GOAL 16A: GOOD GOVERNANCE

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PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

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ABSTRACT: *Today the tourism industry is mainly dominated by the interest of governments and large corporations and tends to neglect fundamental and human rights of the people affected by it. In order to ensure good governance in tourism, local people have to be empowered to participate in decision making when it comes to tourism development and economic opportunities arising from this development. Effective and transparent monitoring mechanism need to be established at local, national and global level in order to measure tourism's effect on social and economic development. Businesses need to monitor and take responsibility for their impacts.*

INTRODUCTION
Tourism and transparent, accountable, inclusive and effective governance

"Central to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the need to promote peaceful and inclusive societies based on respect for human rights, the rule of law and transparent, effective and accountable institutions. … far too many people are poorly supported by weak institutions and lack access to justice, information and other fundamental freedoms. Efforts are under way to make national and international institutions more effective, inclusive and transparent. … However, significant challenges remain" (UN, 2016).

The 2030 Agenda aims to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, emphasizing the importance of public access to information, protection of fundamental freedoms and the promotion of non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development (ibid).

Does current tourism practice enable local, national and international institutions to be more transparent, accountable, inclusive and effective? Does tourism contribute to economically and socially just and inclusive societies?

As a highly stratified industry with often complex supply chains, how decisions are made about both new tourism facilities and related infrastructure and how the local and national governments monitor the effects of travel and tourism on social and economic development are fundamental. Governance of travel and tourism, who makes decisions and how and how they are held to account, is key to contributing to just and inclusive development.

Large corporations continue to have significant influence in key destinations and in many 'sending' countries on the patterns and approaches to travel and tourism. This is pronounced in some sectors including cruises. Their influence is achieved through diverse contractual and planning relationships. Local and national regulation and monitoring of travel and tourism is, generally, significantly weighted in favour of both large and medium sized tourism companies, businesses and activities and is not determined by the economic and social rights and interests of the majority of citizens in host communities and regions. There is extremely limited systematic environmental, social and economic monitoring of the effects of travel and tourism on women, men and children's social and economic rights.

Major Challenges

Tourism development is fraught with negatives including inequality, social and cultural erosion, environmental degradation and pollution (Ling, 2016). A particular characteristic of contemporary tourism in this age of neoliberal globalization is that it is closely intertwined with the finance and real estate industry. There is consistent evidence of large tracts of public land being privatized and acquired by foreign or 'external' investors for luxury tourism, residential and commercial development, resulting in displacement and disempowerment of local people.

At local and national levels there is a very significant democratic deficit with respect to participatory planning and consultation on travel and tourism. Globally there is significant documentation of planning decisions which prioritise the interests of large and medium companies at the expense of the majority of citizens and the environment. This is linked to the exclusion of citizens and communities from key decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods. Corruption related to planning and infrastructure development and myopia of agreed environmental and health standards' is still, sadly, widespread (cf. i.a. Das and Dirienzo, 2010; Hajdinjak, 2014; Transparency International; Tshiangu, 2015; Zimmermann, 2015). Overall there is a dearth of community-based, reliable, appropriate, democratically accountable planning and monitoring processes and systems related to travel and tourism. This inhibits participatory and accountable planning and monitoring.

At transnational level, as with most transnational industries the issue of corporate impunity remains a significant issue and its effects cascade down, negatively affecting the lives and livelihoods of millions of people.

Lack of indicators and policies for sustainable tourism

At present there is still insufficient knowledge within industry about sustainable tourism indicators, tools and mechanisms; as well as a lack of government level strategic planning and policy commitment to sustainable tourism. In addition, globally there is a widespread lack of a strong tradition of networks and partnerships, regionally and internationally, that are working on sustainable tourism at local, national and regional levels and embracing participatory planning processes, sharing and exchanging information among industry stakeholders. Generally, there remains a wide range of interpretations and lack of policy consistency in relation to 'sustainable' tourism as well as resource and capacity limitations for effective implementation across all levels of government as well as industry-based organisations and within host communities and regions. This hinders forward looking people-centred collaboration on policy and practice.

The overall conclusion "that the success of the 2030 Agenda will depend on our ability to sustain stable, secure and inclusive societies governed by states that are essentially trustworthy, responsive to constituents, free of corruption and committed to eliminating violence " (Zuber, 2016) is extremely pertinent for travel and tourism.

TANGIBLE WAYS FORWARD

To contribute positively to the building of just and inclusive societies that can provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions, travel and tourism require structural reform, crucially in the relationships between large and medium businesses, local and national political, legal and planning processes and citizens in 'host' communities and regions.

