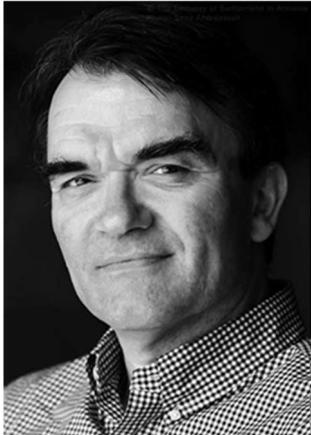




NEWSLETTER – JULY 2019



It has been nearly a year since I started my mission in Amman and I am pleased to say that my journey so far has been an exhilarating one. As you will see in this issue of our newsletter, I have had the privilege to hand over my credentials to President Barham Salih on my first visit to Iraq last April and have since then undertaken two exciting trips to Baghdad and Erbil in order further strengthen the bilateral relations between Switzerland and Iraq. In Jordan, the Embassy supported together with the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia a series of cultural festivals this spring by facilitating the participation of Swiss artists such as the Image Festival Amman and the Amman Jazz Festival. Finally, I am proud to inform you that Switzerland adopted a new cooperation program framing its humanitarian and development aid activities in the region, including Jordan and Iraq, for the upcoming years 2019-2022.

1 August 2019 marks the Swiss National Day commemorating the founding of the Swiss Confederation in 1291. I want to take this opportunity to invite you to join us for the traditional party for all compatriots in Jordan and Iraq with Swiss specialties to my residency (see below).

Last but not least, there is a feedback form at the end of this newsletter and a quiz question. If you answer the quiz question correctly you will get a chance to enter a draw to win the book “Swiss Made” of which the Arabic edition was recently launched in Jordan. I look forward for your contribution and suggestions to make the newsletter better to your liking.

I hope you enjoy reading about the Embassy’s activities and cooperation with different partners and look forward to seeing you at the Swiss National Day celebration.

With best regards,

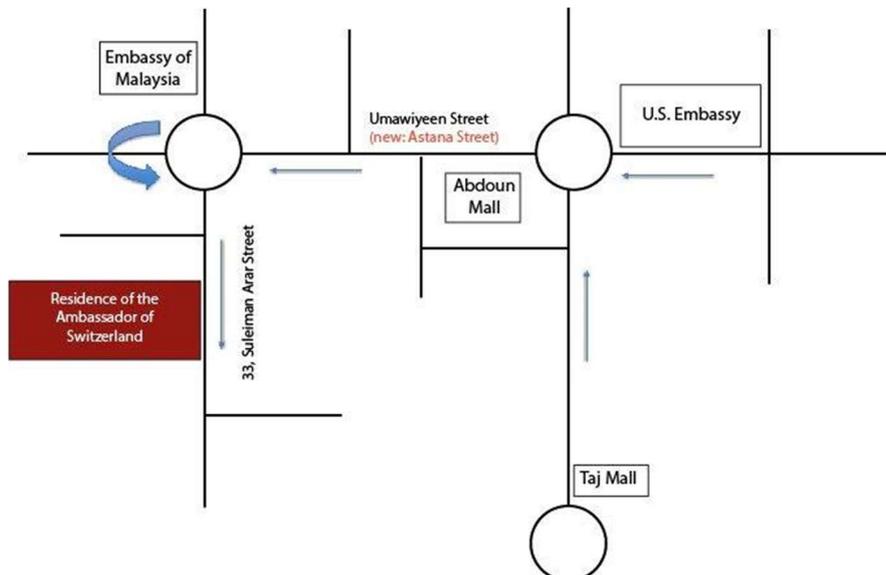
Lukas Gasser

Ambassador of Switzerland in Jordan and Iraq

Invitation to the Swiss National Day

Dear Compatriots,

On behalf of **H.E. Mr. Lukas Gasser**, Ambassador of Switzerland, you are cordially invited to celebrate the **Swiss National Day** with Swiss specialties on **Thursday, 1 August 2019**, at 6:00 pm at his residence on 33, Suleiman Arar Street, in Abdoun. RSVP before Monday, July 22, 2019 to Christine.Bisunia@eda.admin.ch.



