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Implementation of the General Programme of Work 2020-2021: Regional Activities

Note by the Secretary-General

In this document, the Secretary-General presents to the UNWTO Member States of the Regional Commission, the activities undertaken in the region from July 2020 to July 2021 to restart tourism based on the re-alignment of the 10 priority areas of the Agenda for Africa-Tourism for inclusive Growth.



I. Overview of the COVID-19 impact on the tourism sector in Africa

1. The COVID-19 health crisis has upended the global economy and continues to have unprecedented impact on travel and tourism industries, placing millions of jobs as well as livelihoods of millions of local communities at risk. In Africa, though it is one of the least affected regions, the pandemic threatens to roll back social-economic gains and gender equality that sustainable tourism development has been delivering across the continent. In the region [women that make up 69% of the tourism work force](#) compared to 54% to the rest of the world, are bearing the brunt of the pandemic as well as small, micro and medium enterprises representing 80% of the tourism sector.

2. According to the latest data from [UNWTO World Tourism Barometer](#) (Volume 19, issue 4, July 2021) for the region of Africa, international tourism arrivals drop by -81% in January-May 2021 compared to the same period of pre-pandemic year 2019, or -74% over 2020, as travel restrictions remained high due to the coronavirus pandemic. International Tourism Arrivals in 2020 registered 18.1 million (North Africa 5.5 million, Sub-Saharan Africa 12.5 million), -74,2% compared to 2019 (70 million). This sharp decline represents a loss of about 52 million international arrivals compared to 2019.

3. In the same vein, International Tourism receipts dropped by 36% from US 38,879 billion in 2019 to US 14,017 billion in 2020, while total export revenues of international tourism in the balance of payments including travel & passenger transport fell from 47 billion USD to 17 billion, representing a drop from 9% in 2019 to 4.2% in 2020.

4. According to IATA, total demand for air travel to the region had a sharp decline in the first five months of 2021 in international RPKs (-72%) in Africa. Furthermore, data from UNWTO indicates a drop of -79% in international air bookings made between 1 January and 28 May 2021 (versus 2019) for any future travel. However, the region fared better compared to other regions thanks to softer restrictions.

5. According to the [newest edition of the UNWTO COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions –A Global Review for Tourism Report](#) as of 1 June 2021, 29% of all destinations worldwide have their borders completely closed to international tourism. Regional differences with regards to travel restrictions remain 19% in Africa (10 destinations including one SIDS) have a complete closure of borders, 38% partial closure of borders (17 destinations) and 43% (22 destinations) request the presentation of negative Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) or antigen tests upon arrival when entering a destination as an international tourist. On some occasions this is combined with quarantine.

6. International travel is slowly picking up but the recovery remains weak and with much uncertainty over the fluid and involving Covid-19 variants. Data from latest UNWTO barometer showed a slight improvement in global hotel occupancy in May, with 33% occupancy in Africa. However, domestic travel is driving the recovery of tourism in several destinations in the region.

7. Furthermore, many UNWTO Member states have embarked on various vaccine roll-out programmes since 2021. Supply of Covid vaccines to Africa (43 countries)¹ has been enhanced in August 2021 through the

¹ www.afro.who.int, <https://africacdc.org/covid-19-vaccination/>



efforts made by the COVAX facility (Covid-19 Vaccines Global Access) and the AU COVID-19 African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT), the Africa Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP) on behalf of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention) Africa (CDC).

8. The main purpose is to vaccinate a minimum of 20% of the population with approximately 600 million doses by the end of 2021. Currently, vaccination rates are very low compared to other regions, less than 2% of one billion African citizens are fully vaccinated².

9. Against this backdrop, a greater access to vaccines is an imperative that will help to restart tourism among international travelers and comprehensive and harmonized travel protocols are a prerequisite for restoring confidence in the mind of tourists.

