

Al-Tafila Our Destination

Adding Al- Tafila’s archaeological sites on the tourism map.

January 2022 - March 2023



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New Tactics in Human Rights

New Tactics in Human Rights, a program of the Center for Victims of Torture, emerged as a creator of tactics, a leader of coalitions, and as a center that advocates for the protection of human rights from a unique position – one of healing and of reclaiming civic leadership. Since 1999, New Tactics has created unique resources – organized around the analysis of potential solutions rather than that of specific issues, geographic regions, or target groups – that allow activists to clearly recognize the unique elements of their situation, and to seek promising approaches that have worked elsewhere in order to apply them to new regions or issues. Since the program’s creation, human rights activists from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have participated in New Tactics in Human Rights activities, including regional workshops, an International Symposium, web-based discussions, publication development, and more. These activists encouraged New Tactics to provide more focused training and resources in the region. In 2009, New Tactics launched an initiative to support MENA human rights activists. For more information:

- <https://www.newtactics.org>
- <https://www.cvt.org>

General Overview

Advocacy Goal

Placing Al-Tafileh on the tourist map by promoting one tourist site in Al-Tafileh, which is Al-Tafileh Castle, by the end of 2023 to increase the number of tourists and, consequently, create job opportunities for the local community.

Vision:

In the future, Tafila Governorate is a destination for tourists from around the world.

Human rights-based focus area

Safety and security¹ - Universal Declaration of Human Rights, **Article 25**
“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family”

Geographic area

Local, Tafila Governorate, Jordan.

Advocacy Action Areas²

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, this case study offers four action areas that are needed to conduct any advocacy campaign:

- Internal capacity building
- Research
- Mobilization
- Engaging decision-makers

Tactical Aims

New Tactics in Human Rights has defined four primary human rights-based tactical aims: prevention, intervention, restorative, and promotion. This case illustrates the following tactical aim:

- Promotion

Campaign implementation period

January – March 2023

Campaign Outcome Statement

As a result of our actions, we hope that the mayor of Tafila will positively support the campaign’s activities..

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. The New Tactics Method utilizes: safety and security; non-discrimination; participation; and protection-accountability.

NOTE: The rights listed in these four “categories” maybe 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 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.

Background

About Tafila Women Charity Society – Jordan

It founded at the beginning of 2011 under the Ministry of Social Development as a non-profit voluntary women charity. Its primary goal is to empower women and develop their community capacities in the Al-Tafilah governorate through the implementation of specialized programs for building secure families. The administrative body consists of 7 women elected by the general assembly, which comprises a total of 99 women. The work revolves around family counseling and also focuses on community development for both male and female youth through various partnerships, whether local, national, or international.

Tafila Women Charity Society programs and activities:

The Society adopts numerous programs, activities, and projects, including the ‘Youth for Positive Change’ project. The project commenced in February 2022 and ran until February 2023 (for one year) with a primary goal. The main objective was for the youth of Al-Tafilah to have a high level of awareness regarding the societal issues by the end of the project, in order to reduce community violence in the region. This project included several activities such as:

1. Preparing needs assessment manual that includes Al-Tafila’s youth needs for the next three years.
2. Conducting a series of training sessions for community’s youth leaders based on the results of a needs assessment and the needs assessment manual.
3. Establishment of 13 community initiatives in the following fields: cultural, tourism, political, artistic, social, and technology.
4. Streaming 12 broadcast episodes.
5. Executing 4 advocacy campaigns for the community including tourism and political campaigns.

Issue Background:

Unemployment is a significant issue in Jordan, with the Department of Statistics reporting an unemployment rate of 24.7% in the fourth quarter of 2021. Youth unemployment, in particular, was even higher, reaching 47.3% for individuals aged 15 to 24.

The tourism sector has long been an essential component of the Jordanian economy, providing employment opportunities and generating revenue. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, tourism contributed 7.3% of the country’s GDP in 2019 and employed 116,000 people. The Jordanian government has made efforts to promote tourism and attract visitors through measures such as visa exemptions, infrastructure

development, and investment in cultural and historical sites.

