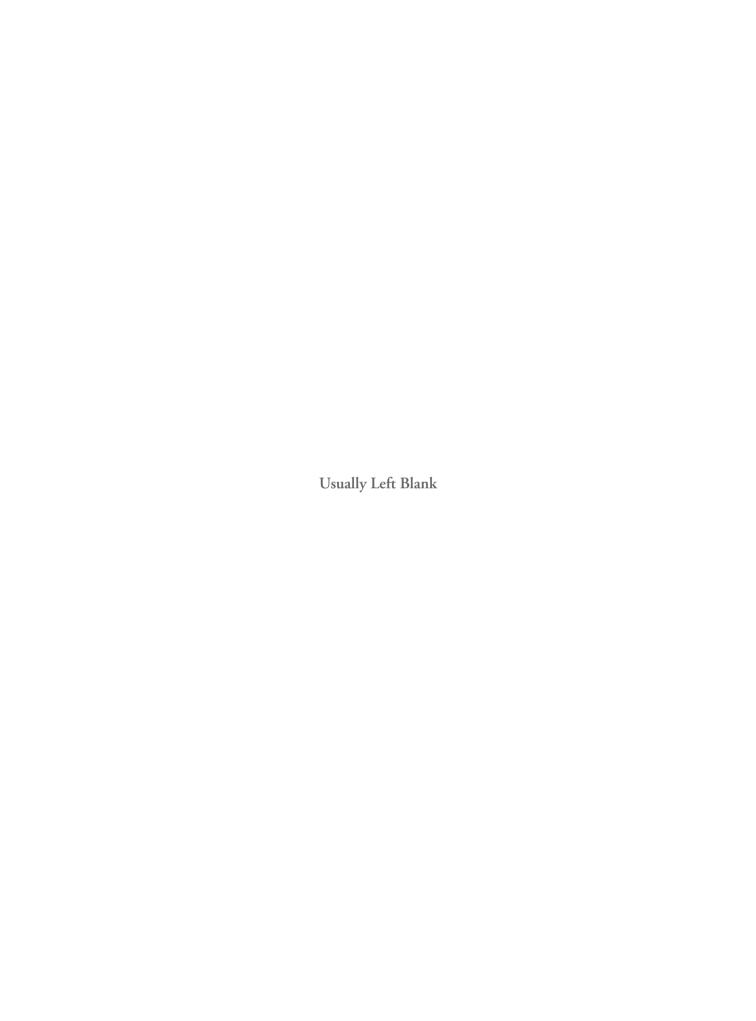
Commercial activity in Al-Shou'la is limited to small shops and a small iron workshop. But there are nearby commercial and retail offerings, including a large downtown area in the City of Irbid.

#### **Nearby Tourism Activities**

Jordan is a major tourism destination on the global market, and Al Shou'la is seen as an emerging rural, eco- and agri-tourism destination.

The only Shou'la tourism site that is promoted by the Jordan Tourism Board is the cultural heritage site known as the Battle of Yarmouk, 635 AD, which gave control of Greater Syria to the Muslim Army and its commander, Khalid Bin Al-Walid. The site is not on most tour operators' circuits, although it is on MOTA's Yarmouk Trail. However, the site is visited in the warmer weather months by Jordanians. According to the LDU, approximately 17,000 local tourists visit the site every week during spring and summer, so it offers opportunities for expanded domestic and family-based tourism.

With regard to extended tourism circuits, there are a number of important regional sites that are easily accessible from Shou'la and are on many tour operators' circuits including the conserved Ajloun Castle and the Decapolis ruins at Pella and Umm Qais (Biblical reference were made to Gadara and nearby cave of Prophet Issa or Jesus). These sites are under the control of the Ministry of Tourism's Department of Antiquities (DOA), while eco-tourism activities in Ajlouin are managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), and Dibben Forest Reserve by the Ministry of Agriculture.

