

## **THE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COMCEC TOURISM WORKING GROUP**

The COMCEC Tourism Working Group (TWG) has successfully held its 19th Meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in a virtual-only format, with the theme of “Sustainable Human Resource Management in Tourism Sector.” During the Meeting, Tourism Working Group, made deliberations on the policy recommendations related to promoting sustainable human resource management. In the light of the main findings of the report and the intense deliberations during 19th Meeting, the Working Group has come up with the following policy recommendations:

**Policy Recommendation 1:** Improving/Developing strategic COVID-19 alert and new normal adjustment sustainability policies in human resources.

**Rationale:** The global epidemic had serious effects on the industry, especially in terms of human capital. Re-establishing human capital's commitment and trust in the tourism industry is critical. Competent and experienced human resources professionals have switched to other sectors or established their own businesses because of the global epidemic paralyzing the sector. It is of great importance to reintroduce these employees to the tourism sector. The crisis plans of the tourism sector must be prepared in a clear, consistent and sustainable manner and shared transparently with all stakeholders, especially with the employees. With the global epidemic, the expectations of customers from employees have also changed. In this context, efforts should be made to raise awareness among employees about changing customer concerns and expectations. After the COVID-19, tourism businesses must adapt to the new global order, use the new normal advanced technologies, meet customer expectations and bring more visitors. Encouraging tourism businesses to adapt to the new global order, preparing clear, consistent and sustainable crisis plans after the Pandemic and sharing, encouraging, guiding and transparently empowering employees so that long-term access to talented sustainable human resources. Therefore, research suggests that a global tourism human resources crisis management plan can be developed against possible crises that may arise in the future. To adopt a mechanism to secure tourism based communities.

**Policy Recommendation 2:** Promoting in-service training, tourism schools, certificate programs, international exchange programs, and internship opportunities with a view to improving service and quality in the tourism industry.

**Rationale:** Tourism education increases the level of service by improving the knowledge of the personnel in tourism businesses. For this reason, in close cooperation and collaboration with the private sector, planning for the training of employees should be given priority. Creating industry advisory boards in tourism schools for enhanced collaboration on the contents of tourism education and “train the trainer” programs targeting tourism instructors would help close the gap between what is needed from human resources in tourism and what is provided at tourism schools. In-service training is very significant for employees who lack expertise and training. The goal of improving workforce and service quality should be to improve employee performance. Prepare a locally driven strategy to spread awareness campaign on the importance of tourism activities on the local economy to maintain the involvement of the local people in the tourism activities to provide direct income. In order to increase employee performance, it is important to bring an educated workforce to the industry. Developing in-service trainings, opening tourism schools, expanding language programs, certificate programs and international exchange

programs for tourism employees in tourism education, and having access to internship opportunities. Therefore in-service trainings, tourism schools, certificate programs, international exchange programs, and internship opportunities should be expanded to bring educated human capital to the industry.

**Policy Recommendation 3:** Ensuring the sustainability of Staff/Employee well-being through, among others, rewards, bonuses or raises in salary or possibility for employees to become shareholders and favourable working circumstances.

**Rationale:** In order to determine customer satisfaction, it is necessary to prioritize personnel satisfaction. Sustainable human resource management should consider strategies and a work environment that promote employee happiness and well-being. The tourism industry can flourish with the use of many internal motivation methods. Encouraging internal motivation techniques such as rewards, bonuses or salary rises to ensure employee satisfaction. In order to have more motivated employees, allowing them to become shareholders in tourism Business Company. Providing favourable working circumstances help human resources to become more sustainable. Therefore, the tourism industry needs to create a system that will increase the overall staff productivity, increase innovation capacity and enable them to provide better service. People can help workplaces achieve their goals and plans by successfully integrating hiring, selection, training, performance reviews, organizational culture teams, and training. It should be give a special interest to the vocationally training of tourism and hospitality to ensure the sustainability of human resources within the industry.

**Policy Recommendation 4:** Increasing synergy between businesses and partners through enhanced interaction among travel agencies, tourism companies, hotels and tour operators.

**Rationale:** It is essential to maintain effective and strong communication and interaction between tourism businesses. For government purposes, there should be a strong and sustainable interaction between travel agencies, tourism companies, hotels and tour operators. For industry leaders as policy planners and makers, accurate benchmarking and a clear definition of issues will be guiding principles. The synergy between tourism businesses helps the industry develop successfully, minimize the problems that may arise and provide quality service in the industry. It also helps promote lifelong learning by developing long-term resources development strategies and organizational knowledge of the country's contribution to the tourism industry.

#### **Instruments to Realize the Policy Advices:**

**COMCEC Tourism Working Group:** In its subsequent meetings, the Working Group may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas in a more detailed manner.

**COMCEC Project Funding:** Under the COMCEC Project Funding, the COMCEC Coordination Office calls for projects each year. With the COMCEC Project Funding, the Member Countries participating in the Working Groups can submit multilateral cooperation projects to be financed through grants by the COMCEC Coordination Office. For the above-mentioned policy areas, the Member Countries can utilize the COMCEC Project Funding and the COMCEC Coordination Office may finance the successful projects in this regard. These projects may include organizing

seminars, training programs, study visits, exchange of experts, workshops and preparing analytical studies, needs assessments and training materials/documents.

**OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum:** In its future meetings, the OIC/COMCEC Private Sector Tourism Forum may elaborate on the above-mentioned policy areas and the sub-areas from the private sector perspective.