However, despite these efforts, some areas in Jordan, including Al-Tafileh, do not receive a sufficient number of tourists. This has had a negative impact on the local economy and employment opportunities, especially for tourism graduates and women who produce local handicrafts and products.

Al-Tafileh governorate boasts numerous historical and tourist attractions, including the Afra mineral baths, the diverse climate of Dana Reserve, Al-Tafileh Castle, and many other historical, cultural, and religious sites. This makes it a potential tourist destination capable of promoting economic development, which is currently lacking in terms of developmental programs.

Most of the tourist sites in the governorate are not adequately represented on the Jordanian tourist map, and their significance is often overlooked, with deteriorating landmarks as evidence.

According to a report from the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Al-Tafileh welcomed only 12,173 tourists in 2019, in stark contrast to Petra, the most popular destination, which received 979,586 tourists during the same year. Consequently, graduates of tourism colleges in Al-Tafileh struggle to find employment in their field. Women who engage in handicrafts or produce local products for sale also suffer due to the lack of tourists, as they primarily rely on visitors to sell their products.

Hence, the 'Al-Tafileh: Our Destination' campaign was launched as a tourism initiative to highlight the essential tourist, historical, and cultural landmarks in the Al-Tafileh governorate by shedding light on these areas.

In this context, this campaign focuses on a major problem that can be identified as the following:

Due to the non-inclusion of tourist sites in Tafila Governorate, the problem of lack of job opportunities, is resulting in young people with tourism specializations having their right to a full standard of living denied.

Success markers

Progressive success markers are identified so that the campaign team is able to know, demonstrate and celebrate their achievements. Success markers are specific and fixed standards of success for outcomes that can be compared with what actually happens after action is taken. The following success markers were developed before implementation activities began:



Enough (a modest success that is realistic to achieve): The mayor's acceptance of the invitation to attend the open day event held at Al-Tafileh Castle (achieved).



Full Success Marker (a slightly more ambitious success that is realistic to achieve): The mayor sponsoring the Open Day event.(achieved).



Overflowing (a much more ambitious success that could happen but would be very surprising if it did): The mayor's

commitment to allocate three days each month for showcasing the products of local women and youth in one of the municipal building's halls in Al-Taflah, free of charge, serves as an encouragement for the campaign following his attendance at the open day event (achieved).

Achievements

As a result of the campaign’s activities, the mayor has decided to allow the local women and youth in Al-Taflah to showcase and sell their products for free in a dedicated hall inside the municipal building for three days every month. Additionally, a tourist booklet encompassing numerous tourist areas in Al-Taflah has been prepared and adopted by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation for translation into Spanish. Several entities, including the Police Force, hotel and cafe owners in Al-Taflah, and others, have reached out to the campaign team to obtain copies of the tourist booklet.

Main campaign components

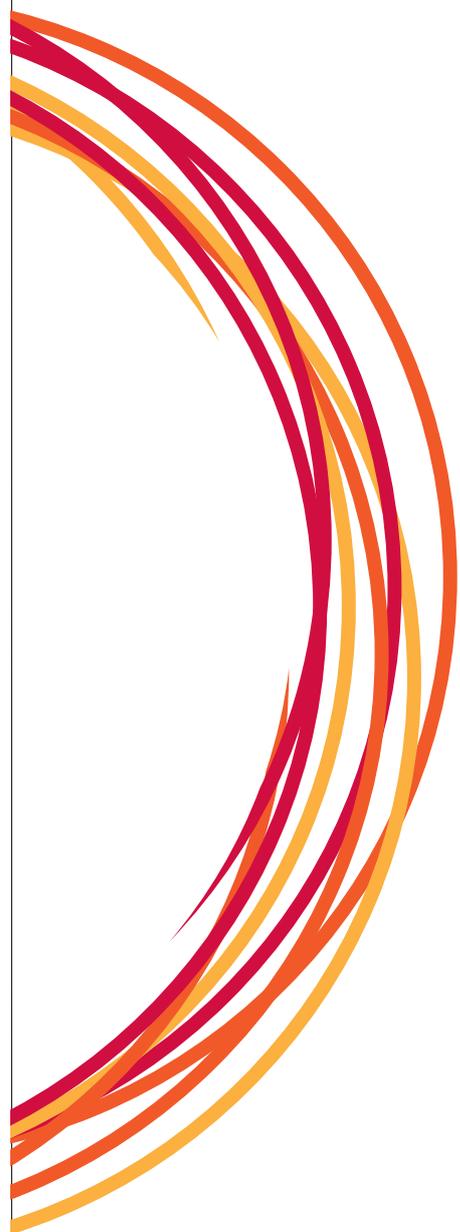
Advocacy action areas:

