

D-8 COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY ON TOURISM

1. Introduction

The D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation is an inter-governmental Organization that was established in 1997. It comprises eight developing countries, namely Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

Over the years, the D-8 Organization has made giant strides in some of its priority areas of cooperation such as trade, industry and SME, agriculture and food security and transportation.

Tourism is one of the priority areas of cooperation for the D-8. However, this sectoral track remains unexplored despite its huge potentials for the individual economies of the D-8 Member States. It is the intention of the D-8 Member States to vigorously pursue success on this sectoral track going forward. Thankfully, some of the Member States have relatively developed and thriving tourism sectors that could serve as beacons and shining examples for others to follow. In other words, the tourism successes recorded by some of the Member States could be replicated by other members who can also emerge as tourism success stories and rising stars.

For example, Egypt, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey have thriving tourism industries and they have made giant strides in repositioning the sector in order to be able to compete favorably with best-in-class destinations. Little wonder that Malaysia recorded tourism expenditure of US\$21.8 billion and tourism arrivals of 25.8 million in 2018 and the sector employs over 3.5 million people (which is 23.5 percent of total employment in the country). On its part, Turkey, which holds the tourism crown among our members, is working on a plan to attract 75 million tourists and reach an industrial revenue of US\$65 billion in 2023. The country earned over US\$32 billion from the sector in 2018. Indonesia is not left behind as it raked in US\$15.5 billion from the sector and welcomed 15.8 million visitors in 2018. Same goes for Egypt which received almost 8.3 million visitors and US\$8.6 billion in 2017.

Arrivals of non-resident visitors (overnight visitors -tourists- and same-day visitors - excursionists-) at national borders – Thousands

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bangladesh(excl: excursionist)	125	643	830	1,026	..
Egypt	9,878	9,328	5,399	8,292	..
Indonesia	9,435	10,407	11,519	14,040	15,810
Iran, Islamic Republic Of (excl: excursionist)	4,968	5,237	4,942	4,867	7,295
Malaysia (excl: excursionist)	27,437	25,721	26,757	25,948	25,832
Nigeria (excl: excursionist)	4,803	6,017	5,265	..	..
Pakistan	..	..	..	..	..
Turkey	41,627	41,114	30,907	37,970	46,113

Source: UNWTO

Employment - Total number of employees by tourism industries - Thousands

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bangladesh	..	..	..	..	..
Egypt	1,752.0	1,993.0	..	..	..
Indonesia	326.1	333.1	340.4	..	399.5
Iran, Islamic Republic Of	..	..	..	..	..
Malaysia	2,860.0	2,898.8	3,181.8	3,308.6	3,471.1
Nigeria	881.5	1,082.9	1,429.4	..	..
Pakistan	..	..	..	..	..
Turkey	1,248.0	1,368.0	1,401.0	1,467.0	..

Source: UNWTO

Inbound tourism - Total expenditure - US\$ Million

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bangladesh	154	150	214	348	357
Egypt	7,979	6,897	3,306	8,636	12,704
Indonesia	11,567	12,054	12,566	14,691	15,596
Iran, Islamic Republic Of	4,197	4,771	3,914	4,632	..
Malaysia	24,469	19,194	19,682	20,311	21,774
Nigeria	600	472	1,087	2,611	..
Pakistan	971	915	791	876	816
Turkey	38,855	35,597	26,788	31,870	37,130

Source: UNWTO

Outbound tourism - Total expenditure - US\$ Million

COUNTRY	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Bangladesh	782	827	843	1,127	1,208
Egypt	3,486	3,636	4,351	2,419	2,897
Indonesia	10,263	9,800	9,932	10,945	11,629
Iran, Islamic Republic Of	10,130	9,658	9,893	11,928	..
Malaysia	13,893	11,599	11,339	12,145	13,248
Nigeria	9,123	9,255	4,520	8,181	..
Pakistan	2,209	2,642	2,962	3,222	2,895
Turkey	5,475	5,683	5,025	5,180	4,993

Source: UMWTO

It would be recalled that the Istanbul Plan of Action which was adopted at the 9th D-8 Summit in October 2017 directed that the Member States should come up with a Comprehensive Tourism Strategy in order to serve as a framework for cooperation in this area. It is in this light that this document is prepared to foster cooperation and help the D-8 Member States to make the tourism sub-sector of their economies one of the best performing sectors in the next 10 years. It encapsulates objectives, goals and targets as well as commitments and timelines to be met in the next decade so that the tourism sectors of the D-8 Member States will record double-digit growth and the desired cooperation among D-8 Member States in the sector will be secured and guided accordingly.

Tourism has emerged as a formidable sub-sector of the global economy. Over the years, it has been grown from strength to strength, emerging as one of the fastest growing sectors of the global economy. Currently, it is among the top five economic sectors of the world. Available data indicates that 1.4 billion tourists were recorded in 2018 and US\$1.4 trillion were earned in the same year. Also, US\$1.0 billion were collected as tourism taxes in the same year. Three million travelers cross national frontiers daily. It is projected that there will be over 1.8 billion tourists around the world in 2030. The Asia-Pacific is the fastest growing region because of its rich and unforgettable destinations as well as diverse and better visitor experiences. It is important to point out that travel and tourism contribute 12.4 percent to the ASEAN region's GDP. Nearly 21 percent of total Chinese tourists visit ASEAN. This is a feat that D-8 countries should try to approximate.

