Dear esteemed readers,

Right now, governments around the world are concentrating their efforts on re-opening their borders and restarting tourism, all against the backdrop of the COVID-19 health crisis. In Africa, the easing of lockdown measures alongside the gradual lifting of travel restrictions means that the socio-economic benefits of tourism and travel are slowly returning.

As covid-19 continues to reshape the tourism ecosystem, African destinations need to address the health and safety challenges posed by the pandemic to remain competitive. I would therefore like to commend Member States for their genuine efforts in this regard. Governments have reacted swiftly and taken a range of effective measures, through their fiscal and monetary policies as well as through supporting jobs and skills, boosting market intelligence and utilizing public and private partnerships to address the heath crisis and support the sector with funds and grants. They have also been supporting the ingenuity of locally-based and innovative solutions.

Nonetheless, the spread and complexity of the virus poses challenges that will require several factors to be taken into consideration. UNWTO and the Global Tourism Crisis Committee have worked jointly on a set of key recommendations and our Global Guidelines to Restart Tourism will support both the public and private sectors in the difficult months ahead.

It has been encouraging to see that many countries across Africa have already taken concrete steps in line with these guidelines and have adapted them to their own unique circumstances in a consistent and harmonized manner. It is also encouraging to see that many have established enhanced protocols as well as introducing monitoring systems at the local level.

Furthermore, in our efforts to support tourism recovery in Africa and to respond to the immediate needs of our Member States, we have conducted several webinars, master classes, workshops and closed meetings on several themes relating to the UNWTO 2030 Agenda for Africa. A recent online survey allowed us to identify the priority areas of the Agenda that Members wanted us to re-align in order to better respond to the challenge of COVID-19. Themes such as crisis communications, Brand Africa, resilience and security in tourism and capacity building are the key areas that will help consumers regain confidence in the sector when they resume travel.
Since the 63rd Regional Commission for Africa that was scheduled to be held in the Republic of Seychelles could not be hosted as planned, we had to conduct our Commission meeting virtually for the very first time.

The outcomes of the well-attended meeting emphasized the need to reorient the activities of the Agenda for Africa with a focus on developing domestic, intra- and inter-regional tourism to boost the sector. Other areas to consider include product diversification, investing in innovation and the digitalization of the sector, and also strengthening cooperation and collaboration among member states on safe and seamless travel and data sharing.

In addition to the Global Guidelines, the UNWTO COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Package will help Members and tourism stakeholders reorient their marketing strategies and make their tourism sectors more efficient and profitable. This package is structured around three main pillars, namely economic recovery, marketing and promotion, and institutional strengthening and building resilience. Currently more than 60% of our work in the region is related to technical projects and I would like to encourage member states to take fully advantage of this.

In addition, new initiatives have been launched such as one focusing on African Gastronomy that can be a tool for economic growth and job creation and the UNWTO Inspiration Africa Branding Challenge. For the latter, I would like to use this opportunity to encourage start-ups from the region to submit their proposals and at the same time congratulate Jirani’s Food, a Kenyan online food start-up and one of the winners of the UNWTO Gastronomy Tourism challenge in the category of social impact.

Finally, though today we are faced with a health pandemic that has important economic as well as social impacts, we have seen a number of positive things emerging through these challenging times. I urge all stakeholders to continue to embrace this enormous challenge positively and to keep pushing towards a swift recovery for our sector.

Elcia Grandcourt
UNWTO Regional Director for Africa
UNWTO Regional Department for Africa Live Webinars

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.

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.