Internal Capacity Building

This action area requires attention to an organization’s capacity to carry out advocacy including commitment, structure, mobilization, leadership and decision making. When it comes to this action area, Al-Taflah Women’s society was keen on building the capacity of the campaign team in several areas, including advocacy which was gained through the training conducted by New tactics in Human Rights on the “Five Steps Strategic Effective Method”. This training aimed to equip participants with all the necessary knowledge to design a successful and meaningful advocacy campaign for human rights and to hold decision-makers accountable at both the local and national levels through the use of advocacy or support-building strategies rooted in the human rights approach.

This training provides a five-step gradual process to develop a strategic path, also known as the campaign’s journey of change. This strategic path helps track the progress and monitor the development of the campaign. It begins with collective action to identify a clear and specific problem statement. This step is crucial for any campaign. The identified problem statement was: “Due to the non-inclusion of tourist sites in Tafla Governorate, the problem of lack of job opportunities, is resulting in young people with tourism specializations having their right to a full standard of living denied.”

The campaign team attended this training in Al-Taflah from December 24th to December 27th, 2022. This training contributed to directing the development and implementation of the campaign. The core team consisted of four members from the youth of Al-Taflah with varying experiences. Responsibilities were assigned based on the campaign team’s expertise, with the team consisting of a financial coordinator, a technical and administrative coordinator, a photographer, and a logistics specialist.



Research

This action area requires attention to gathering information, data, and analysis to develop recommendations for actions on an issue and regarding each of the other components (internal capacity building, mobilization and engagement of decision makers) before, during and after taking action on an issue.

Needs Assessment Manual:

The Society created a needs assessment manual with the aim of accurately identifying the needs of Al-Tafla Youth. This needs assessment manual serves as a reference during the 'Youth for Positive Change' project and for future initiatives or projects. The needs assessment manual covered all areas of the Al-Tafileh governorate except for the Al-Hassa district, encompassing various sectors including education, health, services, economic aspects, social aspects, and tourism. This study was based on a survey participated in by 998 individuals, in addition to five focused working groups representing five categories. These categories included young men and women aged 20-24, representatives of institutions and associations, civil society activists, representatives of the governorate council and municipal council. The results were collected, analyzed, and used to determine the needs of the youth in the Al-Tafileh governorate.

Among these needs, the study emphasized those related to the tourism sector, including the importance of developing tourist sites and viewpoints, improving tourism facilities and infrastructure such as hotels and chalets, as well as enhancing tourism promotion for various types of tourism in Al-Tafileh, including therapeutic, religious, and recreational tourism. Based on these findings, the issue was identified, leading to the implementation of the "Al-Tafileh Our Destination" campaign.

Tourist booklet:

Based on the results of the Needs Assessment Manual, the Tafla Women Charity Society prepared a comprehensive tourist booklet. This booklet includes an overview of the Al-Tafileh governorate, a list of some services provided such as restaurants, hotels, and transportation lines in the governorate, as well as photos and details about various tourist and archaeological sites. The purpose of this booklet is to assist in promoting the governorate and attracting tourists to it. The necessary information was collected in stages as follow:

1. Stakeholders' field visits

Five relevant government departments were identified to provide information to the campaign team. These departments include the Directorate of Tourism, the Directorate of Antiquities, the Directorate of Culture, the Greater Al-Tafileh Municipality, and the Transport Sector Authority. The campaign team then drafted official correspondence, made phone calls, and scheduled visits. These visits aimed to acquaint the official entities with the campaign and gather the necessary information about the tourist areas in Al-Tafileh to include them in the booklet.

