Political Uncertainty (Tourism as an Instrument for Development)

Eman M. Helmy
Chapter 16

POLITICAL UNCERTAINTY
Challenge to Egyptian Tourism Policy

Eman M. Helmy
Helwan University, Egypt

Abstract: This chapter traces the Egyptian tourism policies since the 1980s and showcases patterns of successes and pitfalls of plans instrumented by such policies. It also debates the extent to which Egyptian tourism policies and strategies have been able to cope with the shifting international trends and comprehend the most recent models of development with all its economic, technological, and environmental dimensions. The discussion illustrates different plans/tools employed to achieve broad goals and discusses influences of their implementation. This sheds light on the current uncertain political situation and problems posed by such unstable circumstances. Keywords: Egyptian tourism policy, enabling environment, sustainable development, political instability

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry sector has deep roots in Egypt since the 19th century when Thomas Cook organized his remarkable trip to its archeological sites in 1869. Like many other old destinations, the industry witnessed an evolution in its performance during the six decades that followed
the World War II which witnessed a recognition of various economic and development impacts of tourism all over the world. The tourism policies and governance for development have crucially contributed in the boom of tourism in Egypt at national, regional, and local levels. For instance, tourism in Egypt provide 11.3% of the total national income and 19.3% of the total foreign exchange (TDA, 2011). However, the Egyptian case was special in its tolerance and ability to sustain its tourism activities over the last 60 years, a period mostly characterized by a series of crises either related to the Middle East or to Egypt itself.

Nevertheless, Egyptian tourism policies became mature, coupled with vision and precise economic and sociocultural goals by 1980s, which witnessed a shift from the traditional policy structure and instruments to more brave, modernized, and market-oriented policy drivers. The privatization of the public sector hotels was the first policy-guided decision for transformation. The policy has been consolidating more effective tools to cope with the international changes as well as national requirements and local challenges. Notably, pitfalls of the previous stages have also been feeding the decision-makers while crafting tourism’s strategies and its policy. Hence, the tourism policy came to encompass the environmental goals by 1990s. This latter become more comprehensive to cope with the emerging sustainable development movement.

PILLARS OF TOURISM POLICY IN EGYPT

To accomplish the national tourism policy goals over the past three decades, key areas have been tapped as drivers of change and transformation (Figure 1): reengineering the tourism organizational structure; fostering investments in the industry; enabling regulatory, legislative, and operational environments for private sector projects; developing human resources; instrumenting tourism for socioeconomic welfare in remote regions; promoting sustainable tourism in the different destinations; accessing international funds and technical expertise; and involving the emerging Egyptian nonprofit organizations in tourism development and planning (especially in the social and environmental aspects). Arguably, the above interrelated drivers have been successively instrumented over the past three decades. These transformations were based on the goals set by the tourism strategy/policy at each stage which attempted to fill in gaps and tackle challenges emerged in the preceding phase.
The modernization of the national tourism organization structure was crucial by the early 1990s, to set all required regulations and rules of promoting private sector investments in the coastal and less developed areas. The negative environmental impacts of the rapid pace of development that took place in 1980s in the pioneering leisure regions such as Hurghada (on the Red Sea) implied the establishment of a national authority to professionally develop master plans of the coastal regions. Accordingly, the Egyptian Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was established in 1991 by law No. 7, under the auspice of the Ministry of Tourism, to take over the exploitation, planning, and usage of lands allocated for tourism development outside the city zones (TDA, 2011). Such areas possessed a wide variety of ecological and cultural assets but lacked many of the infrastructure and superstructure
services. The policy targeted such regions as potential leisure destination that could cater for scuba diving markets and special interest clients, in addition to the traditional beach tourism segments.

Over 20 years, the TDA has sought to implement technical investment, environmental, and sociocultural development instruments which helped Egypt diversifying its tourism product offerings that currently compose an array of recreational, special interest, business, cruising, and ecotour, as well as the traditional archeological and cultural features. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of the 50 tourism centers planned by TDA on the different regions till 2011.

The TDA sets certain rules and regulations of allocating land for private investment in the above-mentioned regions which encompass legal, technical, security, and financial aspects. The regulations have also implied a number of technical procedures such as planning and environmental determinants for the commitment to the carrying capacity and environmental conservation standards. For example, the investor is required to conduct both economic feasibility analysis as well as Environmental Impact Assessment approved by the TDA and the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency before the project is initiated (TDA, 2012).