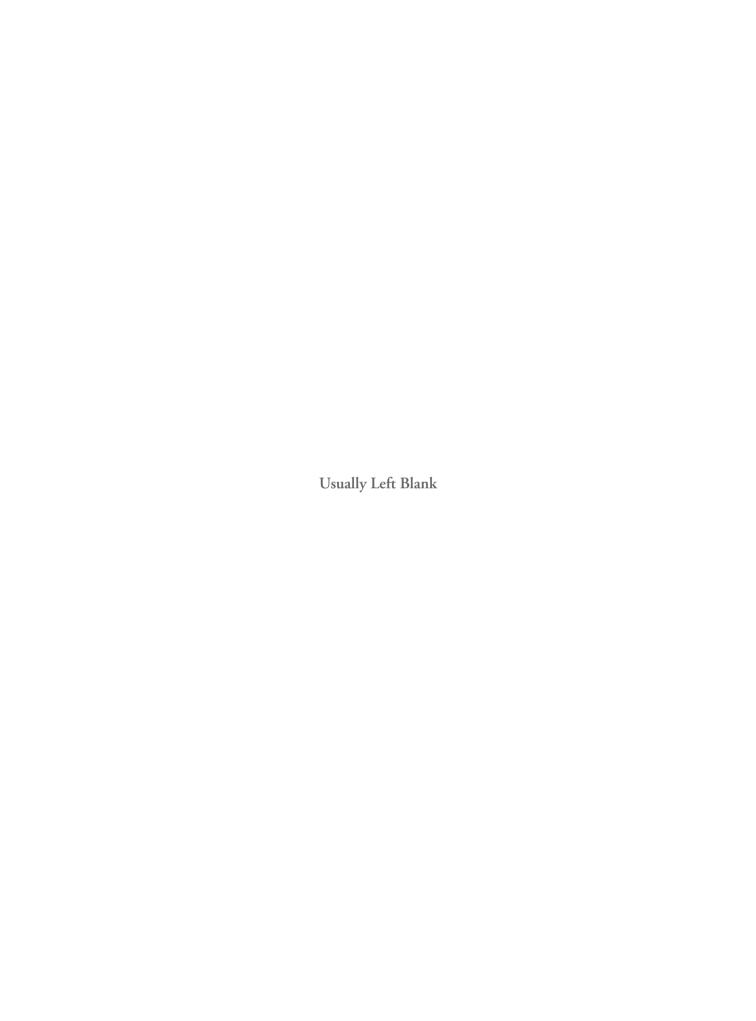


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## AL SHOU'LA MUNICILITY VISION AND MISSION

Vision A nationally competitive agriculture sector and growing tourism sector that caters to domestic tourists, maintained by genuine partnerships with the private sector.

Mission Al Shou'la's mission is to enhance the tourism and agricultural sectors in partnership with the local community and private sector by supporting micro and small businesses, product competitiveness and marketing, public awareness surrounding environmental preservation, and infrastructure to support growth in these two sectors.



# LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The stakeholder engagement process identified a number of priorities to pave the way for growth and economic development. A substantial amount of the priorities identified focused on strengthening the municipality as an institution. We reviewed these priorities in section 5 of this document. In this chapter, we present the economic development and investment priorities identified through this process. As part of the second phase of LED planning, further sectoral analysis is required to understand the sub-sectors, the value chain, and value added opportunities.

Al Shou'la is rural yet close to Irbid and approximately 130 km away from Amman. It offers less expensive land and a more affordable cost of living, a strong, youthful work force, and some infrastructure is already in place. The location provides a strong opportunity to bring Al Shou'la onto the tourism map or itineraries for tour operators that visit Ajloun Castle and the Decapolic ruins at Pella and Umm Qais. It is also an attraction for domestic tourists, representing another potential area for growth. Therefore any potential opportunities for development were mainly identified in the tourism sector and include enhancing tourism product development, auxiliary services, and market infiltration for tourism products.

Stakeholders identified a number of potential investment opportunities. All of them are intended to result in jobs, increased revenue for the municipality so that it may provide better services, and opportunities to enhance quality of life for the community.

Support product development and auxiliary services in the tourism sector. Identified as a sector with potential for growth, stakeholders prioritized investments into developing tourism products to improve the availability of services to international and local tourists. Developing products and services that tap into niche-markets present opportunities for economic and sustainable growth. Al-Shou'la has the resources to create rural based agritourism. Agri-tourism is the practice of engaging in activities, events, and services for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes in rural areas or on farms to allow visitors to experience, learn about, or participate in the agriculture industry. This includes traditional foods, farm-based and cultural heritage activities, and nature-based activities.

The municipality will have to carry-out a value chain analysis to understand opportunities available in the tourism sector, basic product development needs, and value added and support auxiliary services. In the meantime, the municipality has identified a number of quick-win investments, including the development of an open air market that caters to local tourists as well as an eco-tourism resort and restaurant. The Al Yarmouk Battle site is visited by 10,000 local tourists annually for short stays, mainly picnics. The open air market will target this market and provide a space for local farming produce and home-based business products to be sold, while simultaneously offering entertainment experiences for children. The municipality also proposed the creation of an ecotourism resort and restaurant as investment priorities. Overnight services currently do not exist in Al Shou'la. Extending tourists' stay in Shou'la is an important strategy to increase tourist spending in the area. The municipality envisions that the resort will provide numerous tourist services, including accommodation, entertainment, food, and basic shopping for local products. Sharabil Bin Hassneh or SHE EcoPark in the Jordan Valley represent solid prototypes for this type of project.

For more information about these quick-win investments, consult Annex 2.

Enhance market infiltration for tourism products. Numerous opportunities exist for enhancing outreach in Al Shou'la through the Jordan Tourism Board and existing mainstream and niche market tour operators (TOs). The municipality should work closely with existing TOs who visit the Ajloun Castle and the Decapolis ruins at Pella and Umm Qais to ensure that this experience is integrated into the these tours. Further, there are also opportunities to tap into existing eco-tourism activities and markets in Ajloun, managed by the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature and Dibbeen Forest Reserve which in turn is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture.

