

VEGA - Sustainable Tourism



About Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA):

A 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, founded in 2004 through a Leader with Associate (LWA) cooperative agreement, VEGA is an agile vehicle for USAID Economic Growth Officers to tap the Alliance's 17 Member NGOs in building capacity for private, public and NGO sector development. VEGA is the world's largest consortium of economic growth volunteer organizations that collectively have assisted 140 developing countries & mobilized more than 67,000 experts to promote economic growth activities. VEGA's track record of delivering sustainable solutions throughout the developing world includes over 20 programs worth more than \$100 million.

VEGA Members' Sustainable Tourism Experience

Latin America & Caribbean

Ecuador, Guatemala
Guyana, Honduras,
Ecuador, Jamaica
Dominican Republic

Sub-Saharan Africa

Nigeria, Mali,
Tanzania, South
Africa, Ghana,
Nigeria, Zambia,
Ethiopia, Uganda,
Mozambique, Kenya,
Madagascar,
Senegal, Rwanda

Europe & Central Asia

Russia, Kyrgyzstan,
Romania, Bulgaria,
Montenegro,
Azerbaijan, Georgia

Middle East & North Africa

Lebanon, Jordan,
Palestine, Egypt

South Asia

Sri Lanka, Tibet

East Asia & Pacific

Thailand, Vietnam

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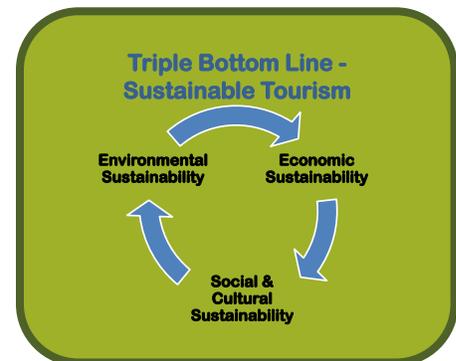
Tourism can be a powerful tool for achieving sustainable economic development worldwide.

- Total contribution of Travel & Tourism (T&T) to Global GDP, including its wider economic impacts, is forecast to reach US \$9.2 trillion (9.6%) by 2021.
- The total contribution of T&T to global employment, including jobs indirectly supported, is forecast to rise to 324 million jobs by 2021.
- T&T visitor exports are expected to generate \$1.8 trillion by 2021.
- T&T investment is estimated to reach \$1.5 trillion in 2021.
- Tourism is an important industry for developing countries, a major source of employment, and often among the top three export revenue producing industries with double-digit percentage contributions to GDP.

Sources: World Travel & Tourism Council

VEGA and its Members have long recognized the potential of tourism as key to economic growth in developing countries and are actively working on programs using an integrated cross-sectoral approach to sustainable tourism.

By tapping into the opportunities inherent in tourism value chains, programs involving close collaboration with host country ministries, associations, chambers, NGOs, and both large and small businesses, stimulate sustainable economic growth, job creation, environmental practices, and social & cultural preservation.



VEGA programs have included:

- Government-level tourism and investment strategy creation;
- Assistance to SMEs in the tourism supply chain;
- Export promotion for handicraft artisans;
- Private sector-led Destination Management Organization development;
- National Tourism Workforce Development policy reforms;
- Training through Inbound Tour Operators Associations in destination governance, event management, and tour route development & guiding;
- Mapping Software, Virtual maps and adventure Geo-maps;
- Entrepreneurial training and skill enhancement;

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- Strengthening the capacity of local business schools to expand their curricula to include tourism;
- Developing a Sustainable Tourism and International Development Online Learning Program;
- Tourism Products Registry tools;
- Capacity building for nongovernmental organizations, businesses and associations.



Program Highlights:

➤ **CDC Development Solutions’ (CDS) innovative TEMPO model** is a collaborative system that builds MSME capacities to access new markets and B2B linkages, more fully participate in public sector planning, and more convincingly sell the assets they have to the tourism industry. TEMPO is an ‘intrapreneurial’ model, focused on assisting local businesses provide services demanded by tourists at market rates and international standards. The program strengthens local businesses capacity and performs asset audits and value chain analyses to determine the goods and services on offer versus market demand from tourists. They then become collaborative nonprofit enterprises that link high-performing local businesses into international booking and reservations systems. This combination of services that provides capacity building for businesses in the tourism industry and facilitates entry into real-time reservations systems is the standout added value of TEMPO.

➤ **ACDI/VOCA** conducted a nature-oriented tourism assessment in Mindo, Puerto Lopez and the Napo River basin in Ecuador. The team applied elements of two frameworks—Nature, Wealth and Power, which considers the ecological, economic and social factors and benefits involved in natural resource management and nature-based enterprise; and the Value Chain Approach, which examines opportunities and constraints facing key businesses in an industry and the critical factors affecting their competitiveness.

“When done right, sustainable tourism development can be an effective tool for stimulating economic growth, alleviating poverty, conserving biodiversity and environmental resources, and creating employment opportunities for local communities... Tourism allows for the implementation of programs focused on improving the quality of life for citizens in the developing world without compromising the future well-being of the people or the planet... The **United States Agency for International Development** has embraced tourism as a change agent over the last several years by supporting over 100 projects in 72 countries.”

➤ The **SAVE Travel Alliance (SAVE)** was formed in 2004 by the National Geographic Society, Counterpart International, George Washington University and the Honduras Institute of Tourism to coordinate their volunteer efforts related to sustainable tourism and economic development. SAVE’s ultimate goal is to build the capacity of destinations to identify, develop and market tourism opportunities and to utilize these to achieve core economic development, heritage and environmental conservation, and scientific capacity goals. Recent SAVE activities include: Southern African Slave Wrecks & Heritage Route Project; Ethiopia community capacity building & small business development; Dominican Republic community tourism enterprise development & visitor center design; Guatemala marketing & communication strategy for Lake Atitlan; Mozambique trip circuits & management information system; Northern Morocco tourism product development.

➤ **Aid to Artisans (ATA)** has spent 33 years creating economic opportunities for over 100,000 artisans in more than 110 countries. ATA blends deep-rooted cultures and handmade traditions of the developing world with a commitment to building profitable businesses. Environmentally sound practices are at the foundation of ATA’s methodology, recognizing that lasting economic growth is only possible through an integrated approach to product development, business skills training, market access and eco-effective processes. ATA accomplishes this by working together with partners, leaving behind an infrastructure that continues to support the artisan community long after we complete our mentoring. Over the past 10 years, these efforts have leveraged nearly \$230 million in retail sales. About 70% of the artisans ATA works with are women.