



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT  
STUDIES, CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT  
STUDIES  
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

---

---

**Practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in Promoting  
Tourism Products in Abroad**

---

**By: Terefe Tujuma**

**Advisor: Tamirat Tefera (PhD)**

A Thesis Submitted to the Centre for Environment and Development Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Tourism Development and Management.

Addis Ababa University  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
July, 2022

## **Declaration**

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this study contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma. To the best of my knowledge, no other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis. This work has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other university. Accordingly, I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is hereby submitted for the degree of Master of Art in Tourism Development and Management.

Name: Terefe Tujuma Hundie

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Certification Statement**

This is to certify that Ato Terefe Tujuma has carried out his post-graduate thesis on “Practices of The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in Promoting Tourism Products in Abroad”. This work is the original effort of him and I recommend that this work fully enables him for the award of Master’s Degree in Tourism Development and Management.

Advisor: Tamirat Tefera (PhD)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Addis Ababa University, College of Development Studies,  
Center for Environment and Development Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Terefe Tujuma entitled “Practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in Promoting Tourism Products in Abroad” submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Tourism Development and Management.

Approved by Board of Examiners

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Acknowledgments**

First of all, my heartfelt thankfulness goes to God for giving me energy and making me strong to accomplish this research.

Next, I convey my truthful appreciation and gratitude to my Advisor Dr. Tamirat Tefera for his continuous follow-up and useful advice.

Next, I would like to thank my wife Mrs. Meseret Megersa, my daughters Bilise and Singiten, and also my sons Firaol and Jeneus for their generosity, understanding, and patience, while I'm taking their time throughout the past three years to realize my master's degree.

Finally, I would like to record my genuine thanks to my colleagues in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their valuable contribution especially, in providing reference documents, and for their highest involvement and input in the realization of this research paper.

# Table of Contents

	<b><u>pages</u></b>
Abstract.....	iv
Acknowledgments.....	v
List of Figures.....	x
List of Abbreviations .....	xi
<b>Chapter One: Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Background of the study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3. Research questions .....	6
1.4. Objective of the study.....	6
1.4.1. General objective.....	6
1.4.2. Specific objectives.....	6
1.5. Scope of the study.....	7
1.6. Significance of the study.....	7
1.7. Ethical Consideration.....	8
1.8. Organization of the study.....	9
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1. Introduction.....	10
2.2. Theoretical Literature Review .....	10
2.2.1. Overview of tourism and the tourism industry in Ethiopia.....	10
2.2.2. Destination, Destination Development and Management.....	13
2.2.3. Destination Marketing.....	15
2.2.4. Marketing Mix and its elements.....	17
2.2.5. Digital marketing and its strategy.....	21
2.2.6. Digital marketing practices.....	25
2.2.6.1. Business to customer digital marketing practice.....	25
2.2.6.2. Business to Business digital marketing practice.....	26

2.2.7. Role of stakeholder’s coordination in destination promotion and competitiveness .....	27
2.2.8. The role and benefits of digital technologies and social media in tourism promotion.....	28
2.2.9. Linkage of tourism, promotion, and safety and security.....	30
2.2.10. The benefit of promoting destination and tourism products.....	31
2.2.11. Tourism attractions and the current tourism destination development in Ethiopia.....	32
2.3. Review of Empirical Literature.....	34
<b>Chapter Three: Research Methodology.....</b>	<b>36</b>
3.1. Description of the study area.....	36
3.1.1. The Establishment and the power of the Ministry.....	36
3.1.2. The structure and the responsibilities of the Ministry.....	37
3.2. Research Design.....	39
3.3. Research Approach.....	39
3.4. Data Source and data Collection Methods.....	39
3.5. Target Population .....	40
3.6. Sampling techniques .....	41
3.7. Method of Data Analysis and Presentations.....	41
<b>Chapter Four: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation.....</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1. Introduction.....	43
4.2. The role and responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia.....	43
4.3. The Role of the Ministry in Stakeholders coordination.....	45
4.3.1. Office of the Prime Minister (OPM).....	47
4.3.2. Ministry of Tourism (MOT).....	47
4.3.3. Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs (MDINA).....	48
4.3.4. Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC).....	49
4.3.5. Regional Tourism Bureaus .....	49
4.3.6. Ethiopia Airline.....	50

4.3.7. Tourism Ethiopia.....	50
4.3.8. Ethiopian Tour Operators Association (ETOA).....	51
4.3.9. Addis Ababa Hotel Owners Association (AHA).....	51
4.3.10. Association of Hotel Professionals (AHP).....	51
4.3.11. Ethiopian Diaspora Agency (EDA).....	52
4.3.12. Ministry of Trade and Regional Coordination.....	52
4.3.13. Ethiopian Customs Commission (ECC) .....	52
4.3.14. Ethiopia Tourism Board (ETB) .....	53
4.3.15. Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council (ETTC) .....	53
4.3.16. Diasporas.....	53
4.3.17. Community schools.....	53
4.3.18. Think-tanks and Ethiopia’s friends.....	54
4.4. The rules and regulations that support the role of the directorate. ....	54
4.4.1. Proclamations.....	55
4.4.2. Investment Regulations .....	55
4.4.3. Policies.....	56
4.4.4. Constitution.....	57
4.4.5. Business manuals.....	57
4.4.6. Tourism Trade Qualification Assurance License.....	58
4.5. The Practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs .....	59
4.5.1. The practices of the Directorate General of Trade and Tourism Expansion.....	59
4.5.1.1. The Practices on using the manual and strategy of Promotion.....	59
4.5.1.2. The practice of managing and planning.....	59
4.5.1.3. The practice of the Ministry in stakeholder coordination.....	60
4.5.1.4. The Practices in Promoting the tourism destinations and products.....	63
4.5.1.5. The practice of assigning Tourism Ambassador.....	65
4.5.2. Practices of Ethiopia’s Missions.....	65
4.5.2.1. The practice of the Missions in organizing an event and recruiting tourists, tour operators and investors.....	66
4.5.2.2. The experiences of the Missions in coordinating the stakeholders.....	67

4.5.2.3. The practices of collecting information and using digital technologies.....	68
4.5.2.4. The practice of developing the marketing strategy.....	69
<b>4.6. The Challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting</b>	
tourist Destinations and products .....	70
4.6.1. The promotional challenges of the Ministry .....	71
4.6.1.1. Lack of Digital Marketing Strategies.....	71
4.6.1.2. Lack of Market Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP)	
strategy.....	72
4.6.1.3. Challenges related to Coordination and collaboration.....	73
4.6.1.4. Challenges relating to the quality of products and	
product diversification.....	75
4.6.1.5. Challenges in the use of Digital technologies.....	76
4.6.1.6. Lack of Budget and Fund-raising mechanisms.....	78
4.6.1.7. Lack of skill and knowledge-based promotion.....	80
4.6.1.8. Challenges related to infrastructure and service delivery.....	81
4.6.1.9. Challenges of Peace, Security and Stability.....	83
4.6.1.10. The problem related to the Manuals.....	84
4.6.1.11. Challenges of Covid-19.....	85
<b>Chapter five: Summary, conclusion and recommendations .....</b>	<b>86</b>
5.1. Summary.....	86
5.2. Conclusion.....	90
5.3. Recommendations.....	91
References.....	95
Appendices.....	104

