Item 5 (a) of the provisional agenda

Execution of the UNWTO Programme of Work in the Americas 2011

(a) Progress report on ST-EP and MDG-F projects

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General informs the Members of the Commission on the Progress report on ST-EP and MDG-F projects.
Progress report on ST-EP and MDG-F projects

Introduction

The present report summarizes the projects that the UNWTO is managing in Latin America. They have been geared with a view to contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in light of the importance of such goals for the United Nations and its member states.

The World Tourism Organization contributes to the achievement of the MDGs, in particular, goals 1, 3, 7 and 8, which are described below:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Promote gender equality and empower women
3. Ensure environmental sustainability
4. Develop a global partnership for development

This contribution is made through two lines of intervention: the Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty initiative, known ST-EP, and the MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F).

The UNWTO has committed resources and efforts, both its own and those of partners in the region to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through sustainable tourism. This effort is supported by a coordination office in Nicaragua and a support office in Ecuador.

The ST-EP Initiative

During the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002, the World Tourism Organization expressed its intention to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Convinced that tourism, is developed in a sustainable manner, can effectively contribute to the reduction of poverty in the world, and particularly in the least developed countries, the Organization presented an initiative called Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty, STEP, as an effective instrument for the eradication of poverty. In 2003 the General Assembly of the Organization, gathered in Beijing, approved the initiative, which had already been enthusiastically welcomed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The ST-EP initiative was ambitious from the outset, owing to its very nature. It consists in pooling the efforts of multiple partners, both public and private, aimed at the achievement of an attractive but difficult objective: the creation of jobs and activity benefiting vulnerable groups (young people, women, unskilled workers, members of indigenous communities) of developing countries and regions. In this sense, we are focusing on the development of a complex sector, which, in order to grow, requires the simultaneous presence of a set of factors (access, positive image, suitable infrastructure, sanitation, satisfactory conditions in terms of health and hygiene, education and good levels of training) which often do not exist precisely in these countries, regions or communities.
For their implementation, ST-EP projects must use one or more of the seven mechanisms identified by the UNWTO whereby tourism contributes effectively to poverty alleviation:

1. Employment of the poor in tourism enterprises
   This mechanism means taking measures to increase the number of poor people working in tourism enterprises. The relationship between tourism enterprises and the employment of the local population is symbiotic, given that both parties obtain benefits, which helps the fight against poverty by enabling the poor to develop their own skills, allowing for the possibility of a large number of people to benefit directly, and raising the standards of service. It is important to promote education and training so that the poor can rise up to these opportunities and to eliminate any social or cultural barriers.

2. Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor or by enterprises employing the poor
   One of the fundamental conditions in order to achieve poverty reduction is to ensure that goods and services in the tourism supply chain are sources, as much as possible from local providers. The objective is to increase as much as possible the proportion of tourism spending that is retained in local communities and to involve the poor in the supply process. This type of measures help maintain the traditional forms of rural activities and skills, enhance the quality and identity of local tourism products and establish stable sources of business.

3. Direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor
   One of the principal ways in which the poor try to obtain income from tourists is by directly selling products and services such as fruits, handicrafts or guided tours. It is important to provide tourists with information about the local products available as well as to inform local populations to ensure that their products meet the quality requirements of the visitors.

4. Establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor, e.g., micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), or community based enterprises
   This mechanism involves the creation and management of tourism enterprises by the poor, whether individually or as part of a community.

5. Tax or levy on tourism income or profits with proceeds benefiting the poor
   This mechanism refers to tourism income received by the national or local government, which can be used to reduce poverty. Levies or taxes obtained locally, for example, on overnight stays or entrance fees for protected areas, can often be used entirely or partly for the benefit of the community.