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:

• Africa Region Member States Online Meeting - UNWTO initiatives to mitigate COVID-19 impact on tourism, Friday, 3 April 2020

• Managing effective crisis communication: COVID-19 Perspective, Thursday, 23 April 2020. Please find the recording here

• The Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism – Trying to make sense of so much or so little data - African Insights, Thursday, 30 April 2020. Please find the recording here

• Online Seminar on Realigning our Priorities in Times of COVID-19 - Which Mesures to Restart Tourism in Africa? (in French), Thursday, 14 May 2020. Please find the recording here

• Brand Africa and the Path Towards Tourism Recovery: Positive Stories from the African Continent, 30 June 2020

• Rebuilding Confidence Among Tourism Consumers and Businesses in Africa: An Integrated Regional Response, 02 July 2020. Please find the recording here

• Market Intelligence Masterclass for Africa: Big Data for Planning and Recovery - An Introduction, 06 July 2020

• Training virtual workshop on crisis management in tourism, 23 July 2020

At the invitation of its partners, the Regional Department for Africa also joined the discussion in the following webinars:

• The UTB Tourism Konnect live chat on Uganda's tourism in the wake of COVID, Friday, 8 May 2020

• In view of fostering collaboration with Marriott International, the following online event was conducted on the occasion of the Africa Day: Marriott Virtual Africa Day Connections Event with UNWTO “Celebrating Diversity and Common Heritage through Tourism in challenging times”, Friday, 29 May 2020
UNWTO and IFC join forces to advance market intelligence in Africa

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.

‘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 inform their plans. They are also seeking guidance in navigating this complex field and skilling up with the right partnerships and programs.

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.

Delivered in partnership with the Digital Tourism Think Tank, participants discussed:

- What big data insights can tell us about COVID-19 and the tourism market in Africa
- The spectrum of data opportunities in Africa, who the main providers are and what they offer
- The pros and cons of different uses and approaches to using traditional and big data
- Lessons learned from Portugal, Ethiopia and South Africa

The programme is expected to be further developed during the later part of 2020.

ACTIVITIES FOR THE REGION
63th Virtual Meeting of the UNWTO Regional Commission for Africa, 8 June 2020

Recovery and resilience were the central themes of the 63rd Regional Commission for Africa (CAF) which had to be held virtually for the first time since the current situation meant it could not be held in Seychelles as planned. The meeting brought together 24 Ministers of Tourism and enjoyed the presence of 140 participants from across the region with representatives of ten international organizations such as the African Union, the West African Monetary Union, as well as from the private sector and members of the UNWTO Affiliate network, all to plot a united course towards a stronger and better tourism sector.

Priorities to Unlock Africa’s Tourism Potential

For more information please click on the link below


UNWTO Adapts Agenda for Africa to accelerate Tourism Recovery

Member States from across Africa have shared their priorities for tourism against the backdrop of COVID-19. As with every other global region, African destinations have been hit hard by the restrictions on travel introduced in response to the pandemic. The sudden and unexpected drop in tourist arrivals has placed many millions of jobs at risk and threatened to roll back the progress made in sustainable development.

In this regard, an online survey was launched to better understand the key areas Member States believe UNWTO should focus on in the agenda for Africa and to support the swift recovery of the sector from COVID-19. For further information, please click on the link below:

UNWTO Technical Assistance

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 who have expressed a need for technical support in the recovery and the restart of their tourism sector. (insert read more link).

The package offers guidance to both public and private tourism sector stakeholders in their crisis response by, firstly, outlining UNWTO’s range of technical assistance, and, secondly, detailing potential areas of intervention, including impact assessment, roles and responsibilities.

Several donors have also expressed their interest in collaborating with UNWTO in implementing this Recovery Package in Africa, namely the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Other ongoing projects (non-COVID-19 related) continue to be implemented (through remote assistance) or new projects are being developed in the following countries:

- Angola (Government) – Tourism Planning, Statistics and Value Chain Analysis
- Comoros (Government) – Tourism Code (Law)
- Benin (WB) – Hotel classification, Tourism Statistics and Tour Guide Training
- Botswana (Government) – National Tourism Strategy and Tourism Master Plan for Kasane/Kazungula
- Lesotho (AfDB) – Reestablishment of Lesotho Council of Tourism
- Morocco (UNDP) – Hotel Classification
- Nigeria (GEF) – Tourism Planning
UNWTO Tourism Online Academy Scholarships