II- Implementation of the Programme of Work in Africa 2020-2021

10. As a response to COVID-19 and its impacts on the tourism sector in Africa, the UNWTO Regional Department for Africa, in close consultation with member states, have reshaped and realigned the [10 priorities of the Agenda for Africa-Tourism for inclusive Growth](#) aiming to delivering customized and tailor-made solutions to address key challenges of member states to better manage and mitigate the impact as countries gradually open up borders to restart tourism. The Agenda for Africa-Tourism for inclusive Growth is in line with the AU Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development 2030.

A. Regional Activities from June 2020 to December 2020

Official visits of the Secretary-General to the region to restart tourism

11. In a view of supporting member states to restart tourism and ensure the full integration of the tourism sector in national recovery plans and measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic, The UNWTO Secretary-General supported by the Regional Department for Africa reaffirmed UNWTO's commitments to the continent and conducted official visits in the region. It served to strengthen existing partnerships, engage member states to support tourism stakeholders from the public and private sector by elaborating and implementing safety net measures and financial support for the sector and tourism employees. It was also an occasion to work directly with Member states to adapt the Agenda for Africa: Tourism for Inclusive Growth.

12. In this regard, The UNWTO Secretary-General paid a first visit to an African Member State since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic with a three-day official visit to Namibia from 4 to 6 November 2020 on the occasion of the [Namibia Tourism Expo](#). He met with His Excellency Dr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia for talks on realizing the potential of tourism to drive sustainable development, including for youth, women and rural communities.

13. Alongside this, a meeting with Vice President H.E. Nangolo Mbumba allowed the UNWTO leadership further opportunity to express support for African Member States in their endeavor to drive recover and growth

² www.bbc.com/news/56100076



through tourism. The UNWTO delegation met with Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, MP, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism to identify ways of growing the country's tourism sector, including a greater focus on gastronomy tourism, rural and community-based tourism. It was also an opportunity to discuss the preparation of **the UNWTO Regional Conference on "Strengthening the Brand Africa: Tourism towards recovery"** to be held in Windhoek from 14 to 16 June 2021.

14. [Following this visit, the UNWTO](#) Secretary-General traveled to Tunisia, in the framework of the Tunisia Hospitality Symposium, (25-27 November 2020). The Secretary-General of UNWTO met with H.E. Kais Saied, President of Tunisia, and his Head of government Hichem Mechichi of Tunisia during a high-level visit to the North African country.

15. This second visit to an African Member State in the space of three weeks reaffirmed UNWTO's commitment to restarting tourism across the continent and focus on working closely with governments to promote sustainable growth and innovation. In addition to the meeting with the President and Head of government the UNWTO delegation also held talks with the Tunisian Minister of Tourism Habib Ammar to discuss plans for **current and future collaboration**. Alongside this, the Secretary-General and the Tunisian authorities discussed UNWTO's partnership with the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development \(EBRD\)](#), with a current project providing technical support to drive the recovery of Tunisia's tourism sector in the wake of the pandemic.

Advocating the Brand Africa

16. **Advocating the Brand Africa** is one of the ten priorities of the **UNWTO Agenda for Africa – Tourism for Inclusive Growth**, needed now more than ever to help restore market confidence and build a strong destination image so as to restart tourism in the continent. A strong brand image will help kick start and accelerate the process of recovering from the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

17. In this context, on 30 June 2020, The Regional Department for Africa organized a closed session with the CEOs of Tourism Boards of Sub-Saharan Africa on **Brand Africa and the path towards tourism recovery: positives stories from the Africa continent**. The live webinar aimed at discussing on strategies and explore possible steps to take in order to brand Africa as a competitive and attractive tourism destination. It served as a base for the preparation of a Brand Report for Africa to be published in 2021. 37 participants attended the event together with 17 CEOs of Tourism Boards and Directors of Tourism Departments of Angola, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Uganda, Seychelles, Somalia, Vanilla Islands, Zambia, Zimbabwe