6. Voluntary giving/support by tourism enterprises and tourists
   Voluntary contributions in the form of money or in kind provided by visitors or tourism enterprises can help reduce poverty locally. Various studies have shown a desire among tourists to give something back to the place they have visited. Many tourism enterprises have also made commitments to provide guidance to development initiatives in the areas where they operate.
7. Investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the poor in the locality, directly or through support to other sectors
Tourism development, particularly in a new, remote or rural location, may require investment in new infrastructure such as roads, water and power supply, sanitation and communications. With careful planning, this infrastructure can bring positive benefits to the poor, providing them with basic services and opening up new and faster channels of access to the markets. The principal challenge consists in ensuring that the new tourism development does not consume resources at the expense of the local communities, but on the contrary, to offer them the possibility of access to them.

More than 150 projects have been identified to be implemented worldwide, 80 of them have been financially approved and are in different stages of their implementation.

ST-EP projects world-wide 2006-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Over 150 pilot projects identified</th>
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<tr>
<td>95 projects approved for implementation in 33 countries and 3 sub-regions (West and Southern Africa and Central America): 29 projects in the Americas (31%).</td>
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<td>Total project portfolio valued at over USD 10 million (Americas 22%).</td>
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Americas ST-EP Projects Portfolio 2010

BOLIVIA

Strengthening Community-based Tourism

The project aims to reinforce the strategic framework of Community-based Tourism and to strengthen pilot initiatives through training, equipment and marketing. Project activities will soon be launched.

Main contributions: ST-EP Foundation.

Strengthening Rural Community-based Tourism and Commercial Management along the Inca Trail

Refurbishments of Quehuaya lodge, Pata Patani interpretation centre and Tiraska craft workshop were carried out. These communities, and Chiripa community, participated in awareness raising meetings and training on tour guiding, cooking and business management. They have constituted the inter-community company Misterios del Titikaka and are managing and promoting a one day tour in the area of Lake Menor with the support of La Paz-Beni DMO.

www.misteriosdeltitikaka.com

Main contributions: SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO
CENTRAL AMERICA

Support Programme for Rural Tourism

The project aims to contribute to the regional integration of rural tourism initiatives. A workplan is under formulation and activities are planned to commence in 2011.

Main contributions: ST-EP Foundation.

ECUADOR

Fostering Rural Community-based Tourism, Inclusive Business and Effective Destination Management along the Inca Trail

Awareness raising of heritage values was carried out. Different tourist routes were identified from Ingapirca to Amaluza and the potential of tourism products was validated by the communities, service providers and tour operators through the “Sales Test” methodology. Training on tourism and cultural management and local guiding was also carried out. The project participated in various tourism fairs and a linkage was created between CERART and 200 handicraft producers.

Main contributions: SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO

GUATEMALA

Strengthening Community-based Tourism Destinations in Quiché

Community organizations participated in an exchange and training programme that focused on quality services, business management and tourism best practices. The construction of a lodge in Laj Chimel forest (www.lajchimelecoturismo.com) has started and a new tourism product in the destination “Nuevos Mayas” (www.newmayas.com) has been designed. Improvements are being carried out by craft makers of El Jocote and Laj Chimel. The Municipality is enhancing the access to Chixoy river for the tubing experience (www.guatetubing.com).

Main contributions: Italian Cooperation.

HONDURAS

Connecting Local Tourism Products and Services with the Marina Copan Hotel in Copan Ruinas

Inclusive tourism practices within the Hotel Marina Copán were assessed and an inventory of locally available products carried out. Selected SMEs received training on business management and marketing and developed business plans. The establishment of a revolving fund is ongoing and will contribute to improved SMEs performance and thus facilitate the creation of commercial alliances.

Main contributions: SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO
Sales Increase through the Innovation of the Culinary Culture

Awareness raising of gastronomy in the tourism industry was carried out and various fairs were organized. SMEs received training on food handling, culinary innovation, quality services and financial planning. Information on trainees looking for employment has been distributed to the Tourism Chamber of Tela. A recipe book is being elaborated.