**Enhance agricultural productivity and marketability.** The agricultural sector significantly contributes to the local economy and is the second largest employer in Al Shou'la following the government. Al Shou'la produces olives, guava, and citrus fruits. An absence of data hindered the team from assessing the potential for growth within this sector and for these products. To understand the economic value of these products, the municipality will need to conduct value chain assessments of these products. The municipality and stakeholders did, however, identify a number of relevant short-term investment wins, including an agricultural plant nursery and green house, an olive mill, converting pomace into soap and pellets for

wood burners, and grading bottling and packaging of olive oil for export. Another method for enhancing agricultural productivity identified included expanding agricultural zoning and identifying tracts of land to develop.

**Workforce development.** Workforce development better prepares labor for market needs within the municipality. To support women in the workplace, the municipality will look into providing women with training and mentoring opportunities. To draw youth into the workforce, the municipality, in partnership with the private sector, could develop on-the-job training internships. This would not only ensure the availability of a skilled work force for investors, but also provide youth with some income and fill the gap left by a lack of vocational training. This could be particularly helpful in the industrial training, food processing, and emerging industries, where cultural barriers regarding service provision must be broken.

Home-based businesses. Supporting home-based businesses facilitate economic opportunities for and participation by women and encourages young entrepreneurs who wish to open start-ups. These individuals will benefit from growth opportunities if the cost burden on SMEs is reduced, ultimately leading to increased market competitiveness. The municipality should focus on targeting women and youth to increase awareness about formalizing their home-based business and even the process for establishing a start-up.

Prepare the LDU to better plan, prepare and administer PPPs. To support the establishment of the investment projects identified in this strategy, the LDUs will need to be prepared to plan, administer, manage and monitor PPPs. This will include establishing a PPP guidance booklet and training relevant staff within the municipality and specifically the LGU.

The municipality and relevant stakeholders identified other investment opportunities which are described in the chart below and Annex 2. Investment cards will need to be further clarified and updated by the stakeholders and municipalities in order to demonstrate all opportunities available in Al Shou'la.

Action Plan	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding	Timeframe
Conduct detailed sectoral and value chain assessments and identify medium-, long-term, and value-added investment opportunities in the following sectors:  Tourism Agriculture	Advisory body, donors, private sector	Municipality	40,000	2016-2017

Action Plan	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding	Timeframe
Identify and establish mentoring opportunities for women.	Private Sector	Municipality		2016-2017
In partnership with the private sector, establish and administer on-the-job training internships.	Private Sector	Municipality		2016-2017
Train municipal staff on how to prepare, administer and monitor PPPs.	USAID LENS, MOMA	Municipality	30,000	2016
	vin" investment opp nt projects identified			
Open air market in Yarmouk with commercial shops featuring handicrafts and agricultural products	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Private sector investor; strategic partner (municipality)	50,000	2017-2018
Tourist resort and heritage resort	MoMA, MOT, CVDB; private sector	Private sector investor; strategic partner (municipality)	1,500,000	2017-2019
Agricultural nursery and greenhouse	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Municipality	150,000	2016-2017
Olive mill, converting pomace into soap and pellets for wood burners and fireplaces	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Municipality	100,000	2016-2017
Sorting and recycling waste	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Municipality	50,000	2019-2020
Amusement park for children	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Municipality	200,000	2019-2020
Grading bottling, packaging of olive oil for exporting	MoMA; CVDB; private sector	Municipality	150,000	2017-2018

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# MUNICIPAL STRENGTHENING ACTION PLAN FOR LED

The Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis highlighted a number of key institutional challenges the municipality will need to address before undertaking a robust local economic development plan. The action plan focuses on actions specifically geared towards strengthening the municipality's ability to plan for local economic development, and mainly:

- Practicing effective land use planning and improving the rationale for land use decisions.
- Improving the organizational structure and management framework.
- Enhancing IT infrastructure and capacity in municipal offices.
- Improving the municipality's financial performance and revenues.
- Developing a mutually beneficial Regional Partnership Council with regional municipalities and with Municipal and Governorate LDUs.

**Objective 1:** Practicing effective land use planning and improve the rationale for land use decisions.

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop a comprehensive land plan and map or master plan	Illustrates specific types of land use areas planned and/ or zoned for different types of investment. Highlight consolidated land areas or adjacent parcels under single ownership.	MOMA	Municipality	350,000 Timeframe 2016-2017
Identify land parcels and key development clusters for investment	Highlight parcels owned by the municipality; for targeted private land, contact the owners regarding interest in discussing future development opportunities. Explore expanding existing industries and their associated industrial or commercial needs. Jordan 2025 adopts a cluster-focused approach to expanding existing industries and locating supportive, related industries nearby.	MOMA, Cities and Villages Development Bank (CVDB)	Municipality	50,000 Timeframe 2016-2017
Develop approvals manual	Illustrates the development process to investors, local businesses, and SMEs including the types of plans to be submitted, fees to be paid, the staff/council review and approvals process, the permit process, and site occupancy. Develop a proffer system that links approval of density/ floor area ratio to community improvements (e.g., extension of sewer or water line).	MOMA	Municipality	50,000 Timeframe 2016-2018

