

Working with Development Partners

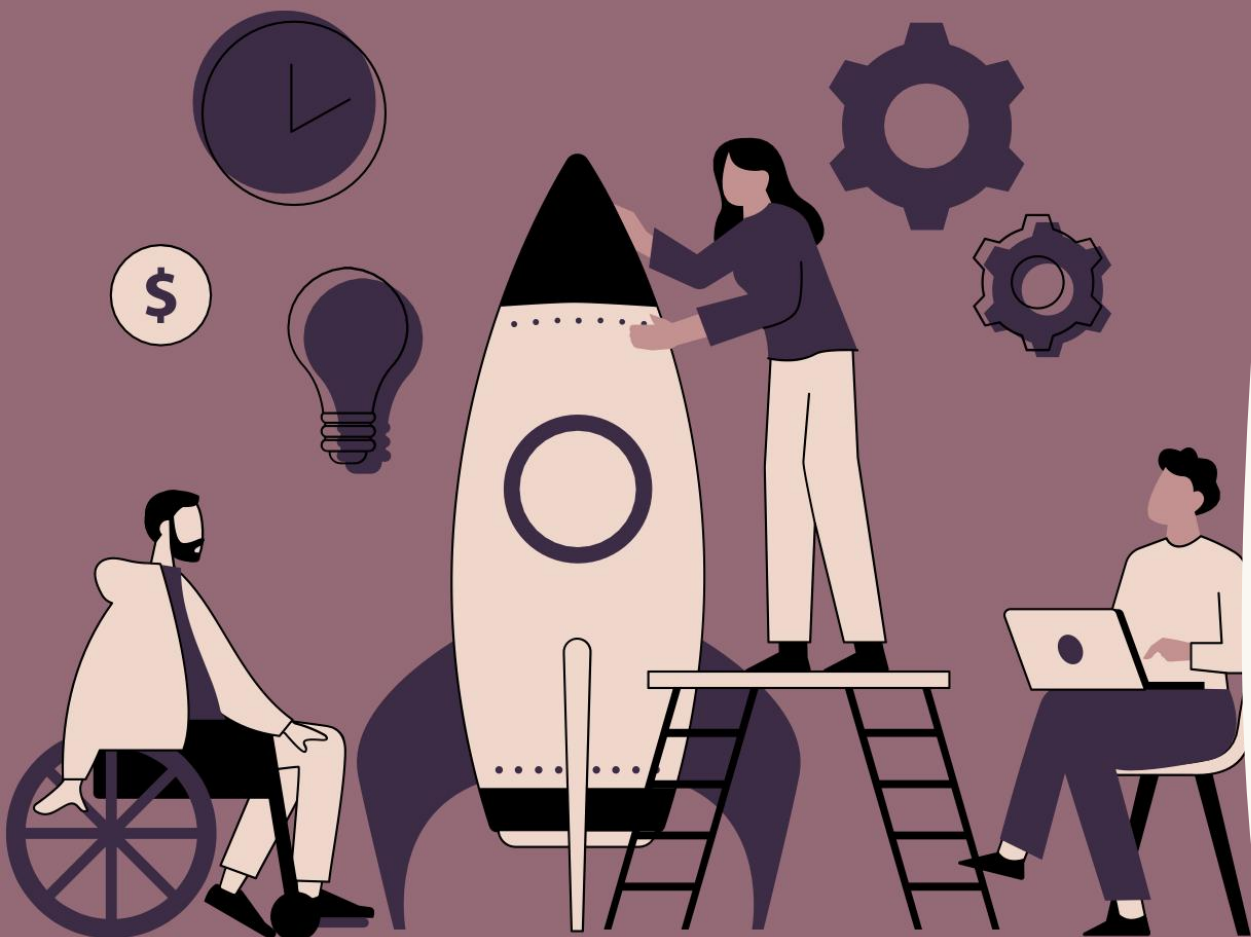
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Everyone's here to help (in their own special way)

- **Multilateral and bilateral donors** — may fund large-scale tourism infrastructure, policy reform, climate adaptation, and regional tourism programs
- **International NGOs and UN agencies** — may support community tourism, cultural heritage, environmental safeguards, and inclusive tourism jobs, skills training and capacity building
- **Development finance institutions** — may invest in commercially viable, large-scale tourism and tourism-adjacent ventures like hotels, ports, and transport infrastructure
- **Technical platforms and blended finance** — may support incentives-based policy change and de-risking tourism investment such as matching grants, guarantees, or public-private investment structures

Practical takeaway: Not all partners work the same way — know who's in the room, and what tools, resources (and limitations) they bring.

No fit? No funding.



- Each development agency has a different lens: climate, gender, private sector, governance...
- Tourism comes in many ‘flavours’.
- Aligning your “ask” with their mandate increases traction — even if it means reframing your priorities
- It should start from your national or business needs — but be pragmatic, and willing to mould the ask to the opportunity
- If there’s no fit, walk away

Practical takeaway:

Systems shape outcomes. If you understand the machinery, you can work with it — or around it.

Different scale. Different delivery.



- Delivery might be through government, tourism authority, a third-party contractor, or direct to the private sector
- That affects visibility, control, and speed — and who you need to influence
- Large-scale: multi-year, multi-million, multi-stakeholder (slow but systemic)
- Mid-scale: targeted technical or policy support (can bridge ideas to action)
- Micro: catalytic grants or pilots (proof of concept, local impact)

Practical takeaway:

Map the delivery chain early and match your ambition to the scale – and speed – of support.

It's not you - it's the system



- Bureaucracy, internal politics, slow procurement — it's not personal, it's structural
- Momentum often depends on upstream champions and internal alignment
- Your counterpart may be helpful – passionate even - but not the actual decision maker
- Reports and other outputs require specific metrics, language, or messaging

Practical takeaway:

Learn how decisions really get made — and build enough slack to survive the delays.

Measure it or it didn't happen



- Donors expect results — but also stories: measurable, meaningful, and credible
- Good M&E shows both impact and improvement
- Data needs framing — not all progress is linear
- Stick to the agreed M&E framework unless formally expanded
- Multiple partners can align — but duplication kills credibility
- You will need to report — and meet their requirements. Accept this early.

Practical takeaway:

Build your measurement into the work from the start. The right indicators can help you tell the truth, not just tick boxes.

GSTC Standards as a tool



- Shared standards build credibility and reduce perceived risk
- They can anchor project design, define quality, and guide investment
- Help bridge government–private sector gaps
- Well-selected standards can serve as ready-made performance indicators — making it easier to track progress, stay within scope, and communicate results.
- Alignment with global standards can support shared understanding of both intent and results

Practical takeaway:

Reference existing standards frameworks (whether national or global; destination or industry) to show alignment, especially when seeking support.

Final thoughts

(from a recovering development bureaucrat)



Tourism delivery is already a collective effort.

Donors introduce more moving parts — and another agenda to align



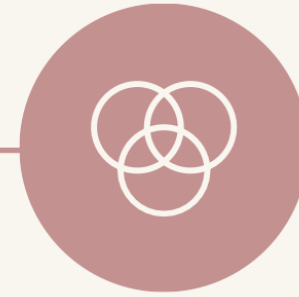
Tourism projects can burn more capacity than they bring funding.

Be honest about what's doable — and when to walk away



Standards and impact frameworks help you tell a credible story.

Use them to build trust — and get your proposal over the line



Align your ask with their mandate.

Standards and frameworks can help find the sweet spot