

Tourism as an Answer to Poverty in 3rd World Countries



The United Nations has recently pointed out the importance of tourism in the 3rd world countries to combat poverty.

In many of the world's poorest countries, tourism has been growing rapidly in the last decade. Numbers of foreign visitors to poor countries have been growing at a rate 6 times higher than in Europe. Indeed, tourism in these areas has been proven to be growing faster than the automobile, agriculture or electronics industries.

Let's take the examples of Botswana and Zimbabwe to illustrate why tourism is vital for such countries. Washa Tema, the deputy director in the Botswana department of tourism, has stated that tourism is the only service industry with a continual positive balance of trade arriving from more developed countries into the so-called 3rd world countries. He added that catering for visitors creates new jobs, increases opportunities for small businesses, and encourages gender equality. In theory, it will allow financial and social benefits trickle down to the poorer layers of the social hierarchy.

Research experts have highlighted the emergence of so-called pro-poor tourism in countries such as China, the Philippines, Nepal, Egypt, South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe. This type of tourism is aimed at changing the distribution of the benefits from tourism in favour of poor people. The "look east" marketing policy, particularly employed in Zimbabwe, is intended to increase number of tourists in the southern African state.

Similarly, the 2010 football world cup is viewed as an important event in African tourism as the south of the continent is set to reap the rewards of staging such a globally significant tournament. It will bring financial injections, new markets and new partnership opportunities. The greatest significance of the world cup is that poorer communities in all South African states are likely to cooperate with private sectors in areas with a lot of tourists.

Date: 2006-12-05

Article link:

<http://www.tourism-review.com/tourism-as-an-answer-to-poverty-in-3rd-world-countries-news76>