Ambassador Gasser's first official visits to Iraq

From 6 April 2019 to 8 April 2019, Lukas Gasser, Ambassador of Switzerland to Jordan and Iraq, who is based in Amman, undertook his first official visit to Baghdad. He was accompanied by Consul Dario Lanzillo. In Baghdad, the Ambassador handed over his credentials to President Barham Salih, rendering his accreditation as Ambassador to Iraq official.



Ambassador Lukas Gasser handing over his credentials to the Iraqi President Barham Salih

From 26 May 2019 to 30 May 2019, Ambassador Gasser revisited Iraq, accompanied by a delegation from the Headquarters of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs as well as a representative



Ambassador Gasser meets with the Head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Kurdish Regional Government in Erbil

from the State's Secretariat for Migration.

This time, the Ambassador also visited Erbil in the Kurdish Region in Northern Iraq. During his visit in Baghdad and Erbil, the Ambassador and his delegation met with several Ministers in order to discuss bilateral relations between Switzerland and Iraq in the fields of politics, economy and migration. Furthermore, the delegation met with representatives of the diplomatic community and

members of UN agencies as well as NGOs present in the country.

Overall, the trip enabled Ambassador Gasser and the members of the delegation to establish important contacts and to get familiarized with the situation and the priorities of Iraq for the upcoming period. Regular trips by Lukas Gasser in his function as Ambassador to Iraq are foreseen in order to keep up the relations formed already and to further enhance the ties between Switzerland and Iraq.

Welcome new citizens to legal age



Consul Dario Lanzillo and Deputy Head of Chancery Nicole Clivaz meet with two of the Swiss citizens that turned 18 years old.

The Consul Dario Lanzillo invited fellow compatriots who recently celebrated their eighteenth birthday to an official lunch. They are now able to enjoy their full civil rights and obligations.

Five people reached their legal age in Jordan and Iraq this year. The gatherings took place in Amman

(18 June 2019) and Erbil (18 March 2019). Congratulations to the fellow compatriots for reaching legal age!



Consul Dario Lanzillo meets the citizen that turned 18 years old in Erbil.

Artist in Residence Program

The Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia supports and disseminates Swiss arts and culture in Switzerland and throughout the world. It has been committed to cultural exchange between Switzerland and the Arab world through its liaison office in Cairo since 1988. Through the "Artist in Residence Program" Rayelle Niemann, who is a Freelance curator and cultural producer in visual arts, came to Jordan to research on social phenomenon spaces/places, created by, and provided for, the human being and the arising reciprocal influences and effects.

Like us on Facebook to stay updated with the Embassy's activities and news.

<https://www.facebook.com/SwissEmbassyAmman/>

The Embassy is now represented on the board of the Swiss Jordanian Business Club

Further strengthening ties between the Embassy and the Swiss-Jordanian business community, Ambassador Lukas Gasser and his spouse Marilu Gasser hosted a reception for the members of the Swiss Jordanian Business Club (SJBC) on the beautiful summer evening of 1 July 2019 in their residence.



Guests at the reception as Ambassador Gasser gave his speech.

The event took place in a relaxed atmosphere and was well-attended. It allowed participants to network as well as to learn about the latest developments and upcoming events of the SJBC.



Guests networking at the reception.



Ambassador Gasser with a member of the Swiss Jordanian Business Club

The Chairman of the SJBC, Ambassador Adnan Talhouni, presented the new board members following the renewal of the body during the General Assembly on 25 May 2019. As a novelty and upon invitation of the SJBC, the Embassy is now represented on the board with its Head of Diplomatic Affairs (also covering economic issues), Mrs. Alexandra Häfliger, as an honorary member.



Ambassador Gasser together with Ambassador Talhouni.

