USTDA is supporting projects in the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and Eurasia regions that represent both high economic development priorities for host country sponsors and strong opportunities for U.S. firms. USTDA's program in Jordan spans across the energy, transportation and telecommunications sectors and has contributed to advancing critical infrastructure development while also generating U.S. exports.

Powering an Energy Movement

USTDA has developed a robust clean energy portfolio in the MENA/EE region, with key investments in geothermal and solar power generation. For example, the Agency's project preparation assistance laid the groundwork for the inauguration of a 52.5 MW solar power facility in Ma'an, Jordan. Working together with Kawar Energy, a private Jordanian energy company and Colorado-based CH2M Hill, USTDA's support provided the justification for commercial financing of the region's largest private sector power project. Arizona-based First Solar was selected as the project's engineering, procurement and construction contractor and also was chosen to supply technology.

The plant, which accounts for approximately 1 percent of Jordan's total energy generation capacity, produces clean electricity using over 600,000 modules manufactured by First Solar. Its unique design allows it to generate up to 20 percent more energy than standard fixed solar power facilities.

Installation of solar power facility in Ma'an Jordan

Supporting Jordan's Transportation Sector

USTDA supported a pilot project to demonstrate how U.S. technology could improve the flow of freight traffic at the Port of Aqaba, Jordan's sole seaport. That project, led by U.S. technology provider NTELX (Vienna, Virginia), established Nafith, the National Freight Information Transportation Hub. One of Nafith's top successes has been its Truck Control System (TCS), one of the largest e-government systems in Jordan. The TCS minimizes wait times by processing trucks quickly and smoothly through the Port of Aqaba and its terminals. Furthermore, the TCS has helped to synthesize information from several industry and government databases, ultimately decreasing transportation costs by an estimated 20 percent. The TCS has also reduced congestion and pollution, and even helped to prevent accidents.

Using Jordan as a model, Nafith has expanded its efforts to new markets: it launched a similar effort in Iraq, building and managing a system to process trucks passing through three ports in the Basra region and across the Kuwaiti border.

Developing Smart Grids and Cities

USTDA recently supported three separate feasibility studies for the Electricity Distribution Company (EDCO), Irbid District Electricity Company (IDECO) and the Jordanian Electric Power Company (JEPCO to assess smart grid upgrades across the country. The studies, carried out by Tetra Tech (Arlington, VA), helped establish the roll out of smart meter technologies to hundreds of thousands of Jordanian customers across the country.

Recently, USTDA signed a grant with the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) aimed at enhancing Amman's operations, public services and citizens' quality of life by harnessing innovations in information and communication technology.