

Harnessing Tourism for Jobs, Growth and Opportunity in Africa

Fact Sheet

- Tourism is a powerful vehicle for economic growth and job creation all over the world. The tourism sector is directly and indirectly responsible for 8.7 percent of the world's jobs (2012 WTTC), 9.2 percent of the world's GDP (2012 WTTC), 5.3 percent of the world's exports (2012 WTTC), and 4.7 percent of the world's investment (2012 WTTC).
- About 3.8 million jobs (including 2.4 million indirect jobs) could be created by the tourism industry in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) by 2021. Total direct and indirect employment impact of tourism in Africa is 12.8 million jobs in 2011 (the current number is 13.1 million for 2012).
- More than 16 million people are expected to be employed directly or indirectly in Sub-Saharan Africa as a result of travel and tourism by 2021.
- Global international tourist arrivals have been growing steadily at 4-5 percent per year on average since the 1950s. Between 2009 and 2010, despite the global financial crisis, international tourist arrivals in the continent increased by 8 percent.
- The continent attracted 33.8 million visitors in 2012 from a small base of just 6.7 million in 1990, and receipts from tourism for the same year amounted to over US\$36 billion and directly contributed 2.8% to the region's GDP.
- One in twenty jobs in SSA is in travel and tourism. There were an estimated 5.5 million direct tourism jobs across the continent in 2012.
- More than 10 million people travel across international borders every year within Africa for leisure, shopping, medical needs, sports, religious gatherings, business meetings and conferences, and visiting friends and relatives.
- Up to 55 percent of international passengers on African airlines are traveling for business, compared to just 15 percent for tourism and 30 percent visiting family and friends.
- By 2021, about 75 percent of all tourists to Africa will be intraregional African travelers, and South Africa is the largest source market for intraregional travel.
- Only 10 percent of Sub Saharan Africa's 390,000 hotel rooms are estimated to meet international standards, and South Africa has about half of this stock.

- Hotel development costs in Africa are still high on average: US\$400,000 per room for a mid-market hotel in Nigeria; US\$250,000 per room in Ghana compared to a median of US\$200,000 per room for a full-service hotel elsewhere in the world.
- In 2011, only 23 international hotel corporations were operating in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Airfares in Africa are almost 50 percent higher than elsewhere and charter tours are 20-30 percent more expensive than comparable destinations in other parts of the world.
- Despite having 15 percent of the world's population, the continent is served by only 4 percent of the world's scheduled air service seats. However, this seat supply grew by 6.5 percent between 1998 and 2009.