**Objective 2:** Improve organizational structure and management framework

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop a chart describing the structure of the municipality and LDU unit and staff responsibilities	This will clarify the purpose of the LDU, divide responsibilities, and propose a clear and updated action plan and supporting budget. The structure of the LDU will be explained as well as personnel roles, responsibilities and qualifications.	MOMA	Municipality	20,000 Timeframe 2016
Develop staff training program	This will entail training and exchange programs with other municipalities in the areas of financial management, human resource planning, and information technology.	МОМА,	Municipality, with the support of an advisory body	100,000  Timeframe 2016-2017
Develop external capacities of staff (investment- related technical skills )	This is aimed at improving communication with citizens and investors, and government as well as project cycle management, including feasibility studies.	MOMA, Chamber of Industry and Investment, JIC	Municipality	10,000 Timeframe 2016-2017
Establish M&E System	Provide information on results to the Council, Governorate, MOMA, MOICP, Donors, and others	MOMA	Municipality	50,000  Timeframe 2017-2018

**Objective 3:** Enhance the municipality's IT infrastructure and online presence.

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop a website	Improved transparency & information shared with community & investors	MOMA	Municipality, through and advisory body	5,000 Timeframe 2016

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop a computerized system (hardware and software) for all municipality work (finance, HR, etc.).	This will improve the municipality's efficiency and effectiveness. It will also improve their data collection, HR, financial, and information sharing capabilities. This activity includes the necessary GIS hardware and software. The system will also ensure that other municipalities' systems are linked to one another.	MOMA	Municipality	65,000 Timeframe 2016-2017
Develop a clear and efficient virtual review and permit process	This is linked to the approvals manual and fosters a more efficient understanding of investor responsibilities. The process saves time and money, and allows more efficient organization of financial and administrative matters.	MOMA	Municipality with the support of an advisory body	50,000 Timeframe 2016-2017

**Objective 4:** Improve the financial performance and revenues of the Municipality.

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop and estimate facilities and buildings located within municipality borders	Develop a list of facilities and building and Increase income generating revenues of "Al Mosaqafat" taxes.	MOMA	Municipality	50,000 Timeframe 2016-2018
Launch awareness and media campaigns to motivate citizens to pay their fees and taxes.	The campaign will focus on the municipality's role toward citizens and vice versa. The campaign will help citizen realize the importance of paying fees and taxes.	MOMA and campaigning organization	Municipality	20,000 Timeframe 2016-2020

Activity	Description	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost (JD) / Funding
Develop mechanisms to prepare the budget according to international standards.	Boost the municipalities' creditworthiness and empower them with proper public financial management (PFM) tools that adequately control the total revenues and expenditures. Allocate public resources appropriately among sectors and programs and ensure that the municipalities operate as efficiently as possible	Urban and Rural Development Bank	Municipality and MOMA	50,000  Timeframe 2016-2017
Improve law enforcement and facilitate debt collection procedures via affordable installments programs.	Increase municipal income generation	MOMA and Ministry of Justice	Municipality	- Timeframe 2017-2018

Objective 5: Develop a mutually beneficial Regional Partnership Council with regional municipalities and with Municipal and Governorate LDUs.

Activity	Results	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost / Funding
Develop an Action Plan and budget for the RPC	Enhanced advocacy at the national level	MOMA	Municipality	TBD Timeframe 2016-2020
Develop an investment map and regional branding with the JIC.	Enhanced visibility to investors	MOMA, JIC, GLDU. Chamber of Commerce and Industry	Municipality	100,000 Timeframe 2017-2018
Develop and implement a survey of investors	Improved monitoring of strategy success or gaps	MOMA	Municipality	20,000 Timeframe 2016-2020

Activity	Results	Implementing Partners	Implementing Body	Cost / Funding
Environmental awareness campaigns	Increasing tourism numbers, preserving the environment and lowering the cost of waste disposal	Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities (MoTA), MoMA, CSOs, RSCN	Municipality, CSOs	25,000 Timeframe 2016-2020

The purpose of the Public Private Partnership Council is to reduce bureaucratic obstacles and actively encourage economic development by creating a culture of investment. The Council would be responsible for assisting the municipality with:

- budgeting for new or improved citizen services with regional implications capital improvements and infrastructure,
- identifying and recruiting investors and businesses,
- working with vocational schools and universities and local businesses/industries to develop a mentoring training program for workforce recruits including women and local youth,
- working with donors and the JIC to develop and promote a pro-business environment,
- working with local communities to establish a pro-business brand to continue to market the area for both business retention and expansion and new investment,
- becoming a political alliance to lobby on behalf of the region and work with the Ministries and national government in Amman to develop clearer policies for municipal revenue and an incentives program for investors and home-based businesses targeting the economic participation of women.

