How to make the best use of tourism statistics and TSA data for tourism policies
Lesotho experience

UNWTO Virtual Workshop on Statistics:
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BACKGROUND

• Lesotho is a small country 30,555 square kilometres landlocked by an economic giant, South Africa.
• It is classified as the third world country with a GDP of M34 188 billion (2019 estimates).
• The tourism sector contributes a total of 2.7% to the economy of Lesotho.
• Out of a total of 15.8 million tourist arrivals in South Africa, Lesotho only received a total of 1.42 million tourists in 2019.
• The tourism statistics for 2016/17 show an average of 3.5 overnight stays in the country for leisure.
• Lesotho has roughly 15 tourist destination areas (TDAs)
  • Some not fully developed
  • Some fully developed and ready to support new tourism investments

The importance of tourism data

• To evaluate the magnitude and significance of tourism
• To quantify the role and contribution of tourism
• To establish the role played by tourism in BoP of a country.
• To inform the planning and development of physical tourism facilities.
• To provide a means of marketing forecasts for tourism
Link with the tourism strategy/plan in your country

- Information from tourism statistics identified that Lesotho’s tourism industry has huge potential for growth given the emerging tourism travel trends:
  - The Lesotho’s tourism attraction sites are located in rural areas, providing an opportunity to engage the host communities in tourism for creation of household income.
  - Tourism sector earmarked as a priority growth sector for its potential to generate employment.
  - The tourism sector is expected to create a total of 10,000 jobs annually, most of which will be possible in the rural areas.

Link with the tourism strategy in Lesotho con’t…

- A plan has since been developed to create an environment conducive for successful tourism investment start-ups and growth for improved quality tourist travel and experience in partnership with host communities and private sector in Lesotho by 2020.
- Main objective being to:
  - Increase the number of new investments in the tourist development areas
  - Increase the number of tourist stay in the country
  - Improve participation of host communities in the tourism initiatives for improved household income
  - Improve quality of tourist experience in Lesotho around the country
Data required for designing and monitoring tourism policies

- Visitor Arrival Statistics
- Tourism expenditure estimates
- Visitor Surveys (expenditure, motivation, satisfaction etc.)
- Accommodation and Tourism Establishment Surveys
- Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSAs)

Current key sources for tourism statistics for Lesotho

- Accommodation statistics
  - Number of visitors per hotel/lodge/guesthouse
  - Expenditure on accommodation
- Food serving statistics
  - Number of visitors per hotel/lodge/guesthouse
  - Expenditure on food and drinks
- Missing sources
  - Traveller's surveys done at other points of entry to determine the number of foreigners who visit Lesotho for tourism purposes.
  - Traveller's surveys done at points of entry to determine kinship visitors.
  - However, these surveys are only done at the airport.
Advantages of Compiling a TSA

• The main advantage of developing a TSA is that it identifies the weaknesses in a system of tourism statistics, enabling these to be addressed through improved data collection and analysis, and the implementation of new surveys.

• TSAs are constructed using a combination of:
  • Visitor expenditure data,
  • Industry data
  • Supply and Use Tables from the SNA

• Hence TSAs provide:
  • Detailed production accounts for the tourism industries
  • Data on employment
  • Linkages with other productive economic activities.

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Lesotho Tourism Satellite Account 2013

Economic Indicators

- Toursim GDP: 3.1%
- 1.2 billion maloti as Inbound Tourism Expenditure
- 0.1 billion maloti as Domestic Tourism Expenditure

Tourist Trips

- Overnight Visitors: 319,188
- Day Visitors: 112,107

Domestic Tourism

- Domestic Tourist Trips: 293
- Total Revenue per Bed Night: 765 maloti
- Employees per Room in Accommodation: 0.8

Businesses and Employment

- Total Direct Employment (excl. Government): 4,008 jobs
- 2,350 jobs of which Female
- Total Indirect Employment: 1,310 jobs

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Accommodation

- 180 Accommodation Establishments
- 3,370 Rooms
- 6,452 Beds
- 415,647 Total Bed-Nights
- 765 maloti Total Revenue per Bed-Night

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Domestic Tourist Expenditure

- 765,000 local jobs
- 567 million maloti

Inbound Tourist Expenditure

- 319,188 Overnight Visitors
- 112,107 Day Visitors
- 1.2 billion maloti

Leisure Visitors

- 306,000 Local Jobs
- 300 million maloti

Tourism GDP

- 3.1% of GDP
- 208,084 Overnight Visitors
- 163,930 Day Visitors
Main Challenges in Lesotho

- Inadequate and/outdated tourism related surveys
  - Lack of detailed data
- Financial sustainability
- Human resources capacities
- Institutional issues and funding
- Inter-institutional platform

Possible new measurement projects in Lesotho.

- To continue compilation of the TSA, the following have to be regularly conducted/updated:
  - Supply and Use Table
  - Domestic Tourism Survey
  - Traveller arrivals
  - LOTIS Database
  - Visitor Survey
  - Employment Survey
- Updating of these would inform proposed policies
Proposed tourism policies/measures to promote the tourism sector in Lesotho

- Policies that would ensure ongoing operations at tourists resorts.
  - Re-opening of abandoned or closed tourism facilities.
- Policies to Improve accessibility to tourist resorts
  - Regular maintenance of roads that access tourist attractions (i.e. Sehlabathebe, Malealea gravel roads).
- Policies geared towards public or international outreach to tourists via advertisements, proper operating tourist centres, maintenance of websites for tourist resorts, etc.

Thank You