The guests were also informed about the four new committees to be created which will include both members of the board and regular members of the SJBC: social, education, culture committee; trade, tourism, economic committee; ICT, digital entrepreneurship committee; and membership and finance committee. Highlighting the added value expected from these new vehicles for the SJBC, Ambassador Talhouni invited members to actively engage and

sign up to work within one of the committees. Finally, he presented the newly adopted Articles of Association of the SJBC.

For further information about the Swiss Jordanian Business Club, please contact: info@swissjordanian.com

Contemporary Dance Festival



The contemporary Dance Festival was supported by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia. The festival showed Compagnie Linga which is a Swiss contemporary dance group performing FLOW at the Grand Opening. The dance group has strong ties to Jordan as that was the third time that Compagnie Linga was on stage in Amman as part of a regional tour.

ILO's 100-year anniversary



Simone Troller, Regional Advisor for Migration & Development giving a speech.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) which is based in Geneva celebrates this year its 100th anniversary. In this context, Jordan participated as one of 24 countries all over the globe in a live 24-hour "Global Tour" – commemorating the 11 April 1919, the date when the plenary session of the Paris Peace Conference approved the draft ILO Constitution. The celebration ceremony in Jordan was supported by the Embassy, Switzerland being the host country of the ILO. The highlight of the centenary celebration was the unveiling of a mosaic on social justice that was prepared by persons with disabilities. During the unveiling, different categories of workers (women, disabled, refugee, domestic worker, etc.) voiced their wishes for social justice in Jordan.

Several high-level panelists pointed out the progress Jordan has made in advancing decent work in the country, but they also raised concern about women's inclusion in the Jordanian labour market, the segmentation of Jordan's labor market, as well as the mismatch of expectations between job seekers and job offers.



H.E. Mr. Samir Murad, Minister of Labour of Jordan giving a speech.

Ambassador Lukas Gasser highlighted in his opening speech the continued relevance of the ILO's mandate for Jordan and the region. He also referred to Switzerland's well-functioning social partnership, which is a pillar of the country's

economic success, and the Embassy's readiness to share its experiences with Jordan.



Ambassador Gasser with the Deputy Director General of the ILO Mr. Greg Vines

Through its Global Program Migration & Development, Switzerland seeks to improve work conditions for migrants, refugees and nationals in low-skilled sectors throughout the Middle East, including in Jordan. The goal of its engagement is to improve labor protection for low-skilled workers, and to enhance migrants' contribution to development and refugees' ability to earn a living.

The Liberal Theatre

The Liberal Theatre hosted the Swiss group INTERFACE which was supported by the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia. They performed "Vive La Vie" which won the golden prize at the festival. Actress Johanna Rittiner Sermier won the prize for best actress, and the director André Pignat won the Special Jury Prize.

Lieutenant Colonel Nicolas Winteregg visits Royal Military Police in Amman



Lieutenant Colonel Nicolas Winteregg upon arrival at the Royal Military Police in Amman

As part of the Defense Attaché's regular duties to gain knowledge about the local security, Lieutenant Colonel Nicolas Winteregg visited the Royal

Military Police in Amman which belongs to the Jordanian Armed forces in June this year.

The Commander of the Military Police, Brigadier General Mekhled Al Hajjaya welcomed the Defense Attaché and his colleagues from other diplomatic missions that accompanied him. During the visit, the Defense Attachés were briefed about the missions, trainings, tasks and organization of the Military Police. They had interesting discussions followed by questions and answers.

The briefing was concluded by some practical demonstrations (check point, security check, etc.) and then a friendly lunch where they exchanged traditional gifts.



Defense Attaché Nicolas Winteregg exchanging gifts with the Commander of the Military Police

Providing Opportunities for Syrian refugees in Za'atari and Azraq Camps through Education

In Syrian refugee camps in Jordan, there are 46,565 children of school age, out of which approximately 31% (15,000) are out of school. However, many children that actually attend schools in camps drop out due to overcrowded classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, and lack of social cohesion, violence in classrooms or reasons related to displacement or poverty.

