

Egypt's Ministry of International Cooperation, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, EBRD and UNWTO Sign COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Cooperation Package to Promote Resilience, Sustainability, and Inclusive Growth

- **The COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Cooperation Package is structured around three main pillars: Economic Recovery, Marketing and Promotion, and Institutional Strengthening and Building Resilience.**
- **The package will also build the capacity of the labor force and private enterprises to avoid future shocks**
- **UNWTO awarded Egypt in 2019 for its commitment towards Tourism through launching the Egypt — Tourism Reform Program and its contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The pandemic has placed acute strain on global tourism. As one of the world's largest economic sectors, tourism generates growth, investments, creates jobs and drives exports globally. The global tourism sector represents 30% of the world's export of services (\$1.5 trillion), with 45% in developing countries. In May 2020, UNWTO forecasted that the impacts of COVID-19 will result in international tourist arrivals dropping by 60% to 8% when compared with 2019 figures. In Egypt, the sector represents 15% of GDP with 98% privately led.

In its efforts to boost the recovery of the tourism sector, with a focus on private sector engagement, Minister of International Cooperation, H.E. Dr. Rania A. Al Mashat with Dr. Heike Harmgart, Managing Director for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and H.E. Dr. Khaled El-Enany, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, signed on Tuesday through a virtual event, a Covid-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Cooperation Package in collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).

To build the resilience of tourism enterprises amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as the private sector represents 98 percent of the tourism sector in Egypt, incentivizing job creation is a key cornerstone of the cooperation package, as it seeks to identify support mechanisms for tourism enterprises, particularly SMEs, to support the local economy and strengthen local linkages. It also aims to formulate specific recommendations to foster job creation, targeting the self-employed and protecting the most vulnerable groups. The package will also aim to improve Egypt's tourism safety, health and hygiene regulations to align with international practices,

providing tailor-made training programmes that are applicable to the local context for managerial level in the tourism industry as well as newly hired fresh graduates.

It is worth noting that Egypt launched the Egypt — Tourism Reform Program (E—TRP) in November 2018, a structural reform program designed to achieve a sustainable tourism sector through implementing reforms that strengthen the sector’s competitiveness, consistent with international standards. The pillars of reform included: Institutional, Legislative, Branding and Promotion, Infrastructure and Tourism Development as well as International Tourism Trends. In March 2019, the UNWTO awarded H.E. President AbdelFattah ElSisi for his commitment towards Tourism through launching the E—TRP and his contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Creating opportunities through developing and executing policy frameworks as the essence of E—TRP while applying the principles of a circular economy, ensures a sustainable recovery through creating economic prosperity, social equity, and improving environmental and hygiene quality, all of which contributes to local development.

E—TRP English:

<http://bit.ly/ETRPEn>

E—TRP Arabic:

<http://bit.ly/ETRPar>

“The new agreement with EBRD-UNWTO is an example of deepening collaborations to advance sectoral support and accelerate progress to meet Egypt’s priorities going forward. Through providing impact analysis and data collection tools, it will allow private enterprises to make informed decisions on the basis of number-driven data and make predictions to avoid future shocks. This in turn will foster the entrepreneurship spirit in the sector and lead to a better inclusion of women and youth in the workforce. The pandemic has given us an opportunity to not just ensure an immediate recovery but to build back better for a more sustainable tourism industry.” H.E. Dr. Rania Al Mashat, Minister of International Cooperation, stated.

H.E. Dr. Khaled El-Enany, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of International Cooperation, the EBRD, UNWTO, and colleagues at the Ministry for their efforts to reach the signing of this agreement. “The Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance Cooperation Package comes at a crucial timing, as it supports the Ministry and its affiliated entities as well as the private tourism sector to embark on the ongoing transformation, especially on capacity building, and supporting the ministry to ensure the recovery of the industry.” he stated.

“EBRD is proud to support the tourism sector of Egypt with this Covid 19 tourism recovery package to help this important sector to build back better with the expertise of the UNWTO.” Dr. Heike Harmgart, Managing Director for the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean EBRD.

In December 2020, the Ministry of International Cooperation together with the EBRD, agreed on a financing agreement for the regeneration of a brownfield site in West Cairo serving the Grand Egyptian Museum and Great Giza Pyramids, into a Hyatt Regency Hotel, promoting the introduction of green technology, and youth and women inclusion in Egypt. It is expected that more than 300 jobs will be directly generated and viable progression routes from training into employment will be created for at least 250 young people. The project will also include a high-quality training programme, funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), and work-based learning opportunities in hospitality and tourism for young people, promoting in particular women’s participation.

Egypt is a founding member of the EBRD. Since the start of the Bank’s operations in 2012, the EBRD has invested over €7 billion in more than 125 projects in the country.

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Ministry of International Cooperation