The tourism sector is also the biggest employer of labour in the world. It supports over 319 million jobs worldwide. It is estimated that one job out of every 10 is a tourism job. This is aside from the hospitality-related jobs that the sector also supports. Tourism can therefore be used by the D-8 Member States to mop up the army of unemployed youths roaming the streets by getting them gainfully employed.

2. Strategic Directions

a. Strengthening of the Public Sector, harmonization and Joint Training among D-8 Member States

It is important to increase D-8 competitive position globally in such a way that tourism will contribute substantially to the development of the individual economies of D-8 Member States. In other words, the D-8 Member States should strive to increase tourist arrivals and receipts and make their tourism sector a reliable source of foreign exchange earnings and a lucrative and high growth and high return investment area. The D-8 Member States may:

- Focus on strengthening governance in the tourism industry in order to create dynamic synergy and maximize tourism core skills.

- Significantly improve the capacity and coordination of governing bodies in tourism development and competitiveness of tourism products as well as enhance tourists' experience.
- Establishing linkages between the D-8 tourism academies that offer certificates level programmes in tourism planning and destination management as well as intellectual and entrepreneurial skills and market talents that will enable citizens to fit into the modern tourism environment and guarantee highest productivity and effective implementation of tourism development projects.
- Firm up high level coordination in the implementation of current government policies, supporting the implementation of current government policies, supporting the implementation of policies through the enhancement of tourism core skills, enhancing the capacity and tourism understanding of parties involved in destination management and accepting innovative governance model.
- Remove unnecessary regulatory burden in order to encourage investments as well as intra D-8 tourism.
- Consider relaxation of visa requirements among D-8 Member States, taking into consideration national regulations.
- Establish D-8 Platform under the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).
- Set aside D-8 Tourism Day to be marked and celebrated with tourism events all across D-8 Member States.
- Choose D-8 Tourism City of the Year on annual basis in order to engender healthy competition among the cities of the D-8 Member States.

b. Promotion of Tourism Infrastructure Investment in D-8 Member States

Domestic and foreign direct investment (FDI) is crucial for the tourism sector in particular and other sectors of the D-8 Member States economies in general. Investment engenders the transfer of technology and facilitates improvements in productivity. It also helps in creating jobs, increasing per capita income and elevating overall standards of living.

In order to emerge as fertile and lucrative frontier for investment, the D-8 Member States may:

- Assist one another in promoting D-8 Member States tourism infrastructure investment priorities and strategies to attract huge investable resources from across the globe in order to develop their promising tourism sectors and maximize their national development potentials.
- Form concerted efforts to create favourable investment climate and conducive business environment in order to attract global investment interest, confidence and activities to their economies.
- Complement their large and dynamic markets and rapidly growing middle class with a modernized, predictable and harmonized regulatory environment that is more competitive and investment friendly. D-8 Member States may put in place favourable business climate through sound policies, effective institutions and attractive incentives. In other words, they must make their business environment friendlier in order to improve their ease of doing business ranking and global competitiveness.
- Develop policy solutions and risk mitigation strategies that will neutralize D-8 Member States daunting risk profile, guarantee access to tourist sites in the troubled parts of their countries and build the confidence of would-be tourists.
- There is also the need to tackle the image problem of some of the D-8 Member States as well as credibility deficit and reputational injuries inflicted on them by years of stereo typing and misperceptions. This can be done through aggressive marketing strategies and other confidence building measures.
- Involve the private sector of the D-8 Member States in the efforts to make the tourism sector attractive.

c. Digitalization of Tourism

The D-8 Member States will introduce Smart Tourism initiatives to build their capacities and compete favorably with best-in-class tourist destinations around the world. The Member States may:

- Develop comprehensive digitalization programme including Artificial Intelligence (AI)/big data analytics that will transform the tourism industry towards Smart Tourism in line with the opportunities ushered in by the Industrial Revolution 4.0.

This will increase the competence, innovation and digital advancement of the Member States.

- In order to constantly align with the trend of digitalization, the tourism industry of the D-8 Member States should promote the use of big data analytics in predicting the future of tourism due to its ability to reveal patterns, trends and associations and human behavior and interactions.
- Take advantage of smart partnerships between the public and private sector to optimize e-marketing in order to create a mega marketing network.
- Public sector to embrace and regulate the sharing economy to encourage innovation and new opportunities, and at the same time curb negative impact on the industry.
- Optimize the tourism value chain by adopting the visitor economy concept. It is positioned to grow tourism by volume and value, to create economic opportunity for businesses to grow, to create more jobs and to attract public and private investment.
- Create a D-8 Tourism Website for easy access to information on tourism offerings, programmes and events in D-8 Member States.
- Establish D-8 Trip Advisor, Booking.com, etc.
- Publish on regular basis D-8 Tourism Map and Guide Book.
- Compartmentalization of the tourism sector in order to foster wholesome development, specialization, diversity, uniqueness, personalization of services and authentic experiences e.g. health, education, conference, festival, cruise-yatch, culinary, rural, faith, lung washing, sports and adventure tourisms.

d. Innovative Tourism Offerings

- Develop spectacular natural wonders, must-visit sites as well as diverse and multifaceted tourism offerings and hospitality potentials in order to offer would-be travelers exiting and worthwhile travel experience. There is no gainsaying that better tourism products and services and exiting travel experience determine travel decisions and tourism landscape.

