
**Saving Our Cultural Heritage
Combating Illicit Excavation and Trade in Antiquities**

Al Masir International Center for Studies Research and Training

**Jordanian Civic Activists Toolkit II:
Case Studies of Jordanian Advocacy Campaigns**

Civil Society Capacity Building in Jordan
USAID Civic Initiatives Support Program
2013 – 2018



¹ Source: The information related to these four areas of rights are adapted from and found in Discover Human Rights: A Human Rights Approach to Social Justice Work, The Advocates for Human Rights (<http://bit.ly/1TmOp6v>). The New Tactics Method utilizes: safety and security; non-discrimination; participation; and protection-accountability. NOTE: The rights listed in these four “categories” may be placed in any area depending upon the context where the right is being violated. For example, Article 23: Right to join trade unions might be placed in “Safety and Security” rather than “Participation” where organizing or joining a union is dangerous.

² Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) – Article 27 (1): Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

³ The identification of the four action areas outlined in the Legacy Tool comes from the advocacy experience of Mr. Faisal Abu Sondos, former Executive Director of The Royal Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS). Mr. Abu Sondos has been a New Tactics Method Trainer since 2010 and Lead Method Trainer since 2011. While using the New Tactics Strategic Effectiveness Method in his own organizations’ advocacy efforts and coaching other civil society organizations in using the Method he identified these four action areas to assess progress. The benefits and drawbacks regarding the use of technology in each of these advocacy action areas needs examination in relation to the appropriateness for the intended target groups and goals of an advocacy campaign.

Overview

Advocacy Issue

The right of Jordanians to access, participate in, and enjoy their cultural heritage

Human Rights–Based Focus Area¹

Protection / Accountability – (UDHR – Article 27²)

Scope of Advocacy

National / International

Advocacy Action Areas³

A challenge for many civil society organizations is distinguishing between being busy with activities and implementing tactical actions that strategically advance an advocacy effort. In order to help organizations better assess how to expend precious resources, the Legacy Tool offers four action areas that are needed to conduct any advocacy campaign: internal capacity building, research, mobilization and engagement with decision makers. This case provides insights into all four action areas:

- internal capacity building
- research
- mobilization
- engagement with decision-makers

Tactical Aim

New Tactics in Human Rights has identified four primary human rights-based tactical aims: prevention, intervention, restorative and promotion. This case demonstrates:

- promotion

Campaign Period

July 12, 2015 – July 11, 2016

February 15, 2017 – May 14, 2018

Brief Summary

The depletion and destruction of Jordan's irreplaceable cultural heritage by illegal excavations and trade in antiquities has reached an alarming level. This loss is costing the Jordanian people their right to access, enjoy, and participate in their cultural heritage. Culture is fundamental to human dignity and identity. Based in Irbid, **Al Masir International Center for Studies Research and Training** (Al Masir Center) focused on the legal, social and political circumstances that enable and explain the depletion and destruction of Jordan's antiquities. As a result, Al Masir Center's advocacy, **Saving Our Cultural Heritage**, promoted the preservation of the right to cultural heritage through recommended amendments to the Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 and national artifacts inventory and documentation system for museums,⁴ for decision makers. These two critical areas can significantly combat the threats posed by the looting and loss of cultural property.

The rich archaeological heritage of Jordan is being depleted by the illegal trade carried out to meet an escalating demand for antiquities internationally. These illegal activities have been systematic and have intensified to a frightening scale in recent years. One example of the loss of cultural property is the *Rizqah Stelae*. This is a highly significant Chalcolithic period (Copper Age) collection which was illegally moved from Jordan. Based on relevant international legislations and charters, Al Masir Center compiled documentation for an official request to return and restore the *Rizqah Stelae* to Jordan. The case materials for the *Rizqah Stelae* was presented to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA), along with a restitution documentation manual, video and procedures to assist the government in future efforts to restore stolen antiquities to Jordan.