2. Tourist Areas Field Visits

To gather additional information, such as how to book certain places at Al-Tafila, needed contact information, history of some of Al- Tafila’s landmarks, and their locations. The campaign’s team members conducted field visits to multiple tourist and archaeological sites. Multiple photos of these areas were also taken to be included in the tourist booklet. These areas included the Dana Natural Reserve, Al-Ma’tan Village, Afra Mineral Springs, Barbita Mineral Springs, Wadi Al-Hassa Tourist Camp, and the Maqam (shrine) of Harith ibn ‘Amir Al-Azdi, and others.

As a result, the team was able to prepare both a printed and soft copies of the tourist booklet, targeting the local community and tourists. Copies were distributed to the Directorate of Antiquities and the Police Force. Also, the booklet was distributed during Tafila’s Women Charity Society events and to its members and visitors. More than 150 copies were distributed. The soft copy was uploaded to Tafilah Women Charity Society website, and the booklet content is displayed on the campaign’s Facebook page, which has received nearly 35,000 views.

Open Day Event:

To implement the Open Day activity, it was necessary to carry out a series of steps to engage decision-makers, mobilize stakeholders, and encourage allies to join the campaign, as follows:

Mobilization

This action area requires attention to engaging and bringing together individuals, organizations and institutions in a collective effort on an issue. In this action area, the campaign team utilized the Tactical Map of the New Tactics program to help them identify a list of targeted stakeholders for engagement and interaction. This list included media channels such as ‘Al-Mamlaka TV’ to cover the Open Day event and produce a promotional video for the tourism area (Al-Tafilah Castle) and distribute it through social media. Additionally, it involved tourist guides who play a vital role in reaching and covering the tourist areas, as well as other entities like the Tourism Activation Authority, Al-Salh Visitors Center, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, tourism sector initiatives within the governorate, hotel and chalet owners. The team worked on writing formal letters, making phone calls, and conducting field visits to these entities to introduce them to the campaign and invite them to join the Open Day event.

Moreover, collaboration was established with ‘Nahna’ platform to add the opportunity of volunteering in the Open Day event for youth on the platform, as this opportunity will be added to their volunteering hours



Figure 1: A Tafila Women’s Charity Society member taking photos of archaeological sites.



Figure 2: photo from the Open Day activity.

balance. Furthermore, cooperation was initiated with the 'Fazatna' volunteer team to support in managing the Open Day event and facilitate the work of the campaign team.

Engage decision makers:

This action area requires attention to understanding and applying power dynamics and decision-making processes to positively affect change on an issue. In this action area, the campaign team utilized the tactical map to identify decision-makers, including representatives from the Department of Tourism, the Directorate of Antiquities, the Directorate of Culture, and the Greater Tafilah Municipality. Subsequently, the team-initiated communications, correspondence, and prepared official letters to visit these entities, acquainting them with the campaign's objectives and inviting them to participate in and support the campaign's activities and the Open Day event.

The aforementioned actions enabled the campaign team to organize an Open Day event at Al-Tafilah Castle. The area had recently undergone renovation by the Ministry of Tourism, but no initiatives had been executed or publicized there, despite its potential for hosting programs and initiatives. It remained relatively unexplored compared to other areas like Dana.

It's worth noting that the Open Day event was the first event held at the castle on January 24, 2023, and it achieved significant success and garnered widespread attention. It included several activities, such as:

1. Welcoming and introducing the "Al-Tafilah, Our Destination" tourism campaign.
2. Preparing 30 frames containing pictures and information about the tourist areas and distributing them to the parties attending.
3. Creating a space to showcase and sell products crafted by local women, including handmade crafts, traditional items, and artisanal products.
4. The event wrapped up by serving a traditional local dish called "Al-Rashidia" to all the attendees.
5. Distributing the tourist booklet