The Egyptian Tourism Authority (ETA) is another significant body working under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Tourism. Its main responsibility is the promotion of the inbound and domestic tourism to different national destinations. Its main objective is to position Egypt as a well-established destination in the international market and to sustain international and domestic demand to the diversified tourism areas. To accomplish its objective, the ETA operates 32 domestic information offices at different areas across the country, together with 17 international offices in countries deemed to be the most significant tourism generating markets (OECD, 2012). Notably, some of the international offices target more than one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of Planned Centers</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Red Sea</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aqba Gulf</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El-Ein El-Sokhna (80 km along the Suez Gulf)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras Sedr</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West North Coast</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: TDA (2012).
country in the same region which assures coverage of broader markets while reducing the fixed costs. The ETA is keen to have the Egyptian tourism present in all international tourism events, such as international fairs, exhibitions, and markets. It is to work cooperatively with international tourism organizations for hosting landmark events in different Egyptian destinations. For example, Egypt cooperated with the UNWTO in hosting the International Tourism Day on September 27, 2011 that took place in Aswan (ETA, 2010; OECD, 2012).

The Egyptian Tourism Federation is a vital key player representing different tourism sectors through five sub-associations: Hotel Association, Travel Agents Association, Chamber of Tourist Establishments, Chamber of Tourist Commodities, and the newly developed Chamber of Scuba-diving and Water Sports. The elected heads of the union and its sub-associations participate in identifying the main features of the Egyptian tourism policy. They, together with the Ministry of Tourism and Egyptian Tourism Authority, participate in the promotional campaigns launched in the international market. Of significance is the Federation’s technical and financial contributions in helping many tourism projects sustaining its business during the 1990s. This is a period characterized by a set of crises due to the Gulf War and the terrorists’ attacks. Thanks to the fund project initiated by the Egyptian Tourism Federation to face crises, the tourism private sector was to a great extent secured while facing the international and national crises that occurred in the first decade of the new millennium (ETF, 2012).

**Boosting Private Investments as a Key Instrument**

The fourth five-year plan (1997–2002) estimated the investment in the tourism industry at 31.8 billion Egyptian pounds, of which 98% had to be covered by the private sector (MOT, 1996). Hence, since late 1990s, Egypt has been instrumenting a set of incentives and guarantees under Law No. 8/1997 to encourage private investments in tourism which also seek all opportunities to attract Foreign Direct Investments to promising tourism areas. For example, the TDA was allocating lands to the private sector project in the coastal areas at $1 per square meter, while the investor was committed to supply the infrastructure services to his project premises (TDA, 2012). In addition, tourism projects, including transportation, were granted corporate tax exemption for five years, extendable to 10 years in case the project is located in a desert area and 20 years for projects in the Western Desert oases such as Kharga, Baris, and Farafrah oases (Rady, 2002).
Due to the various incentives instrumented by the tourism policy, Egyptian and foreign investments, mainly from the Gulf Arab countries, contributed to every aspect of development, infrastructure, large-scale integrated resort communities, and a variety of services (Eraqi, 2007, p. 195). The involvement of the private sector in tourism development in all regions, especially remote ones, have enabled Egypt expanding its hotel capacity in areas designated by TDA as leisure and ecotourism destinations. All such regions are located outside city cordons considered less developed. Table 2 illustrates the expansion of hotel capacity in all regions under the authority of TDA up to 2011.

Meanwhile, private investment has been attracted to a number of infrastructure projects in the above-mentioned regions. For instance, the Build, Operate, and Transfer scheme has been approached to construct state of the art airport in Marsa Alam (south of the Red Sea), including in a number of power stations in these areas. More recently, there is a plan in 2013 to auction 28 million square meters for tourism development which mainly attract foreign investments from Europe as well as the Arab Gulf area (Zaazou, 2012).

On the other hand, the ETA has also realized the importance of cooperating with the private sector in elaborating joint marketing campaigns while participating in the international tourism fairs and exhibitions such as the World Travel Market and ITB Berlin which consolidates the promotional activities and renders effective influence of the Egyptian delegation in these and similar international events. Such a collaborative approach has also strengthened the Egyptian competitive edge and helped the ETA to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No. of Rooms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El-Ein El Sokhna</td>
<td>2,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuibaa — Taba</td>
<td>6,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharm El-Sheikh — Nabq</td>
<td>18,055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ras Sedr</td>
<td>1,754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Red Sea</td>
<td>32,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Queser</td>
<td>7,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsa Alam</td>
<td>6,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MarsaMatrouh (North West Coast)</td>
<td>1,264</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TDA (2012).
secure adequate financial and technical support to its promotional campaigns (OECD, 2012).