The cultural, socio-economic, legal, geo-political, and technical factors that contribute to the phenomenon point to the broad range of groups and levels of society involved in the problem. Over a period of more than two years, Al Masir Center engaged many of these different groups to tackle the problem, including local communities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and government agencies.

While local looters may start the chain of events, the stolen antiquities rarely enrich these local looters. This is because the artifacts move from looter to many middlemen, and finally, dealer to customer. For example, if you consider the profits based on 1 JOD. A local looter receives .500 JOD, a local middleman might obtain .750 JOD, an importer in another country would receive 2.500 JOD, and eventually a dealer making the sale to a customer collects 100 JOD. This kind of profit chain keeps people engaged in the illegal trading of antiquities. While the local looter clearly receives a pittance for the artifact, this short sighted illegal



Figure 1: A picture of a segment of the Dead Sea Scrolls provided by Al Masir.

⁴The recommended specifications for a national artifacts inventory and documentation system were provided to MOTA & DAJ with an official meeting.

Figure 2:

1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Article 5 (a,b,f):

To ensure the protection of their cultural property against illicit import, export and transfer of ownership, the States Parties to this Convention undertake, as appropriate for each country, to set up within their territories one or more national services, where such services do not already exist, for the protection of the cultural heritage, with a qualified staff sufficient in number for the effective carrying out of the following functions:

- contributing to the formation of **draft laws and regulations designed to secure the protection of the cultural heritage** and particularly prevention of the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of important cultural property
- establishing and keeping up to date, on the basis of **a national inventory of protected property**, a list of important public and private cultural property whose export would constitute an appreciable impoverishment of the national cultural heritage
- taking **educational measures to stimulate and develop respect for the cultural heritage** of all States, and spreading knowledge of the provisions of this Convention

Note: Emphasis added to highlight the advocacy areas undertaken by Al Masir

trade illustrates the great cost to the Jordanian peoples' right and benefits to their cultural heritage. These illegal activities harm Jordan's international image. But ultimately, the country is deprived of an important asset that can be used for the economic and social benefit of the society at large.

In fact, these illegal activities have deprived Jordan of some of its most outstanding archaeological treasures. Two examples are the **Dead Sea Scrolls**⁵ which were illegally moved (Figure 1), and the loss of **400 priceless Hellenistic gold coins** stolen from the Citadel Museum in Amman which were replaced with fake coins.

While Jordan has an international mandate to preserve cultural heritage as a member state of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), this preservation requires public awareness, support and participation. Jordan joined UNESCO in 1950 and ratified the **1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property** in 1974.⁶ In particular, Article 5 (a, b, and f) of the Convention serves to highlight the achievements made by Al Masir Center in their outstanding efforts to preserve and protect Jordan's cultural heritage for future generations (Figure 2).

The "**Saving Our Cultural Heritage**" advocacy campaign utilized significant research findings to engage stakeholders in solution-based dialogues to address the legal, structural and cultural foundations perpetuating illegal trafficking and trade in antiquities. As a result, local to national decision makers were engaged to assist and advance the government's protection and accountability mandate under the Convention to combat the illegal trafficking and trade in antiquities.

Achievements

Al Masir Center undertook four critical areas of research which also provided opportunities for dialogue and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders. The findings provided information and documentation for recommendations in the following areas:

- extent and underpinnings of the illegal excavation and trade in antiquities in Jordan
- legal gaps and defects in the Antiquities Law
- standards and requirements of museum documentation and registration systems
- recovery process of illegally moved and stolen antiquities.

Extent of the illegal excavation and trade in antiquities

Al Masir Center developed a position paper⁷ outlining the contributing factors and the extent of the problem of illegal trade in antiquities. The position paper was utilized to raise awareness among a range of stakeholders beginning in the Irbid Governorate, with local community meetings and direct visits to

⁵ The Dead Sea Scrolls are one of the most important archaeological discoveries in the 20th Century. These scrolls are the oldest copy of the Bible. The Scrolls were kept at the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem which was under the Jordanian authority when they were illegally moved from the museum and their ownership was changed in violation of prevailing international laws and conventions.

