

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends of the Roundtable Human Rights and Tourism,

It is my pleasure to welcome you today to our annual symposium 2020 in this challenging – *not to say horrible* year.



My name is Antje Monshausen from Tourism Watch at Bread for the Word. I am proud to serve as chairwoman to the Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism.



We are a multi stakeholder initiative that consists of tour operators in the outgoing tourism segment, travel associations from the main European travel markets, multipliers, such as fairs or schools, certifiers and NGOs.





MISSION

Through cooperation, we build a trusted network of different stakeholders in tourism. We provide access to expertise, initiate pilot projects and develop learning materials. We support the implementation of human rights due diligence in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles within tourism companies, the supply chain and destinations

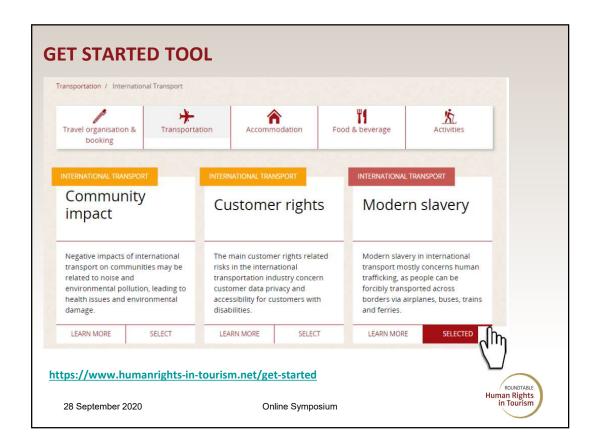
28 September 2020

Online Symposium

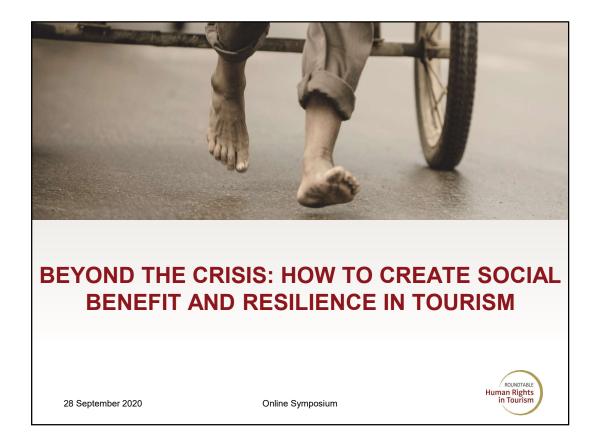
Our aim is to contribute to the vision of tourism that respects and protects human rights. Through the implementation of human rights due diligence strategies in line with the UN guiding principles on business and human rights, we want to promote social benefit along the supply chain and in destinations.



The spirit in which we work together is a spirit of trust and cooperation – among our more than thirty members, but also through robust connections to the broader tourism sector both in the sending markets and in destinations. We continuously deepen this networks through an increasing number of destination activities – e.g. last year with a joint supply-chain oriented human rights impact assessments in Myanmar and Thailand – from which we will learn more during this day.



Based on practical experiences and enriched by the expertise of different stakeholders, the Roundtable provides access to expertise, initiates pilot projects and develops learning materials – among them online tools that help to practically implement due diligence strategies, with guidelines and checklists to understand risks and assess impacts, and inspirations how to consult external stakeholders or to strengthen internal networks.

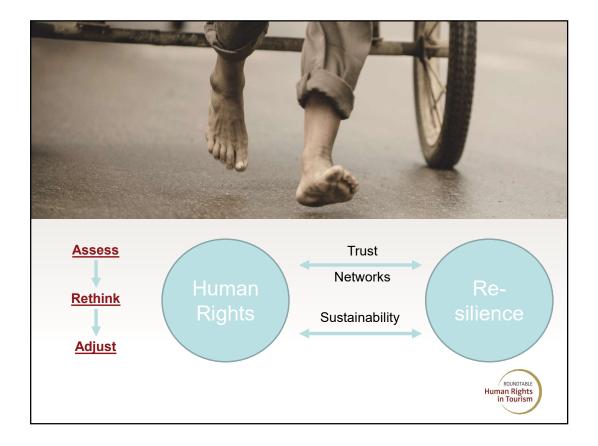


The title of our symposium is "Beyond crisis: How to create social benefit and resilience in tourism". Not surprisingly, I have to confess that when we started to plan this symposium we were not thinking to have a focus on crisis. The current situation came to us, in the same way it came to you — unexpected and brutally.

We decided to choose the title **beyond** crisis . Because as little as we were able to ignore the reality we wanted it to narrow our discussions and our perspectives. The truth is that the crisis changed everything **and nothing**. Because none of the challenges around human rights are in any regard less relevant today then before — on the contrary the crisis is amplifying the challenges — e.g. the vulnerability of the most vulnerable sections of the supply chain is now seen sharper than before. Part of the truth is also that the absence of international tourism is not turning anything to the better. There is no alternative to building back — but we have to do it **better**.

The focus on resilience also found it's way to our agenda only in the last months. Same as "beyond crisis" it is a hopeful concept, because it is rooted in the believe that we are able to overcome everything. Resilience understood in a holistic way is not just the ability to economically survive (that's just the necessary precondition – and difficult enough in that times) – but it goes much beyond: it is the ability to rethink and adjust and thus being better prepared for new challenges.

Online Symposium "Beyond the Crisis: How to Create Social Benefit and Resilience in Tourism", 28 September 2020



Consequently the triad "assess / understand, re-think-adjust" will guide us through this day.

I think that respecting human rights and resilience are based on the same principles and thus mutually reinforcing.

These principles are

- 1. Trust, cooperation and networks
- 2. Sustainability and do-no harm

The first principle "trust and cooperation" means that networks are strong enough to survive challenging times. Even though everyone in this virtual room is far away from being optimistic, we can be sure that this crisis will end one day and trust-based networks grounded on common values and cooperation will be the foundation for new success. The second principle "sustainability" is also strongly interlinked with both: the resilience- and the human rights-approach. Sustainable products are the result of a due diligent management strategy that minimizes the ecological, social and economical risks and maximises the opportunities. This again is the precondition for future resilience. Especially if we are courageous enough to think beyond this Covid-crisis and spot the other two big global challenges that are already there — namely climate crisis and the catastrophe of growing inequality. To make it short: building back better is not possible without human rights, sustainability and resilient networks!

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My deep believe is – and here I am speaking for all members of the Roundtable and want to particularly mention those who contributed to the preparation of this event - is that in a segmented sector, such as tourism, and in a complex world, such as ours today, no one can achieve anything alone – together we are stronger!

There are no one-fits-all solutions, but different ways to success and progress. In this spirit we are meeting here today. We will learn from experts, but also share practical experiences with each other.



We have invited today more than 15 speakers and experts and we are more than 130 participants from 28 countries on all continents.

Even though we have decided to exercise physical distancing today and go for an online-symposium, we don't want to practise social distancing.

So we invite you to get an active role today – being it in the break-out sessions later or by choosing the empty seat in our panel to participate in a discussion for a short while or by meeting others – friends or foreigners – during the breaks.

We have prepared a social wall with all contact information and share it with you, so that you have a chance for follow-up later. If not done yet, please provide your information on the social wall.



I wish you and all of us a very interesting day, with fruitful discussions – maybe surprising insights – and good networking and hand over to our highly esteemed moderator of the day - Klaus Ammann. He is the deputy Head of Business Editorial Department at Radio SRF – the largest Swiss broadcasting company.