18. In the same vein, in June 2020 UNWTO launched the [Inspiration Africa – Branding Challenge](#) in collaboration with CNN, UNWTO Media Partner, to identify the most creative, innovative and disruptive communications campaigns promoting powerful and inspiring stories about the continent. These stories all provide a positive narrative for the region and reposition Africa as a competitive, attractive and safe tourism destination in the minds of future travellers. The Live Webinar on **Brand Africa and the path towards tourism recovery: positive stories from the African continent, a closed forum in conversation with CEOs of Tourism Boards** of the sub-Saharan Africa region to discuss on strategies and explore possible steps to take in order to brand Africa as a competitive and attractive tourism destination.

19. More than 200 proposals from top international specialists in the fields of marketing, communication and advertising were submitted. The challenge culminated in a virtual final on 16 October 2020. 10 finalists were presented and a winner was announced (ATREVIA, UBUNTU: Africa invites you to live).

20. The Awards Ceremony also provided the occasion to host a high-level roundtable with renowned tourism experts who exchanged and debated on the topic: *“Restoring market confidence and building a strong destination image: steps and strategies to brand Africa in the Covid-19 era”*. [Podcast interviews](#) with [the finalists](#) of the challenge were also conducted.

Capacity-Building activities and RDAF Webinars

21. **Fostering Resilience** is one of the key areas stressed by the member states in the framework of the realignment of the Agenda for Africa- Tourism for inclusive Growth. In this regard, the Regional Department for Africa in close collaboration with [CRISOTECH](#) conducted three respective virtual capacity-building trainings (23 July, 19 November and 10 December 2020) for both Anglophone and Francophone Member States of Africa on crisis management and creation of a crisis unit in the tourism sector.

22. The main objective of the trainings was to equip tourism stakeholders from the public and private sector with tools and techniques on crisis management and further prepared them to integrate the elements necessary to set up a crisis unit as part of their activities. Participants were then given the opportunity to take part in a unique crisis simulation exercise.

23. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNWTO, in collaboration with Members States, Affiliate Members, international organizations and other tourism partners, has been consolidating intelligence on the local, national, international measures and policies undertaken for mitigating and combating the effects of COVID-19 crisis on tourism sector and accelerating recovery.

24. Alongside this, UNWTO has been providing Members States and key stakeholders with leadership, assistance and guidance in adopting harmonized strategies and a coordinated approach with the purpose of easing travel restrictions and reopening international borders. This will help restore travelers' confidence and enable the restart of the tourism sector worldwide.

25. Against this backdrop, and in support with its Member States and Partners, the UNWTO Regional Department for Africa has undertaken the following closed and open virtual webinars:

Rebuilding Confidence Among Tourism Consumers and Businesses in Africa: An Integrated Regional Response

26. On 2 July 2020, in close collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD, the Regional Department of Africa organized a virtual **Rebuilding Confidence Among Tourism Consumers and Businesses in Africa: An Integrated Regional Response**. The meeting was an open conversation with regional integration experts in private sector and key regional bodies of Africa to discuss the types of regional responses and incentives that could be provided to support the recovery of the tourism sector from a business perspective and the key measures to restore confidence among consumers especially in terms of their rights.

Market Intelligence Masterclass for Africa: Big Data for Planning and Recovery - An Introduction

27. UNWTO and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) - a sister organization of the World Bank and member of the World Bank Group - joined forces to deliver a virtual Masterclass on the use of big data in market

intelligence, to Africa Member States on 6 July 2020. 'Big Data for Planning and Recovery – An Introduction', focused on the use of market data, especially big data, to support countries in their recovery from the unprecedented impacts of COVID-19. Many African destinations are looking for information and market intelligence to help them make smart and data driven decisions. They are also seeking guidance in navigating this complex field and up-skilling with the right partnerships and programs.

