

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF TOURISM WORKFORCE IN THE MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR IMPROVED TOURISM SERVICE QUALITY

The analytical study titled “Enhancing the Capacity of Tourism Workforce in the Member Countries for Improved Tourism Service Quality” has been commissioned by the COMCEC Coordination Office specifically for the 4th Meeting of the COMCEC Tourism Working Group with a view to enriching the discussions.

The study is divided into five main chapters. Chapter One introduces the approach of the Study. Chapter Two focuses on a conceptual framework for enhancing the capacity of tourism workforce. Chapter Three presents the general outlook of the tourism workforce development in the OIC Member States including the current challenges faced by the Member States. Chapter Four presents some success stories from the world as well as from the Member Countries. Finally, Chapter Five provides some recommendations for enhancing the capacity of tourism workforce.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

1. CHALLENGES

The major challenges faced by the Member Countries include:

- Lack of long term national human resource development strategy
- Absence of stakeholder partnerships in workforce skills development for tourism
- Limited private sector industry involvement in decision-making about training and up-skilling and ineffective consultative arrangements
- Low status of tourism professions in the eyes of many potential entrants and their families
- Skills shortages in key tourism professions
- Supplier dominated training system with limited focus on workplace skills needs
- Limited confidence and understanding by employers and employees in the workforce development system

2. SUCCESS STORIES

The Study examines fourteen case studies (Singapore, Australia, Ireland, Canada, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Uganda, Iran, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Cameroon, Mali, Azerbaijan, Oman) that provide a range of successful approaches for addressing some of the challenges. The lessons learned from these cases can be summarized with the following themes:

- Ensuring stakeholders’ engagement
- Creating Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in Human Resource Development (HRD) for tourism
- Training and Development for all levels of staff
- Understanding the “Hospitality Factor”
- The Value of the “Ripple Effect”
- Linking Human Resource Best Practices to Bottom-Line Performance
- Strengthening Human Resource Management Practices
- Building on a foundation of effective Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for tourism with the schools and colleges system

3. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The challenge to seek a sustainable solution for the long-term operation of a tourism skills development model for tourism professionals in the Member Countries cannot be met by any single course of action nor is it the responsibility of any single actor. A multi-faceted approach to achieving a solution is required.

The key outcome of the Study is a “Draft Framework for Professional Training in the Tourism Sector in the Member Countries” which contains six cross cutting key themes. Each theme is accompanied with a set of recommendations. These are:

Inform - Information sharing will play a vital role in addressing labor force pressures in the tourism and hospitality industry of each Member Country. The Inform theme focuses on increased access to information by employers, workers, youth entering the workforce and individuals considering employment in this industry.

Recommendation(s):

- National Awareness Campaign

Engage - At the heart of a realistic solution to the HRD challenge in tourism is the engagement of all stakeholders in a partnership model for skills enhancement which will necessitate close cooperation with and the delegation of responsibilities to local government, civil societies, industry associations and private sector operators. This output is crucial in seeking a sustainable up-skilling model for the Member Countries.

Recommendation(s):

- Stakeholder Engagement

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