How can travel and tourism contribute much more to just and inclusive societies and the fulfilment of the SDGs?

Reforming the relationship between business stakeholders and local decision-making

Citizens and workers in the host communities have the biggest stake in ensuring a form of tourism that protects their cultural and natural environments and that contributes to fulfilling their social and economic rights.

Many of today's challenges can be addressed if working relationships are built between communities and local large, medium and small tourist operators, working through local and national participatory and accountable decision making, planning and monitoring processes, rooted in more inclusive democracies. This is a complex, challenging, but essential process (Mason, 2016).

Integrated participatory planning

Approaches to sustainable development must be co-ordinated nationally and locally. There are some examples of this type of planning within tourism. They show that it is possible to promote diversified forms of tourism to ease concentration and allow for alternative ways to encourage more socially just and environmentally respectful activities. However, to be viable and sustainable they all depend on citizen/community/public control and participation.

Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

Local planners, local and national government officers and representatives of trade unions, tourist operators, travel agents, and 'host' communities and regions must be equipped with guidelines and 'best practices' for sustainable tourism in practice. Such guidelines must aim to bridge the large gap between rhetoric and reality. These guidelines must be generated through a network of "Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism".

One step forward is to put in place regulations and local and national legislation that effectively protects local citizens and communities from harmful tourism as well as mechanisms that require travel and tourism businesses to compensate for losses and to clean up the damage they have created, especially if an operator ends their activities in an area.

Clear, transparent, accessible mechanisms of accountability

Accountability mechanisms are needed to empower people(s) to monitor and hold governments, financial institutions, development agencies and the private sector engaging in tourism accountable for their actions.

At the transnational level, as with other industries that involve transnational corporations and business activities, an international legally binding instrument on transnational corporations, a binding treaty, with respect to human rights is essential. This should contain clear and strong provisions that prohibit the interference of corporations in the process of forming and implementing laws and policies, as well as administering justice, at all national and international levels. (Treaty Alliance, Transnational Institute, 2015)

Local communities and indigenous peoples must have a central position in the new models of sustainable tourism, understanding this activity in every instance as a means of enhancing the quality of life and wellbeing of local populations, including mainstreaming gender considerations in sustainable development.

There are a growing number of community-based initiatives that are enabling host communities to have a clearer and stronger voice in how travel and tourism is developed and monitored. Many are associations and not-for profits and build on participatory development approaches to community development. Each provides some key contributions to ways forward to more sustainable and just travel and tourism.

ViaVia, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

ViaVia is a women led association based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. "Our tours are developed to bring people together, travellers and communities, for mutual reward. The core principle is to build cross cultural understanding through communication and joint experiences. To ensure this ViaVia Jogja commits to develop the skills of our guides, both theoretical knowledge and practical guiding and communications skills. We also commit to providing our customers with dos and don'ts and accurate information, which enables the traveller to have positive cultural experiences. Local communities shall be involved in the development of our tours, and are provided with regular opportunities to provide feedback.

www.viaviajogja.com

Kabani, Kerala, India

It is our belief that grassroots movements like this take place in local communities and work along with travellers. It is therefore fundamental that we raise awareness within these local communities and empower them through training, leadership programs and move towards a participatory model of tourism. That is we should look to decentralise the current model, bringing autonomy and power to the community, and provide a democratically elected board that represents locals, NGOs and other organisations involved.

Kabani have started the Thoughtful Travel Movement and also work with host communities to establish local village committees which link directly to local self-government, the Panchayati Raj. This enables a clear regular voice with appropriate political decision makers. Kabani is established as an NGO and a social enterprise.

www.kabanitour.com

Loop Head, County Clare, Ireland

Loop Head Tourism was set up to ensure that the future development of the peninsula would happen in concert with the wishes of those that lived here. It is a community-based voluntary group made up with equal representation from each member parish (local level government) regardless of size in order to ensure a balance.

Our ethos, which every business in the network has to sign up to, is: "Loop Head Tourism is committed to promoting responsible and sustainable tourism development while safeguarding the unique culture, heritage and biodiversity of the peninsula through co-operation with all stakeholders in the wider community."

www.loophead.ie

Tamadi, France

Tamadi has, since 2005, developed a vision of solidarity travel based on partnership between host communities, their organisations and travellers. Tamadi is based on close partnerships with farmers' organizations involved in rural development. These partners host travellers in their country. Tamadi is a not for profit association and a member of ATES (Association pour le Tourisme Equitable et Solidaire) which is a network of organisations and specialists in equitable and solidarity tourism.

http://tamadi.org, http://www.tourismesolidaire.org/reseau-ates/qui-sommes-nous

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