**Enabling Environments for Private Sector Projects**

Relevant to the preceding pillar, the Egyptian government has taken serious steps to create a favorable legislative and regulatory environment to encourage investments in the tourism industry. As part of the enabling environment, Egypt has modernized its supply infrastructure to reflect its commitment to the General Agreement on Trade in Services and to the liberalization of tourism (OECD, 2012).

During the last 15 years, the Egyptian government has worked on the improvement of the telecommunication services which have also been carried out by private sector initiatives. On the other hand, to link the beach and leisure destinations on the Red Sea to the major archeological sites in Upper Egypt, motor roads have been constructed. This added development offers a wide range of opportunities and facilitate the movement of tourist flows from the Red Sea centers to the heritage sites in Upper Egypt and vice versa.

To enable the beach resorts in Sinai and the Red Sea effectively promoting their packages and elaborating distinctive deals with international tour operators, charter flights have been permitted to reach the international airports in such regions such as Sharm El-Sheikh, Hurghada, and Marsa Alam international airports.

**Promoting Sustainable Tourism**

The sustainable tourism approaches and strategies have become an integral part of the Egyptian national tourism policy by the beginning of the new millennium. The reestablishment of a fully fledged environmental authority (Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency) in 1994 has also played the most crucial role in the implementation of sustainability. To date, for example, 30 areas have been declared as protectorates by the Nature Conservation Sector which constitute more than 15% of the total Egyptian land. The Nature Conservation Sector plan targets the increase of such number to reach 40 protectorates by 2020 (EEAA, 2012).

The TDA has been launching the “Green Sharm Initiative” project with three successive phases to transform Sharm El-Sheikh into a green destination. Its holistic approach has identified four key components for sustainability: reduced carbon emissions, sustainable water supply, effective waste...
management, and healthy biodiversity. The implementation of the project has entailed joint work among different stakeholders such as Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Ministry of Transportation, in addition to private sector leaders, including the Head of the Egyptian Hotel Association and the Head of the Chamber of Diving and Water Sports (Zaazou, 2010).

In line with the government’s efforts, the NGOs have also contributed in underpinning the Egyptian sustainable tourism plans. For example, “The Green Star Hotel Initiative” is a national eco-certification and capacity building program, working in partnership with the leading international organization, to encourage Egyptian hotels and resorts to move toward sustainability (Green Star Hotel, 2013). To employ technology in the modernization of the Egyptian authorities and projects that target the accomplishment of the broad sustainable development application, the Center for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage has been established as one of the projects developed at the Egyptian Smart Village. The center instruments technology to identify, illustrate, and develop a database for the documentation of all aspects of the Egyptian heritage, including monuments, natural biodiversity, folklore, and crafts. One of the significant databases that have been elaborated by the center is “our natural heritage at risk” which identifies the endangered species and provides all data required for their conservation (CULTNAT, 2013).

Arguably, the last decade witnessed the movement of the Egyptian tourism policy toward the implementation of sustainable tourism in the coastal and ecotourism destinations and the collaboration with the NGOs for the execution of a number of ecotourism projects. However, the Egyptian tourism policy has not shown merit in putting sustainability into practice for the conservation of the archeological sites. To date, tourist activities still pose a number of problems in such sites which imply serious actions for managing carrying capacities and implementing more effective site and tourism management techniques. The task also entails cooperative efforts between the Supreme Council of Antiquities and the different stakeholders. At the political level, the authorities and stakeholders should be involved in the meetings and discussions over the conservation of the archeological sites which in turn will identify specific actions and commitments to be taken by the tourism authorities as well as industry stakeholders.

Yet, the archeological authorities are still requested to engage site planners, sustainable development experts, and tourism management specialists while crafting their policies. This will broaden the existing narrow vision which regards restoration of the monuments as the sole prime function.
The issue also calls for the involvement of NGOs which have professional expertise and comprehensive vision for heritage site sustainability.

**Involving the Emerging Egyptian Nonprofit Organizations**

Awareness of the role of sustainable development in tourism development and planning has also been reflected in the emergence of many private organizations and NGO’s launching landmark projects in the different tourism regions. As one of the most prominent buoy systems, Hurghada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association (HEPCA) has launched a campaign to install over 1,000 moorings throughout the Red Sea coast to combat the physical damage of the coral reefs. In addition, the Samadai project has jointly been executed by the Nature Conservation Sector with HEPCA to safeguard endangered native Dolphin populations in Samadai Island (South of the Red Sea) by dropping the number of excursionists to Samadi Island from 2,500 to 200 per day and putting tourism management in practice (EEAA, 2012; HEPCA, 2013). Meanwhile, to safeguard the flora and fauna habitats from degradation, the Rescue and Environmental Protection Society has been working closely with the environmental and tourism authorities in the Red Sea zones.

