

## Restoring Wastewater Facilities in Wadi Mousa Region Challenge

Tourism in recent years has become one of Jordan's major growth industries. As tourism's contribution to Jordan's national economy increases, it will become even more vital to ensure that historical sites such as Petra are preserved to a high standard and that local inhabitants living in the surrounding regions benefit. Today, 20,000 Jordanians live in Wadi Mousa and the surrounding villages. The number of visitors to Petra has quadrupled over the past decade to almost 500,000 annually. In addition, over the last several years, the number of hotels operating in the area has increased by tenfold to 60 hotels. Unfortunately this rapid expansion in tourist facilities was not accompanied by a comparable growth in water, sewage, and other facilities.



Photo: USAID/Jordan

**New wastewater treatment facilities help protect the corrosion of the World Heritage site of Petra.**

### Results

The people of Wadi Mousa have benefited from the new sanitation and water system. 1,100 households are connected to the new sewage system - relieving the owners of the cost and burden of emptying their septic tanks manually and ending the environment problems associated with sewage cesspits. Service quality at hotels and tourist facilities in Petra has improved by eliminating the foul odors and possibilities of sewage flooding. Parks were established throughout the region for the enjoyment of the local residents, which was previously not possible because of the polluted environment.

The plant has been successfully integrated within the Petra environment. Interestingly, digging and construction work resulting from the project has uncovered a variety of archaeological artifacts that would otherwise have remained hidden. A USAID-funded Jordanian archaeologist assessed and cataloged this material under a subcontract to the Petra National Trust. A selection of artifacts is scheduled to be displayed at the Petra museum.

### Initiative

As part of a long-term effort to ensure adequate infrastructure in the region, USAID, along with France and Germany, funded the \$43 million Wadi Mousa water and wastewater treatment project. This project benefited not only Wadi Mousa, but also the neighboring communities of Taiba, B'doul, and Beida.

USAID's total contribution of \$27 million funded the design and construction supervision for the entire system, as well as the new wastewater treatment plant and a series of pumping stations.