ST-EP Initiative

Working lunch on ST-EP

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In spite of the potential of tourism for poverty alleviation, disadvantaged groups in developing countries do not always benefit from the economic impacts of tourism due to a high level of leakages in the tourism economy, and limited experiences and capacities at local level.

Poverty alleviation is one of the greatest global challenges.
Launch of the ST-EP Initiative

UNWTO’s commitment to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The ST-EP Initiative was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in 2002.

Objective: Reduce poverty levels through developing and promoting sustainable forms of tourism.
Research and Capacity building

Five reports provide evidence of the impact of tourism in reducing poverty levels, as well as recommendations on how to maximize these impacts → 7 ST-EP Mechanisms


UNWTO - a Specialized Agency of the United Nations
The 7 ST-EP Mechanisms

1. Employment of the poor in tourism enterprises
2. Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor or by enterprises employing the poor
3. Direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor
4. Establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor
5. Tax or levy on tourism income or profits with proceeds benefiting the poor
6. Voluntary giving or support by tourism enterprises and tourists
7. Investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism also benefiting the poor in the locality

“Tourism and Poverty Alleviation: Recommendations for Action” UNWTO, 2004
The 20th session of the UNWTO General Assembly in August 2013 approved the proposal to transform the ST-EP Foundation into an independent organization, the new International ST-EP Organization.

So far, almost 50 countries have already expressed their interest to join the International ST-EP Organization, and participated in different milestone events in the transformation process.
As of April 2017, 118 ST-EP projects have been approved for implementation in 45 countries and 3 regional areas.

100 projects have been successfully completed.

**AMERICAS (31)**
- Bolivia
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- Guatemala
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Nicaragua
- Peru
- Central America*

**EUROPE (3)**
- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina

**AFRICA (60)**
- Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and West* and Southern Africa*

**ASIA (21)**
- Bhutan
- Cambodia
- China
- Lao PDR
- Nepal
- Mongolia
- Timor-Leste
- Vietnam

**MIDDLE EAST (3)**
- Jordan
- Lebanon
- Yemen

* regional project
Focus of ST-EP Projects

- Increasing local economic impact from tourism in selected destinations
- Training of local guides, hotel employees and workers of connected sectors
- Providing business and financial services to micro, small, medium and community-based tourism enterprises
- Facilitating the involvement of local people in tourism development around natural and cultural heritage sites
- Establishing business linkages between poor producers and tourism enterprises
Ethiopia: Konso Community Tourism Project

Enhance the local economic impact, and in particular community benefit, from sustainable tourism in Konso

• Awareness raising meetings and training local guides (13)
• Training on customer care and business management to owners and staff of 26 hotels and restaurants
• Use of tourism district fee for development projects
• Tourist information centre established
• Active marketing and promotion

IMPACT:
• Number of international tourist arrivals increased from 1,833 in 2006 to 8,293 in 2010
• Guides earning US$ 2,000 per quarter (2009-excluding tips)
• Income generated for development projects increased from US$ 7,000 in 2007 to US$ 26,500 in 2009
• Positive feedback tour operators and tourists (Tripadvisor)
Higher visitor spending and benefits to rural communities through the Tanzania Cultural Tourism Programme

- Development of guidelines & quality control
- Training on business planning, and product improvement and diversification
- Identification and development of new cultural tourism enterprises
- Active marketing and promotion

IMPACT:
- 32 new cultural tourism enterprises established (from 25 to 57)
- 20% annual growth in number of tourists visiting CT enterprises (30,000 → 60,000)
- Income generated by over 3,000 local people + contributions to community development projects
UNWTO endeavors to gain experience and expertise through the implementation of ST-EP projects, show best practices, and disseminate lessons learned.

UNWTO remains committed to further developing ST-EP as an inclusive initiative, accessible to Members, and we will continue working with our partners, including the new International ST-EP Organization, to consolidate and expand the ST-EP activities.
UNWTO
Technical Cooperation

step.unwto.org