The Siwa Sustainable Development Initiative conducted by Environmental Quality International (EQI), an Egyptian private sector firm, has instrumented various techniques for implementing sustainability in the ground. The initiative has established a set of projects such as conserving the Siwaian local crafts, reviving the traditional building style and the technique of using *Kershef* (mixture of rock salt and mud) to build walls through the establishment of *Adrere Amellal* ecolodge and training indigenous to offer unique hospitality experience that include ancient folkloric designs, tranquility, and organic food and agro-culinary products (UNDP, 2007).

**Accessing International Funds and Technical Expertise**

Since the historic international campaign launched by UNESCO in the 1970s to rescue the Nubian temples, the Egyptian policy has been keen to build strong ties with all world organizations and to benefit from the financial aids and technical expertise that can be offered by foreign identities. More recently, the Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative is one of the pioneering sustainable development projects in Egypt conducted in the 1990s collaboratively by the USAID, TDA, and Personnel Administration Consulting Group. In 1998, the Urban Management Program, under the...
umbrella of the United Nations Center for Human Settlements, organized a city consultation in Siwa Oasis, which addressed a set of challenges facing the oasis such as the rapid opening to the outside world, increasing urban pollution, and threats to the ecological sustainability of the oasis, heritage protection, infrastructure development, education, as well as health and social development (UMP, 2013).

Under the broad objective of developing diversified and sustainable tourism in South Sinai for the benefit of the Bedouin population, the European Union has allocated 64 million euros for funding the South Sinai Regional Development Program to be executed between 2003 and 2013 (Eu-ssdp, 2013). One of its numerous projects implemented is Sheikh Sinai Bedouin tourist trekking which helped local indigenous to establish a safari trekking business and to promote the trekking activities to the worldwide audience using the modern media of Facebook and Google Earth (EuropeAid, 2010; Eu-ssdp, 2013).

The renovated Bibliotheca Alexandria project has been executed through the cooperation of different international organizations with the Egyptian government to inaugurate the new library building in 2002. Bibliotheca Alexandria is currently one of the most significant tourism sites in Alexandria which contains scripts and letters from almost all the languages all over the world to reflect the multicultural heritage and the spirit of the library. A remarkable feature of the library is the Cultural Panorama an interactive display of Egypt’s cultural heritage over nine screens, the first ever patented 9-projector interactive system (ETA, 2010).

Tourism for Socioeconomic Welfare in Remote Regions

One of the key objectives of the Egyptian policy is instrumenting tourism as a key player in alleviating poverty in less developed regions and combating unemployment. Today, tourism employs 2.7 million direct jobs estimated at 12.6% of the national labor force. This is in addition to the indirect jobs generated by the supplying sectors and relevant activities (TDA, 2012).

Tourism has become the core economic activity for local communities in many of the Red Sea, Sinai, Upper Egypt, and Western Desert regions. These projects have managed to engage local Bedouins and members of the tribal communities in Sinai, Red Sea, and the Western Oases in a wide range of tourism activities, especially ecotourism, safari, and adventure services. Al-Karma ecolodge in South Sinai draws an example of co-ownership and management between the government (St. Katherine Protectorate) and the local community (Bedouins). Yet, the ecolodge still lacks commercial
orientation and experience to ensure success. This emphasizes the need for building capacities of such indigenous communities to be able playing more effective role especially in the project operation and marketing domain (Meade, 2008). In addition, tourism has extensively improved the infrastructure services in many less developed regions and has offered opportunities for reducing gaps between remote and metropolitan areas which, to a certain extent, helped the government to combat the internal immigration to urban areas that suffer problems of over population and congestion.

However, the overreliance of such communities on tourism has led to major economic problems at present. This is due to the severe negative impacts of the ongoing political unrests on the tourism activity. Moreover, the tour guidance sector has tremendously been affected by the crisis as most of the Egyptian tour guides are self-employed, working as freelancers for different agencies. The crisis has also been extended to the hotel sector whose labor currently suffers job insecurity and significant cuts of salaries and wages.