28. A total of 62 participants from 18 countries joined the Masterclass: Botswana, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Contributing to the discussion were ForwardKeys, Mastercard, TCI Research, Tripadvisor, WETU, Turismo de Portugal and Jurni from South Africa.

29. On 23 September 2020, **UNWTO and Google hosted the first tourism Acceleration Programme in Sub-Saharan Africa** aiming at accelerating the digitalization of the tourism sector, key to adapt to the new tourism reality, understand market intelligence and insights for consumer behavior and drive recovery. UNWTO and Google have partnered for an online Acceleration Program for UNWTO Member States' tourism ministers, top travel associations and tourism boards to further develop innovation and digital transformation skills.

30. In addition, the UNWTO Regional Department for Africa participated and contributed to numerous online events including the following:

- Webinar on Investment Driving Africa's Travel & Tourism Value Chain (in collaboration with Invest Africa, African Tourism Investment Summit, wtm), 7 October 2020
- [Africa Tourism Leadership Forum 2020](#) (in collaboration with Africa Tourism Partners), 19-21 October 2020
- Panel Discussion on *"How stimulating demand for African products in USA, UK, European and African markets"*, 19 October 2020
- Africa Travel and Tourism CEOs Forum on *"Brand Africa – Joining our voices to build a strong image and market confidence for Africa"*, 20 October 2020
- African Airlines Association (AFRAA) 52nd AGA, 10 November 2020
- "Entrepreneurship Week" (in collaboration with AVACOMORNAMI), 16- 21 November 2020
- Discussion panel on "Entrepreneurship as a driver of Tourism", 18 November 2020
- Leveraging innovative technologies and digital solutions for the tourism sector in Africa, 7 December 2020

Collaboration with Affiliate members of the region

31. The 3rd Africa Tourism Leadership Forum took place in Rwanda, Kigali, from 19 to 21 October 2020. The Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) is a Pan-African dialogue platform which brings together key stakeholders of Africa's travel, tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors to network, share insights, and devise strategies for intra-Africa travel and tourism growth across the continent, whilst enhancing the brand equity of "Destination Africa". Organized by UNWTO Affiliate Member *Africa Tourism Partners* and its CEO Mr. Kwakye Donkor, the event was the first major African tourism meeting to be held in with both in-person and virtual participation. It assembled over 150 physical delegates, 500 virtual delegates and 60 renowned speakers from over 40 countries including the UNWTO Secretary-General. It also counted on the participation in key panels of high-level officials from the Organization.

This year's forum was held under the theme "Shaping a better future for Intra Africa travel together through a

shared vision". Topics discussed at the conference included the opportunities that the pandemic presents.

32. To close the event, nine Africa Tourism Leadership Awards were given to recognize and reward individuals, businesses and institutions that are changing the Africa travel and tourism narrative through their work in different categories. These included awards for Leading in Progressive Tourism Policy (*Rwanda Development Board*), Outstanding Entrepreneurship (Flawless Events, Ethiopia), Women in Leadership (Anthea Rossouw, Dreamcatcher, South Africa), Most Innovative Business Tourism Destination (Cape Town and Western Cape, South Africa) and Outstanding Accommodation Facility/Group (*SABI Private Game Reserve, South Africa*) among others.

African Ambassador's virtual meeting

33. On 2nd December, a virtual meeting was conducted with African Ambassadors in a view of sharing updated information of the UNWTO's response to # restart tourism and discuss priority areas of the Agenda for Africa, Tourism for Inclusive Growth, that have been re-aligned by the member states of the region. It was also an opportunity to present new services and products of UNWTO such as [COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package](#), [UNWTO Global Tourism Dashboard](#), and [UNWTO Tourism Recovery Tracker](#) among others.