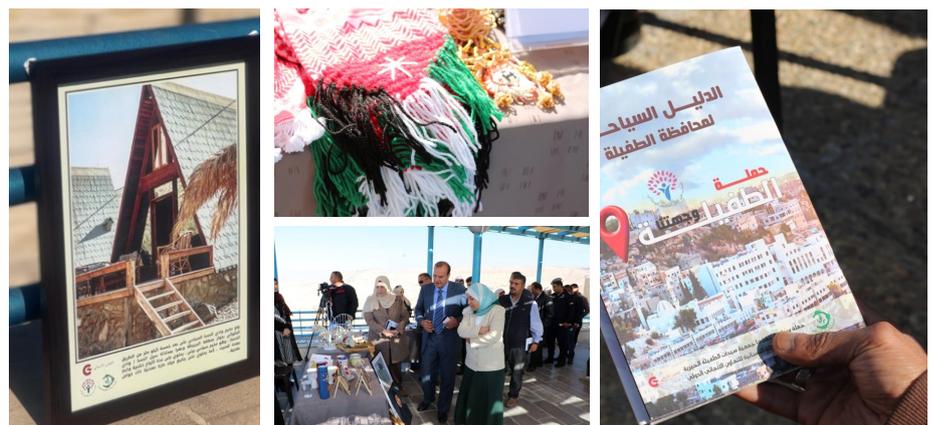


Figure 3: photos from the Open Day activity.

Many different organizations and individuals participated in the event, with a total of approximately 72 attendees, as recorded on the attendance sheet. The event received support and sponsorship from the Al-Tafilah Municipality, and the Mayor himself was present. Various government bodies, including the Tourism Directorate, Antiquities Directorate, Cultural Directorate, members of the governorate council, and representatives from the police force, also attended. Furthermore, the event attracted craftswomen, artisans, and numerous young individuals from Al-Tafilah who were involved in various tourism-related projects. This included college graduates with a background in tourism and passionate individuals interested in tourism initiatives, and others.

As a result of the campaign’s efforts, the Mayor granted women the opportunity to exhibit their products in a municipal hall for three days each month. The Antiquities Directorate also facilitated the hosting of events in areas under its authority, such as Al-Tafilah Castle. Many other organizations expressed their strong support for the campaign after witnessing its success during the open day event.

