

Jordan

Project for the Construction of the Petra Museum

Cultural Grant Assistance (March 2014 - April 2019) / Technical Cooperation Project (November 2015 - March 2020)

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Petra, a huge area of ruins of the ancient Nabataean Kingdom* city surrounded by rocky mountains and also known as a filming location for the movie “Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade,” is the largest tourist destination in Jordan with approximately 800,000 people visiting each year. However, it faces numerous challenges. For instance, local residents were not familiar with the history or lives of the ancient people. The systems for preserving and managing archaeologically valuable relics excavated from the ruins were insufficient, and the opportunities to exhibit them were also limited.

Japan decided to build a new museum adjacent to the entrance to the Petra ruins through the Cultural Grant Assistance in order to improve the situation, stimulate tourism in the Petra region, and promote the development of the local community. Japan has also provided assistance for the museum's opening through the “Project for Community-based Regional Tourism Development in Petra Region.” This is a JICA Technical Cooperation Project aimed at the development of human resources to run the museum and take on the



The Petra Museum (Photo: JICA)



Visitors viewing exhibits inside the Petra Museum (Photo: JICA)

comprehensive development of the Petra area.

In April 2019, the Petra Museum opened with the attendance of Crown Prince Hussein. Currently, approximately 300 relics from the Stone Age are displayed in the museum, and 6 video clips and 22 touch panels produced through Japanese technical cooperation provide visitors with various information. These have resulted in allowing not only visiting tourists but also local residents and students to learn about the history and nature of Petra, as well as the people that lived in the era of the Nabataean Kingdom. The Petra Museum is expected to contribute to the promotion of tourism—one of Jordan's main industries—and become a center for educational activities aimed at deepening understanding of the country's history and culture as well as preserving cultural heritage.

* It is a kingdom of the Nabataeans, which achieved the height of prosperity around 2,000 years ago and flourished through trade particularly in Petra.