UNWTO, through its Online Academy and with the collaboration of IE.University, are committed to supporting Member States in building the capacity of their personnel and as such is offering a scholarship package to continue fostering high-quality online education in tourism. The scholarship on offer is for the online course on Introduction to Tourism Industry Management. Members have been informed about the process required to apply for the scholarships on the UNWTO Tourism Academy website www.unwto-tourismacademy.ie.edu. We would appreciate if you could note the following instructions (insert read more link):

1. Each Member State can apply for three individual scholarships based on availability until the end of 2020; Please kindly share with the UNWTO Regional Department for Africa at the following email address rdaf@unwto.org, the contact details of the selected awardees;

2. All UNWTO Tourism Online Academy courses are free of charge while certificates are payable. In this regard, scholarships will also cover the cost of the certificate.

3. The Scholarships only apply to the course: Introduction to Tourism Industry Management (COURSE ONLY AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH AT THE MOMENT);

4. The UNWTO Tourism Online Academy has created one code per each 100 scholarships in the region. Please do not share the code otherwise each introduction of the code into the platform will subtract an additional scholarship, affecting other awardees.

5. The certificate comprises two parts: a page for awarding the recipient and the other page specifying the instructions to make use of the scholarship.
Africa Is Leading Innovation and Entrepreneurship

During these challenging times, when tourism has come to a standstill, innovation and digital transformation are more relevant than ever. All over the world, entrepreneurs are developing disruptive projects and Africa is one of the key leaders of this movement.

At UNWTO we have witnessed this force throughout our five Startup Competitions. From 2018, we have received more than 750 applications from Africa, representing 14% of the total candidatures, a number that demonstrates the region's enthusiasm for innovation. In geographical terms, an average of 22 countries have been represented in each edition.

At the same time, initiatives such as the UNWTO Healing Solutions for Tourism Challenge have seen Africa as the third best-represented region of the programme, after Europe and the Americas. All this backs up the data. For example, it has been reported that "over last five years, the entrepreneurship ecosystem, through incubators, accelerators and tech hubs, has grown ten-fold in Africa". And it will definitely keep growing with the cooperation of all stakeholders.

UNWTO believes in youth and business creation for sustainable development, and we are committed to continue empowering entrepreneurs either through online courses such as the UNWTO Tourism Online Academy as well as other new innovation programmes.

While COVID-19 has shaken the global economy, there is an opportunity to establish tourism as a driver of recovery and also to continue to promote the natural attributes that Africa has to offer through the sector. The recently launched Inspiration Africa Challenge aims to find the most creative branding campaigns to create a positive image of the continent. Above all, it is designed to reinforce the message of a tourism destination that supports the effort of individual countries and companies by telling the positive stories about its people and the continent.

We highly encourage our partners and stakeholders to join in the challenge and help us spread the positive stories and lead tourism recovery with innovation and sustainability as key priorities.

Deadline for candidatures: 7 September 2020


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UNWTO promotes African Gastronomy

Gastronomy is a unique local and regional intangible cultural heritage which can serve as a discerning factor to attract tourists. For many countries, food-making represents an integral part of their history and identity and has become a key element in the nation's brand image. It is a way of promoting understanding among different cultures, and of bringing people and traditions closer together. As such, gastronomy tourism represents an opportunity to revitalize and diversify tourism, promoting local economic development and involving various professional sectors, most notably in rural destinations.

As part of the UNWTO #TravelTomorrow campaign, which has been supported by destinations all around the world, UNWTO launched a special gastronomy initiative, showcasing chefs from around the world sharing recipes of how to make local dishes at home. The purpose of this campaign is to celebrate the values around gastronomy, as a reflection of culture, heritage, tradition and also transmit a sense of community.