⁶ Jordan ratified the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property in 1974. The text can be obtained from UNESCO: English: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001140/114046ab.pdf#page=129/001410/141067a.pdf>

⁷ The Al Masir Center position paper on the illicit trade in antiquities includes some of the most important illegally moved and stolen antiquities of Jordan.

institutions and government departments to gain their support.

In collaboration with the Faculty of Archeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University, Al Masir Center organized a noteworthy seminar. "*The phenomenon of trafficking in antiquities and their smuggling: the problem and its solutions*"⁸ highlighted the research findings and the seriousness of the phenomenon of illegal trade in antiquities in Jordan. Within the framework of the seminar, an extensive discussion took place among representatives of the university, the local community, and essential government agencies (see Figure 2, Article 5.f). The Deputy Governor of Irbid attended the seminar along with representatives from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Department of Antiquities, the Jordanian Museum, the Ministry of Interior and security services, the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission, the Customs Department, and the Ministry of Justice.

Legal gaps and defects in the Antiquities Law

In order to contribute to the formation of draft laws and regulations designed to secure the protection of cultural heritage, and particularly prevention of the illegal export of important cultural property, Al Masir Center studied the current Jordanian law (see Figure 2, Article 5.a). The engagement of participants from the local community to the level of parliamentarians in reviewing the articles of the Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 was undertaken with the view to address gaps and pitfalls. Reviews of the national law, including the provisions of the law and proposed amendments, explored key areas for the protection of antiquities including: international legal supports, ethical standards for preserving Jordan's cultural and civilizational heritage, and deterrent penalties for anyone trying to destroy, smuggle and trade archaeological sites.

The legal study identified the gaps or pitfalls which make the Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 seriously inadequate to protect Jordanian's rights and benefits to their cultural heritage. In September 2017,⁹ Al Masir Center organized the first seminar with MPs at Yarmouk University, "*The legal gaps in the Jordanian Antiquities Law.*" This seminar was structured to engage the Legal Committee of the Jordanian parliament. In addition to seven parliamentarians from the Legal Committee, scholars from the Anthropology and Antiquities Faculty of Yarmouk University participated in the discussion. Parliamentarians were shocked by the presented facts and figures regarding the extent of the stolen and moved antiquities. The discussion focused on potential amendments to the Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 to address the defects and provide solutions in the law. Based on the discussion with the members of the Legal Committee, another seminar was conducted with Parliamentarians in April 2018. Al Masir gathered a group of MP's to discuss the proposed solutions for the defects in each article of the Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988. The participating Parliamentarians were again shocked with the lack of quality in the existing Antiquities Law to address the protection and accountability of Jordan's cultural heritage. MPs declared the proposed modifications would be considered in the upcoming law amendment session.

Standards and requirements of museum documentation and registration systems

It is essential to establish and keep an up to date, national inventory of protected property (see Figure 2, Article 5.b). UNESCO's "*Recommendation concerning the protection and promotion of museums and collections, their diversity and their role in society*"¹⁰ provided Al Masir Center with universally recognized

⁸ The seminar was reported in the Yarmouk University Media Network on 24 May 2017, <http://yumn.yu.edu.jo/index.php/newscenter/526-2017-05-24-10-08-28>

⁹ The September 2017 seminar with Parliamentarians was reported in the Yarmouk University Media Network, <https://www.yu.edu.jo/index.php/yumn/newscenter/1240-2017-09-13-11-46-00>

¹⁰ Source: UNESCO, Recommendation concerning the protection and promotion of museums and collections, their diversity and their role in society, 17 November 2015 English: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49357&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html Arabic: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002451/245176m.pdf#page=28>

Figure 3:
UNESCO's Museum Recommendations addressing illicit trafficking: 8, 21, and 26