Developing Human Resources at Different Levels

Egyptian tourism policy was tactful in identifying the crucial need of the national tourism market of well-trained personnel at the different vocational levels. While the higher education institutions look at the top management levels, the vocational education was behind the ambition of the tourism industry supplying the number of graduates and competencies required by the industry. It was the initiative of the Egyptian Tourism Federation (ETF) to establish the Egyptian Human Resource Development unit which managed in less than 10 years to conduct a set of projects for qualifying thousands of personnel with the required competencies and skills to fill gaps at the different vocational levels.

The unit has been working collaboratively with international best practices in a number of projects, some of which are funded by international organizations such as International Development Ireland, the American Hotel and Lodging Association, Cornell University, Royal Life Saving Society UK, and Technical Vocational Education and Training, to build capacities of qualified hoteliers and tourism personnel (ETFHRDUNIT, 2012). One of such projects is the Tourism Workforce Development project which aimed at enhancing the workforce skills in the tourism industry. The project conducted a set of activities relevant to the human resource development issue, such as implementation of a pilot training initiative on destination marketing, completion of three case studies (Movenpick Sharm
el-Sheikh, Emeco Travel, and Americana Restaurants) on how to face and overcome human resource development challenges and design of a survey to assess the workforce requirements in the hotel sector in Egypt (SRI, 2009).

The unit has also been appointing professional trainers on short-term contracts to conduct training courses covering all vocational jobs to the hotel and travel agency employees at the different regions. In addition, the unit arranges, with the coordination of the different hotels and resorts, for on-job training to new graduate job seekers (ETFHRDUNIT, 2012).

Achievements and Shortcomings of National Policy

Arguably, the Egyptian tourism policies implemented in the past three decades reflect patterns of achievements, weaknesses, and lessons for improvements. Indeed, the most prominent accomplishment is embodied in the ability to diversify national tourism product offerings. Such a strategy implied the development of remote zones, namely, the Red Sea, Sinai, the North West Coast, and Western Oases that have become in less than two decades international destinations for beach, scuba diving, safari, and eco-tourism activities. Despite the negative environmental impacts of the rapid pace of development in the pioneering leisure regions such as Hurghada, the Egyptian tourism policy has managed to record a remarkable increase in the number of arrivals and tourist receipts. Statistics show that the number of international tourists has jumped from 3.9 million in 1996 to reach 8.6 million in 2005, and over 14 million in 2010. The receipts raised from $3.2 billion in 1996 to $6.8 billion in 2005 and $12.5 billion in 2010 (MOT, 2011; UNWTO, 2012b).

Although the projects mentioned throughout this case study illustrate the concern of both Egyptian national tourism and environmental sectors, as well as the private sector and NGO’s for sustainability of the ecological and cultural assets, the tourism policies in the leisure and natural areas have been characterized as commercial development that mainly instrumented the establishment of luxurious honeypots on the Egyptian long beaches with lesser ecological and social concerns.

During the 2000s, many of beach resorts have shown merits in their commitments to the environmental conservation techniques. However, the debates over the policies of land allocation and the emergence of a small segment of political and business figures dominating the investment scene in tourism created a concern for the ability of the industry to target social equity. Meanwhile, the national policy was far behind the serious steps of instrumenting entrepreneurship and Small and Medium Enterprises as
Entrepreneurship entails the consideration of various tools such as facilitating loans to such enterprises in tourism, empowering entrepreneurs with the technical support and training and raising awareness about investment opportunities. On the contrary, the policy was, to a great extent, influenced by the national political agenda which prioritized personal interests and benefited a very small segment of the society while harboring foreign investments to many economic sectors with lax regulatory rules.

The 2011 revolution broke out to change many of the political, economic, and social circumstances that Egypt was going through which used “Social Equity, Liberty, and Livelihood” as a slogan for its demands. However, the impact of such unrest has been severely negative for the industry, as the number of tourists dropped to 9.4 million in 2011, with a decrease in the tourist receipt at US$8.7 billion (UNWTO, 2012b). The negative impacts have also been extended to the labor force as tourism employs 2.8 million professionals, in addition to the indirect jobs generated by the relevant sectors (ETF, 2012; UNWTO, 2012b).

**Challenges Ahead**

Although the 2011 revolution aimed at the improvement of the political, economic, and social circumstances, the three-year transitional period witnessed a set of turmoil that negatively affected all sectors of the Egyptian economy. The concept of crisis management has been instrumented since 1980s when tourism was hit by a series of terrorist attacks. However, the ongoing crisis has different features as it challenges all the political, cultural, and economic aspects. The crisis is not only influencing the future policies but rather it will extensively frame them and determine how the industry will be managed and operated in the future.

