



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 14, 2020

**TO:** USAID/West Bank and Gaza, Acting Mission Director, Courtney Chubb

**FROM:** USAID/OIG Middle East and Eastern Europe (ME/EE) Regional Office, USDH NFA Coordinator, John Vernon /s/

**SUBJECT:** Audit of the Fund Accountability Statement of Akko Center for Arts and Technology, Full STEAM Ahead Program in West Bank and Gaza, Cooperative Agreement 72029418CA00001, September 28, 2018 to December 31, 2019 (8-294-21-007-N)

This memorandum transmits the final audit report of the fund accountability statement of Akko Center for Arts and Technology, Full STEAM Ahead Program in West Bank and Gaza, cooperative agreement 72029418CA00001, from September 28, 2018 to December 31, 2019. USAID/West Bank and Gaza contracted with the independent certified public accounting firm Ernst and Young-Middle East to conduct the audit. The audit firm stated that it performed its audit in accordance with the U.S. Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. However, it did not have an external quality control review program. The audit firm explained that professional organizations in West Bank and Gaza do not offer such a review program. The audit firm is responsible for the enclosed report and the conclusions expressed in it. We do not express an opinion on the auditee's fund accountability statement; the effectiveness of its internal control; or its compliance with the award, laws, and regulations.<sup>1</sup>

The audit objectives were mainly to: (1) express an opinion on whether the fund accountability statement for the period audited was fairly presented, in all material respects; (2) evaluate the auditee's internal controls; and (3) determine whether the auditee complied with the award terms and applicable laws and regulations. To answer the audit objectives, the audit firm performed the subject financial audit that covered total expenditures of \$388,541 from

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<sup>1</sup> We reviewed the audit firm's report for conformity with professional reporting standards. Our desk reviews are typically performed to identify any items needing clarification or issues requiring management attention. Desk reviews are limited to review of the audit report itself and excludes review of the auditor's supporting working papers; they are not designed to enable us to directly evaluate the quality of the audit performed.

September 28, 2018 to December 31, 2019.

The auditors expressed an unmodified opinion on the fund accountability statement and did not identify any questioned costs. The auditors did not identify any material internal control weaknesses and identified one material instance of noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations. The auditors said that the auditee is not subject to mission order number 21 and executive order number 13224 (Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions With Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit or Support Terrorism), as the program falls outside the scope of the mandatory provisions underlying Mission Order 21. Further, the audit firm issued a management letter.

To address the issue identified in the report, we recommend that USAID/West Bank and Gaza:

**Recommendation 1:** Verify that Akko Center for Arts and Technology corrects the instance of material noncompliance detailed on page 15 of the audit report.

We ask that you provide your written notification of actions planned or taken to reach a management decision.

OIG does not routinely distribute independent public accounting reports beyond the immediate addressees because a high percentage of these reports contain information restricted from release under the Trade Secrets Act, 18 U.S.C. 1905 and Freedom of Information Act Exemption Four, 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4) ("commercial or financial information obtained from a person that is privileged or confidential").