National Tourism Organisation of a Northern European Country

C O N T E X T   &   C H A L L E N G E

The northern country is a highly attractive destination, known for its beautiful, diverse seasons and well-established tourism infrastructure. Its reputation as a less crowded and eco-friendly destination aligns well with the growing demand for sustainable travel. Moreover, it enjoys a strong, positive image globally, thanks to its stable and transparent society, which fosters trust in its authorities.

The organisation, with its agile and low-hierarchy structure, is well-prepared to make quick decisions and adapt to changing circumstances, further enhancing the nation's appeal as a safe and reliable travel destination.

The country's tourism ecosystem also faces challenges, primarily due to the lack of a unified approach to risk management. Without a central authority overseeing crisis management, responses can be fragmented and slow.

Current geopolitical tensions have introduced significant accessibility constraints to the destination. The country has lost its competitive advantage as a hub for the East due to flight restrictions over Russian airspace, and it is now inaccessible by train for international travelers. Additionally, lack of mobility and accessibility options within some cities and between different regions is also a challenge.

A C T I O N S

Considering the current context and challenges identified, the organisation developed the following actions:

1. Governance Structure Strengthening:
- Define roles and responsibilities for crisis management within the organisation and assigning people to pre-defined roles. Communicate these assignments both internally and externally.
- Establish a steering group to coordinate the crisis management efforts of the tourism ecosystem.

Replicability potential: Moderate (it requires human resources and technical capacity within the organisation to implement the crisis management structure)

2. Crisis Management Plan:
- Develop a crisis management plan for the destination. Identify tourism ecosystem stakeholders, their roles in a crisis and how they should be involved, and document possible crisis scenarios and related actions plans to each scenario.

Replicability potential: High (it does not require significant resources)

3. Crisis Communication:
- Implement a crisis communication system. Identify target groups and select the appropriate communication channels for each stakeholder.

Replicability potential: High (it does not require significant resources)

4. Infrastructure Development:
- Create a roadmap to improve accessibility and mobility by collaborating with transportation & mobility solutions' providers and infrastructure public departments. Also, survey travelers to understand their preferences and needs.

Replicability potential: Moderate (requires significant coordination efforts with transportation and mobility providers and expertise in accessibility and mobility)

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EXPECTED IMPACTS & LESSONS LEARNED

With the implementation of the actions mentioned above, The organisation is expected to the address the challenges identified and wield positive impacts for the tourism ecosystem. Other organisations, particularly those with similar level (national) and mandates (operational) in the tourism ecosystem dealing with similar challenges, can also leverage valuable lessons:

Strengthen Governance and Coordination
- Defining roles and responsibilities for crisis management and establishing a dedicated steering group leads to increased coordination amongst tourism ecosystem stakeholders and a more effective response to crises.

Improve Resilience and Crisis Preparedness
- Developing a crisis management plan with clear protocols and well-defined responsibilities is a crucial first step to enhance the preparedness and the effectiveness of response effort for future crisis events.
- Implementing a crisis communication system ensures that all stakeholders are timely and accurately informed through appropriate channels, enhancing trust and cooperation.
- Improving accessibility and mobility, makes the destination more inclusive and prepared to withstand future crisis events. Moreover, considering slow, low-carbon travel solutions aligns with global sustainability trends.