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1 - The elements of the 4Ps of the marketing mix.....	18
Figure 2.2. - The elements of the 7Ps of the marketing mix.....	18
Figure 2.3. - The three types of media channels that marketers need to consider.....	23
Figure 2.4 - Marketing and product development strategies.....	24
Figure 2.5 - The stages of Customer relationship (lifecycle).....	26
Figure 3.1 - The building of MOFA.....	37
Figure 3.2. shows the structure of the Ministry.....	38
Figure 4.1 - Different stakeholders of tourism.....	54
Figure 4.2. Different incentives of tourism investment .....	56

## **List of Abbreviations/Acronyms**

AHA	Addis Ababa Hotels Association
AHP	Association of Hotel Professionals
AMA	American Marketing Association
AU	Africa Union
AUDA	African Union Development Agency
B2B	Business-to-business
B2C	Business-to-customer
CNN	Cable News Network
CRM	Customer relationship management
DMO	Destination Management Organization
EA	Ethiopian Airlines
ECC	Ethiopian Customs Commission
EDA	Ethiopian Diaspora Agency
EIC	Ethiopian Investment Commission
ETB	Ethiopia Tourism Board
ETOA	Ethiopian Tour Operators Association,
ETTC	Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Growth Domestic Product
HA	Hotel Associations
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication
MDINA	Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs
MM	Marketing Mix
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOT	Ministry of Tourism
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTRC	Ministry of Trade and Regional Coordination
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

OPM	Office of the Prime Minister
PR	Public Relations
RTB	Regional Tourism Bureaus,
SNS	Social Networking Site
STP	Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning
STPDM	Sustainable Tourism Policy Development and management
TAP	Tourism Action Plan
TE	Tourism Ethiopia
TOR	Terms of References
TPLF	Tigray Peoples Liberation Front
TTCI	Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index
UK	United Kingdom
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Social & Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organizations
WTO	World Tourism Organizations
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WTTCI	World Travel and Tourism Council Index

## **Abstract**

*Ethiopia is one of Africa's most fascinating destinations with enormous, unique and amusing cultural, natural, and historical attractions. To promote these attractions to the international communities, the Ministry of foreign Affairs of the Federal democratic Republic of Ethiopia has played a great role. The Ministry has many practical experiences in promoting Ethiopian tourism destinations and products and also faced enormous challenges that hinders the promotional activities.*

*To assess the practices of the MOFA of Ethiopia in promoting tourism products in abroad, it is very important to undertake research on the area. To realize this, the researcher chose the directorate of trade and tourism expansion from the main office and one up to three Ethiopian Missions from each continent to collect data. The researcher uses a qualitative research method with purposive sampling and the primary data were collected through the distribution of an open-ended questionnaire to 15 individuals, one focus group discussion and five key informant interviews of the selected individuals of the Ministry were undertaken and the result was presented in the form of narration by using qualitative techniques. The secondary data were also collected from various books, research papers, academic journals, reports, and other official documents of the Ministry.*

*From the assessment of the collected data, there is the practical experience of the Ministry in promoting and negotiating tourism-related issues, coordinating the stakeholder, organizing an event, assigning a tourism ambassador, promoting the tourism products, and initiating ideas and opinions related to foreign tourism policy and strategy.*

*On the other hand, the Ministry faced enormous challenges that influences its promotional activities in one way or another. The finding indicates that the absence of digital marketing strategy, lack of market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy, poor coordination system, poor quality of products and product diversification, challenges of using digital technologies, lack of budget and fund rising mechanism, challenges related to the skilled, the service delivery and peace and security are the most influential ones.*

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### 1.1. Background of the study

Across the globe, tourism has evolved as one of the most expansive, and diverse sectors of this century. It is one of the largest, primary drivers, and fastest-growing sectors that has a great contribution to economic growth and job creation throughout the world. (Martin Oliver Pedak, 2018). Africa's unique history and natural wonders are gaining attention amid the local and global increase in cultural, heritage, and development tourism (*Landry Singne, 2018*). Africa's unique history, cultural heritage, and natural wonders are a great potential for the continent to be a vibrant host for tourists and its economic development. The sixty-fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development that was held in Geneva in 2017 states that tourism is an important sector that has a great contribution to the gross domestic product, employment, and trade in many African economies. For millions of Africans, tourism is a lifeline and it's potential for driving transformative and inclusive growth must be harnessed (Mukhisa Kituyi Secretary-General of UNCTAD, 2018). Since the 1990s, tourism has increasingly contributed to Africa's growth, employment, and trade. The tourism sector has been praised for its capacity to stimulate economic growth through the creation of jobs and by attracting investment and fostering entrepreneurship, while also contributing, if properly harnessed, to the preservation of ecosystems and biodiversity, protection of cultural heritage, and promotion of empowerment of local communities (*The Economic Development in Africa Report 2017*).

The African Union and sub-regional communities have also put tourism at the top of their agenda (Landry Singne,2018). The African Union has endorsed the continent's Tourism Action Plan (TAP) developed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), renamed African Union Development Agency (AUDA). The TAP recognizes tourism development among priority sector strategies of the African Union Development Agency across Africa and aims to make Africa the destination of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Landry Singne, 2018). At the continental level, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Tourism Action

Plan under its New Partnership for Africa's Development recognize tourism's importance in driving Africa's socio-economic development and structural transformation through job creation, in catalysing growth in other productive sectors and in fostering inclusion through the participation of women and youth in the sector's activities (The Economic Development in Africa Report 2017). Generally, tourism can be an engine for inclusive growth and economic development, and it can complement development strategies aimed at fostering economic diversification and structural transformation.

Believed to be the cradle of human civilization, Ethiopia is one of Africa's most fascinating destinations with enormous and diversified tourist attractions. The country is one of the ancient African states that have the cradle of civilization, home of historical, cultural, and natural beauty. (Selamawit Kassaye, 2013). It has unique and amusing biodiversity, cultural, natural, and historical attractions. The beautiful land features ranging from highest mountain of Ras Dashan to the most spectacular volcanic landscapes of the lowest points in the world, the Danakil Depression, is an amusing attraction in the country. Different attractive features of fauna and flora, mammals and birds found nowhere else in the globe, lakes, rivers with waterfalls, and the various caves like Sof-Umar which makes the country the most attractive and popular emergent tourist destination in Africa (Selamawit Kassaye, 2013).

Ethiopia has the biggest share of Africa's world heritage sites registered by the United Nations Education, Social and Cultural Organizations (Marie Huber, 2017). Apart from the natural resources, Ethiopia is also endowed with magnificent historical and cultural tourist attractions. The most famous ones include the Rock-Hewn Church of Lalibela, the walled city of Harar, the Castle of Gondar, the Obelisk of Aksum, the lower valley of Awash, and Omo, the stelae of Tiya, the Gaadaa system of Oromo, Fiche chembalala, Meskel, and Timket.

The existence of different Embassies and organizations, the presence of the headquarter of the African Union, and the office of UNECA in Addis Ababa are countless opportunities for the growth of the tourism sector in Ethiopia. Moreover, the growth of international standards and branded hotel industries and restaurants in Addis Ababa and the leading flag carriers of Ethiopian Airlines that link the country to the world contribute a lot to the development of the tourism sector.

Tourism products are a key pillar in the development of any tourism destination. The range and quality of the tourism product offering define the competitiveness and attractiveness of tourism destinations and the visitors' experience. Nowadays, international competition in the tourism sector is frequently rising as more and more destination development are available. Additionally, the application of smart tourism destination development and marketing activities are increasing, highly skilled destination and product promotional activities to the international market are growing. Ethiopia has many internationally recognized tourist attractions and is one of the opportunist countries from the continent by having more world heritage sites, but they are not well optimized. The country is well regarded as the most important tourism destination in the world however, the sector is still described as the one that is underdeveloped and at its infant stage (*Atlaw Alemu interview, 2020*). This immaturity in the sector is due to lack of attention, financial constraints, weak management system, and shortage of trained manpower. Moreover, the absence of the application of smart technologies to enhance destination development, promotion, and easy access to information will also impose its impact on destination and tourism product development as well as foreign tourist arrivals (Elshaday Timkat, 2002).