Social Media campaign to promote the Africa region

34. At the initiative of the UNWTO Secretary-General, a social media campaign was launched in December 2020. The main objective was to showcase the diversity of African countries and to promote positive stories of the continent. [#MyAfrica](#) aimed to contribute to changing perspectives away from stereotypes when talking about "Africa", which overwhelmingly has a one-size-fits-all approach to different national realities and people. The social media campaign had with a strong human angle to boost Africa's potential as a vibrant and diverse tourist destination and aimed to showcase the power of tourism through its protagonists and help bringing sustainable growth and opportunities for millions in the region. A set of guidelines was elaborated to guide participants on the content and relevance of their positive stories. More than 300 positive stories were shared among which a selection was conducted.

Signing of conventions

35. UNWTO, the Government of Benin and the World Bank signed a contract of 1.2 million USD to support sustainable tourism development in the areas of tourism licensing and statistics. In the area of tourism licensing, the project aims to support the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Arts of Benin to update the system for granting licenses and classification of tourism establishments and on statistics the purpose is to support the Ministry in the strengthening of its tourism statistics system and the development of an experimental tourism satellite account.

Collaboration with United Nations Country Teams in the region (UNCT)

36. In a view of strengthening collaboration on the ground with UN Agencies, the Regional Department for Africa participated actively and shared technical inputs on the tourism sector to the United Nations Country Analysis and Socio-economic Response plans of the following countries: Cabo Verde, Ghana, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania and Togo. The purpose is to underline the importance of integrating tourism in socio-economic recovery response plans and identify possible source of funding for the restart of

tourism.

B. Regional Activities 2021

Strengthening member relations

37. In 2021, In a view of strengthening cooperation and support towards tourism recovery with its member states of the region, The Regional Department for Africa conducted in close collaboration with the member relations office of the UNWTO Secretary-General, Technical cooperation and silk road department, and operational departments, conducted several virtual technical meetings to provide insights and technical inputs on UNWTO Services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective was to identify priority areas of the members and therefore proposed tailor-made technical initiatives to support the rebuilding of the tourism sector in their countries.

37. In this regard, virtual meetings have been held with the following countries; Rwanda (16 February 2021), Nigeria (18 February 2021), Mozambique (9th March), Lesotho (27 April), Mauritius (29 April), Comoros, (27 May), Togo (24 June), Angola (25 June) and Cha(7 July) to identify areas of cooperation and actions that could be undertaken to rebuild the tourism sector. The main areas identified to work on were on domestic tourism, digital marketing, tourism statistics, branding, capacity-building and elaboration of health and hygiene protocols for the tourism sector among others.

38. Furthermore, Ministers of Tourism of various countries acting in their capacity as the highest representatives of the State in the tourism sector, International Organizations CEOs, and Accredited Ambassadors of Africa have the opportunity upon request to pay an official visit to the UNWTO headquarters. The secretariat uses these meetings to share information on the UNWTO Programme of Work, the adopted *UNWTO Agenda for Africa -inclusion for tourism growth* as well as the institutional meetings programmed for the year such as the 64th UNWTO CAF Meeting in Cabo Verde, to be held on 2 and 3rd September 2021, the WTD celebrations in Cote d’Ivoire, September 2021, the 24th UNWTO General Assembly in October/November 2021 and other upcoming activities. It is also an opportunity to deliberate extensively on the needs of each country and identify areas of support of UNWTO. The following meetings were conducted with high-level officials of the region:

- H.E. Mr. Lai Mohammed, Minister of Information and Culture of the Republic of Nigeria, 9th March 2021;
- H.E. Mr. Muhammad Adam, Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana to Spain, on 9th March 2021;
- H. E. Mrs. Maria Manuela Lucas, Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique to Spain, 11th August 2021.

A Tour of African Gastronomy Book

39. Under the umbrella of Advocating the Brand in Africa, one of the priority of the Agenda for Africa-Tourism for Inclusive Growth, The Regional Department for Africa in collaboration with the operational programme on Market Intelligence and Market Trends published in January 2021 “[A Tour of African Gastronomy](#)” .