Over the time of Moslem Brothers (mid-2012 till early July 2013), there were real concerns for the future of many destinations, especially in the beach resorts. The change also tapped the marketing strategies and regions deemed to be primary generating markets for the Egyptian destinations. For example, the Ministry of Tourism was preparing a marketing campaign to be launched in the Iranian market, which remained suppressed over the past four decades due to certain political circumstances. Such decisions, if continued, would have implied consequent changes in the features of the tourism products and all relevant services and activities.

The Moslem Brother’s political agenda not only implied sudden changes in the tourism industry but also provoked the Egyptian cultural, political,
and lifestyle norms. More importantly, the regime could not meet the expectations of committing itself to fulfill the 2011 revolution demands. On the contrary, it worked to execute its ideological agenda resulting in a set of unrests and deterioration in all aspects. The June 30, 2013 revolution, backed by Egypt’s military, was erupted all across the Egyptian regions to cease the brotherhood regime and reform the political roadmap. However, such political turmoil had negative percussions on tourism. Although 2012 showed a sustained rebound (+18%) after the decline of 2011, the industry was again hit by the unrests and terrorists’ attacks over the last six months of 2013 (UNWTO, 2013a).

Arguably, the future of the Egyptian tourism industry will extensively depend upon the ability of the different political stakeholders executing the roadmap as set by 2013 revolution. Such target has not only become a determinant for a democratic political arena, but also bedrock for any economic transformation and more importantly an essential requirement for stability and security. This in turn will have an influence on tourism which has great potentials to boost the Egyptian economy, attract foreign direct investments, and contribute in the social and environmental development.

CONCLUSION

The Egyptian case exemplifies the most prominent vehicles approached by tourism policies in many developing countries, mainly fostering private sector investments, building human capacities in tourism, instrumenting it as a means for poverty alleviation and socioeconomic development, and attempts to put sustainability into practice. Through such interrelated drivers, Egyptian tourism policy has met many of its economic goals and has accomplished tangible achievements in instrumenting tourism as a vehicle for development in remote areas.

Arguably, the early phases of the tourism policy reflected modest consciousness of environmental conservation and sustainable development issues which have lately been incorporated into the recent tourism plans as significant pillars. However, the implementation of a comprehensive sustainable tourism policy necessitates the cooperation of various parties, whether governmental, nonprofit organizations, or private sector. It also requires a full vision to all Egyptian sites and destinations, whether newly developed in remote areas under the auspice of the TDA or traditional well-established inside the city cordons.
While the involvement of the tourism policy in putting sustainability in practice in the ecological and natural destinations can variously be illustrated, the tourism policy reflects a very shallow role in archeological site sustainability. Although all heritage sites are under the full authority of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, most of the pressures on such sites are caused by tourism activities. The case calls for a shift in the way the archeological sites are managed and entails adequate financial resources and experienced human resources to implement effective carrying capacity management, site management, and tourist management techniques, in addition to the traditional restoration tasks elaborated by the archeological authorities.

One of the shortcomings of the Egyptian policy is its inability to establish culture for entrepreneurship in tourism and hospitality. Although this industry offers great business opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises, the policy has not come yet to address the different challenges facing young entrepreneurs, such as technical and financial support, training, and consultancy on how to initiate a business from the scratch and manage and operate a successful Small and Medium Enterprise. The policy should also instrument powerful plans to raise awareness about the different opportunities of entrepreneurial projects and launch a campaign to attract young graduates to the promising investment areas. In this context, entrepreneurship should be considered as one of the key solutions to address the persisting problem of unemployment in the overpopulated Egyptian community. The case also suggests the review of the tourism education programs at different levels, to incorporate entrepreneurship into the tourism and hospitality curricula to build up the entrepreneurial professional and personal skills.

The chapter has critically emphasized the current challenges that face the Egyptian tourism policy due to the political instability. Although there is a consensus that tourism can play an essential role to mitigate the deteriorating economic circumstances, the repeatedly occurred unrests and more recently terrorists’ attacks constitute the main challenge facing the tourism policy.

The possibility of the Egyptian tourism policy transforming its plans and tools to encompass the main themes of January 25, 2011—social equity, liberty, and livelihood—and benefiting from the roadmap, as declared by June 30, 2013 revolution, will certainly depend on the political agenda that will frame the future policies of all sectors including tourism.
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