5th WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE
Baku, Azerbaijan, 2-3 May, 2019

Building dialogue into action against discrimination, inequality and violent conflict

Showing how positive contributions of diversity are enhanced by meaningful social interaction and respectful dialogue.

UNWTO’s BREAKOUT SESSION:

Innovative initiatives in tourism fostering social inclusion and diversity

Introduction:

Tourism, being one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, has experienced continuous growth in the recent decades, doubling the number of tourist arrivals since 1999. According to UNWTO data, international tourist arrivals worldwide reached 1.4 billion in 2018.

This translates into 1.4 billion tourists interacting with other cultures and embracing diversity as a quality in itself.

Tourism can be perceived as the epitome of intercultural dialogue; it allows meeting the “other”, learning about different cultures, hearing foreign languages, tasting exotic flavours, bonding with other human beings and building tolerance. In essence, it is a mind-broadening educational and spiritual experience.

Moreover, this industry also has an extraordinary potential to contribute to the socio-economic empowerment and non-discrimination of women and youth, indigenous people, migrants, persons with disabilities and other segments of population who have not enjoyed historically the most privileged position in human development.

This breakout session organized by UNWTO aims to illustrate how tourism can actually prompt social inclusion, mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies, in line with the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

Objectives:

This breakout session will explore ways in which tourism can be a useful tool to alleviate socioeconomic development issues in post-conflict areas and amongst displaced communities, by creating business and employment opportunities.

The session will also illustrate how tourism contributes to appeasing tensions by triggering dialogue between traditionally antagonistic or warring parties.
The featured multisectorial examples intend to shed light on socio-culturally inclusive projects that helped breaking down the barriers of discrimination and inequality.

The speakers will demonstrate how, for instance, migration - a significant manifestation of globalization - makes considerable social and economic contributions to destinations and home countries, culturally enriching societies, enhancing the value of tourism products and providing labour force for the travel, tourism, hospitality and catering sectors.

Gender equality will be also highlighted as the tourism sector is better placed for developing entrepreneurship ventures led by women than any other industry (Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010, UNWTO & UN Women). In post-conflict zones these ventures can have a significant impact in poverty reduction, in improving the livelihoods of the community and in providing women with economic independence.

Furthermore, the workshop will showcase indigenous tourism initiatives which promote the respect and understanding of the ancestral traditions, while ensuring their safeguarding and the harmonious coexistence between different communities and walks of life.

With a specific focus on bottom-up initiatives led by private stakeholders and civil society, the session will draw particular attention to how the featured examples were originally set up, the key enablers of their success, as well as the challenges and lessons learned.

Provisional Programme

MODERATOR
Hiran Cooray, Chairman, Jetwing Hotels, Sri Lanka

SPEAKERS
Ms. Anny Batamuliza, CEO of New Dawn Associates, Rwanda
Ms. Martina Btaich, Executive Director, Lebanon Mountain Train Association
Mr. Manuel Butler Halter, UNWTO Executive Director
Mr. Louis Martin, Co-founder, Refugee Food Festival
Mr. Neville Poelina, Director, Uptuyu Aboriginal Adventures, Australia