The Council will strive to achieve a wide base of participation, including Mayors, LDU representatives, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and representatives from top regional employers and banking and finance institutions. Representatives from education institutions, NGOs and CBOs and national level ministries will also be part of the Council.

**ANNEXES** 

Annex I: SWOT

Workshop participants to organize the categories of SWOT analysis based on their impact and relevance to the status and condition of Al Shula Municipality, rating their importance on a 1-5 scale.

#### Strengths

Workshop participants identified strengths based on the impacts of internal factors. The most important strength was Al Shou'la's comparative agri-tourism advantage as well as an investment-friendly environment. Irbid Governorate's development program, which was approved by the MoPIC for the years 2016-2018, includes plans to develop archeological and tourist sites there. It seeks to create a tourist trail in central Irbid to connect tourist sites, build a tourist bus station and establish an eco-hotel/lodge/inn in the Yarmouk Nature Reserve, which belongs to Al Shula Municipality. It is clear that significant investment opportunities exist in the tourism industry, as the most visited tourist attractions in Al Shou'la welcome at least 17,000 tourists per week during peak season. This opportunity scored 270 points on the priority scale, followed by the 257 points allotted to the municipality's stable financial condition and zero debt. Participants noted a need to maintain this state. Participants also pointed to the need for a skilled workforce, professional competencies, and academic qualifications amongst the largely youth population of Al Shou'la, assigning 243 points

to this subject. The fourth priority, which was assigned 235 points, was the municipality's solid infrastructure, including roads and lighting, which is key to encouraging agri-tourism investment. A qualified LDU - which has helped prepare several development plans, a masterplan, and general plan since 2003 - was ranked fifth with 224 points. Although the unit acts as an incubator for information and data on the municipality and the region, capacity building is required in a few different areas.

The following table shows Al Shou'la's strengths as discussed during the workshops:

No.	Strengths	1	2	3	4	5	Votes	Priority
1.	Comparative agri-tourism advantage	1	0	3	10	44	58	270
2.	Stable financial condition of municipality	4	1	2	5	45	57	257
3.	Need for skilled workforce, competences and qualifications	1	1	8	24	24	58	243
4.	Good infrastructure	2	6	8	18	25	59	235
5.	Qualified LDU	7	4	11	14	24	60	224
6.	Solid response to citizens' demands	4	5	11	25	14	59	217
7.	Sufficient municipal staff	11	6	11	13	19	60	203
8.	Financial and administrative independence of the municipality	11	14	7	8	22	62	202
9.	Neutrality of municipal employees	7	10	13	14	15	59	197
10.	Availability of land to host entrepreneurial projects	8	7	18	8	17	58	193

#### Weaknesses

The workshop identified 17 weaknesses:

- The most serious weakness was a passive private sector that does not cooperate with the municipality on investment projects, particularly in the tourism industry. This priority scored 253 points.
- The need for a solid institutional structure to encourage investment as well as poor communication process between the municipality and local community received 249 points.

- The municipality lacks a database, while tourist sites are not equipped to receive tourists. This weakness was given 239 points.
- Municipal staff members do not possess business cards 238 points.
- The fifth priority which earned 232 points included weaknesses such as the municipality's lack of a website, the outdated masterplan and general plan, and insufficient financial resources and investment opportunities.
- Disposal of wastewater forests, which harms the environment and contaminates groundwater, was allotted 224 points.
- The municipality lacks documented and officially approved procedure manuals and brochures (221 points).
- The municipal staff's job titles do not match the functional structure (210 points).
- The municipality lacks a computerized system and electronic network to connect departments (204 points).
- The negative impact of tourism on the environment and livestock and the adverse effects of waste disposal (185 points).
- Weak rules and bylaws within the organizational structure (182 points).
- Poor performance of municipal councils (176 points).
- Citizens' attitudes toward municipal work (174 points).
- Disregard for quality regulations and standards in tenders and projects (172 points).

No.	Weaknesses	1	2	3	4	5	Votes	Priority
1.	Passive private sector	6	2	3	11	38	60	253
2.	Poor communication between the municipality and the local community	8	3	5	10	36	62	249
3.	Lack of database	6	7	12	12	27	64	239
4.	Tourist sites unequipped to receive tourists	7	1	12	11	30	61	239
5.	Municipal staff members lack business cards	5	4	11	13	28	61	238
6.	Municipality lacks website	10	2	10	12	28	62	232
7.	Insufficient financial resources and investment opportunities	7	8	1	9	34	59	232