In cooperation with Relief International, the Swiss Development Cooperation's program (SDC) have a significant impact on students' ability to succeed academically. The programme improves Syrian refugees' capacity to pass school exams and contributes to decreasing dropout rates from formal education and increasing the overall retention and re-integration of students within the system. The programme also provides meaningful recreation and access to libraries that are vital for psycho-social well-being and healthy interaction amongst peers.

The Remedial Education Classes are offered to in-school children who have been out of formal education for two years or less and require additional support to allow them to succeed in the formal education system.



Students at the remedial education classes.

The Drop-out programme is a Ministry of Education owned certified non-formal education programme; that ensures a "second chance" for out-of-school children aged 13 years and above who have been out of school for three years or more, and thus not eligible for formal education.



The graduation ceremony of the first batch of Syrian Refugees from the Drop-out programme.

Early Childhood Development is a complementary service to the education programmes provided that enables the participation of students-caregivers by providing safe learning and development space for children aged 0-5 years.



Children taking part in the early childhood development.

The Embassy's small grants program for 2019

Within the scope of its small grants program, the Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan supports in 2019 three local Jordanian NGOs as well as one NGO in Iraq in their endeavors to address various issues related to human rights.

In cooperation with the Community Media Network, the Embassy supports a project that aims at rendering

journalists working for different media outlets more aware of environmental topics and encouraging them to use their acquired knowledge in the writing of their texts.

Addressing the gender gap in Jordan as well as the challenges for women to be represented in politics, the Embassy supports the Karak Castle for Consultations & Trainings Organization in its endeavors to establish a women caucus in Karak. Within the scope of the project, a series of meetings and training sessions for elected women in Karak aim at establishing the first Karak Elected Women Networks, promoting women's political participation.

Despite the worldwide tendency to abolish death penalty for all crimes, there are still 17 articles in the Jordanian Penal Code that allow for capital punishment (as of January 2019). In the project Right to Life vs Death Penalty, the East and West Center for Sustainable Development Organization aims at bringing back the necessity of abolishing the death penalty into public discussion.



Participants at the workshop where a study showing different effects of death penalty on society was presented.

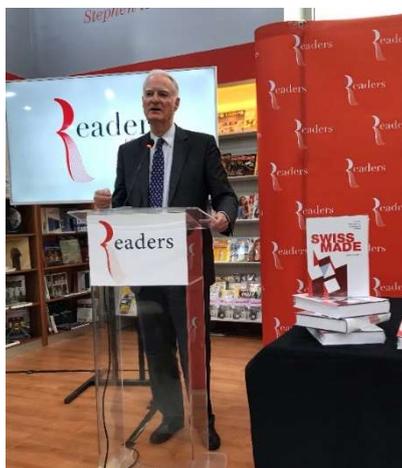
Last but not least, the Embassy supports the Iraqi NGO Ajial Association for Intelligence and Creation Development in its efforts to reduce suffering of sexual harassment victims in the Diyala province in Iraq. The project further aims at enhancing the role of women in protecting and practicing their rights in society.



Launching event under the patronage of Karak Governor Dr. Jamal Al Fayez with members of local and municipal councils, governors and deputies.

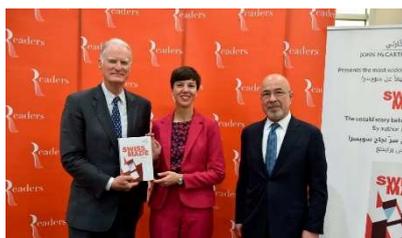
Swiss Made: Book Launch in Amman

The Arabic version of the book “Swiss Made – the untold story behind Switzerland’s success” by James Breiding was launched at Readers on 8 April 2019. The Embassy of Switzerland in Jordan supported the event. The book vividly describes various success stories of Swiss entrepreneurs and sheds light on the question why Switzerland – a tiny, landlocked country with few natural advantages – has been so competitive and prosperous for such a long time.