It is well known that if the tourism sector is properly exploited, it has brought huge economic potential for countries that have viable tourist destinations and wish to develop their tourism industries. Nicolas (2013) states that tourism is an attractive business tool for economic development specifically in the developing world. In Ethiopia, there is a long way ahead to exploit efficiently the benefits of the tourism sector and secure its right position in the economic sector. The tourism sector has great potential and contribution to the development of the national and local economy through earnings of foreign exchange, creating employment opportunities, stimulating infrastructure development, and enhancing the income of the residents if it is properly developed and promoted. However, these economic benefits were not exploited effectively in Ethiopia yet because there are few arrivals due to poor destination development and weak promotional practices in the country.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is one of the biggest government institutions that play a crucial role in promoting our historical, cultural, and natural tourist destinations and products to the international communities. The

Ministry has a practical experience in stake holder coordination, event organizing, facilitating different meetings and familiarization trips and promoting Ethiopia's tourism potential. During these promotional activities there is an effort of the Ministry to use digital technologies and work with different stakeholders in coordination to realize the contribution of the tourism sector to the economic development of the country. But there is a challenge of coordination, use of digital technologies and digital marketing strategies in the Ministry which are not resolved yet to undertake effective and efficient promotional activities that enable to attract potential tourists to the country. To tackle this problem, it needs the engagement of different stakeholders for effective and efficient implementation of the promotional strategies that will accelerate the development of the sector and assist in enhancing international arrivals.

Therefore, the concern of this thesis is to assess the practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and identifying the available challenges that hinders the promotional activities and finally put some strategic recommendations that assists the Ministry to exercise its responsibility.

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Tourism promotion is an outreach efforts and communications that include systematic planning, identifying, and informing a key audience to enhance the market for your tourism destination or products. Promotional activity is a business activity that communicates a company's interests through informing and influencing action. A detailed knowledge, skill, and awareness of natural, cultural, and historical tourism heritages and products are very important to undertake the effective and efficient promotional activity.

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, the use of the current promotional strategies and tactics are very crucial to get your destination to be one of the choices to be visited by tourists (Fatemealsadat Afsahosseini, 2020). Today, thankful to the recent digital technologies, tourism destinations and product promotion can be easily accessible and promoted to international tourists within a short period and with very cheap promotional expenditure. In this era of digitalization, using internet technology to promote your destination is indispensable and fits the modern age to provide the necessary information effectively and efficiently. Social media and social networks like websites, YouTube, tweeter, Facebook, WhatsApp,

Telegram, WeChat, Instagram, etc are very influential in the globe in promoting destinations, tourism products, and in building a positive image of the destination. These various forms of digital marketing offer an option for tourists in their choice of a tourist destination. Singh (2015) states that social media is powerful and plays an imperative role in digital marketing and he suggests that social media is an appropriate tool to increase brand awareness.

Ethiopia is a country with the best tourism destination and amazing tourism products that have the potential to attract foreign visitors (Sophie Eastaugh, 2015). However, there are few arrivals in the country due to poor destination development, weak promotional practices, lack of promotional strategies, and absence of market segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategy. According to the findings of Kidane (2015) in his assessment of promotional practices of tour operators of Ethiopia, he found that there is no effective promotional strategy and program, lack of applying promotional mixes and identifying target tourists, problem of designing appropriate message and less coordination. Technology-driven and strategy based promotional activity of tourist products by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia to the international community has a significant role in the effectiveness of promoting the country's tourism resources with minimum possible cost and time. Such kinds of promotional activities and practices have great potential in creating a positive image of a country as well as enhancing the tourist volume.

A few researchers like Abebaw Shimelis (2020) and Shewaye Sewnet (2019) are addressing the practices of promotion in Addis Abeba and Awi Zone. But the research paper on the title of “Practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in promoting the destinations and products” is a new one and has not been published elsewhere as best of my knowledge. In this regard, the researcher believes that examining the current tourism promotional practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in this recent era of globalization has a great importance for the input of strategy and policy documents.

On the other hand, many researchers do not work their research papers on the practices and challenges that facing the country during the promotion of tourism potential. Nowadays, even if there are a few studies that are undertaken on the mentioned title by a few researchers, these studies have their own limitations and gaps. For instance, Abebaw Shimelis (2020) and Shewaye Sewnet (2019) are addressing the practices and challenges

of promotion in Addis Abeba and Awi Zone respectively and indicate the challenges like the constrain of budget, lack of government attention, lack of stakeholder coordination, poor service delivery, shortage of skilled manpower, the problem of security and infrastructure development and give their recommendations on how to tackle those challenges. However, these studies do not indicate the absence of digital marketing strategies and market segmentation, targeting, and positioning strategies as the challenges of this century to promote destinations and miss to put the recommendations on the ways forward.

Therefore, the researcher wants to assess the practices and challenges of using digital marketing strategies, market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategies, as well as on the use of technology-driven promotional practices. Moreover, the gaps in the previous studies were assessed. In this regard, the main purposes of this dissertation are to present the practices of the Ministry in promoting the tourism destinations and products, to identify the challenges faced by the ministry, and finally to give some recommendations that solves the mentioned problems and helps as an input for the development of strategies and policies.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

To deal with the identified research objectives, the study was guided by the following sets of key research questions:

1. What are the roles of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Trade and Tourism Expansion Directorate), and Ethiopian Missions in promoting the destinations and tourism products?
2. What are the existing practices of the Ministry in supporting and coordinating of Missions and other stakeholders to facilitate promotion?
3. What are the existing practices of Ethiopian Missions in promoting tourism destinations and products to the international communities?
4. What are the challenges faced in the existing practices of promoting tourism destinations and products?

### **1.4. Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.4.1. General objective**

The general objective of the study is to assess the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting the tourism destination and products to the international community to enhance the volume of tourist arrivals to Ethiopia.

#### **1.4.2. Specific objectives**

The specific objectives of this study include the following;

1. Assessing the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
2. Assessing the practices of the MOFA of Ethiopia in coordinating and supporting Ethiopian Missions and other stakeholders to facilitate promotional activities.
3. Assessing the practices of Ethiopian Missions in promoting tourism products to international communities.
4. Identifying the challenges faced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in promoting tourism resources abroad.

#### **1.5. Scope of the Study**

This study assesses the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia during its operational activities up to the end of the year 2021. This is due to the fact that the Ministry undertakes a reform program and changes some of its structures at the beginning of 2022. Therefore, including a few months after January 2022 in which the Ministry exercises the new structure makes this study invisible due to the infancy and ineffectiveness of the structure.

The focus of the study is mainly on promotional practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia particularly in assessing the practices of the main office and the Missions of Ethiopia residing in different countries of the world.

Geographically, the study covers the five regions of the continent. Since the government of Ethiopia has more than 61 diplomatic missions in five regions of the continent (African, European, America, Middle East, and Asian countries), the researcher chose one up to three Missions from each region based on the prioritization of the MOFA to recruit the tourists and also the tourism potential and the experience we gain from those countries.