8. *A key component of collection management in museums is the creation and maintenance of a professional inventory and regular control of collections. An inventory is an essential tool for protecting museums, preventing and fighting illicit trafficking, and helping museums fulfil their role in society. It also facilitates the sound management of collections mobility.*
21. *Member States should ensure that museums implement principles of applicable international instruments. Museums are committed to observe the principles of international instruments for the protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage, both tangible and intangible. They also should adhere to the principles of the international instruments for the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property and should coordinate their efforts in this matter. Museums must also take into account the ethical and professional standards established by the professional museum community. Member States should ensure that the role of museums in society is exercised in accordance with legal and professional standards in the territories under their jurisdiction.*
26. *Good practices for the functioning, protection and promotion of museums and their diversity and role in society have been recognized by national and international museum networks. These good practices are continually updated to reflect innovations in the field. In this respect, the Code of Ethics for Museums adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) constitutes the most widely shared reference. Member States are encouraged to promote the adoption and dissemination of these and other codes of ethics and good practices and to use them to inform the development of standards, museum policies and national legislation.*

foundations for advancing sound recommendations to fight against the illegal trafficking of cultural property in Jordan (see Figure 3, Recommendations #8, 21, and 26).

The study of international documentation and registration museum systems conducted by Al Masir Center provided an outline for potential specifications of a unified system for Jordanian museums. Based on these specifications, an assessment of the existing local documentation and registration systems adopted by Jordanian museums was evaluated. The assessment focused on the effectiveness of the existing documentation and registration systems to prevent the illegal movement and theft of the museums' collections. The research team undertook the following process: 1) a review of the related scientific literature, 2) determined the research sample in order to cover all different

types of museums in Jordan, 3) designed and distributed a survey questionnaire based on the Documentation Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM-CIDOC), and 4) conducted field visits to targeted museums.

An important finding is that while the official national regulatory body is the Department of Antiquities (DoA), there is no unified national registration and documentation system for Jordanian museums that would provide a national inventory of the existing artifacts. This has resulted in a number of challenges for combatting illegal trafficking in antiquities. Each museum has its own collection and documentation. This has had negative effects on the protection of antiquities due to loss or theft.

Utilizing UNESCO's internationally adopted standards for documentation and registration, Al Masir provided an analysis, report and recommendations for Jordan to address the following issues:

- **Incompatible systems:** Each museum has its own system. The current registration systems are not compatible and information cannot be easily combined into a single documentation system.
- **No fixed serial numbers as a warning system:** Jordanian museums do not give a fixed serial number for archeological items. The number is placed next to the archeological item or in the records but not fixed on the item itself. A new number is given to the item each time it moves to a new location. In addition, there is no tracking system for archeological items when they are moved from one place to another. Therefore, there is no system that gives a warning to those responsible that an item has been stolen. This makes the process of switching, changing or counterfeiting the archeological item far too easy.

- **Inadequate preservation of paper records:** Paper records documenting archeological items are not preserved in a manner that protects them from loss or damage from environmental factors or natural disasters.

Al Masir Center conducted a workshop with museum staff to solicit their input and feedback for a proposed museum documentation and registration system. The attendees represented different relevant stakeholders working in museum documentation. This workshop contributed essential guidance to the final recommendations for a proposed registration system for antiquities and officially submitted to MoTA.

Recovery process of illegally moved and stolen antiquities

Among the significant antiquities illegally moved or stolen from Jordan include: Dead sea scrolls, Mesha Stele, the Ruins of Khirbet Rizqa, the Ruins of the Archaeological Bab Al Dheraa and the Mosaics of Jerash. For example, the mosaic floor of the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Jerash is one of the lost mosaics dating from the Roman and Byzantine eras. These are irreplaceable aspects of Jordan’s cultural legacy which were illegally exported from the country to various museums around the world. It is important to note that international mechanisms, provided through Article 13 of the 1970 Convention make it possible to recover stolen cultural heritage (Figure 4).