Against this backdrop, several Member States have participated in this initiative, from the couscous of Algeria, to the Alloco braised chicken of Côte d’Ivoire, the Cachupa of the island state of Cabo Verde, and the Nshima of Zambia, among others. Across Africa, gastronomy tourism can be used to drive economic growth and create jobs, including in rural communities, and it can also help protect and promote cultural heritage. We invite our Member States, Affiliate Members of the region and partners to celebrate our rich flavors and spices by following these recipes at: https://www.unwto.org/cuisine-african

Furthermore, in an effort to continue promoting African gastronomy at the international level, UNWTO launched “A Tour of African Gastronomy” during the 63rd Meeting of the UNWTO Commission for Africa. Since Seychelles was meant to be the host country of the event, it was given the opportunity to showcase its rich and diverse gastronomy in the “Taste of Seychelles’ Gastronomy” brochure, prepared in collaboration with the Seychelles Tourism Board. Following the success of this first brochure, UNWTO will publish soon a book entitled “A Tour of African Gastronomy” compiling information on typical ingredients, recipes and star chefs from different African countries in order to showcase the diversity of African cuisine as an example of intangible cultural heritage and talent.

The Taste of Seychelles’ Gastronomy” brochure can be downloaded at:
Safety, Security and Health Protocols in Africa

As countries are lifting their travel restrictions and relaxing their lockdown measures, many destinations in Africa are preparing enhanced safety, security and health protocols. In this regard, several countries have published their sanitary protocols that can be accessible through the following links:

- Eswatini:  [https://www.thekingdomofeswatini.com/](https://www.thekingdomofeswatini.com/)
Tanzania re-opens its tourism with new national standard operating procedures

Tourism is one of the key economic sectors in Tanzania. Over the past few years, the sector’s impressive growth has enhanced macro-economic diversification from the traditional reliance on agriculture. Tanzania is endowed with world-class tourist attractions, pulling in hundreds of thousands of tourists from various countries across the globe and so supporting the economy. Thanks to tourism’s economic contributions – this has contributed to pushing the country up the ladder to become a ‘developing economy from 1st July, 2020’ as the World Bank reports.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has created a challenge to growing tourism in destinations like Tanzania, where 28% of total land mass has been set aside for conservation. Tourism has been the main source of income to cover conservation costs, so that the Government and private sector now are now investing in conservation and in the improvement of livelihoods for local communities in rural areas.

In recognition of the importance of tourism to Tanzania, Tanzania’s tourism sector (both public and private actors) are developing detailed protocols regarding control measures and procedures for preventing the spread of COVID-19 so that the destination can re-open earlier to mitigate the negative economic impacts that could result from this pandemic. The protocols referred to as National Standard Operating Procedures (NSOPs) have been adopted and customized by all tourism entities (companies, authorities and other related service providers dealing with tourists) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure the safety of tourists visiting the country and the staff serving them. During these trying times after the re-opening of the country’s tourism sector, Government institutions, tourism business operators and other stakeholders are under instructions to continuously monitor advisories issued by the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC). Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) form a general guideline and have been based on the recommendations of UNWTO, WHO and other international organizations. The document will be updated periodically as and when more information becomes available to ensure sustainable tourism operation and conservation of resources.

The SOPs are now communicated through various channels to ensure the target audience complies. For staff, training for safari guides, hotels and lodges, park, airport and immigration workers, and guides cooks and porters operating on and around Mt. Kilimanjaro, will help prepare them for the re-opening of tourism during this period. All key tourism players are now ready to welcome the world to Tanzania.

TTB in collaboration with tour and hotel and lodge operators have organized familiarization trips to Tanzania for international travel agents to bring them to Tanzania and take them around to see how the country is prepared to serve tourists in this new reality. Documentaries with testimonials on high levels of compliance by Tanzania public and private sector players have been produced and shared with travel agents to be used to build confidence to potential tourists or to encourage those who have cancelled their trips to the country to re-book their holidays.
UNWTO’s Work on COVID-19 related Travel Restrictions from an International Tourism Perspective

Since the beginning of the outbreak of COVID-19, UNWTO has closely monitored travel restrictions in 217 destinations worldwide, assisting its Member States with timely and relevant information. In five issues of the series of reports “COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions – A Global Review for Tourism” the evolution of such restrictions is documented, starting as early as of 31 January 2020, when the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. While in the beginning it was mainly those destinations in Asia and the Pacific and Europe with growing infection numbers that introduced such restrictions, after the declaration by the WHO of COVID-19 as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 destinations from all other regions followed. By 20 April 2020 UNWTO reported that 100% of all worldwide destinations had imposed restrictions on travel, representing the most severe restrictions on international travel in history.