Based on this, the researcher makes an interview with five individuals, organizes one focus group discussion and also distributed questionnaires to fifteen selected individuals who are

working at the main office and in Ethiopian Missions in the mentioned regions to analyse the practices and identify the challenges faced during the promotional activities.

## **1.6. Significance of the Study**

It is logical that any academic research has to meet its identified objective that enables it to solve the stated problems. In this regard, this study will have the following significances.

**As an input for the strategy and policy documents:** This study has a great importance in examining the role of the Ministry, the Missions and other stakeholders. It reviews, examines and assesses the status of the existing promotional practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia and identifies the potential challenges during the promotional activities. In addition to this, the study contributes to the ministry to know its gaps in the current promotional practices of the destinations and products and assists it to create a new promotional strategy that enhances the flow of tourists to the country. Finally, based on the findings, the study recommends on the ways forward that enables the Ministry to craft the strategy of promotion and incorporate some recommendations into the policy document of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**For the development:** The study identifies the challenges that face the Ministry during the promotional activities and recommends on how to tackle these challenges. This helps the tourism sector to enhance its capacity of coordination, finance, skill, technology and so on... that enables the sector to improve the service delivery, promotional practices and use of digital technologies. This supports the country to use the current digital technologies during the promotional activities as well as the service delivery for the effective dissemination of information to make our tourist destinations to be one of the best competitors in the world. Therefore, these activities enhance the service quality and tourist flows which contribute a lot in the development of the tourism sector as well as the economy of the country.

**For the academic:** This study has a great importance for the academicians, scholars and researchers as a reference to teach the practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in universities, colleges and seminars and also used as a baseline to undertake further study on the area.

## **1.7. Ethical Consideration**

Ethics is a very important issue of any scientific research to build trust with individual participants and organizations to have reliable scientific results. During each process of the study, this is to say at the beginning of the research, during the collection and analyses of data and reporting the result, it needs much attention of the researcher. Before distributing the questionnaire for the selected individuals, the researcher clarifies the purpose of the study to the participants or respondents. Furthermore, the researcher notifies the respondents that the withdrawal from the interview session before completion of delivering the necessary information is unethical, the importance of honesty and frankness during the response to the questionnaire, unrestricted and free participation without any pressure from the researcher is also the guiding principle in this research.

## **1.8. Organization of the Study**

This study organized into five chapters. Chapter one will present the background, statement of the problem, objective of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study and ethical issues of the study, and also the organization of the paper. Chapter two comprises the review of related literatures. Chapter three thoroughly discussed the research methodology of the study. Chapter four endeavored to present, analyze and interpret data sought from both primary and secondary sources and the last but not the least chapter five disclosed the summary, conclusion, and recommendation part of the study.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Literature Review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter deals with the review of theoretical and empirical literatures that are used as evidence and supports the work of the researchers. In the theoretical literature review, the overview of the tourism and tourism industry in Ethiopia, Tourism destination, destination development and management, destination marketing, digital marketing practices, role of stakeholder's coordination in destination promotion and competitiveness, the role and benefit of digital technologies and social media in tourism promotion, the linkage of tourism, promotion, safety and security, the benefit of tourism promotion on enhancing tourist flow, and tourism attractions and the current tourism destination development in Ethiopia will be presented. Finally, in the empirical review of the literature similar works of different researchers on the area will be assessed and presented.

### **2.2. Theoretical Literature Review**

#### **2.2.1. Overview of tourism and the tourism industry in Ethiopia**

For many decades, many researchers define tourism and tourists in different terminologies. Stephen and Smith (1988) state that there is no single definition of tourism or tourists as economists, psychologists, and geographers perceive certain things about tourism in their field.

The World Tourism Organization gives a technical definition of tourism and tourists which is a common term used to cover both demand and supply side that has been accepted and adopted in a variety of forms and used throughout the world. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2004), tourism is the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited. This organization also defines tourists as people who travel to and stay in a place outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes not related to the exercise of an

activity remunerated from within the place visited. Therefore, tourist is a temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work or residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to provide to their needs (Gunn 1994).

Tourism is one of the largest and rapidly growing industries in the world (Martin O. P. 2018). In the early years of the twentieth century, tourism has continued to expand due to technological developments, especially an increase in air travel, a rise in personal wealth, and the availability of greater amounts of free time.

Tourism is a major foreign exchange and employment-generating industry that brings a change in the national and local economic growth (UNDP, 2011). It contributes its share in increasing the income of the local people that plays a significant role in altering their life standards. Over the last few decades, tourism has become one of the main sectors of the global economy, not only because of its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of different countries, but also because of the employment it generates (Cooper, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert, & Wanhill 2008).

The tourism industry is an industry that consists of all those firms, organizations, and facilities which are intended to serve the specific needs and wants of tourists. Ethiopia was the first African country to establish a tourist industry in the 1960s in acknowledging its tremendous tourism potentials like its numerous tourist attraction, visitors welcoming and proud people of their country's historic heritage (Ashenafi, 2016). Schellenberg (1965) argues that the main components of the national tourism product are: natural and human heritage of the country (geographical location, climate, landscape, various attraction specific natural elements, vegetation, flora and fauna, natural reservations and parks, cultural, artistic and historical values, language, folklore, hospitality, customs, and traditions, etc.), general infrastructure (general economic development, transport, trade infrastructure, municipal infrastructure, cultural infrastructure), tourism specific infrastructure (accommodation, restaurant facilities, health facilities, entertainment network, tourist transport categories, tourist information network, the business of tourism consumption, travel agencies, etc.), other components aiming at the institutional framework, directly or indirectly linked to tourism.

Ethiopia is a land of origin and a cradle of humanity, where we first walked on two legs. The country is a source of Blue Nile, the origin of coffee, UNESCO registered tangible and intangible heritages, rivers and waterfalls, lakes with greater attractions, beautiful landscapes from high pics of Ras -Dashan to low lands of Danakil depression. Furthermore, the country has different national parks, forest biosphere reserves, historical, cultural, and natural museums. In addition to this, the diverse religious festivals, people with different ethnic backgrounds that speak more than 80 languages and are all unified in mutual respect and genuine hospitality towards guests are an amusing tourism resources of the country (Mohamed Amin, 1996).

Ethiopia is an important and strategic country that serves as the headquarter of AU and the Economic Commission for Africa which opens a door to host many international meetings and conferences. The importance of a country has been growing and many international organizations have been continuously strengthening and expanding their institutions in Ethiopia which creates an enormous demand for accommodation. Ethiopian Airlines is also playing a great role in attracting tourists through promoting the country's tourism destinations in international markets. Ethiopian Star Alliance Airline is a multi-award winner for its commitment and contributions towards the development and growth of the African aviation industry offers more than 21,555 daily flights to 1,356 airports in more than 193 countries that enabling it to contribute its share in the growth of the national economy through enhancing tourist flow and foreign currency exchange ([Ethiopian Airline](#), 2021).

As one of the developing countries in Africa, Ethiopia, and its tourism is becoming an important sector contributing a great deal towards the social, cultural, and economic development aspects of the country. The Government of Ethiopia is committed to strengthening the tourism sector and recognizes that tourism could play a vital role in exchanging foreign currency, creating more jobs, earning an income for citizens, and alleviating poverty. Over the last three years, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has made tremendous development gains in tourism destination development. The tourism infrastructure development in the country like star-rated hotels, lodges, restaurants, guest houses, destination development, roads, and transportations are raised and delivering the necessary services to the tourists. But, in my opinion and the views of different

professionals in the sector, the existing infrastructure in the country is not met the international standards and the interest of tourists in supplying good services to the tourists uniformly all over the country where our destinations are available.