40. This publication gives local chefs, the best food ambassadors, the chance to contribute to the story telling of African gastronomy, by sharing their most emblematic recipes and local ingredients. A Tour of African Gastronomy is presented as the start of a journey that not only offers an itinerary through a variety of culinary delicacies, but also aims to be a guidebook for travelers to understand the culture of the communities they intend to visit.



41. It further pays homage to the unique culinary experiences of 38 countries on the African continent. Since then, UNWTO, in close collaboration with one of its partners [Voyages Afrig](#), initiated The Tour of African Gastronomy Talk series which unravel the food, beverages, recipes and ingredients of Africa's diverse culinary featured in UNWTO's 96-page Tour of African Gastronomy. (click [here](#) to have access to the VA Podcast).

42. In line with Advocating the Brand in Africa, a closed session was organized for the CEOs of Africa Tourism Boards on 20 April 2021 to set the tone of the meeting planned in the framework of the UNWTO Regional Conference: Strengthening Brand Africa for the swift recovery of the tourism sector. The main objective was to discuss on how to build market confidence and accelerating tourism recovery through individual country brands. The discussion held among the CEOs of Cabo Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mauritius, Rwanda Seychelles, and Zimbabwe gave inputs on the preparation of a Brand Africa Report as a toolkit and guidelines to help every member country to bring their brand to the fore.

43. On the occasion of UNWTO's publication '[A Tour of African Gastronomy](#)', UNWTO devoted the month of May as the Month of promotion of African Gastronomy and its Chefs, which also coincided with the Africa Day celebration. This project put to the fore one of the key priorities of the UNWTO Agenda for Africa - Tourism for Inclusive Growth, Advocating Brand Africa. The initiative's main objective was to promote African gastronomy and its Chefs whilst showcasing African intangible cultural heritage and talent around the world.

44. The activities of the African gastronomy celebration were hosted virtually during the month of May 2021 and consisted of five weekly round table sessions held on [6th, 11th, 17th, 25th and 31th May](#) that culminated with a special session on **Women Empowerment Through Gastronomy in Tourism in Africa**. The discussion by gastronomy experts from both the public and private sector included chefs from the continent, international and regional organizations and explored how to increase the potential of African gastronomy at regional and global level. The celebration of Africa Day on 25th May was marked by a live cooking show by one of our guest chef from the continent, giving prominence to the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, couscous. During this initiative, UNWTO welcomed over 200 participants from more than 55 countries of Africa and the world. The event emphasized the importance of African gastronomy not only for tourism, but within the overall world gastronomy.

UNWTO Regional Conference: Strengthening Brand Africa for the swift recovery of the tourism sector

45. Building on the 2015 UNWTO Regional Conference on Enhancing Brand Africa - Fostering Tourism Development was held in Ghana, which set the premises for key outputs to develop a strong Brand Africa, the **UNWTO Regional Conference: Strengthening Brand Africa for the swift recovery of the tourism sector**, was held in Windhoek Namibia from 14 to 16 June 2021. One of the main objectives was to leverage tourism as a cross-cutting sector with high impact on national and regional branding to enhance the image of African destinations as the building blocks of the overall image of Africa as well as engaging the public and the private sectors as well as local communities and the diaspora in promoting positive stories and experiences about Africa, developing synergies between countries to further strengthen the positioning of the continent.

46. On the back of a series of workshops and a Ministerial Think Tank, UNWTO's African Member States unanimously endorsed the [Windhoek Pledge on Advocating Brand Africa](#). Under the terms of the Windhoek Pledge, Members will engage both public and private sector stakeholders as well as local communities to build a new, inspiring narrative for tourism across the continent.