Al Masir Center developed a restitution manual to guide the relevant stakeholders and officials in the process of reclaiming Jordan’s stolen antiquities in accordance to international law and signed agreements. In addition, a video was produced to summarize the steps for submission of a restitution claim by the responsible Jordanian authorities.

For a number of illegally moved or stolen antiquities Al Masir Center compiled the following documentation: 1) a description about the illegally moved and stolen antiquity; 2) a historical background; 3) the archaeological age; 4) the archaeological importance; 5) how it was illegally moved or stolen; 6) the place where it is located now; and finally, 7) if there are any efforts for restitution and repatriation of the stolen antiquity. Al Masir Center took the next step and prepared an authentic restitution and repatriation case for the *Rizqah Stelae* that can be pursued by the Jordanian authorities (Figure 5). This is a highly significant collection from the Chalcolithic period (Copper Age) that was illegally moved from Jordan. Based on relevant international legislations and charters, Al Masir Center developed the request for restitution of the *Rizqah Stelae* collection. The case materials for restitution include:

- the nature of the stolen *Rizqah Stelae*
- the significance of the *Rizqah Stelae*
- the circumstances of the illegal smuggling outside the country
- the current location of the stolen *Rizqah Stelae*
- proof of ownership by Jordan

Figure 4
1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Article 13

The States Parties to this Convention also undertake, consistent with the laws of each State:

(a) to prevent by all appropriate means transfers of ownership of cultural property likely to promote the illicit import or export of such property;

(b) to ensure that their competent services co-operate in facilitating the earliest possible restitution of illicitly exported cultural property to its rightful owner;

(c) to admit actions for recovery of lost or stolen items of cultural property brought by or on behalf of the rightful owners;

(d) to recognize the indefeasible right of each State Party to this Convention to classify and declare certain cultural property as inalienable which should therefore ipso facto not be exported, and to facilitate recovery of such property by the State concerned in cases where it has been exported.

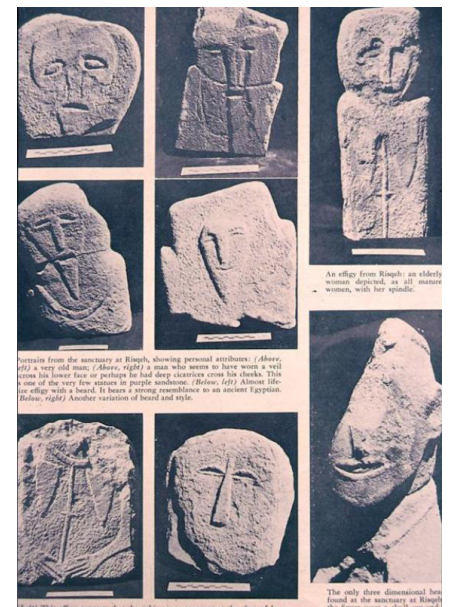


Figure 5: Photos of the stolen *Rizqah Stelae*

"The situation is very complicated but when I put it in this [New Tactics] tactical map, I'm able to see it more easily and see the impact on the citizen there. For the first time, I saw all these players at the same time and see what is involved. We know by using this method that we can distribute the skills we have accordingly. Now we better understand team work and what "team" means. It is not just tasks distributed on people. It is more of understanding the people we need to work on it together. The [New Tactics] 5 Step Method is an easy method that makes the job more enjoyable. I highly recommend it. I believe that this method can be applied on any project in general."

– **Dr. Ziad Al-Saad, Al Masir Center board member and Professor of Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management, Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, Yarmouk University**

- the conditions of the illegal movement of the Rizqah Stelae
- photos and valid references to be enclosed with the report

The case materials and restitution products (manual, video, and drafted procedure) were handed over to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA). These materials include the necessary information for responsible Jordanian authorities, namely the MOTA and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to submit the restitution claim. The meeting to hand over the resources to the Minister of MOTA was especially important to gain the Minister's support to advance the achievements of the advocacy campaign within MOTA and the Department of Antiquities.