No.	Weaknesses	1	2	3	4	5	Votes	Priority
8.	Outdated general plan	9	5	9	9	30	62	232
9.	Wastewater is disposed in the forest, contaminating groundwater	4	9	14	15	20	62	224
10.	Lack of procedure manuals or brochures	5	4	18	16	18	61	221
11.	Job titles do not match functional structure	8	11	15	10	19	63	210
12.	Lack of computerized system and electronic network	8	6	10	11	22	57	204
13.	Negative impact of tourism	15	10	16	13	10	64	185
14.	Weak regulatory rules	15	16	10	10	13	64	182
15.	Poor performance of municipal councils	15	4	18	11	11	59	176
16.	Attitude toward municipal work	14	7	22	10	8	61	174
17.	Disregard for quality regulations in tenders and projects	15	12	15	7	12	61	172

#### **Opportunities**

This portion of the workshop demonstrated good opportunities for investment in the agriculture and tourism industries thanks to Al Shou'la's tourism and agricultural infrastructure. The workshop identified seven opportunities, with the first being taking advantage of Al Shou'la's olive trees. The area hosts the largest number of olive trees in the Kingdom, highlighting the region's comparative advantage and significant investment opportunities in agriculture and tourism sectors. This priority scored 291 points. Other priorities included:

- Expanding agricultural zoning to encourage investment and positively reflect on the municipality and region (260 points).
- Designating Al Shula as an environmentally significant area, which would attract investment in the agriculture and tourism industries (249 points).
- Potential donor support for development projects (245 points).
- Mineral springs can attract therapeutic tourism, boosting Al Shou'la's comparative advantage (244 points).

Other opportunities are shown in the table below:

No.	Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	Votes	Priority
1.	Olive trees	2	1	1	6	52	62	291
2.	Expanding agricultural zoning	5	2	5	19	32	63	260
3.	Designating Al Shou'la as an environmentally significant area	8	3	7	6	38	62	249
4.	Potential donor support for development projects	7	2	6	14	32	61	245
5.	Mineral springs and therapeutic tourism	7	8	7	5	36	63	244
6.	Taking advantage of cultural heritage to promote tourism	4	4	17	14	22	61	229
7.	Potential business investments	17	8	12	8	18	63	191

#### **Threats**

The workshop identified nine threats, mainly:

- A weak partnership with the private sector (257 points).
- MoMA interference in the municipalities (252 points).
- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) laws and regulations, including the agroforestry law, obstruct investments and development projects (243 points).
- Marginalization of Al Shou'la's agricultural and tourism potential in the media (242 points).
- Weak laws and regulations governing municipal work (241 points).
- The impact of migrant workers and the Syrian refugees on the area (231 points).

The following table demonstrates other threats:

No.	Threats	1	2	3	4	5	Votes	Priority
1.	Weak private sector partnership	6	2	4	15	35	62	257
2.	MoMA interference	6	5	4	11	36	62	252
3.	MoA laws and regulations	5	4	12	16	26	63	243
4.	Marginalization of Al Shou'la's potential in media	3	0	5	6	40	54	242
5.	Weak laws and regulations governing municipal work	8	2	11	14	28	63	241
6.	The impact of migrant workers and Syrian refugees	9	8	9	11	27	64	231
7.	Flaws in tax laws regarding exemptions for projects in remote areas	8	2	12	8	30	60	230
8.	Border-related security issues	6	9	11	15	21	62	222
9.	Al Shou'la is not currently on Jordan's tourist map	2	0	0	0	22	24	112

### **SWOT Matching**

- 1. Comparative Agri-tourism Advantage: The SWOT analysis shows a clear match between categories when it comes to Al Shou'la's comparative agri-tourism advantage. Workshop participants saw a genuine investment opportunity in agritourism, which will benefit the municipality as an institution as well as Al Shou'la and its residents both economically and developmentally. Agri-tourism investments are expected to gradually lower poverty and unemployment rates, but at the same time, poor infrastructure at agricultural and tourist sites is likely to discourage investment. Other notable investment opportunities exist as well. Workshop participants believed that designating Al Shou'la as an environmentally significant area and taking advantage of the large number of olive trees located there constitutes a good strategy. This approach utilizes tourism and agriculture to generate revenue, boosting economic infrastructure and enhancing partnerships with the private sector. The workshop agreed that a weak partnership with the private sector poses one of the most serious threats to investment, in addition to some of the country's laws and regulations, which should be reformed.
- 2. Administrative, Financial, Organizational, And Legal Status: The municipality is in relatively good financial condition because it is not in debt, has a stable fiscal budget, and enjoys financial and administrative independence. But at the same time,

the municipality's financial resources are inadequate, and private sector investment opportunities are insufficient. According to workshop participants, the Municipality LDU is key to enhancing local economic development. The unit plays an important role in future investment planning and has solid experience in strategic planning and in attracting donors. However, the municipality's institutional capacity is weak, lacking an organizational structure, database, computerized system and electronic network - all factors that impact investment. The municipality responds well to citizens' demands, but does not communicate well with the local community. Successive municipal councils have failed to properly communicate with local community, brief residents on development projects and the municipality's financial condition, and engage or involve them in setting priorities. The municipality lacks a computer network to link regions together as well as a computerized system, procedure manuals or brochures, and a website. The municipality's outdated general plan forms one obstacle facing investment.

