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INTOALBANIA

Despite its tremendous potential and significant strategic focus, the tourism sector in Albania is still underperforming expectations. Strategic studies highlight poor infrastructure – both hard and soft - as one of the main underlying reasons for the disappointing sectorial growth of tourism. While hard infrastructure is primarily subject of government interventions, the soft infrastructure is largely overlooked. Through an efficient and innovative approach, this project will deliver a comprehensive technological solution to the soft infrastructure problem with sustainable impact.

The project's mission is to boost economic growth in tourism by connecting the traveler with the country's best culture, heritage and nature. It combines the tourism concepts of digitization and authenticity in a unique single intervention. At the center of intervention is the development of an advanced digital platform, combined with a smartphone application, which promises to become the largest digital platform for international tourists and local visitors. In addition the project will intervene selectively to modernize the soft infrastructure of nationally recognized museums and implement a character hospitality model for hotels to follow.

In achieving these goals, the project will be supported by important and strategic partnerships. The project is designed through a comprehensive 3-way National-Local-Rural strategic approach for which CBS will partner with the Ministry of Culture on national level, the Municipality of Tirana on local level, and with an existing rural network.

The intervention will last 3 years and provide significant economic impact. It will generate a total economic benefit of \$16.3 Million, an increase of over 60K visitors and create 670 new jobs.

PROGRAM AREAS

BUILD DIGITAL PLATFORM (INTOALBANIA.COM) AND SMARTPHONE APPLICATION

The platform which will become the travelers “must have guide” to Albania, will reshape the entire experience by inspiring, booking, guiding and sharing the experiences. The platform will significantly improve the consumer’s experience, engaging them from the earliest stages of planning and becoming a companion throughout the journey. It starts by inspiring authentic destinations customized by user preferences which then move to planning, booking, guiding and making smart decisions at every step of the journey. The smartphone application is designed as a mobile companion to the traveler who is already in the country. It assists with quicker and more immediate decisions such as daily planning, discovery of new destinations on-the-move, local events and social media sharing. The platforms will be combined with two pilot-type catalytic interventions:

MODERNIZE THE SOFT INFRASTRUCTURE

The objective of this intervention is to demonstrate how a museum with advanced digital technologies can boost customer satisfaction resulting in a significant increase of visitors. The technology will be the first of its kind in Albania and include digital touch displays, multi-lingual audio, application guides and other forms of technology aiming to deliver an interactive museum experience. The museums will be selected in collaboration with Ministry of Culture, the ultimate beneficiary of this intervention together with its dependent institutions.

“CHARACTER HOSPITALITY” MODEL TO HOTELS AND GUEST HOUSES

“IntoAlbania” will provide technical assistance to select hospitality providers, who already embraced a character concept and are prepared to seriously invest into the model. Technical assistance to these project beneficiaries will consist of developing the character, design, and hospitality service, then promoting and communicating the authentic or heritage values. The goal of this catalytic intervention is not only to preserve Albanian culture and tradition but to demonstrate how hosting with character makes for a good business model

CURRENT PROJECT

Name: INTOALBANIA – Innovative Tourism in Albania

Duration: March 2017 – March 2020

Budget: \$1,105,000

Implementer: Creative Business Solutions

Contact: Zhaneta Shatri, USAID Deputy General Development Officer | zshatri@usaid.gov | +355 4 229 3537