Key Lessons

The following advocacy action areas provide lessons for reflection regarding Al Masir Center's "**Saving Our Cultural Heritage**" advocacy campaign to promote a national artifacts inventory and documentation system, amendments to the Jordanian Law of Antiquities, and reclaim stolen cultural heritage.

Advocacy Action Areas

Internal Capacity Building

Advocacy skills training and support

Al Masir Center took advantage of skills training opportunities and support services offered by USAID – CIS as a grantee. One such training was the New Tactics in Human Rights [Strategic Effectiveness Method](#) training on advocacy. As a result, their view of advocacy, who is involved, and pathways to address their issue greatly expanded. This provided them with new opportunities for their advocacy efforts and also expanded the roles of their own team.

Lesson Learned: Assessing skills to advance advocacy campaign objectives

Any advocacy campaign demands a wide variety of tasks and responsibilities. Regardless of how small or large the team, it is a challenge to utilize team member skills in the most efficient and effective way. Through the **Saving Our Cultural Heritage** advocacy campaign, Al Masir Center assessed the skills and areas of expertise of team members and effectively leveraged those skills. The combination of people and skills gathered not only researchers with specializations in different fields but each person also brought a good network with decision makers: Prof. Dr. Ziad al Saad (team leader, combating illicit trade in antiquities), Dr. Mustafa Al Naddaf, (international law and local legislations), Dr. Khader Atoum (socio-economics of illicit trade in antiquities), Mr. Mohammad Jarradat (museum documentation and registration), Dr. Mefleh Al Jarrah and Mr. Yasser Qudah (networkers with MPs, government officials, concerned security authorities, etc.), and Mr. Mohammad Rababha (activities coordinator and logistic support). Working as a team expanded opportunities to develop and foster new skills especially in the area of community engagement.

Research

Indepth problem analysis to develop solutions

Al Masir Center's experience highlights the importance of an indepth and accurate understanding of the problem. The identification of the gaps in the documentation and registration of antiquities along with the broad range of stakeholders reinforcing the profit chain provided new insights for developing

appropriate solutions to the illegal trafficking and trade of Jordan's antiquities. Al Masir Center adopted a research-based approach for dialogues with both local community and decision makers (see Mobilization). Research and analysis of the problem made it clear that both governmental action and community involvement are critical for the protection of Jordan's cultural heritage. Without local community understanding, valuing and participation in their own cultural heritage, the loss of Jordan's antiquities will continue.

Lesson Learned: stakeholder participation and validation of research findings for developing recommendations

Complex problems often require legal and policy attention (content), operational measures for implementation (structure) and changes in human behavior (culture). This **Triangle Analysis**¹¹ of content, structure and culture can provide validation for research and insights for involving stakeholders to develop appropriate solutions. Al Masir Center's research contributed essential information in each of the three areas for combating illegal trafficking and trade in antiquities:

- **Content (current laws and policies):** The Jordanian Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 has significant inadequacies which require amendments to address the gaps in protection. The participation of government agencies, parliamentarian committees, and MPs provided essential feedback for developing and gaining support for policy recommendations.
- **Structure (operational measures):** The documentation and registration survey conducted with museum staff, documentation experts and government agencies made it possible to identify the critical need for a unified, national documentation and registration system. This absence of an early warning system greatly contributes to the lack of protections and subsequent loss of Jordan's antiquities. The site visits to museums and the workshop conducted with these stakeholders concentrated on operational remedies.
- **Culture (human behavior):** Community participation revealed the socio-economic drivers fueling the profit chain in the illegal trafficking of antiquities. This provided Al Masir Center with a new understanding of the misunderstanding and complicity at the local community level that must be addressed through community engagement and education.

