



South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Sustainable Tourism in Mexico

BACKGROUND

As the 17 SDGs targets offer the world a new direction, tourism can and must play a significant role in delivering sustainable solutions for people, the planet, prosperity and peace. Tourism activities are related with the culture. Thus, cultural sectors such as heritage, creative industries and artists are key agents for tourism. In this regards, UNESCO has developed normative and analytical frameworks, which include the World Heritage List, a list of properties forming part of the cultural and natural heritage of the whole humanity, given their Outstanding Universal Value. Mexico has 14 cities declared by UNESCO as World Heritage, and these cities works together within the Mexican World Heritage Cities Association.

OBJECTIVE

In cooperation with UNESCO Mexico and MWHCA, the UNOSSC Cities Project launched this initiative to enhance capacities of local authorities, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and communities for achieving a sustainable growth and recovery of the tourism sector and exchange practices through South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC). The project reinforces the protection of the Outstanding Universal Values of World Heritage Cities of Mexico, straightens the positives synergies of tourism and culture in the framework of the SDG's and promotes knowledge exchanges and cooperation among cities of the Global South.

DELIVERABLES

Deliverable 1

Needs assessment that identifies areas to strengthen capacities of local authorities and key agents in the subjects such as SDGs, sustainable tourism, protection of the Outstanding Universal Value of the cities, and communication strategies and management of social networks and digital platforms for cultural tourism.

Deliverable 2

A South-South Cities cluster on sustainable tourism that serves as a community and platform for mutual learning; capacities exchanging; identification and sharing of innovative experiences; and supporting partnership-building and resource mobilization.

Deliverable 3

Capacity development trainings to improve skills of local authorities, SMEs, and communities, especially women and youths, to increase their knowledge on sustainable tourism and digital transformation. Local stakeholders' capacities on sustainable tourism and creative industries development extended and increased.

Deliverable 4

Development of products derived from the implementation: a) a catalogue of good practices on tourism promotion that integrates SDGs and heritage conservation; b) a guide to improve the use of social networks and digital platforms in World Heritage cities; c) a strategy for positioning cities as sustainable tourism sites.

PARTNERSHIP

The initiative follows a multi-stakeholder partnership approach that includes two United Nations agencies (UNOSSC and UNESCO), and the Mexican World Heritage Cities Association (MWHCA or ANCMPPM), which gathers the local authorities of 14 cities. The initiative also encompasses the participation of national level authorities, such as the ministries of culture and tourism, as well as the National Institute of Anthropology and History. Finally, it also contemplates the participation of academic and educational institutions such as the Center for Higher Design Studies of Monterrey, whose students are carrying out the positioning strategy as part of their degree process, as well as universities and regional research centers attached to the UNESCO Chairs Program.

Key Partners

- United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)
- UNESCO Office in Mexico
- Mexican World Heritage Cities Association (MWHCA)
- Center for Higher Design Studies of Monterrey (CEDIM)

Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue

A multi-stakeholder dialogue, held on 29 November, framed the first stage of implementation of the project. Named Travel South over Cloud Webinar Series: South-South exchanges on Sustainable and Cultural Tourism in World Heritage Cities of Latin America and the Caribbean, the dialogue laid out the ground for the project to: (1) identify the criteria needed to develop sustainable tourism policies from the point of view of the cultural and creative sector; (2) understand the lessons learned in cities' regarding their responses to COVID-19 pandemic; and (3) highlight the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in sustainable tourism, cultural heritage and creative industries.

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