- Enhance demand through high value tourism products, services and destinations to appeal to high value tourists in order to increase the shopping expenditure of tourists and other tourist spending.
- Establish Public-Private Partnership with leading industry champions in promoting specific tourism market niche (e.g. in health tourism, sports tourism, adventure tourism, etc.)
- Identify targeted markets, shorten supply chain and improve destination attractiveness.
- Market D-8 countries as a brand with uniform tourism standards.
- Use analytical tools to study the importance of making travel experience more memorable and personal i.e. personalization of services.
- Focus on enhancing visitor experience through the best unique selling proposition a country can offer and also the need to understand and provide customized travel demand in order to cater for the tourist market.

e. Promotion of Sustainable Tourism

D-8 Member States will promote eco-friendly tourism and will fight over tourism in popular destinations and environmental pollution. In other words, they will strive to create a balance between conservation and usage levels. They will also work on capacity constraints, sustainability issues and infrastructural support.

- It is important to ensure that government policies and business practices are aligned in order to create sustainable and responsible tourism.
- Promote tourism as the catalyst for current and future economic growth as well as social and environmental impacts while addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and local communities.
- Explore ways to manage tourism responsibly especially in fragile destinations.
- Embark on the beautification of natural surroundings.
- Encourage protection, conservation and preservation of cultural and natural heritage.

f. Enhancing Human Capital and Service Quality

- Enhance human capital by ensuring ideal and attractive career paths in the tourism industry. Human capital transformation is imperative in creating a signature culture that personifies local hospitality and professionalism of the tourism industry.
- Focus on improving the quality of tourism education and the credibility of the profession.
- Obtain input and feedback from tourism stakeholders on suitable tourism curricular.
- Add smart tourism content in tourism education and training as technology is the key component of information system that supplies tourism consumers and service providers with information.
- Enhance professionalism through holistic training and acquisition of skills, concepts, rules or attitude in order to improve the employees' performances.

g. Destination awareness and management

- Joint promotional activities should be undertaken in order to expose tourism offerings to aspiring explorers.
- Adequate promotional budget should be provided in order to fund marketing activities.
- Aggressive advertisements of tourism destinations in order to attract tourism customers.
- Effective use of social media in tourism marketing
- Introduce mobile applications to help tourists make contacts, bookings and payments online.
- Focus on main markets with high spending potential such as China, Japan, India and South Korea in order to attract huge number of tourists to the D-8 Member States.
- Branding of the D-8 Member States as unique and exiting tourist destinations.

h. Experience sharing and global best practices

- D-8 Member States with relatively developed and thriving tourism sectors should share their experiences and best practices with other members that are at the bottom of the tourism curve in order to help them develop their sectors in a similar fashion, transcend the limitations of their tourism offerings and emerge as strategically significant destinations.

i. Airlines/Connectivity

In order to facilitate movement of tourists among D-8 Member States, Tourism Senior Officials strongly support the programmes/initiatives undertaken by the D-8 Transportation Group on the following:

- Establishing regular/code share flights amongst their national carriers and other airlines in order to ease movement and increase the density of air passenger traffic;
- Designate at least one airport as D-8 Airport in order to promote people-to-people and business-to-business contacts as well as increase tourism arrivals and receipts among all Member States. It is also to provide good airport facilities and services for the D-8 business community encompassing the members of the D-8 Chamber of Commerce and Industry (D-8 CCI) and the D-8 Payment Card holders. These facilities include lounge services and fast track facilities for all travelers from D-8 Member States;
- Facilitate across the border movements through road networks of contiguous Member States;
- Facilitate sea voyages for interested tourists in order to catch their fancy; and
- Develop local air routes and rail services in order to ease the intra-state movements of tourists.

j. Artifacts/Souvenirs

- Promote the production and marketing of artifacts and souvenirs for the purchase of tourists.
- Encourage the joint production and marketing of souvenirs among the entrepreneurs of Member States.

Conclusion

The Comprehensive D-8 Tourism Strategy is prepared in order to guide the D-8 Member States in coordinating their tourism policies and activities with a view to making the tourism sectors of their

economies strategically significant and economically viable. If executed along with national tourism programmes, it will help Member States to realize their individual potentials and enmesh them in economic cooperation and joint efforts to reposition their national economies.

It is important to point out that the areas outlined in this document are mutually reinforcing, interrelated and we believe working on each of them will help to bring progress.