Even if, the country possesses numerous natural, historical, and cultural tourism attractions, various external and internal factors have been negatively affecting the sustainable development of the tourism industry. Budget constraint, shortage of qualified and skilled man power, poor planning and management system and lack of attention and political commitment are the major factors that hinders the development of the sector. Moreover, the bad image of the country in front of foreigners, the absence of coordination, poor quality of tourist infrastructures and currently the country's involvement in the civil war negatively affecting the tourism sector. In addition to these, the country is not familiar to use smart tourism destination development strategy and the recent digital technologies to make easy access of information regarding the destinations and products to the tourists.

### **2.2.2. Destination, Destination Development and Management**

The destination is a complex network involving a large number of infrastructures that supply a wide range of products and services. A tourism destination is a geographical area with different facilities and infrastructure that are very vital for tourists to come and stay. Destination attractions are places of interest that draw tourists to visit, typically for their inherent or exhibited natural or cultural value, historical significance, natural, or built beauty, offering leisure, adventure, and pleasure (Vengesayi 2009). Gunn and Var (2002) states that destinations are places of tourist interest. The geographic, cultural, and traditional factors as well as the available natural resources make the destination to have its unique characteristics. Gunn noted that within the destination residents and tourists share certain characteristics and elements of the destination while others are used exclusively by one group or the other.

For the resident, the destination is the place where they live or stay to do their daily activities, whereas, the tourist destination is the place where they visit temporarily to have leisure time for a short duration. Tourists visiting a destination stimulate the investment in different tourist facilities like hotels, lodges, restaurants, and other tourism infrastructures that enables the area to attract additional tourists. Destination development and

management needs a proper planning that ensures the participation and full engagement of local communities. Conflicts can arise where the use made of the various elements of a destination by tourists and by the local community is different (Howie 2003). Therefore, to avoid conflict of interest that arise during the destination development and the visit of tourists to the area, integrated destination planning, and management that ensure the participation of all stakeholders is very crucial. Gunn and Var (2002) proposed that the planning process at a destination needs to be integrated because communities owe resources and play a critical tourism role in destinations since they are a part of the destination.

The concept of destination management was introduced in tourism literature during the 1980s, and further improved in the late 1990s (Nersrin Sourak, 2015). Destination management is the process of bringing together and integrating various components of the destination mix within a certain geographic area. Destination management focused on bringing the perception of residents and tourists close together, through the involvement of the various stakeholders and awareness creating on the shared interests of both tourists and residents. The destinations are needed to be well managed as much as they can be because when a tourism destination is managed poorly, as many are, its future as both destination and community is threatened (Jamieson, 2006). WTO (2004) argues that destination managers are the key front-line decision-makers for many of the issues and challenges related to the sustainable development of their destination. Howie (2003) proposed the special actions to tourism destination management with a special focus on the provision of suitable accommodation, changing the resources into attractions, and ensuring integration of tourist-related developments.

Destination Management Organization (DMO) roles are unavoidable in tourism management and development activities. The responsible and accountable management and development of natural and cultural resources through sustainable tourism policy and destination management (STPDM) are very essential for the development of tourism destinations. In another word, sustainable tourism development needs to give special attention to designing appropriate policies and strategies as well as emphasizing tourism management and planning. In the determination of destination competitiveness, destination management is a critical factor that can be evaluated through market share and frequency

of tourist visits. Environmental, social and economic values are protected in the development of a sustainable competitive destination.

The sustainable tourism destination development concept emerged from the attempt to conserve natural resources and the environment. Jamieson (2006) claimed that the achievement of sustainable development goals of tourism needs strategic planning and sound management, particularly in community destination zone. Government is one of the key leaders in tourism destination development which can transform traditional community-oriented to be legal action. According to Sofield (2003), sustainable tourism destination development must be managed by governments, because those only states can provide the conditions for movement towards sustainability. Sustainable destination management helps to preserve the local people's heritage and interests, address the needs of tourists, reduce the negative impacts of tourism development and protect the local environment. In this regard, tourism destination development, destination management, and marketing are key policy focus in the tourism sector development strategy in most countries.

Destination image for a specific destination and travel motivation provide important information for understanding tourist behaviours and behavioural intentions (Philips and Jang, 2007). A positive image supports the intention to visit and a negative image negatively influences visit intention (Fakeye and Crompton, 1991). Hsu and Lam (2006) indicate that motivation for travel has been an important area of study in the tourism literature and they state that understanding why people travel and what factors influence their behavioural intention of choosing a travel destination is beneficial to tourism planning and marketing. According to travel motivation theory, there are two types of motivations: push and pull (Dann, 1977). Push motivation is what implants a desire for people to want to travel, while pull factors are closely related to destination attributes that attract tourists (Iso-Ahola, 1982). According to this theory, pull factors are things like attractions that draw people to a destination whereas, push factors are the needs of tourists which may include rest, adventure, and relaxation. Therefore, to attract more tourists to the destination it needs the development, management, planning, and marketing of the destinations that motivates a visitor to visit the sites.

### **2.2.3. Destination Marketing**

Tourism marketing is the systemic and coordinated efforts to optimize the satisfaction of tourism. It is a device to transform the potential tourists into actual tourists through the harmonization of the social interests and interests of tourist organizations. Marketing is the function of the organization that can keep in constant touch with the organization's consumer read their needs, develop products that meet these needs, and build a programme of communications to express the organization's purpose (Kotler and Levy, 1969). Tourism marketing is an integrated effort to satisfy tourists by making the best possible services available to them. It is an approach to promote business that depends on the successful formulation of strategic planning and its implementation. The tourism market may be segmented based on local and foreign tourists as well as the income level of the tourists.

Marketing comprises all the activities and processes used to bring buyers and sellers together, including creating, distributing, promoting, pricing, and innovating ideas to facilitate satisfying exchange relationships in a dynamic environment (Kotler and Armstrong, 2006). It is a process of producing, promoting and easily accessing of a product that can be satisfying a customer's desire in terms of attractiveness, quality, and price. It is all the activities in getting goods and services from the producer or supplier to the user (Edgell, David, and Makens, 1990). According to Raju (2009) marketing is the key issue to achieve the goals of the organization which assists in determining the needs and wants of the target markets and deliver in the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than competitors. Marketing is a key policy focus in the tourism sector development strategy of most countries because of its potential as the most optimal alternative for achieving economic and social development (Benghadbane and Khreis, 2019).

Destination marketing is a vital part of developing and retaining a particular location's popularity that involves cooperative and competitive linkages among the commercial operators. It is a science and an art that promote a tourism resource to achieve higher satisfaction of consumer needs and profit maximization. Destination marketing is the heartland of tourism marketing that plays a catalyst role to link all the other industries in tourism like transport, accommodation, and attractions sectors (Seaton and Bennett, 2004).

Destination marketing is the management process through which the tourist organizations or enterprises identify their selected tourists. Destination marketing is an amalgamation of an individual or collective efforts and activities created to form a total experience of a visited place (Murphy et al., 2000).

Marketing activities are very important in scanning the environment and in market research, to create quality information basis for the selection of prosperous tourism activities and programs (Ilieska, 2002). Tourism destination marketing needs simple research which is used by destination marketers as a tool to design the tourism products and services, to assess tourists' impact to the destination, to evaluate marketing effectiveness and to select the right media for promotion. Moreover, it helps to evaluate the destination image, to assess the elasticity of demand, to identify the types of customers to be attracted and to examine the reasons of deterring people from visiting destinations.