Main contributions: SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO

Establishing Linkages between Garifunas and Small Businesses and the Bahía de Tela “Los Micos Beach & Golf” Resort

Training on entrepreneurship was carried out for local restaurants, supply stores and accommodation. Training for cultural groups and cultural fairs were also organized. A tourism training curricula was developed and a first set of courses took place. Tourist Information Centres have been established in La Ensenada and Tornabé to promote the local offer. Contacts with “Los Micos” resort are ongoing.

Main contributions: ST-EP Foundation

NICARAGUA

Connecting Local Food Providers with Larger Entrepreneurs in Mainstream Destinations

A value chain analysis was carried out and identified local SMEs and Cooperatives. Workshops with hoteliers and intensive training for producers on best agropractices, quality and business management took place. A revolving fund was established to facilitate enhancing the equipment. 53 farmers from Estelí, Jinotega, Boaco, Masaya and Carazo are currently supplying hoteliers through Small Farmer Shop.

Main contributions: SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO

Enhancing Rural and Community-based Tourism Initiatives in Masaya and Granada (RENITURAL)

The tourism network of Laguna de Apoyo, Quetzalcoátl Cooperative, ADIE association, the communal house of La Granadilla, and the rural lodge Nicaragua Libre are participating in a tailor made capacity building and equipment programme. Promotional activities such as the collaboration with AMADEUS Small&Nice programme and the constitution of Tourism Committees are ongoing.

www.turismoruralnicaragua.com

Main contributions: Italian Cooperation.
PERU

**Strengthening Rural Community-based Tourism in Ayapte and Effective Destination Management along the Inca Trail**

Mapping of resources was carried out in Ayabaca, Yanchalá, Samanguilla, El Toldo and Espíndola and potential tourism products were identified in collaboration with tour operators. An awareness raising campaign was launched through the local radio. Training manuals on identity, heritage and tourism were developed and courses held. Tourism associations are currently being constituted.

**Main contributions:** SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO

**Strengthening Rural Community-based Tourism in Puno and Effective Destination Management along the Inca Trail**

Awareness raising of the advantages of networking led to the creation of REDTURC in December 2009. The member associations chose to specialize in different products, and training on business management and guiding was provided. Workshops with tour operators and attendance to fairs took place with the support of Puno DMO. Promotional materials were developed. [www.ogdpuno.org](http://www.ogdpuno.org)

**Main contributions:** SNV, ST-EP Foundation and UNWTO

**Knowledge Exchange on Community-based Rural Tourism**

Within the framework of TUTURAL programme, exchange visits were organized to provide participants with a tourism experience from the point of view of both tourism managers and tourists.

**Main contributions:** ST-EP Foundation

**The MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F)**

The MDG Achievement Fund (MDG-F) is an international cooperation mechanism whose aim is to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The MDG-Fund was established in December 2006 with a contribution of 528 million euros (710 million US dollars) from the Government of Spain to the UN system. The Fund supports national governments, local authorities and citizen organizations in their efforts to tackle poverty and inequality.

It has 128 active programmes in 49 countries spread across 5 regions of the world helping over 20 million people directly and indirectly. In September 2008 at the United Nations High Level Event on MDGs, Spain committed an additional 90 million euros to the MDG-F.

The programmes financed by the Fund are executed through different United Nations agencies and with dozens of governmental and nongovernmental organizations, with special emphasis on ensuring that development processes are owned and driven locally.
The World Tourism Organization actively participates in the implementation of eleven joint programmes within the framework of the MDG-F, in the areas of Culture and Development, Environment and Climate Change, Youth, Employment and Migration, and Development and the Private Sector. Seven of these programmes are being carried out in Latin America (Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Peru)

**Americas MDG-F Projects Portfolio 2010**

**Ecuador**

**Conservation and Sustainable Management of the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve.**

**Duration:** April 2008 – April 2011. (Expected end date: December 2011)

**Objectives:** The project supports the conservation and the management of the Yasuni Biosphere Reserve (YBR). The conservation of the YBR is one of the national priorities, and the project has as its main partner the Environmental Ministry. It will be supporting actions in order to face the climate change via non-emission of greenhouse effect gases and adaptation. It will contribute to protect the rights of the people in voluntary isolation.

