

## **WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (UNWTO)**

### **Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2009 to June 2010)**

UNWTO contribution in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is evident in the numerous capacity building activities undertaken each year and moreover through its ST-EP (Sustainable Tourism for the Elimination of Poverty) initiative. Much of the technical assistance work falls in line with the NEPAD Framework document (2001) where a special sub-chapter on tourism is mentioned, and also the Tourism Action Plan (UNWTO/NEPAD, 2004).

#### **Poverty alleviation in Africa through ST-EP training workshops**

Since the creation of the UNWTO ST-EP Programme, Africa continues to be at the centre of its priority with 26 projects (59 percent of the total) being implemented in the region up until May 2010. The UNWTO Secretariat has continued raising awareness amongst UN agencies and possible donors about the potential of tourism to contribute to poverty alleviation, as well as soliciting support for the ST-EP Programme and the ST-EP Foundation.

In June 2009, UNWTO organized a training seminar in Ethiopia on destination management within the framework of the two ST-EP projects in the country. The workshop was attended by 25 tourism professionals, working for the local and national government, development agencies and the private sector. The seminar responded to capacity building needs and provided the participants a forum for the different stakeholders to exchange ideas, work together and develop their professional relationships.

During 2009, UNWTO also collaborated with the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) to develop a manual on Enhancing Pro-Poor Benefits in Tourism Destinations and Value Chains, which aims at providing practical tools and methods to implement the 7 ST-EP mechanisms in tourism destinations. This publication will be used to plan a series of ST-EP training workshops at regional, country and destination level. Additionally, a proposal to organize ST-EP training workshops in selected countries to strengthen the capacities of stakeholders should be noted.

#### **UNWTO Special Programme for Africa**

The UNWTO Special Programme for Africa was designed as a response to the specific needs of the African Members on tourism development. This programme, which was implemented from 2003 to 2007, was structured around four main objectives that complement each other:

- a) To help African countries define a policy and a strategy to ensure the harmonious and sustainable development of the tourism sector. The UNWTO aims to raise the awareness of governments; travel and tourism professionals; local communities; the banking and financial sectors; and investors regarding the importance of tourism.
- b) To develop know-how in the countries of the region in the areas of the design, implementation and management of tourism development programmes inspired by the messages contained in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Such tourism will

be respectful of the ecological and cultural environment, take advantage of new information and communications technologies, and generate economic benefits that will help the economy in general and local communities in particular.

- c) To promote wider participation by the citizens of these countries in the management of projects, and in particular by local communities in ecotourism projects, with a view to the creation of jobs for local people and the fight against poverty.
- d) To make the UNWTO play its role at the international level as the coordinator of the initiatives undertaken by development partners that have targeted tourism as a key sector in their economic development programme and the fight against poverty. The Plan of Action of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, which explicitly mentions tourism and ecotourism in particular, constitutes an opportunity for governments that seek financing for the development of their tourism sector.

Twenty-three activities in the form of workshops, seminars and training courses have been held in partnership with the governments of the countries of the region. A total of 3,368 participants representing National Transfer Accounts (NTA) officials, personnel working in the private sector, as well as staff from international and regional organizations have benefited from these activities, which are mainly aimed at reinforcing their capacity for the management and sustainable development of tourism. These activities organized in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, among others, have dealt with diverse subjects including: tourism destination management, statistics and the measurement of the impact of tourism, ecotourism, new information technologies in tourism, sustainable tourism and poverty reduction, and quality in the tourism sector.

### **Promoting initiatives and cultural industries in Senegal MDG-F Project**

The joint programme (by UNDP, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNWTO) advocated for Senegal has been drawn up according to priorities defined in the National Strategy for Accelerated Growth (SNCA), the National Programme for the Development of Culture in Senegal (PNDC), the Action Plan on Sustainable Methods of Production and Consumption, as well as different conventions and the action plan for cultural policies adopted by UNESCO. In addition, it is designed to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs 1, 3, 7 and 8. Furthermore, it represents a contribution to the collective response from the UN in Senegal defined in the UN Development Assistance Framework Guidelines (UNDAF) for 2007-2011. The main goal is to support the implementation of national policies aimed at promoting culture as an engine of sustainable human development, taking into account the human rights and vulnerable communities' (women and young people) components.

As one of the partners in this initiative, UNWTO has been very active in the implementation of the activities under its responsibility, which consists fundamentally in:

- Identification of training needs for professionals of the tourism sector (hotels and restaurants)
- Develop and foster one pilot community based ecotourism project in Bassariç Region
- Develop and implement tailored detailed training programmes

This project proposed by the UNWTO, with the support of the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO), Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), and the ST-EP Foundation, embraces the spirit of the NEPAD. It is envisaged to benefit ten West African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone. Its objectives are as follows:

- To promote a sustainable development of tourism in general and of ecotourism in particular in a network of cross-border national parks and protected areas
- To support and protect the biodiversity at the national and sub-regional levels
- To contribute to alleviate poverty in local communities

### **Sustainable Development of Tourism in a Network of Cross-Border National Parks and Protected Areas in West Africa**

This regional project will have a real impact on job creation for local communities living in the bordering areas of the parks. It will contribute to alleviate poverty and also to the protection of the biodiversity, which is part of key elements to ensure a sustainable development of tourism in the parks.

The projects are expected to have several positive impacts in the countries, including: decreasing the seasonal character of tourism and the dependence on one type of market; a substantial increase of revenues generated from tourism; enhancing the conditions of transport to these sites and removing obstacles hindering free circulation of goods and persons among states; facilitating access to bilateral and multilateral financing, large-scale markets via technical cooperation and a more complete utilization of economic complementarities; and diversifying and enriching the tourism offer due to the development of accesses, the fit-up of parks and sites, and the establishment of adapted receptive logistics.

The feasibility study for the project was carried out by a specialized consultancy group, with the financial support of UNWTO and KOICA. For this purpose a committee comprising representatives from the ten countries involved, as well as from the partner organizations was put in place. This committee has held different meetings in Senegal, Mali, Morocco, Spain, Ghana, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan.

The final version of the feasibility study has been approved by the Steering Committee and summarized. An operational report is being finalized. This document, together with the feasibility study, will be distributed to potential funding partners, including TICAD.