#### **2.2.4. Marketing Mix and its elements**

Marketing mix can be defined as controllable group of variables that the organization can use to effect on the buyer's response to product or service (Kotler, 2000). Marketing mix is a term used to describe the combination tactics used by a business to realize its goals by marketing its products or services effectively to a particular target customers group (CIM 2009). Therefore, marketing mix is the combination of different marketing decision variables, strategies, and tactics used by the organization management to market its goods and services.

The most important strategy of marketing in our modern era is marketing mix (MM) which developed through time from one element to multi elements (Thabit 2018). Marketing mix has many elements that can be specified according to the main goal of the organization. The major elements of the marketing mix are product, price, place and promotion which are the bases of any marketing strategy that strengthen the customer satisfaction level (Thabit, 2015). These major elements of the marketing mix, the 4Ps, was originally introduced in 1960 by E. Jerome McCarthy. The 4Ps are still used as a vital part of marketing mix and implemented by many organizations as marketing strategy. These 4Ps were emphasising on product promotion and designed at a period when businesses

remained more focus on selling of the products, rather than the services. Singh (2012) shows that the interconnectivity of these four variables, in such a way that by increasing the product's price, the product demand will be decreased and lesser distribution points will be desired.

In the 1980s the 4Ps was challenged for not referencing the importance of customer service and was extended to 7Ps, which include three further elements (the service mix) that better reflect service delivery: People, Process and Physical evidence. The marketing mix elements need to include the three additional Ps: The People, processes and physical evidence in service marketing mix to carry out an efficient and effective service for the customers. In 2001, Chaffey and Smith recognised the growing importance of relationships, especially within the digital marketing arena and proposed partnerships as an eighth element of the digital marketing mix. They suggested that their eighth P was very important as it enabled digital marketers to extend reach, and build relationships (Chaffey and Smith, 2012). Figure 2.1. and 2.2. shows that the elements of the 4Ps and & 7Ps of the marketing mix.



Figure 2.1 - The elements of the 4Ps of the marketing mix.

Source: <https://www.google.com/imgres?4p-marketing>



Figure 2.2. - The elements of the 7Ps of the marketing mix.

Source: <https://www.smartinsits.com/7Ps of marketing mix>

**Product:** The product is the main element of any marketing mix (Singh, 2012). Product is an item or goods and services accessible by the organization to satisfy customer needs and wants. It may consist of both the tangible and intangible resources that the customers used in their daily activities. Product classifying, packaging and labelling are very important for easy identification and enhancement of the attraction during the promotion. Product decisions include the quality, features, benefits, style, design, branding, packaging, services, warranties, guarantees, life cycles, investments and returns.

To differentiate your products and services from different producers, branding of the product is very vital. The brand symbol is the visual representation of the brand name which assists in identifying products, encouraging loyalty, and aiding a new product introduction. A strong brand has high brand equity, which means that it has high value (Arens et al., 2011). Manufacturers and producers develop their products and services into brands in order to create unique market positions in the minds of their customers (Jobber and Chadwick, 2013). According to Jobber and Chadwick creating a unique position in the marketplace involves a careful choice of the target market and establishing a clear differential in the minds of the people. Branding can add value across the supply chain, act as a barrier to competition, increase consumer trust and generate high levels of profitability (Chaffey and Chadwick 2016). Therefore, it is very important to mark clearly the brand of the product on the packaging as the brand symbol communicate the key features of the brand identity to differentiate and distinguish your product from those of the competing brands.

**Price:** Price is the amount of money paid by customers to visit a destination or purchase the product. The interest of the customer to visit destination, the destination entrance fee, customer's purchasing power, and government rules and regulations are the factors that control the process of the price. Pricing is a very critical decision zone as it has its impact on the need for the product and also on the profitability of the organization (Singh, 2012). Therefore, the price can tell the customer about the market which helps as a differentiation tool. Pricing also has psychological meaning for the consumer, as a high price is often equated with high quality in the absence of other information about the destination or product (Connett, 2004).

**Place:** The selection of the areas for the promotion of tourism resources to the customer needs special attention. The promotional materials have to be ready at a suitable place and easily accessed by the customers. The process of the distribution of the product should ensure whether the product is reaching the target market in the appropriate place, at the right time and at the right cost (Connett, 2004).

**Promotion:** Marketing has many strategies, but all these strategies have one goal, this goal is to promote for the organization products or services by increasing the satisfaction of customers (Thabit 2018). Promotion is one of the elements of the marketing mix which includes all the relevant “activities, materials, and media used by a marketer to update a potential customer about a particular product offering” (Connett, 2004). It refers to how you tell the audience about your product, price or place and even the target behaviour. The goal of promotion is to persuade the target consumer to buy or consume the product offering.

Promotion is one of the strongest elements in the marketing mix that helps the seller to show the product to the customers in an effective manner and encourage them to purchase. Promotional actions are mainly meant to complement personal selling, advertising and publicity (Burnett, 2008). When using promotion as a strategy for influencing tourists’ decisions, it is very important to choose a good promotional tool. Promotion tools are devices, activities, or methods used by marketing managers to convey the desired message to the market to achieve any desired promotion objectives (Esu & Ebitu, 2010). Promotion is the process of informing, persuading, communicating product information or ideas, influencing targeted audiences to change the customer decision, and enhancing the market opportunities. It is an important tool to change the behaviour of tourists, specifically to enhance the positive image of tourism products and services.

Gursoy and Gavcar (2003) described destination promotion as a combination of creating a strong tourism network, raising destination quality, enhancing destination profile, and attracting tourists through strategic events. Promoting the destination requires a coordinated campaign and the development of communicating channels with stakeholders to raise awareness and encourage the purchase of the products. International tourists’ perceptions were based on their perceptions of what they already knew about the

destination. Promotion is very important to fill the perceptual and informational gaps that occurs between suppliers of tourism and the tourist (Esu and Ebitu, 2010). Furthermore, Esu & Ebitu (2010) explain that promotion has a certain influence on the decision to purchase products and services, or in the case of destination marketing to choose a specific destination various communication methods and activities aimed to encourage the target consumer to buy or consume the tourism product offering is very crucial during the promotion. Therefore, promotional activities need special attention, an adequate fund raising and reaching consensus to be successful.

Advertising and public relation are the major promotional tools of marketing the destination. Belch (2007) refers to the elements of the promotional mix as tools that are used in IMC to communicate with the relevant audiences. Arens et al. (2011) explain that IMC is a process of developing and strengthening uniformly beneficial relationships with various stakeholders by creating a strategic plan of communications that will enable constructive contact with the organization or brand through a variety of media.

Promotional practice on television, radio, and printed media like magazines, newspapers, posters, and brochures are very important but in practice is very poor in this 21st century. Targeting the right market, selecting the right media with the right message at the right time is very crucial to attract consumers from several cultural backgrounds and geographic locations. In this century different tools of this era are used by destinations to promote their products. Electronic media are the recent promotional tools that make easy access of information for tourists across the world. Webs and social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, we chat, what-sup, telegram, Imo, Messenger, and YouTube are playing a significant role in promoting tourism destinations and products.

These promotional tools are very important to create awareness for the visitors and change their attitude, enhance the interest of customers and attract them to increase the sales, build a positive image of the destinations, and motivate the tourists to stay longer in the destination. According to Bassey (2010), promotional strategies will serve as connections between the customers and the experience they are seeking. To be successful and competent in the tourism sector, countries must develop a marketing strategy that is better than their competitors that offer better value with good quality, price, and services.