Capacity-Building activities and RDAF Webinars

47. As a continuous support to Member States to rebuild the tourism sector, the Regional Department for Africa participated in the following webinars:

- ATLAS Africa - Book Launch Routledge Handbook of Tourism in Africa on 13 January 2021
- Virtual Best Practices Workshop, hosted by the Department of Tourism of South Africa, 2nd March 2021
- ITB Changemakers Programme - Discussion Panel on female entrepreneurs driving SDGs for tourism resiliency, 10 March 2021
- DAY 1: High Level-Ministerial Meeting on Enhancing Air Transport Connectivity and Growth in West Africa
- Participation to SESSION 4 – Strategies and sectoral synergies that are required for air transport growth, 17 March 2021
DAY 2: High Level-Ministerial Meeting on Enhancing Air Transport Connectivity and Growth in West Africa, 18 March 2021
- DAY1: Africa Business Tourism Mice Masterclass, 24 March 2021
DAY 2: Africa Business Tourism Mice Masterclass, 25 March 2021
- 7e Café du Tourisme MERCATOUR for "tourism promotion and crisis management for economy sustainable growth", organized by the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure of Cameroon, 25 March 2021

Regional integration and dynamic tourism investments: how to create new opportunities to promote the emergence of the sector in Africa?

48. On 13 April 2021, the Regional Department for Africa organized for francophone speaking African Member states a webinar on Regional integration and dynamic tourism investments: how to create new opportunities to promote the emergence of the sector in Africa? with the main objective of discussing how to attract, promote and increase strategic foreign direct investment in tourism, with a view to enhancing the attractiveness of destinations in Africa.

49. A total of 98 participants from 15 Member States, 5 Tourist Offices, 2 International Organizations and 2 Affiliate Members participated. Countries represented were Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Niger, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Senegal, Togo and Tunisia.

50. In a special capacity building event held on 21 and 22 April 2021 organized by UNWTO in partnership with Google, researchers and marketing professionals from 20 African National Tourism Organizations (NTOs) benefitted from two days of training on themes designed to help them attract visitors and better manage their tourism sectors. As well as insights into data collection, analysis and management, the regional course also focused on digital marketing, with a particular emphasis on how digital content and storytelling can be powerful tools for restarting tourism and supporting recovery in the wake of the pandemic. To put theory into practice, participants were able to learn more about UNWTO's tools to provide market insights and to support recovery, including the UNWTO Recovery Tracker and its trusted dashboards. Alongside this, the NTOs were also shown how Google's Insights Tools can help guide sustainable recovery.

51. Furthermore, the Regional Department for Africa participated in the following events:

- Leaders' Forum at the 9th Aviation Stakeholders' Convention, organized by AFRAA and hosted by Ethiopian Airlines, Intervention on the session: "Driving Clear Actions for Air Transport Sustainability and Growth in Africa", 18 May 2021
- UN Africa Dialogue Series Side Event (Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN), 25 May 2021
"The catalytic role of tourism, accelerating the recovery, achievement of SDGs, harnessing the potential of young people, women and innovation".

Unlocking Growth through Investment Promotion and Public Private Partnerships

XII Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa, AFRICA

52. On 20th May 2021, the **12th edition of INVESTOUR, the Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa was held virtually with the presence of** more than 50 countries. Organized jointly by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Casa África and FITUR, INVESTOUR promotes sustainable tourism as a key socio-economic development tool for Africa, while encouraging exchanges on investment and business opportunities in the region.

53. On the occasion of the 41st edition of the International Tourism Fair of Madrid (FITUR), the twelfth edition of INVESTOUR took place virtually and consisted of one round table discussion on revitalizing the tourism sector post-COVID trends and investment opportunities" and investment webinar on Digital platforms to enable Tourism Investment during COVID-19. This strategic platform is held every year within the framework of the FITUR tourism fair in Madrid, and puts African entities with tourism projects in direct contact with potential international partners. The session covered topics such as innovations and new trends as a way to restart the sector, as well as investment opportunities in the tourism sector.