The peak of restrictions was reached in mid-May 2020, when UNWTO’s research showed that 75% of all destinations (163) had their borders completely closed for international tourism. At the same time, and hand-in-hand with the lifting of national lockdowns and quarantine measures, the first 3% of destinations (7) had started easing travel restrictions, including for tourism purposes. By 15 June 2020, the number of destinations that had relaxed restrictions increased to 22% (48), the vast majority of them in the European region opening up for international tourists from countries in the same region (intraregional tourism), signalling a slow and very cautious restart of tourism, in particular in the Northern Hemisphere. However, at the same time 65% of all destinations worldwide continued to have their borders completely closed. By then 24% of all destinations (51) had had travel restrictions in place for 19 weeks, and 37% (80) for 15 weeks.

According to UNWTO’s research, the introduction of complete border closures in Africa gradually increased from 57% of all destinations on 27 April to 74% on 18 May and to 85% by 15 June, while the easing of travel restrictions was observed in 4% of destinations in the region (2) by the latter date.

All reports provide a detailed breakdown on the types of travel restrictions, ranging from complete or partial closure of borders, destination-specific travel restrictions aimed at passengers arriving from specific destinations, to the suspension of flights and other measures, such as suspension of visa and requests for medical certificates. These reports are updated on a regular basis to support mitigation and recovery efforts by destinations. They also highlight the importance of consistent, reliable and easy-to-access information on immigration procedures for international tourists, all of which helps ensure the restoration of traveller’s confidence.

More information on the UNWTO’s response to COVID-19 here

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2 For more information on the reports or to download the different editions of the Report COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions – A Global Review for Tourism, visit: https://www.unwto.org/covid-19-travel-restrictions.
In the midst of the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, positive initiatives from Africa are undertaken to give hope, encouragement and innovative ideas to accelerate the recovery of tourism and promote solidarity.

In this regard, the following positive stories have been gathered for our readers:

**Diaspora Remittances**

**Eritrea**

Contribution by Eritrean Nationals in Diaspora


**Zimbabwe**

Domestic worker gives away nearly half her salary


**Innovation and Technology**

**Senegal**

As part of the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, two young Senegalese have set up an autonomous hand-washing system called “Kayy Rakhassou Link:


**Kenya**

Kenyatta University unveils ventilator prototype made by students. Kenya looking to boost ICU (Intensive Care Unit) capacity as Covid-19 cases increase

https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/health/article/200136720/kenyatta-university-students-make-ventilator-locally;

http://www.ku.ac.ke/component/k2/item/1655-k-u-makes-ventilators.

New App Saving Kibera Residents from Hunger


**Philanthropy**

**Côte d’Ivoire**

Drogba joins Magic System to reach-out to the poor in Abidjan.


**Liberia**

Top Liberian Celebrities Join COVID-19 Fight

**Women Empowerment**

**Liberia**

Women Group Identifies With Less Fortunate Residents of Margibi, G. Bassa.


**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

A beautiful thing: the African migrants getting healthy food to Italians


A Church fund to fight Covid-19; the solidarity of the Bishops of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe


**Trade Unions take action against COVID 19**

Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Somalia, South Africa

[https://www.solidaritycenter.org/tag/south-africa/](https://www.solidaritycenter.org/tag/south-africa/)

**Bilateral and regional partnerships**

Morocco to send Medical aid to 15 African countries to combat COVID-19


Morocco donated medical supplies to the African Union (AU) Commission in a bid to boost the capacity of Africa to enhance its response to the COVID-19 pandemic


Share with us your positive story!
Upcoming events

UNWTO Executive Council – 112th session, Tbilisi, Georgia, 15-17 September 2020
https://www.unwto.org/events/executive-council-112th-session

Contact us

UNWTO Regional Department for Africa
rdaf@unwto.org
www.unwto.org