**People:** People is one of the marketing mix elements that consists of the customer and the employees of the organization. The professionalism, knowledge and skill of the employees and their interaction with customers and other stakeholders is very important to select and retain the customer and grow the company's sale.

**Process:** The process is the activities that play a supporting role in delivering a service (Groucutt, 2005). The process is a mechanisms, methods and procedures in which the companies use to achieve all marketing functions that simplify the purchasing procedure and improve the customer's service experience.

**The Physical evidence:** The Physical evidence is the actual expression that shows the purchasing and usage of a product by the customer.

### **2.2.5. Digital marketing and its strategy**

Digital is electronic technology that generates, stores, and processes data. Strategy is an action that managers take to attain one or more of the organization's goals. According to Johnson and Scholes (2005), strategy determines the direction and the scope of an organization over the long term, and they say that it should determine how resources should be configured to meet the needs of markets and stakeholder. Strategy can determine how organizational resources, skills, and competencies are combined to create a competitive advantage.

Marketing is the science and art of exploring, creating, and delivering value to satisfy the needs of a target market at a profit (Kotler, 2012). It is the satisfaction of demand that helps to identify the desire and wants of the people. In 2007, the American Marketing Association (AMA) define marketing as follows. According to their definitions, Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. A marketing strategy refers to an organization's integrated pattern of decisions that specify its crucial choices concerning products, markets, marketing activities, and marketing resources (Journal of the Academy of Marketing society (2010).

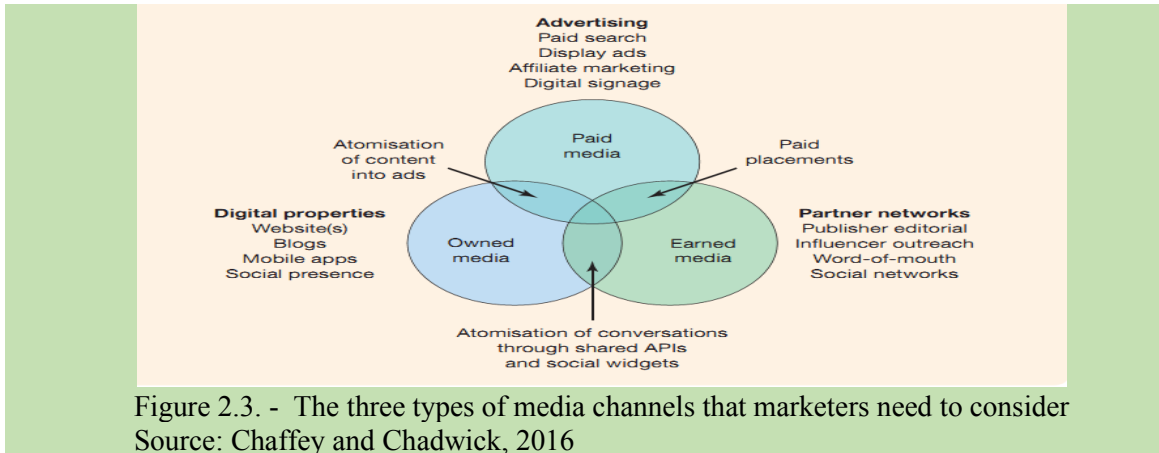
Digital marketing refers to the use of digital technology platforms, combined with traditional media, to achieve marketing objectives (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016). According to these authors, digital marketing is the application of the internet and related

digital technologies in conjunction with traditional communications to achieve the marketing objective. They underline that the interaction and integration of Internet channels and traditional channels is a key part of digital marketing strategy development. The two authors identified the importance of alignment of business and marketing strategy, use of clear objectives, ensuring effective communication (both online and offline), and attracting visitors to the website and other digital media as the effective digital marketing strategy.

Marketing strategy is the strategy that conducts a situation analysis about the environment in which the business is operating, the customer type, the business condition, and competitors' capacity that enables an organization to differentiate its products and services from the others. During the formation of a marketing strategy, it is very important to know who the potential competitors are, what they offer, and how you can challenge or learn from them. Knowing the customer type, his or her interest, and capacity to purchase is also very crucial during the crafting of the marketing strategy. Moreover, setting the digital marketing strategy needs to identify your objectives, tactics and targets so as to clearly understand the goal and purpose of digital marketing (what to achieve), how to get there, and how you know your achievements (evaluations). The digital marketing strategy should follow a similar form to a traditional strategic marketing planning process and should include goal setting, situation review, strategy formulation, resource allocation and monitoring (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016). Figure 2.4. shows the planning framework of digital marketing strategy.

Chaffey and Chadwick in their book of Digital Marketing, underline the importance of using three types of main media channels that marketers need to consider to reach potential customers. The first one is paid media channels like print and TV advertising programs that are bought to promote the product. The second type is owned media which includes company-possessed websites, Facebook, Twitter, application, LinkedIn and so on that are very important in promoting company products. The third media type is the earned media which targets the public influencers through public relations on the social network to increase awareness about the brand. To undertake a successful promotional activity of our destination and products, the use of these three types of media in the integrated manner

makes our promotion very efficient and effective. Figure 2.3 shows the three types of main media channels that marketers need to consider.



According to Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016, nine important elements of strategies are needed for the development of digital marketing strategy. These are:

- 1) Marketing and product development strategies
- 2) Business and revenue models strategies
- 3) Target marketing strategy
- 4) Positioning and differentiation strategy
- 5) Customer engagement and social media strategy
- 6) Multichannel distribution strategy
- 7) Multichannel communications strategy
- 8) Online communications mix and budget
- 9) Organizational capabilities and governance (7s framework).

Marketing and product development strategies are a strategy that assists for market penetration, market development, product development and diversification. Market penetration is the strategy of marketing the prevailing products into the existing market by using of digital technologies. The internet can play a great role for the penetration and development of the market. Product diversification is the strategy that is used to increase profitability and achieve higher sales volume. It involves addition of new products to existing products either manufactured or being marketed.

Market development and penetration and also product development and diversification strategies are the one that should be considered and actively exercised during the promotion

of our destinations and products in abroad. Figure 2.4 shows marketing and product development strategies

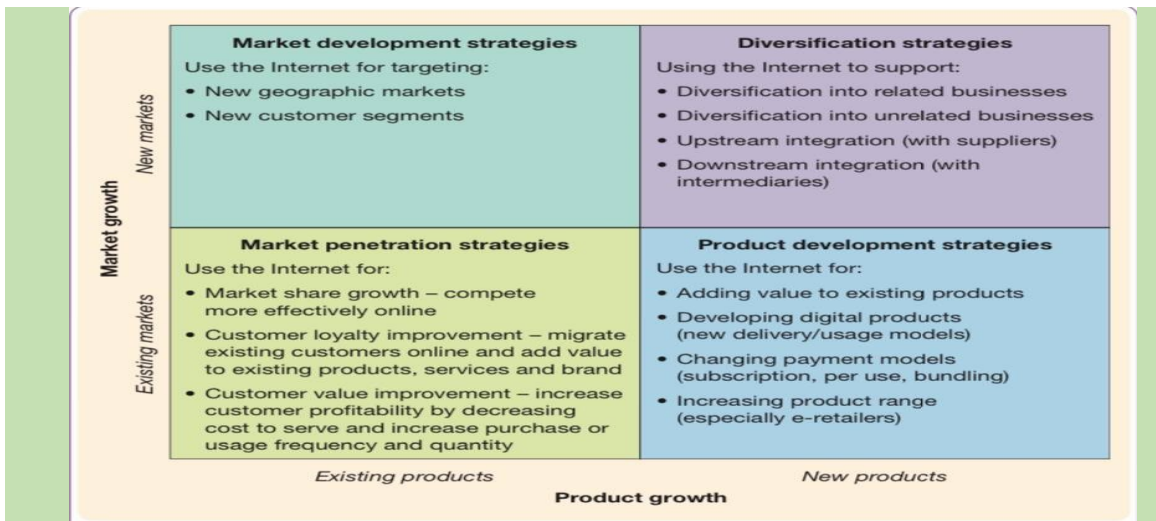


Figure 2.4 - Marketing and product development strategies  
Source: Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016

Target marketing strategy is the strategy that assists to focus on the targeted market that we need to use during the planning of digital marketing. According to Chaffey and Chadwick (2016) marketing strategy involves market segmentation, target marketing, positioning, and planning stages. The two authors emphasise that the market segmentation and targeting approach has to base on five elements like demographic-based customer profile, customer lifecycle, customer behaviour, channel preference, and tone and style preference. In the activities of promoting our tourism destinations and products it is very important to focus on the targeted areas and their cultural background which should bases the demographic and customer behaviour.

