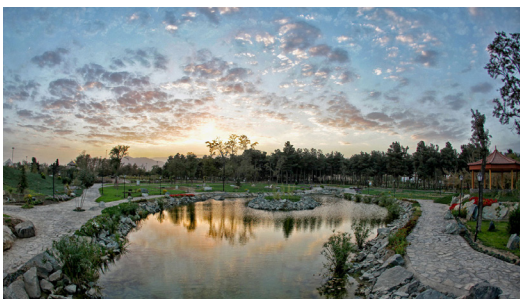


# Newsletter

MPT Newsletter First Edition, January 2020

## Promoting Responsible Tourism for Heritage Protection and Sustainable Development



“Promoting responsible tourism for heritage protection and sustainable development” is a project Co-funded by DEVCO (European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development) that aims to support local development and expanding economic opportunities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Improving the capacity of local development actors to promote and manage responsible tourism as a resource for protecting cultural heritage and consequently contributing to employment generation and sustainable development is the purpose of this project. This project is anticipated to build capacity amongst key stakeholders and strengthen local sustainable tourism development based on the local context, resources and needs and ultimately leads to international dialogue and enhance public awareness that each cultural identity is a valuable asset for the world.

The project is being implemented by a Italo-Iranian consortium of civil society organisations. The Consortium Lead, ATLANTIDE, is an Italian Organization with extensive experience of networking, education, civic engagement, and developing responsible tourism offers based on cultural and natural heritage protection. Marefat Pardis Toos (MPT) is a Mashhad based institute which is activated in the field of culture, tourism, local development and cultural heritage. MPT cooperates with international, national and local communities on supporting socio-economic development, including responsible tourism for cultural/religious heritage protection. Plan for the Land (P4L) is a national level organization based in Kish Island that fosters participatory and sustainable local development aimed to protect and promote local resources. ITACA provides technical and business development support to entrepreneurs and social enterprises, operating in marginalised urban areas, especially start-ups - in responsible tourism, agriculture, home-based business, service industry, heritage protection. NECOS (Civil Society Network for Cooperation and Solidarity) is an international network of organizations that specialise in building public awareness and local capacity in participatory development processes.

First steps of implementing this project were dedicated to project mobilization, incl. finalizing the work plan, partner agreements, project brochure, procuring equipment, informing concerned



### Tourism destinations Standards

Dr. Mozghan Sabet Teimouri

Standardization is to bring into conformity with a standard of a service or good in order to gain customer trust. One of the basic assumptions of sustainable tourism development is the elaboration of clear and transparent standards< ensuring and monitoring its proper implementation. The most important indicators of sustainable tourism establishment are developing tourism strategies and policies; using international guidelines in education; and following international operational codes at all levels. The tourists enterance trend to different tourism destination indicates a constant upward rate of tourists population. Going through the current crisis, people fist demand is traveling and staying in standard accommodation. Health standards will be of perticular interest to people. A main pillar of gaining the tourists trust is the development of specific, appropriate and local standards for various tourism destinations that have received a worldwide approved certificate and have enriched the services, products, transportation network and the environment of various tourism destinations. Standardization is the communication with an international language that is applicable to the tourist destination and is based on various indicators such as climatic, socio-cultural, economic and environmental characteristics. In other words, one of the most essential principles of standardization that provides marketing opportunities and sustainable income in the destination is the localization of standards which will be achieved only with appropriate advertising that follow global standards for the target group.

## Promoting Responsible Tourism for Heritage Protection and Sustainable Development

government agencies, obtaining required permissions. By building capacity amongst key stakeholders in five provinces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the project intends to improve the capacity of local development actors. In order to create a NGO network for Responsible Cultural Tourism, MPT conducted different meetings to identify stakeholders in target provinces of Iran which are Khorasn Razavi, Golestan and Fars. For instance on July 20, 2019 there were two meetings.

A meeting with Dr Shalchian, the Director of Tourism of Mashhad Municipality was held to illustrate the project and building synergies with Iranian institutions on July 20, 2019. We discussed the tourism training programme, hospitality improvement, food diplomacy and workshops, etc. It was suggested that after holding the NGOs symposium, MPT and NECOS will also hold a workshop for managers of Mashhad municipality. This workshop was held on January 26, 2020.

Another meeting was held with the Director Planning and Innovation Centre, Mashhad Municipality on July 21, 2019. The main points were introduction of the Project and activities to be implemented in Mashhad and introduction of the Innovation Centre of the Municipality.



Mr. Jalal Tajik ,as General Director of Tourism and Heritage NGOs of Iran, helped MPT to identify active NGOs. We spoke about the EU as the financial supporter of the project, the Cultural Heritage Organization and NGOs, number of active NGOs in Iran, rural areas and the daily life of people which has a great potential for sustainable tourism.





We also went to the Director General for Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Khorasan Razavi, Mashhad. We met Ms. Javid who is responsible for NGOs of Khorasan Razavi and we asked her to give us the list of Khorasan Razavi stakeholders. We talked to her about active NGOs in Mashhad. We identify stakeholders through rounds of consultations with key actors in local government, tourism industry and cultural heritage protection.

Interacting with the stakeholders and NECOS, MPT has identified key concerned stakeholders in target provinces. We created a list of stakeholders and evaluated them to choose the best possible candidates. Then, MPT conducted a baseline survey amongst network members and key stakeholders. To those who were interested, we sent a questionnaire which was prepared by NECOS.

The designed questionnaire would be used at the outset, mid-term, and completion of the project to identify the capacity gaps at the beginning of the project, and track progress made over time. It consists of a total of 52 items and 3 tables categorized under three main sections which assess three main areas of organizational understanding namely conceptual knowledge, state of the art, and local engagement. The first steps have been taken and the questionnaire has been responded by the stakeholders. Hence, available resources and capacity gaps are identified that shed light on our way to the end of the project. Thus, a summary of the findings obtained from the needs assessment phase.

Through successive interactions we evaluated them and their capacity and motivation. Some of them didn't fill out the questionnaire. We omitted some of those who didn't cooperate, didn't have a positive attitude about the project or were not motivated. Those who demonstrated interest and motivation in participating in the network have been invited to the symposium in Mashhad.

MPT sent Farsi Invitation letter to the CSO Network Symposium in Mashhad to our stakeholders and P4L. MPT also sent invitations to Iranian authorities and the Cultural Counselor of the Embassy of Italy.





Co-funded by the European Union

# Newsletter

MPT Newsletter First Edition, January 2020

## Meeting of Iranian partners.

MPT interacted with P4L to hold the symposium. MPT interacted with all partners to hold the symposium. MPT sent the Graphic Brochure in Persian to its stakeholders and P4L. MPT also sent it to ITACA for the website. MPT also designed the Mashhad Symposium Program. Through active interaction, we hold the symposium on January 8-9, 2020.



## Meeting with the Italian Ambassador

On October 24, MPT and NECOS met the Italian Ambassador and asked them to participate in the symposium.

## Mayor of Mashhad

MPT also arranged a meeting between the Italian Ambassador and the mayor of Mashhad, Mr. Mohammad Reza Kalaie.