This intervention will allow progress towards the achievement of MDG 7, by contributing to the conservation of one of the world’s greatest biodiversities through economic alternatives of communitarian management. The project will also contribute to the achievement of MDG 1, by giving priority to the vulnerable populations.

**Outputs:**

- Support the environmental authorities in the development of a sustainable touristic model in the area of the Biosphere Reserve and the National Park.
- The policies of natural and cultural heritage conservation and of environmental quality have been integrated in the regional and local investment plans of local governments and social organizations with presence in the YBR area.
- Support the implementation of pilot projects that teach sustainability principles and conduct codes jointly worked out with the actors.
- The communities and local governments of the YBR implement replicable initiatives for the conservation and sustainable management of the biodiversity’s natural resources and the improvement of environmental quality with a participative, agro-ecologic, rights related and cultural and gender approach.
- Identify the main touristic markets in order to generate a sustainable touristic product and destination.
Partnership: The project utilizes the respective capacities of six UN agencies (UNWTO, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO, UN-HABITAT, UN-WOMEN). The proposal is coherent with the priorities identified by the UN and AECID, with the participation of UNESCO, UNIFEM and UN-HABITAT in gender and territory management in the framework of equality in the management of natural resources with the support of FAO, UNWTO and UNDP; in coordination with: Environment Ministry (MAE), Heritage Coordinator (MCP), Tourism (MINTUR), Foreign Affairs (MRE), Justice and Human Rights (MJDH), Health, Education, National Secretariat for Planning and Development (SENPLADES), and other public and private organizations from Ecuador; and the provincial and local governments of the BR Yasuní (Orellana).

Development and Cultural Diversity to reduce Poverty and promote Social Inclusion.

Duration: November 2008 – October 2011. (Expected end date: April 2012)

Objectives: The project promotes culture revalorization, inclusion, intercultural dialogue, reduction of discrimination and exclusion gaps in the exercise of basic rights that affect to the population for cultural and ethnic reasons.

The project’s objectives will be achieved through the strengthening of intercultural public policies, the support of cultural and productive revitalization initiatives and the construction of national capacities on information production about cultural and ethnic diversity. The project contributes to the achievement of the MDG I, II, III, V and VII.

Outputs:

- Create a model for cultural tourism products that strengthens the cultural heritage of rural indigenous communities.
- Generate pilot products in selected communities, in coordination when possible with the activities of other participant agencies.
- Ensure the dissemination of the methodologies and pilot products, and the inclusion of concepts into the official curricula of higher education in tourism.
- Reinforce the exercise of cultural rights, increase participation in politics, reduce discrimination and promote equality of excluded groups for ethnic reasons, through the design, execution and evaluation of intercultural public policies.
- Populations excluded for ethnic reasons increase their opportunities for human development and cultural revitalization through the boost of cultural and creative entrepreneurship.
- Reinforce the local and national planning system through the construction of national and local capacities in the production, analysis, use, diffusion of statistical information about the cultural and ethnic diversity in order to make decisions about public policies.
- Beneficiaries: 90 families are improving their community based on tourism product and income through cultural revitalization.