Publisher James Breiding giving a speech at the launching event.

The event took place in the presence of John McCarthy, the publisher of the Arabic version of Swiss Made, while its author James Breiding addressed the public by video-message from Zürich. Alexandra Häfliger, Head of Diplomatic Affairs at the Embassy of Switzerland, also attended the book launch.



Left to Right: Publisher James Breiding, Alexandra Häfliger head of diplomatic affairs, Imad Bukhari CEO of The Group.

The book discusses the successes of Swiss businesses dating back to 300 years and it notes

that most of those business’ founders were immigrants.

Swiss Made is now available at Readers. The **Embassy of Switzerland is giving you a chance to win a copy by entering the competition at the end of this newsletter.**

Barn Owls for Environment and Peace in the Jordan Valley

On 21 April 2019, Ambassador Lukas Gasser and a delegation from the Embassy traveled to the Jordan Valley to visit an interesting project, bridging science, peace and environment.



Ambassador Gasser touring the fields together with General Abu Rashid Mansour (Amman Center for peace and development).

The Jordan River constitutes a natural border between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on one side, and Jordan on the other side. The three nations benefit from the fertile ground for their agricultural activities, but on both sides of the river the farmers face also similar difficulties in their fields. A big challenge is the invasive presence of rodents, which is usually controlled by pesticides.

To find an environmentally friendly solution to this problem,

the Amman Center for Peace & Development in collaboration with the University of Lausanne is facilitating the introduction of a large population of barn owls. The Swiss delegation was invited to observe the successes of the project, partly financed by the FDFA, and attend the installation of two new nest-boxes. So far the results in terms of agricultural productivity and environmental protection are very positive.

Since the same solution is implemented also on the other side of the Jordan River, the project has a transnational dimension and therefore has in addition a symbolic value: the title “Barn Owls know no boundaries”, appropriately represents the natural connection between the two shores. In fact, the project has also the ambition to foster collaboration between Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian farmers.



Installation of two new nest-boxes.

The “Barn Owls know no boundaries” project represents an important example of how science can convey a message of peace, and on this note Prof. Alexandre Roulin, heading the project at the University of Lausanne, had the honor to be received by the Pope on the 11 May 2019, together with the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian partners.

The Embassy supports the Amman Jazz Festival

The Embassy of Switzerland sponsored the Amman Jazz Festival that was organized by OrangeRed in April 2019. Other Swiss Sponsors including Pro Helvetia and the Canton and the City of Geneva also supported the festival. A great variety of Jazz music was presented to the public, from American jazz to European avant-garde as well as Latin, jazz fusion and everything in between to celebrate diversity and cultural fusion.

The festival, which took place at different locations in Amman including Al Shams Theatre, The Amman Staircases, Blue Fig, Corner's Pub and the Boulevard, featured two astonishing Swiss musical groups.

The Swiss-French trumpet virtuoso Erik Truffaz, a graduate of the Geneva *Conservatoire de musique* and regular participant at the prestigious Montreux Jazz Festival, performed together with the French musician SIG (jazz cellist & pianist) and the phenomenal Artis Orubs on drums on 22 April 2019 at the Al Shams Theatre.



The Fanfareduloup Orchestra from Geneva, known for its diversity and versatility, is a musical collective composed of 13 musicians, improvisers, and composers. It presented its Project Orient-Tales together with Ibrahim Kevo

(Syria) and Yarub Smairat (Jordan), combining compositions from the Levant and North East Syria with the orchestra's special creative arrangement, performed at the Al Shams Theatre on 23 April 2019.



The Amman Jazz Festival promoted cross-cultural cooperation and encouraged the diversity of cultural expressions between Jordan and the global village, while emphasizing the importance of preserving cultural identity.

Film on Alberto Giacometti

The Embassy of Switzerland collaborated with Hiwar Art Club at the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman to screen the film "Final Portrait" about the life and work of world renowned Swiss artist Alberto Giacometti.

