



UNWTO Regional Executive Training Course in Qatar

2nd Edition 2014

Cultural Tourism Product Development

1 Description of the project

Following the request of Qatar Tourism Authority, the World Tourism Organization with the support of its UNWTO.Themis Foundation has designed, and wishes to offer to its Member States in the MENA region, an executive training course on Cultural Tourism Product Development.

This course wishes to examine some key concepts on tourism product development, cultural tourism, competitiveness and sustainability, situational analysis, planning and monitoring, as well as to provide the participants with knowledge, skills, tools and a forum for discussion and reflection on cultural tourism product development.

2 Introduction of the content

Tourism has grown at an accelerated pace over the last few decades, and forecasts indicate that this growth will continue in the years to come. According to UNWTO, both the Middle East and the North African (sub)regions will experience an average annual growth in international tourist arrivals of 4.6% between 2010 and 2030.

In all its guises, the cultural identity of a country – from its heritage attractions to its modern architecture, from its indigenous artists to national collections of cutting-edge works from across the globe – provides an opportunity to engage, enrich and inspire audiences, whatever their origin.



Aware of the wealth and diversity of culture to be found in this region, and realising that the Middle East has the potential to become an important, if not leading, tourism destination in the near future, tourism planners are increasingly conscious of the importance of developing cultural tourism products that identify, interpret, celebrate and grow the uniqueness of the region's offer.

While many destinations engage in marketing and promotion activities, a much lower proportion focus their attention on the development and delivery of the various attractions and activities that make up the tourism product. The fact is, though, that unless the tourism product meets the needs and expectations of tourists, the destination cannot realise its full potential. Tourism products are the basis for a destination's tourism sector operation. Critically, the marketing of a tourism destination starts with product research. Unless the product offer is indigenous or appropriate to the identity, values, infrastructure and development objectives of the region or country, while also meeting ever-changing customer needs, marketing alone will not achieve the destination's potential.

Culture and tourism have a symbiotic relationship. Arts and crafts, dances, rituals, and legends which are at risk of being forgotten by the younger generation may be revitalized when tourists show a keen interest in them. Monuments and cultural relics may be preserved by using funds generated by tourism. Similarly, the development of a region's reputation as the go-to for – for example – modern architecture, contemporary art or a major festival unique to the area – will stimulate footfall from both leisure and business tourism markets (the cultural landscape being a key driver in the decision making process of business event planners) and, as such, deliver economic growth and re-investment opportunities for cultural output.

Taking into consideration these factors, the course wishes to outline the essential elements in the process of cultural tourism product development planning and implementation and it illustrates these principles through a range of successful approaches and case studies, setting out best practice examples and benchmarks by which destinations can assess their own product development system and methods. Finally the course will also provide a forum for countries from this world region to share their experiences on successful policies, guidelines, and strategies for cultural tourism development.

3 Target audience

This course is aimed at high level decision-makers in the National, Regional and Local Tourism Administrations who have competences in tourism product development.



4 Methodology and structure

The theoretical-practical methodology used in this course comprises presentations, discussions, debates, group work and practical activities.

Two international facilitators will give presentations which, though mainly theoretical, will be conceptual, tool-sharing and as interactive as possible. The course will also have discussions and debates, and practical activities aim at putting in a real situation the content and tools seen during the course.

These activities will consist of practical tasks, group discussions and a technical visit in an area related to the topic of the course. During such technical visit, participants will be expected to conduct fieldwork, interviews, information gathering and other interactive activities with the local community.

Moreover, participants will be expected to give, at least, two main presentations: one on the outcomes of the fieldwork (the day after the technical visit) and the final one on the final project (on the last day of the course).

To make good use of this event, participants will receive (when selected) an introductory booklet with UNWTO publications, articles or other reading material, introducing key issues and concepts needed for the course.

The intention of this approach – the transmission and usage of various tools, the expertise of the facilitators and participants, the discussion forums and the practical group work – is for participants to fully understand the topics of the course.

5 Objective and outcomes

The objective of this course is to provide participants with knowledge, skills, tools and a forum for discussion on tourism product development.

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the key elements and concepts of a tourism product
- Understand destination competitiveness and sustainability
- Apply a framework for developing a cultural tourism product
- Develop tourism products reinforcing the destination's tourism strategy
- Incorporate sustainable practices in tourism product development
- Analyse, perform impact assessment, monitor and, if required, revise, the tourism product



6 Content

The course is to follow the philosophy of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Introduction

- I.1 Key concepts on tourism product
- I.2 Key elements on cultural tourism
- I.3 Competitiveness and sustainability

Module 1. Situational Analysis

- 1.1 Supply analysis
- 1.2 Market analysis
- 1.3 Impact analysis
- 1.4 Benchmarking
- 1.5 Gap analysis

Module 2. Tourism Product Development Planning

- 2.1 Framework for developing a tourism product
- 2.2 Tourism product development reinforcing the tourism destination's strategies
- 2.3 Sustainable practices in tourism product development
- 2.4 Tourism Product Development Priorities
- 2.5 Partnerships

Module 3. Tourism Product Development Monitoring

- 3.1 Tourism product development monitoring
- 3.2 Performance evaluation using Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
- 3.3 Tourism product development updating

7 Brief informative data

The course is to be held in English and Arabic with simultaneous interpretation in Arabic and in English from 21 to 25 September in Doha for 30 national participants and 10 MENA regional participants.