Partnership: The project utilizes the respective capacities of seven UN agencies (UNWTO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, FAO, UNFPA, UN-WOMEN) in coordination with: Ministry for Public Health, Ministry of Justice and Human rights, Ministry for Education, Ministry of Finance, Secretariat for Peoples and Nationalities, and other public and private organizations from Ecuador; with the provincial and local governments of Sucumbios, Chimborazo and Esmeraldas.
Honduras

Cultural Creativity and Identity for Local Development

Duration: July 2008 – July 2011

Objectives: Seeks to strengthen institutional and human capacities in the management of cultural and creative development at decentralized level, whilst preserving the diversity of Honduran identities. It includes the following sub-objectives: 1) strengthening Regional Culture Councils through participatory drafting of local culture and development strategies and implementing these through cultural management, financing 80 initiatives aimed at children and young people, 16 art training schools and 16 creative interpretation projects on the MDGs; 2) technically and financially supporting entrepreneurship in the creative and cultural industries and rural tourism; the recovery of public spaces, historical building and archaeological parks for local development; 3) researching and spreading information on the impact of culture on development. The Programme corresponds to national priorities in the field of culture. It was developed with the cooperation of the SCAD, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and the private sector.

Outputs:

- Inclusive cultural development programs and strategies developed and applied at the local level, which lay the groundwork for a national cultural development policy based on cultural diversity and strengthening identity.
- Creative and cultural industries developed which promote economic and social development and permit broader opportunities for the population in eight regions.
- Information on the impact of culture on development produced, compiled, analyzed and disseminated in order to build communities and guide public policy and private investment.
- Beneficiaries: 60 new micro and small tourism enterprises supplying products and services strongly focused in cultural revitalization are generating new income for poor families. 8 regional tourism fairs and trade events are showcasing creative and cultural tourism resources.

Nicaragua

Cultural Recovery and Creative Productive Development on the Caribbean Coast of Nicaragua

Duration: March 2009 – April 2012

Objectives: Contribute to reduce equality gaps in the human, social and economic development of indigenous people and afro-descendants in the Caribbean Coast, through cultural rescue, productive development and the deepening in the knowledge about their material and immaterial heritage.

The project contains two complementary thematic cores: a) cultural rescue and productive development that will promote heritage, cultural and natural diversity and productivity in cultural, creative and touristic industries in the Autonomic Regions of the Caribbean Coast, as a means to improve socio-economic development and employment creation; b) Research, statistics and public policy.

Support cultural policies and their regionalization through research, systematization and dissemination of studies, statistics and socio-economic indicators and of cultural expressions in the Autonomic Regions of the Caribbean Coast.

Outputs:

- Coordinate the formulation, reformulation, planning and implementation of the UN System Joint Program with national and regional governments.
- Develop cultural tourism routes and marketing plan.
- Set up sales and promotion venues for cultural products produced on the Caribbean Coast.
- Identify viable cultural tourism itineraries.
- Restore historically and culturally relevant public spaces and buildings.
- Beneficiaries: 130 families improve their tourism income and product through the strengthening of their management capacities and the inclusion of new tourist products and services based in cultural heritage.

Partnership: The project utilizes the respective capacities of six UN agencies (UNWTO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, ONUDI, OIT) in coordination with: Government of the North Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAN), Regional Government of the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS), Nicaraguan Institute of Culture (INC), Nicaraguan Institute of Tourism (INTUR); and the provincial and local governments of the North and South Atlantic Region.
National Development Capacities for Improving Employment and Self-Employment Opportunities for Young People.

Duration: June 2009 – June 2012

Objectives: The project seeks to act in support of efforts already being made at national level towards improving the access of young people to decent employment, especially those living in socially vulnerable conditions in urban and rural areas of Nicaragua, and thereby helping to counteract the negative effects of the migration trend.

Activities will be put in place to assist their labour and social integration, which will be systematically analysed in order to build comprehensive intervention models that will be sustainable at local level.