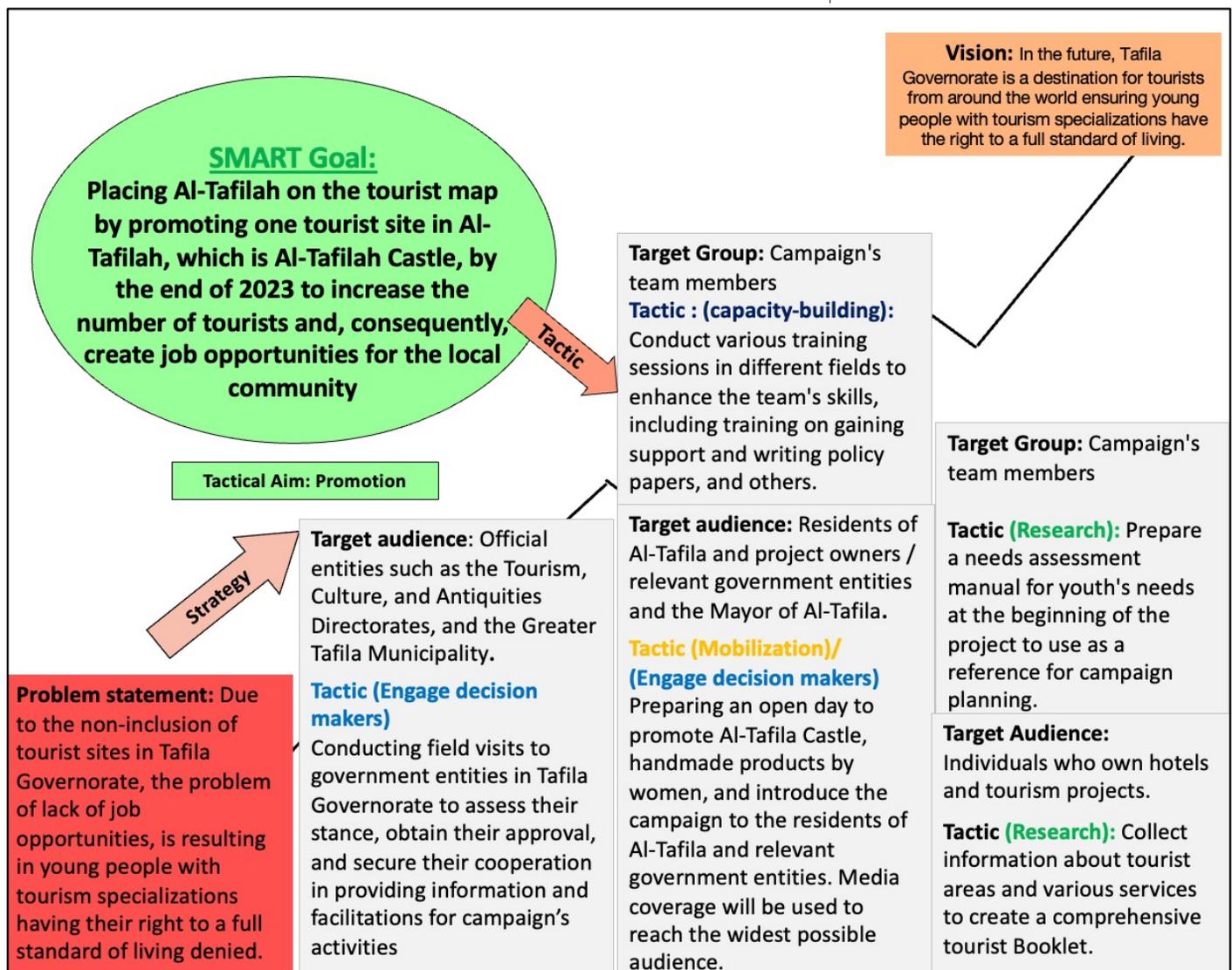


Figure 4: The text in red refers to the problem where we are today. This is located at the bottom of the mountain. This speaks of the right being violated. The vision in orange goes beyond the mountain. This is the world we seek. Where the violated right is now a right that is realized. The text in green is the organization’s SMART goal. This is what the campaign is trying to achieve. The text in grey are all tactics for implementation. These tactics make it possible to reach the goal.

Long-Term Impacts

The impact of advocacy on the organization

The campaign wrapped up by honoring the Al-Taflah Women Charity Society for their hard work, with the Mayor of Al-Taflah Municipality recognizing their efforts. Even after the “Youth for Positive Change” project was completed, the campaign team continued working on their initiative.

They maintained their online tourism promotion efforts through a dedicated [webpage](#) where they showcased various tourist areas along with brief descriptions of each. To support these publications and reach a wider audience, they applied the five-step strategic effectiveness method in the campaign planning and execution. This approach helped reinforce their message and values, such as empowering women and preserving families, and other campaign goals.

The “Al-Taflah Our Destination” campaign is meant to kickstart larger efforts in revitalizing the local tourism sector, which holds significant potential in the province. The organization believes that there are many events and initiatives that can be collaboratively undertaken with capable youth to highlight the region’s attractions and offer opportunities for various community groups to participate in a wide range of activities.

Challenges and Difficulties

On the other hand, it’s worth mentioning that the campaign encountered several challenges and difficulties alongside its numerous successes. Some of these include:

1. Difficulty accessing some archaeological and tourist sites due to the challenging road conditions and the need for additional official approvals to enter, such as the Maqam (shrine) of Harith ibn ‘Amir, which required obtaining extra permissions from other authorities.
2. Limited timeframe for implementing the campaign and the need for extensive information to prepare the tourist booklet.
3. Initial reluctance and limited cooperation from some government authorities at the beginning of the campaign

Lessons learned and Future

Suggestions:

1. Proper planning and campaign documenting are fundamental steps that facilitate campaign execution.
2. Identifying stakeholders, decision-makers, and understanding the power dynamics among them is one of the key factors contributing to campaign success.

3. The necessity of having a cultural and tourism database and a website that encompasses all information related to the tourism sector in the governorate.
4. The importance of engaging youth, harnessing their ability to serve their region and communities, and shedding light on various issues.
5. The power of media and its significance in advocacy campaigns.

