

THE TOURISM SECTOR LABOUR MARKET IN AFRICA (UNWTO)

By Mr John Wandaka Mr. Kazungu Charles Mwangi and Ms Jackline Bosibori Sagwe

Kenya Utalii College, Nairobi

Abstract

The tourism sector remains highly unstable and contingent upon prevailing socio economic and political developments locally, regionally and globally. As such, any structural shocks and imbalances to equilibria often causes contractionary effects on employment levels with debilitating impacts on job security and sustainable livelihoods. The labour market often reacts causing intermittent cycles of disguised and seasonal unemployment. The outcome not only affects the bar for service standards offered to clients but also the career growth paths and choices made by employees. With questions being raised regarding the adequacy of supply of professionals, this seasonality poses varied labour and human resource challenges to suppliers of skilled human resource for the sub-sector.

Tourism's capacity to create employment is one of the reasons behind its attraction to both developed and developing countries alike. The industry in Africa has been faced by a number of challenges such as shortages with respect to labour in general and skilled labour in particular and Moral hazards in labour practices. This has been exacerbated by the tourism industry's inability to compete against other industries in terms of wages and working conditions, thereby undermining attempts to recruit and retain labour in the tourism industry of the region.

This Study examines the available information regarding overall employment level and human resource requirements for the tourism industry as a whole in the African region. It further examines the statistical data sources and survey reports to gain background information to the tourism industry in the region with a special emphasis on the various country studies. The study adopted both descriptive and exploratory research designs. The qualitative approach was used to emphasis in the study.