Institutional capacities will be strengthened in order to place youth employment and migration firmly on the national agenda. The programme will also be closely linked to ongoing national and local initiatives that are already being supported by cooperation agencies, national government and municipal authority agencies. Young people themselves will play a proactive role in the programme as a whole, in their capacity as social entities with rights of their own

Outputs:

− Foster and support entrepreneurship among youth (focus on tourism training) via practical training, generation of a database of dissemination of the information about the newly qualified youths among the tourist sector.
− Improvement in the correlation between supply and demand for youth labour in the 11 chosen municipalities.
− Youth cooperatives and micro-enterprises set up and/or given extra support in the 11 chosen municipalities.
− Improved national capacities in the areas of youth employment and migration.
− Beneficiaries: 300 youths trained and certified in hospitality and tourism related occupations. There’s an estimation of around 30 new small companies and/or cooperatives in tourism related activities that will receive financial and technical assistance from the revolving seed fund, generating work opportunities for at least 60 to 70% of the trainees. The rest will be directed to job opportunities in the existing tourism sector, mainly in Managua.
− There are people employed in the tourism industry and that will receive technical assistance and financial support (credit from the Program seed fund) to become tourism entrepreneurs.

Panama

**Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families**

**Duration:** January 2010 – December 2012

**Objectives:** Reduce poverty levels, especially in rural and indigenous zones, supporting the poor population to initiate new sustainable micro-ventures with emphasis in the touristic and agricultural sectors.

Based on the principle of human development with distributive equality, the project is managed to cover the gap existing between the governmental programme of monetary transfers conditioned by the Opportunities Network and the programme *Impulso Panama* oriented to consolidate the middle size enterprises already existing.

The proposed joint programme, Entrepreneurial Opportunities Network for Poor Families, with intercultural focus includes: (1) adequate public policies, (2) access to productive resources, (3) costs and risks reduction, (4) greatest productivity and better work conditions, including integration to clusters of greater range and access to goods and services.

**Outputs:**

- Policy creation and implementation aimed to develop touristic initiatives that benefit poor people through training and technical assistance.
- Local processes of development of micro-ventures more efficient and effective based on the participation of the private sector in association with the public sector.
- Best access to the productive resources and services of quality support to the micro-venturers.
- Risks and inherent costs reduction in the activities of micro-finances.
- Objective population with strengthened capacities has identified and developed sustainable micro-ventures in order to improve their living conditions.

**Partnership:** The project utilizes the respective capacities of five UN agencies (UNWTO, UNDP, FAO, ONUDI, UNCTAD) in coordination with: Ministry of Agricultural Development, Panamanian Tourist Board, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Small and Medium-Sized Business Authority, Ministry of Economy and Finance; and the provincial and local governments of Cocle, Herrera, Veraguas and Chiriquí.

Peru

**Creative Industries, Economic Inclusion and Poverty Reduction in Peru.**

**Duration:** December 2009 – December 2012.

**Objectives:** Alleviate poverty, through the development of inclusive creative industries in tourism, handcraft, organic agriculture, and gastronomy (because of their potential impact on poverty reduction) in Ayacucho, Cusco, Puno and Lambayeque (regions that concentrate the greatest levels of poverty).
Create a favourable environment for the inclusion of the people who are usually excluded of the economic activity (small/poor producers, women and indigenous communities), with the resolved support of the private and public sector, promoting activities that generate the greatest aggregated value through the improvement labour conditions, the revalorization of cultural identity and contributing to sustainability of inclusive business.

Strengthen the capacities of productive organizations and competences in order to formulate value chains in favourable conditions to facilitate their access to the market, taking advantage of the favourable environment created.

Outputs:

- Favourable institutional environment for the development of business activities that promote inclusive business in creative industries.
- Strengthen existing tourism products and circuits in the selected regions by inserting creative industries in the fields of rural tourism and gastronomy in the selected areas.
- Diversification of existing tourism supply, and adding of handcrafts and organic agricultural products to the tourism value chain in rural tourism and gastronomy.
- The quality systems of creative production have been strengthened through the revalorization of the cultural identity and the improvement of the conditions of decent work.
- Beneficiaries: 120 families involved in 6 rural community based tourism networks will improve their tourism product and income through the inclusion of new activities focused on creative industries using traditional culture.