Alberto Giacometti was a Swiss sculptor and painter (1901-1966) from the charming mountainous region of Bergell in the Canton of Graubünden and is one of the most important artists of the 20th century. He is best known for his elongated sculptures of human figures, but was also a gifted portraitist and painter.



"The Final Portrait" (2017) which was written and directed by Stanley Tucci has Giacometti's painting "The Portrait of James Lord" at the heart of the film. The film powerfully illustrated Giacometti's art pieces and his lengthy creative thought process.



After the screening, an interesting discussion with Jordanian artists, Art students, and Swiss citizens on the work of the artist took place.



Ambassador Gasser handing over the books to Dr. Khalid Khreis.

The Ambassador of Switzerland in Jordan Lukas Gasser attended the event and seized the occasion to hand over two books about Alberto Giacometti intended for the Gallery's library to the Director of the Gallery, Dr. Khalid Khreis.

New Swiss Cooperation Program

In the beginning of 2019, Switzerland endorsed its new Swiss Cooperation Programme Middle East 2019-22. As in the previous years, the new programme is again a regional programme that covers Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey. Various actors of the Swiss government contribute to the implementation of the programme: the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the FDFA Human Security Division as well as the State Secretariat for Migration.



Switzerland contributes to protect and empower conflict-affected and vulnerable persons, to save and reconstruct lives, to reduce fragility, to prevent and transform violent conflicts and to generate development perspectives, to promote good governance and protect and promote human rights, refugee laws as well as the respect of international humanitarian law. The programme covers 4 focus topics: Protection & Migration; Education & Income; Conflict Prevention & Peace Promotion; and Water & Sanitation.

Where needed, Switzerland will continue to provide comprehensive emergency assistance based on the needs. Compared to the last strategy, this programme will have a stronger focus on linking humanitarian aid with development efforts and peace processes. Switzerland works with a number of national and international NGO's as well as multilateral partners such as UN organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Apart from this, in some cases,

SDC Humanitarian Aid itself implements some projects, for example in the water and sanitation domain. In addition to this, SDC deploys experts in the regions to support various UN organizations.

Food and Agriculture Organization Project



In Al-Mafraq, to the North-East of Amman, on the rim of Jordan's vast desert stretching all the way to Iraq, Switzerland is supporting a Food and Agriculture Organization project that pumps water from a rehabilitated dam using solar energy to cultivate the desert. Spinach, cauliflower, chickpeas, lettuce, red cabbage, peas, carrots and thyme have been planted on 17 hectares of barren land to assess which crops give the best results. Run by a cooperative of local landlords, the project gives employment to Syrian refugees and underprivileged Jordanians. The vegetables have been harvested and the products are being sold on the local market.



On a nearby charity farm* that produces olive-oil, the surplus water from the dam is being used to irrigate lettuces, peas and chickpeas. These are then distributed for free to Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanian families living in Al-Mufraq Governorate. The surplus water received from the dam reduces the amount of groundwater needed for irrigation. The charity is currently planning to bottle some of the groundwater saved and give it the vulnerable families and refugees as free drinking water.

* The charity farm is supported by various international and national donors.

IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS

Congress of the Swiss Abroad 2019

The 97th Congress of the Swiss Abroad will take place in Montreux, from 16 August to 18 August 2019, organized through the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA).

For more information about the organisation, kindly check www.aso.ch. If you wish to register for the congress, you can proceed online on www.ose-congres.ch (deadline 26 July, 2019).

Vote info – the new application to stay informed on voting days!

On voting Sundays from 12:00, you will continuously get the updated results of national and cantonal votes and decisions.

See flyer annexed to download this application!

