

## **Faisal A. Al-Sleemi (SCTH, Saudi Arabia)**

I know the below paragraphs are more to theoretical, but I would like to share our point of view regarding “sustainable employment”

### **1. The MST initiative considers three dimensions of sustainability (economic, social and environmental), where employment is a key consideration of the social dimension.**

“**Human Capital**” is of significant relevance in measuring the sustainability of tourism. “**Decent Work**” is very important but is a question of relativity, while “**Green Jobs**” is equally important but what about “**Other than green jobs**”. For employment sustainability, green and non-green jobs need to be considered together.

One way to increase the sustainability of employment is to help people improve their skills, so that they can progress from short-term, entry-level jobs to better jobs.

### **2. Employment aspect in measuring the sustainability of tourism**

Regarding employment in the Saudi tourism industry, ‘food services’ sector accounts for the largest share of tourism-related employment, employing 48.7% of the total workforce in 2016 (1). It is important to note that the total output of a tourism-related industry (food and beverages services) usually exceeds consumption by visitors, as some of the output of the industry is purchased by non-visitors. For example, meals in restaurants, visitors’ purchases will usually account for a portion of the total number of meals produced. The output of food services will involve substantial sales to non-visitors. Hence, the total employment of tourism-characteristic industry does not necessarily equate to the employment generated by tourism demand. Therefore, it is necessary to use an allocator to approximate more closely the levels of employment generated by tourism sector. This is dealt by the use of the tourism ratio or the tourism value added industry ratio (2)

This method of using the tourism value-added industry ratios involves an assumption that the employment generated by tourism in each industry is in direct proportion to value-added generated by tourism (3)

The key challenge is, “How to achieve a continuous growth in sustainable tourism jobs, if there are skill shortages.

#### **a. Green Jobs**

ILO defines green job as one that provides decent work and that contributes to:

- Improving energy and raw materials efficiency
- Limiting green-house gas emissions
- Minimizing waste and pollution
- Protecting and restore ecosystems
- Supporting adaptation to the effects of climate change

Green jobs can be distinguished by their contribution to more environment-friendly processes. Tourism does not directly produce goods or services that benefit the environment, but a tourism job could follow a more environment-friendly process. A key issue is to identify a measurement baseline. Should we be measuring the impact of the job’s existence? If the existence of the job allows for a certain level of tourism activity, should the environmental impact of the tourism activity be considered when measuring how green the job is?

#### **b. Human Capital (Availability of Skills and Experience)**

This is vague. Should the focus be on whether the jobs contribute to the skills/experience of the person in the job, or should it be on how the level of skills and experience of those in a given occupation compare?

There is a European study that may illustrate a way to measure this. It was conducted by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). That study examined skill levels across the entire labor force. It determined how many individuals had skills mismatches using **four factors: underqualified, overqualified, underutilized, and obsolete (skills)**.

**c. Decent Work**

Decent work is important but is a question of relativity. This concept is new for their application in the framework of the tourism industries.

**3. For sustainable tourism employment, KSA's focus has been on issues related to the following:**

- Employment in urban, rural and coastal areas of the Kingdom's tourism sector
- Employment in the Kingdom by 13 provinces (regions) of the Kingdom
- Employment by gender (male – female)
- Aggregate employment

One of the objectives has been to achieve sustainable aggregate employment in the Kingdom. The main issues are related to their measurements.

**4. Key issues in measuring employment in the context of sustainable tourism**

An approach to the organization of data and the relevance of different concepts do differ between national and local scales, depending upon the stage of economic development, the relative contribution of tourism to the economy and tourism awareness at the national and local scales.

The data quality issue is there for Saudi Arabia, which needs to be resolved, but despite of all shortcomings, tourism employment statistics classified by 11 economic activities "Establishment Survey", is published by the General Authority for Statistics. Currently, MAS Center of SCTH is the only Government agency publishing tourism statistics for the Kingdom.

Regarding the sustainability in tourism employment measurement, more efforts are needed to enhance the quality of statistics.

**Available measurement frameworks, statistical standards, other references on tourism employment sustainability**

- ILO, Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector.
- ILO, Decent Work Indicators Guidelines for Producers and Users of Statistical and Legal Framework Indicators: ILO Manual, Second Version.
- UN, IRTS 2008 Compilation Guide.
- UNWTO/ILO, Measuring Employment in the Tourism Industries – Best Practices, 2014.