#### 3. Growth of Economic Sectors:

Agriculture: Participants believed there is an opportunity to expand agricultural zoning, which will boost the abundance of olive trees in Al Shula's groves. Designating the area as an environmentally important region will also help support its comparative agri-tourism advantage. MoA rules and legislation, such as the agroforestry law, obstruct investment.

Investment: Businesspeople in the region represent an opportunity, but there are weak prospects for successful cooperation with the private sector and flaws exist in current tax laws with regard to exempting projects in remote areas.

## Annex 2: Investment Cards

Project Information	Eco-Tourist Resort & Heritage Restaurant
Project Background	Al Shou'la Municipality and the surrounding area have a competitive tourism advantage. Currently, they host many domestic tourists who picnic in the area on weekends. The municipality recognizes that the global agri- and eco-tourism market would enjoy visiting the beautiful hills and forests of Al Shou'la, and participating in community and farm-based activities, including a food market at the Yarmouk Battle site. (The two projects should jointly promote the area.) Tourists would also enjoy a regional tourism circuit that includes hiking on tourism trails such as the Path of Ibrahim and visiting the Yarmouk Forest Reserve. Additionally, these tourists would enjoy visiting some of Jordan's best archaeological sites, including Umm Qais and Pella, two sites that emerged during distinctive periods. Establishing a tourist resort will create a new source of revenue for the municipality and help alleviate poverty and unemployment.
Project Description	The project focuses on designing a nature-inspired resort offering tourist and entertainment services as well as traditional food. Facilities could be simple chalets or platform tents that provide lodging, toilets, dining, a meeting/conference space, and a small shopping area with local products. The project aims to promote tourism in the region, turning it into a tourist destination and offering comprehensive tourist services, including accommodation and entertainment. The municipality owns a piece of land to start the project. The master plan and project design is very important for project success.  (A good prototype for this project is the Sharabil Bin Hassneh or SHE EcoPark in the Jordan Valley, which offers careful preservation, walking tours, and many activities including a zipline, biking, traditional food, and a meeting space for workshops. It also provides an open space for the surrounding community, and the meeting space that can be leased to organizations and corporations for retreats to allow for time away from Amman. (JordanEcoPark. com, AND SHE@FOEME.ORG.)

Project Information	Eco-Tourist Resort & Heritage Restaurant
Benefits & Justification	<ul> <li>Taps into Al-Shoula's comparative advantages in nature and agricultural environments</li> <li>Adds to the very few facilities in the region for emerging nature-based tourism</li> <li>Boosts public private partnerships</li> <li>Creates a number of jobs for citizens to reduce poverty</li> <li>Increases municipal income</li> <li>Brings revenue to the investor</li> </ul>
Time Frame	2019-2017
Estimated Cost	Small eco-lodge with 8 chalets, tents, a dining room, showers and toilets, meeting space, and gift shop – 500,000 JD; Less eco-friendly resort for other tourism markets - 1.5 million JD
Partners/Expected Funding Sources/Other Contributions	Private Sector, CVDB, + Municipality, perhaps donors
Action Items on Work Plan	<ul> <li>Prepare a PRE-feasibility study for the project</li> <li>Identify the components of project phases</li> <li>Source funding</li> <li>Identify flat land with view sheds - perhaps this could be a municipal contribution?</li> <li>Identify a private sector investor</li> <li>Prepare various tenders (RFP)</li> <li>Implement</li> </ul>
Potential Risks	<ul> <li>Lack of financing</li> <li>Inappropriate design for nature and agri-tourists (it is important that investment and project design protect the landscape and views with eco-friendly facilities. It is also key that the restaurant be well managed with good traditional food that promotes farm to table local products)</li> <li>Lack of domestic tourism interest (especially during instability until global market returns)</li> <li>MoA regulations that prevent use of the land</li> <li>Lack of qualified staff to manage approval and implementation</li> </ul>

Project Information	Plant Nurseries and Greenhouses to Produce High Quality Crops
Project Background	Al Shou'la is an agricultural area with numerous olive trees and guava plants. There is extensive agricultural expertise in the area.
Project Description	The project would utilize that expertise and expand agricultural productivity within a controlled, environment conscious of water conservation to increase olive and guava production.
Benefits/ Justification	<ul> <li>No similar project aimed at meeting agricultural demand, increase competitiveness, and upgrade the quality of produce exists within the municipality,</li> <li>Creates an educational opportunity for agri-tourism visits to the greenhouse,</li> <li>Provides an opportunity for off-season production,</li> <li>Creates xxx jobs to benefit local people,</li> <li>Will bring in xxx JOD in municipal revenue,</li> <li>Brings revenue to the investor.</li> </ul>
Time Frame	2017- 2016
Estimated Cost	JD 150,000
Partners/Expected funding sources	Municipality + CVDB + Private Sector investor + Donors
Action Items on Work Plan	<ul> <li>Prepare a PRE-feasibility study for the project</li> <li>Identify components of project phases</li> <li>Source funding</li> <li>Designate or identify a piece of agricultural land</li> <li>Identify the private sector partner</li> <li>Prepare bidding packages</li> <li>Implement</li> </ul>
Potential Risks	<ul> <li>Overuse of chemical pesticides (opportunity for organic production with higher value)</li> <li>Diseases and insects which kill plants</li> <li>Poor promotion of products and lack of market access</li> </ul>