Embassy of Switzerland in Amman – New Faces 2019

The Embassy warmly welcomes the following staff members that have recently joined or are about to join its team:



Name: Sabine Rosenthaler
Section: International
Cooperation
Position: Deputy Regional Head
of Cooperation
Starting date: July 2019



Name: Johanna Weidtmann
Section: Diplomatic Affairs
Position: Political Analyst
Starting date: May 2019



Name: Rahel Losego
Section: International
Cooperation
Position: Program Officer
Yemen
Starting date: October 2019



Name: Regula Lemus Polania
Section: Chancery
Position: Head of Chancery
Starting date: July 2019



Name: Yanal Nasa
Section: International
Cooperation
Position: National Program
Officer Syria
Starting date: May 2019



Name: Stefan Hutter
Section: Operational
Management and Support
Position: Head of Administration
Starting date: August 2019

Embassy of Switzerland in Amman – New Faces 2019

The Embassy warmly welcomes the following staff members that have recently joined or are about to join its team:



Name: Dunia Abu Osba
Section: Diplomatic Affairs
Position: Communication Officer
Starting date: May 2019



Name: Oriana Hirt
Section: Diplomatic Affairs
Position: Academic Intern
Starting date: May 2019



Name: Marion Chambart
Section: International Cooperation
Position: Water and Sanitation Expert
Starting date: June 2019



Name: Andrea Lucia Peissard
Section: International Cooperation
Position: Quality Assurance Advisor
Starting date: July 2019

The Embassy says goodbye to:

- Dario Lanzillo, Head of Chancery
- Roger Saxer, Head of Administrations
- Samuel Heer, Regional Security Advisor
- Petra Winiger, Deputy Regional Head of Cooperation
- Nadin Saxer, Quality Assurance Advisor
- Aline Bürki, Political Analyst
- Michael Zurbrügg, Interim CFPA
- Marc Schindler, Water Project Manager
- Khuzaima Jaber, Communication Officer

It is both with a smile and a heavy heart that we are saying goodbye to our colleagues. We wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors!

Quiz and Feedback Form

What is the “Swiss Made” about?

- Farming in Switzerland
- Success stories of Swiss entrepreneurs

Full Name:

Email:

Phone:

How do you rate the Embassy’s newsletter from a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being least satisfactory and 10 being most satisfactory?

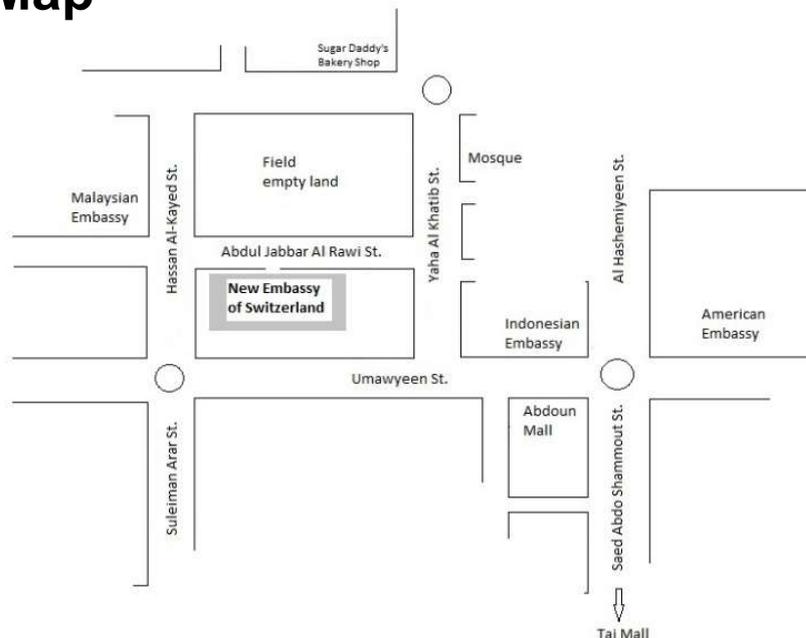
What do you like the most about the newsletter?

What is your least favorite feature about the newsletter?

Any recommendations or changes you would like to see in the upcoming newsletters?

Winners will be informed by email!

Embassy of Switzerland in Amman – Contact Details and Map



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