

GHANA STRUGGLING TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS



Ghana wants to attract one million tourists every year but it may take a while before they manage. The tourism minister asked the UNWTO for help.

Ghana wants to become an important and luring tourism destination. The country certainly has some tourism potential. There are pristine beaches, wild life and also UNESCO heritage sites. Ghanaians want to attract one million tourists every year but so far they have not succeeded. The Ghanaian tourism minister Juliana Azumah-Mensah has asked the UNWTO for help in conducting a survey that should determine why the industry is not as successful as the Ghanaians want it to be.

The minister claims they do not want to promote mass tourism but the industry is planned to play important role in the country's economy. It should create needed jobs thus limit poverty especially in the rural areas. **The tourism industry already employs over 220,000 people and generates approximately 4 per cent of the country's GDP.** Last year approximately 700,000 people visited Ghana.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) already helps the country as it supports it via the **Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP)** program. It aims to eliminate poverty through tourism and education. Ghana has also been chosen to host the UNWTO's World Tourism Day that takes place in September. This could be an ideal opportunity for Ghana to present itself as an attractive tourism destination.

To improve the situation in the tourism sector the government needs to provide it naturally with more money. The Ghanaian tourism also needs to be advertised more aggressively. According to the Vice President John Dramani, tourism businesses need to create more jobs. Mere increasing of the number of visitors does not necessarily mean growth for the industry. Ghana needs to improve its services and provide tourists with the value for money. Number of the country's attraction sites still remains undeveloped and also services often do not meet the international standards.

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