



27 September 2014 – Travel benefits economies, cultures and communities. The celebration of the [World Tourism Day](#) (WTD) on the 27th of September presents a unique opportunity to raise awareness of tourism's important role in providing development and economic opportunities worldwide.

Tourism is a key sector in achieving development goals, including poverty reduction and social cohesion. “Harnessing tourism’s benefits will be critical to achieving the sustainable development goals and implementing the post-2015 development agenda”, [says](#) Ban Ki-moon.

[WTD 2014](#) is being held under the theme Tourism and Community Development to highlight the ability of tourism to empower people and provide them with skills to achieve change in their local communities.

This year's [official celebrations](#) will take place in Guadalajara, Mexico and include a high-level

Think Tank on the 2014 theme with the participation of tourism Ministers, international experts and policy makers in the field of tourism and development.

As a sector representing 9% of global GDP, one in 11 jobs worldwide, tourism has a huge capacity to respond to global challenges. Tourism is also one of the fastest growing sectors. Destinations worldwide received some 517 million international tourists between January and June 2014, 22 million more than in the same period of 2013. This interaction between individuals and communities, and their diverse cultures, leads to tolerance, respect and mutual understanding - the building blocks for a more peaceful world.

WTD is the perfect time to reflect upon your responsibilities and impact as a traveller visiting other communities. By eating at local restaurants and buying local products we can support the local economy. Other tips for sustainable tourists include not buying souvenirs made from endangered trees or plants and saving water and energy. As the Secretary-General of the [World Tourism Organization](#)

Taleb Rifai

[points out](#)

, “each time we travel, use local transport at a destination or buy products from a local market we are contributing to a long value chain that creates jobs, provides livelihoods, empowers local communities, and ultimately brings in new opportunities for a better future”.

[*Publications and useful links*](#)