Mobilization

Utilizing research results to engage and mobilize stakeholders

There has been a history of mistrust between communities in close proximity to cultural heritage sites and government. In order to overcome barriers of mistrust, dialogue processes based on research results built understanding of local community perceptions, as well as impacts of illegal trafficking and trade in antiquities. Al Masir Center engaged stakeholders in validating research findings through all stages. Stakeholders were mobilized to invest in building solutions by utilizing the research findings in the areas of content, addressing the gaps in the Antiquities Law; structure, tackling the complexity of museum documentation and registration; and culture, attending to the needs of communities near cultural heritage sites.

Lesson Learned: foster engagement and solutions through dialogue

Creating opportunities for dialogue was critical to mobilizing stakeholder

"It [New Tactics Method] helped in clarifying the relationships with other people and organizations to facilitate the work. People used to look at the antiquities as stones, while now they appreciate the value and history behind them."

- Dr. Mefleh, Director, Al Masir International Center for Studies, Research and Training

¹¹ "Triangle Analysis" originates from Margaret Schuler in **Empowerment and the Law**, 1986. The text is adapted from Lisa VeneKlassen and Valerie Miller, **A New Weave of Power, People, and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation**, 2002.

support for Al Masir Center's advocacy for **Saving Our Cultural Heritage**. These dialogues centered on research findings which built understanding of the critical losses to cultural heritage resulting from illegal trade in antiquities. This empowered diverse stakeholders – community, non-governmental organizations, governmental agencies and parliamentarians – to be engaged in designing solutions. While communities near archeological sites have special responsibilities, all the people of Jordan have an investment in safeguarding their cultural heritage for future generations.

Engaging Decision Makers

Direct consultations enhanced participation

This advocacy campaign required Al Masir Center to work with decision makers at all levels, starting in the Irbid Governorate with direct consultation visits to government departments, institutions and museums to gain their support.

Their research provided solid evidence regarding the urgency of the situation. On the governorate level, consultations involved the Irbid Customs Department, Public Security Directorate, Intelligence Department, Military Intelligence Services, Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission, the Anti-Narcotics Department, as well as the Irbid police. These consultations provided vital insights for developing proposed amendments to the Jordanian Antiquities Law No. 21 of 1988 which were brought forward to Parliamentarians. As a result, when Parliamentarians were presented with the extent of destruction, loss to Jordan's cultural heritage, and lack of protections, they were shocked and motivated to address the problem (see Figure 6).



Figure 6: Mr. Abed Al Monem Oudat, representing the legal committee of the Jordan parliament with Jordan TV. Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=muqqVP6yTpg>

Lesson Learned: Addressing interpersonal conflicts

Over the course of the campaign, a challenge regarding an interpersonal conflict emerged which impacted Al Masir Center's advocacy effort. Interpersonal conflicts are not unusual, in fact, they are inevitable. When such situations arise, it is imperative to assess and address the conflict. It can be helpful to seek assistance from outside the organization. In this situation, Al Masir Center received consultative services from USAID – CIS. This helpful reflection for team members identified constructive responses to the conflict. Actions taken proved initially promising, however, barriers remain which will require ongoing attention.

Looking forward, Al Masir Center has been in direct contact with the Director General of Antiquities to advance the case materials and restitution products (manual, video, and drafted procedure) which were handed over to the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities (MOTA). The Director General has pledged to take the necessary actions on the various components, particularly the *Rizqah Stelae* restitution case, and the suggested amendments to the antiquities law. The Legal Committee of the Parliament pledged to consult with the Al Masir Center's project team during the process of the ratification and approval of the amended Antiquities Law by the Parliament.

Organizational Impact of Advocacy

The way we work with the community in order to reach the decision makers in the most effective way has changed. That was a challenge for us. At the beginning, we thought having the mayor or the MPs is enough but not really. Now we believe that

we need to go to all levels of the community, not just for community satisfaction, but for influencing the decision makers.

Al Masir Center likes the dedication and involvement in details of the USAID – FHI360. FHI360 is the only organization that works with you hand-in-hand, has an excellent monitoring system, and gives early warning at the right time.

– Dr. Ziad Al-Saad, Al Masir Center board member and Professor of Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management. Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, Yarmouk University