Project Information	Al Shou'la (Open Air) Market
Project Background	The municipality recognizes that domestic tourists, including many from Amman, enjoy visiting the area adjacent to the Yarmouk Battle Site for picnicking and barbecuing in nice weather (estimated at 10,000 visitors annually). Yet no facilities currently exist to accommodate their visits. Additionally, the municipality recognizes that the beautiful natural environment could draw expat tourists and others who may also like to participate in the activities such a market could offer, similar to a farmers market with traditional foods and cultural activities. The market could also become an activity on the agri- and nature-based tourism circuit. All of these tourists would add income to the area and benefit local producers from farmers to home-based businesses.
Project Description	The ten dunam site is located 7 km outside Al Shou'la in the countryside. (The Yarmouk Battle archaeological site, is protected by the Department of Antiquities, but MOTA has granted ownership to the municipality.) The municipality also owns another 30 dunams adjacent to the site.  The program – which could be revised by an investor – includes a master plan (illustrating visitor circulation, lighting, electricity, access to water, toilets, parking, approximately thirty kiosks or shade tents to rent to producers, approximately 24 grills to rent to picnickers, and picnic tables for visitors. (Entry fees would require fencing with strict entry and exit points and extensive staff control and thus should be avoided.)  Producers would include local farmers and home-based businesses selling traditional food products such as breads, pastries, pickled vegetables, olives and olive oil, jams, nuts, and fruits & vegetables (much like a farmers market).  A small Visitor Information building is located on site, and could be used as part of the regional tourism promotional strategy, e.g., to distribute maps or brochures illustrating area sites and other items could be sold or distributed to entice visitors to stay longer, visit more areas, and spend more JD.  Entertainment for children would be located outside of the open air market area, perhaps with an inflatable moon bounce (tickets required for admission). There could also be other swings or parklike areas where children could play safely.

Project Information	Al Shou'la (Open Air) Market
Benefits & Justification	<ul> <li>The absence of a similar agricultural project within the municipality, and enhanced sector competitiveness,</li> <li>Increases opportunities for producers to sell their products – farmers &amp; home-based businesses</li> <li>Revitalizes the agricultural sector (2nd largest employer following the government)</li> <li>Increases opportunities for families to enjoy leisure and recreation</li> <li>Creates job opportunities (perhaps 10 or more staff) and income for local producers</li> <li>Creates revenue for the municipality from leased land agreement</li> <li>Creates revenue for the investor (leasing kiosks or Ramadanstyle tents, grills, picnic areas/tables, moon bounces)</li> </ul>
Time Frame	2016-2017
Estimated Cost	25,000 - 50,000 JD
Partners/Expected Funding Resources	Municipality + CVDB + Private Sector investor
Action Items on Work plan	<ul> <li>Ensure use and approval for parking excavations or construction at the Yarmouk Battlefield Site from Department of Archaeology (DOA) at MOTA</li> <li>Prepare a PRE- feasibility study for the project</li> <li>Identify components of project phases</li> <li>Source funding for the project</li> <li>Identify the private sector partner</li> <li>Prepare bidding packages (RFP)</li> <li>Implement</li> </ul>
Potential Risks	<ul> <li>Poor promotion and implementation of design</li> <li>Poor site management</li> </ul>

## Annex 3: Stakeholder and Private Sector Meeting Attendees List

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معروع بالثنة الإنسال النظ	1 AI	Shoula 8 Oct, 2013	2			ئطة المان)	احد مُطَدُّ التنبية المطبقة اليثنيات (العلهوم والعُلهجية و هوم التنبي ١٠٠٥/١٨٠٠ يشبة النسلة مسئلة العدري	اسم الكتريب مثان الإسطان مثان الإسطان مثلم من قابل تاريخ مشيم القراريز مد القراريز
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## Private Sector List

الجهة	رقم الهاتف	الاسم
تاجر / مستثمر قطاع خاص / الزراعة والسياحة	0778440061	علي صالح العمري
مدير شركة / مستثمر قطاع خاص / معاصر زيتون	0776005740	حسين قاسم الرقيبات
مزارع / مستثمر قطاع خاص		عبدالله محمد سليم سعدون
/ مزارع	077702699	محمد عبدالله زيدان
مستثمر / قطاع الزراعة	0772235318	محمد طلال غوانمة
مجتمع محلي / ناشط اجتماعي	0772104122	علي أحمد اليوانسة

## Annex 4: Pictures from the Stakeholders' Workshop













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