54. As a new feature in this year's edition, the UNWTO presented Investment Webinars in collaboration with the fDi intelligence from the Financial Times, following the partnership that was the development of a joint publication on Tourism Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) analyzing data on Greenfield investments trends.

55. The workshop focused on frameworks and practical tools to attract, promote and mobilize investments in the tourism sector in Africa. It provided insights for understanding and enabling the conditions to strengthen the capacities of the Member States that want to take measures to safeguard, attract and promote tourism investment projects during and after the pandemic for a faster economic recovery.

Strengthening Tourism Statistics Systems

Virtual Workshop on Tourism Statistics, 6-7 July 2021

56. In these challenging times of COVID19 pandemic, both the tourism community and the statistical community have been challenged like never before, and tourism statistics and data are as crucial as ever to guide policy decisions in the short, medium and long terms. In line with its priority area on **Strengthening Tourism Statistics Systems of the Agenda for Africa-Tourism for inclusive Growth** and in an effort to support capacity building in the area of tourism measurement, UNWTO organized an online workshop on July 6th-7th, for 13 countries namely Angola, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Seychelles, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe,

to bring together policy makers (data users) and tourism statisticians (data producers) to uncover the main elements for a sound and efficient tourism measurement.

57. The first session provided a unique opportunity for the tourism community to get a better understanding of the basic tourism statistics and Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) data as well as their use for policy. Given the current context, special emphasis was placed on the measurement of domestic tourism. The second session was to equip tourism statisticians with the necessary capacities to better measure tourism and produce high-quality tourism statistics based on the internationally agreed standards.

C- Upcoming Activities

58. The following upcoming activities in the region are as follows:

● **64th CAF Meeting and 2nd Edition of UNWTO Global Investment Tourism Forum in Africa**, Sal, Cabo Verde, 2-4 September 2021

● **World Tourism Day in Côte d'Ivoire**, 27 September 2021

● **Ministerial Conference UNWTO/WAEMU Perspectives on Security and Resilience for the tourism sector**, Dakar, Senegal, 22-24 November 2021

● **Preparation of the 24th session of the UNWTO General Assembly**, 30 November to 3rd December 2021

Partnerships and signatures of Memorandum of Understandings

59. In a view of strengthening partnership with regional organizations in Africa and to support tourism recovery in the region, the following Memorandum of Understanding have been signed:

- AUDA-NEPAD Memorandum of Understanding, 15th June 2021
- African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Memorandum of Understanding, 3rd August 2021
- Economic Community of Central African States (CEMAC), Memorandum of Understanding (tbc)
- Jeune Afrique, Memorandum of Understanding (under preparation)

Publications

60. The following publications will be launched as follows:

- Brand Africa Report (to be presented at the 64th CAF Meeting, 2nd September 2021)
- White paper on security in Tourism in Africa (to be launched at the **Ministerial Conference UNWTO/WAEMU Perspectives on Security and Resilience for the tourism sector, Dakar, Senegal, 22-24 November 2021**)

RDAF Newsletters

16th, 17th, 18th and 19th editions have been shared with the member states since the inception of the pandemic. The newsletter aims at providing up-to-date information on UNWTO's response to restart tourism and offers a platform for the members to showcase their activities towards tourism recovery.

C. UNWTO Technical Assistance in Africa

61. In the light of COVID-19, UNWTO stands committed to continue providing technical assistance to the tourism sector. On the one hand, UNWTO undertook global research into forecasting the impacts of COVID on the tourism sector, compiling all the travel restrictions in place worldwide, and, on the other hand, UNWTO also launched on 12 May 2020 the COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance package aimed at providing direct technical assistance to its individual Member States. The package is structured around three main pillars: economic recovery, marketing and promotion and institutional strengthening and resilience building. We are already engaged with several Member States that have expressed a need for technical support in the recovery and the restart of their tourism sector. In this regard, the ongoing technical activities in the region are captured in the CAF/64/4.1 working document on technical activities in the region.

