United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

ECA's Technical Support to the Republic of Namibia

Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) Project Launch and 1st Training Workshop

Concept Note

Finalized: 22 April 2022

Background

The Government of the Republic of Namibia recognises the importance of tourism as a driver for economic growth and a tool for alleviating poverty in the country. The National Vision for tourism is to build "a mature, sustainable and responsible tourism industry contributing significantly to the economic development of the country and the quality of life of all her people, primarily through job creation and economic growth". Many other countries in Africa also acknowledge tourism as a major industry and are prioritizing tourism in their overarching development agendas, improving the business climate for tourism, and encouraging investment in infrastructure and hospitality. However, in most cases it is difficult to accurately quantify the contribution of tourism to the national economy (GDP) due to the multi-faceted nature of the industry and the complexities associated with gathering of accurate and reliable statistics. The capacity to produce tourism statistics remains weak in many countries in Africa, including in Namibia.

Based on the recommendations of the National Strategy (2020-2030) on the Tourism Sector [1], the Namibian Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) is working towards developing a sustainable and responsible tourism industry buttressed by an effective statistical framework to assess its performance. However, due to the myriad of challenges encountered in providing accurate and reliable statistics, the Ministry reached out to UNECA for technical support to strengthen the national capacity to produce high quality tourism statistics which enable effective planning and development of the industry.

A team comprising of Officials from the SRO-SA, SRO-EA and ACS undertook a scoping mission to the Republic of Namibia in February 2022 to synthesize the details of the request and undertake

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[1] Developed for the Government of Namibia by the UNESCO under the title 'National Strategy on Sustainable Heritage Tourism Development and Employment Creation Opportunities at Community Level'

a situation analysis. The scoping mission revealed a lot of interest from the various stakeholders on improved coordination of the tourism industry and on the collection of accurate and reliable/ timeous data. The UNECA team, which was supplemented by the UNESCO representative also observed the evident disaggregation and paucity of available data which makes it difficult to properly account/quantify the industry's contribution to the economy.

The team recommended progressive steps in UNECA's intervention/provision of the technical assistance to Namibia including a) constitution of the National tourism satellite accounts (TSA) Steering Committee b) provision of capacity building support on the development of the national TSA and c) on surveys for generating the necessary data for the TSA development, as well as d) a parallel Supply Use Tables (SUT) training for the National Statistics Agency staff.

Justification

The importance of tourism as a driving force towards economic growth and inclusive development cannot be overemphasised.

The scoping mission provided an opportunity to explore ways in which the UNECA can collaborate and partner with the UN Namibia, MEFT and other stakeholders in Namibia to provide the requisite support effectively- starting with capacity building for the development of the national TSA. This is in line with the National Strategy (2020-2030) on the Tourism Sector which identifies support for skills and capacity enhancement/knowledge building in data collection and management as key short-term strategies to strengthern the tourism sector.

The TSA provide a mechanism for compiling a comprehensive set of statistics outside the conventional national accounting framework. The resulting statistics enable informed decisions about tourism as an industry and its linkages to other industries in the economy. Construction of the TSA is complex process that requires a collaborative approach bringing together key stakeholders and institutions. This calls for need to carry out a series of capacity building workshops geared towards imparting the necessary skills and knowledge, and in so doing, ensure the sustainability of the process. The training workshops on TSA are organized to strengthen national capacity to produce high quality tourism statistics.

The 1st training workshop is being organised in collaboration with UN Namibia and MEFT to be held in Swakopmund from 20 to 25 May and will be preceded by the 'Project Launch' scheduled for the 19th of May 2022 in Windhoek, Namibia. This first training workshop will provide a platform for sharing knowledge and experiences on how TSA are compiled, challenges faced and use of alternative methodologies to ensure accurate measures of the size of the tourism industry. Participants will also be informed of emerging approaches and methods to measure sustainable tourism.

Objectives of the Project Launch and the 1st Workshop

The major objectives of the Project Launch, which will be officiated by Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism; include informing the populace on the collaboration between the Government of the Republic of Namibia and the UN Community towards the development of the tourism industry in the country, raising awareness on the

importance of tourism as well as the need for timeous and reliable statistics to support accurate accounting, planning and development of the industry in the country. The training workshop will extend further to provide an overview of tourism in Africa, share best lessons of best practice from Eastern and Africa and beyond, and introduce participants to the UN International Recommendations for Tourist Statistics and TSA recommended methodological framework.

Specifically, the workshop will:
i. Inform participants of the changing trends, challenges and prospects for tourism development in Africa.
ii. Share best practice approaches in the construction of the TSA from both public and private sector perspectives.
iii. Introduce participants to the conceptual and recommended methodological framework for the construction of TSA.
iv. Highlight the benefits of establishing a relationship between TSA compilers and users to prioritize TSA development.
v. Explain emerging methods to integrate sustainable dimensions into the TSA.

Participants

The Project Launch will be open to participation by any interested stakeholders- particularly from the government Ministries/departments, SOEs, Academia, the Media and any other relevant institutions as identified by the MEFT; while the training workshop will target the key tourism stakeholders and institutions drawn from the civil society, academia, public and private sectors.

Coordination

The MEFT, UNECA and UN Namibia will coordinate the hosting of the two events collaboratively.

UNECA mission team

The ECA delegation will be led by the Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa and will include staff from the Sub-regional Office for East Africa and the African Centre for Statistics.

Expected outputs

The main outcomes of both the Launch and training workshop will be the enhanced understanding of the tourism industry, the TSA requirements, technical capacity of MEFT and other key stakeholders to collect and report accurate and timeous tourism data. The following specifics are also envisaged;

- A national TSA steering committee constituted and operational,
- An understanding of the TSA standardised methodology and the approaches to undertaking the induced and in-direct impacts studies by Government officials,

- Enhanced capacity of Government officials to develop relevant tourism data collection instruments,
- A pool of trained tourism enumerators,
- A tourism data set on both primary and secondary data collection, and
- Partial implementation of the National Strategy (2020-2030) on the Tourism Sector, particularly the Strategic Objective 2- on capacity building in the tourism sector.