At G20, UNWTO Advances Role of People and MSMEs as Agents of Tourism Transformation

Bali, Indonesia, 15 November 2022 - Small enterprises and local communities must be given the support they need to become true ‘agents of change’. As leaders of the G20 economies meet in Bali this week, UNWTO has stressed the importance of empowering grassroots actors as well as MSMEs in order to drive sustainable and inclusive transformation and build greater resilience.

As the global community faces up to a range of challenges, including geopolitical tensions, rising energy prices and a climate emergency, UNWTO has placed tourism firmly on the G20 agenda. Under the Indonesian Presidency of the G20, UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili urged leaders to seize the opportunity to rethink and transform tourism in order to deliver on its massive potential for sustainability and opportunity.

Speed up and scale up transformation

Secretary-General Pololikashvili said: “We are behind in progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In fact, progress has actually been reversed in areas like gender equality. Tourism can help us get back on track. But we need to speed up. And we need to scale up. There is no time to lose.”

Over the course of 2022, UNWTO has worked with the G20 Tourism Working Group under the leadership of the Indonesian Presidency and the Minister of Tourism and Creative Industries, Sandiaga Uno, on Guidelines to make MSMEs and Communities agents of transformation. Released in September, on the occasion of the G20 Tourism Ministers’ Meeting, the Guidelines are built on five pillars: 1. Human Capital; 2. Innovation, digitalization and the creative economy; 3. Women and youth empowerment; 4. Climate action, biodiversity conservation, and circularity; and 5. Policy, governance and investment.

Together, the Guidelines put people at the centre of tourism’s recovery and future development. According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, international tourist numbers worldwide are on track to reach around 70% of pre-pandemic levels by the end of the year. UNWTO recognizes the sector’s responsibility to make sure this recovery is translated into more decent jobs, increased investment in infrastructure, skills and talent for the digital and green transformations and women empowerment.
In a post-pandemic world, renewed governance, multilateralism and international cooperation are the only path to address a world in a poly interconnected crisis stressed the UNWTO Secretary-General. Since the G20 economies represent 80% of global GDP, 60% of the world population and 76% of the tourism GDP worldwide, they are in a position to lead by example, he added.

**Related Links:**

- G20 Bali Guidelines for Strengthening Communities and MSME as Tourism Transformation Agents: A People-centred Recovery
- G20 Bali Guidelines for Strengthening Communities and MSME as Tourism Transformation Agents: A People-centred Recovery – Case Studies
- Latest Tourism Data for G20 Economies
- Op-ed by SG, Zurab Pololikashvili – Tourism Reimagined