Customer engagement and social media strategy is the key approach that enables the company to enhance its marketing strategy. Identifying the target customer, knowing their interest, understanding the business goal and crafting attractive messages are the key issues to be considered during the engagement of the customers. After the identification of all these key issues, the use of a multi-channel communication strategy is very important to promote our products effectively and efficiently so as to influence the customers.

The realization of all the stated strategies on the ground is only possible if there is a strong and capable organizational and government system. The establishment of a functional structure of the government or organization is indispensable for the effective

implementation of the strategy. Setting the strategy, establishing the organizational structure, staffing, and capacity building to enhance the skill of employees are key issues to be implemented. Therefore, developing the organizational capabilities and governance system is very important to meet the digital marketing strategy.

## **2.2.6. Digital marketing practices**

### **2.2.6.1. Business to customer digital marketing practice**

Business-to-customer (B2C) marketing is defined as a commercial transaction between an organization and consumers (Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick, 2016). The customer is a very important and unavoidable stakeholder in any business. We cannot think about purchasing goods and services without having a good relationship and loyalty with our customers. To be successful it is very essential to know who is your customer and understand his or her needs and wants. In marketing your business, developing and sustaining customer relationships over a continued period of time by satisfying them for every interaction with your product is crucial

Effective and efficient customer relationship management is a critical issue for the success of your business. Customer relationship management (CRM) is a means of building and sustaining a longstanding relationship with customers to ensure the sustainability of your business. Increased revenue and profitability, better service delivery, improved customer satisfaction and developed loyalty are the benefits of customer relationship management. Each customer should pass through the stages of Customer lifecycle management which includes the selection, acquisition, retention and extension of the customer (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016).

Customer selection is a means of identifying different sets of customers based on the value they can deliver while; customer acquisition refers to relationships that we make with new customers by targeting their profile. The selection and acquisition of customer has no value without keeping them (retain) to make a long-lasting client for the organizations. Customer retention is a mechanism and tactics used by a company to keep its existing customers. Customer retention helps the organization for the extension of the customer which enables the company to increase the range of production. For the effective promotion of our destinations and products it is very crucial to select and made a strong relationship with the potential tourists, media groups, tour operators and tour guides and also retain them for a

long period of time as a customer. Figure 2.5 shows the stages of Customer lifecycle management.

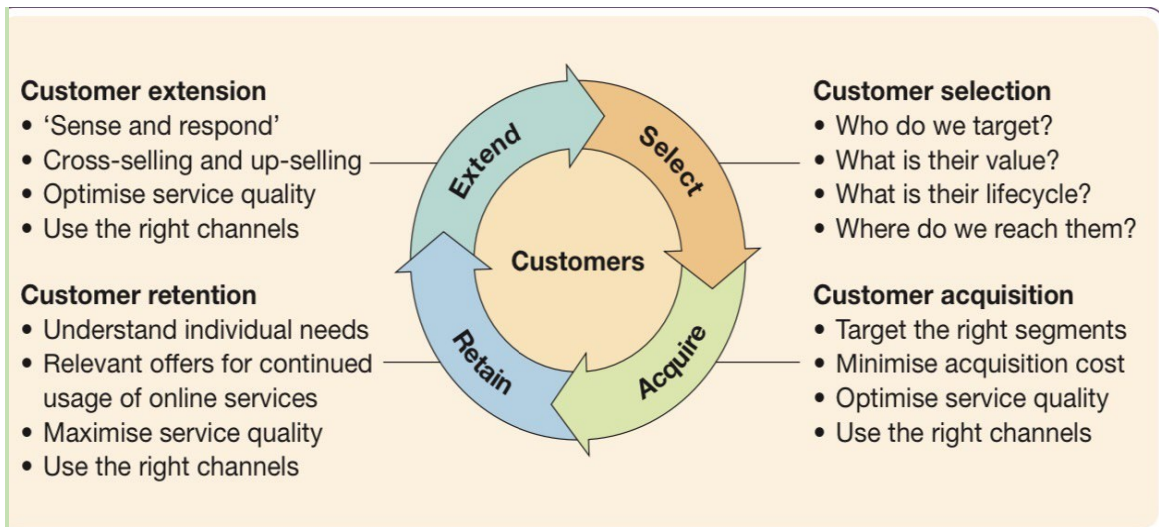


Figure 2.5 - The stages of Customer relationship (lifecycle)  
Source: Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016

### 2.2.6.2. Business to Business digital marketing practice

Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016 define Business-to-business (B2B) marketing as a commercial transaction between an organization and other organizations (inter-organisational marketing). These authors identified three kinds of organisational markets in which businesses are mainly make a transaction with other businesses. These are industrial markets, reseller markets and government markets. Industrial markets are an association that are largely reliant on raw materials and actual production of tangible goods while, reseller markets are the markets formed from the buyers of the products and services in order to resell them to another customer. The government markets are markets that comprise the government agencies and bodies that buy goods and services to carry out specific functions and provide particular services like public schools, hospitals and any other daily services.

### 2.2.7. Role of stakeholder’s coordination in destination promotion and competitiveness

Stakeholders are persons or groups engaged in activities relating to tourism development, who can thus influence or be affected by decisions and actions connected to those activities (Waligo et al., 2013). Tourism is an industry that involves multiple stakeholders where the

responsibility for destination competitiveness is shared by suppliers, government agencies, market intermediaries, NGOs, the general public, and tourists (Azzopardi, 2011). The tourism stakeholders can be comprised of government sectors, local communities, accommodation, and attraction providers, transport companies, tourists, media, DMOs, tour operators and tourism agencies, airlines, advisory bodies, and research institutions. These stakeholders can impose an impact on tourism development initiatives in different ways.

Stakeholders from public and private sectors and the local communities play critical roles in the development and implementation of sustainable tourism (Timur and Getz, 2008). Stakeholder identification and involvement are the foremost steps toward achieving community partnerships and collaboration within tourism (Hardy and Beeton 2001). Failure to identify the interest of a single primary stakeholder group holds the risk of failure of the process of stakeholder participation (Clarkson, 1995).

To ensure successful tourism sustainability and promotional activities, it needs to have a strong collaboration between all stakeholders. The level of support from the various stakeholders will ultimately shape the competitiveness of a destination (Azzopardi, 2011). The active role and involvement of a wide range of stakeholders also play a crucial role to ensure sustainable tourism development, enhancing the competitiveness of the destination, and building a brand image of the tourism products. Stakeholder theory recognizes that all stakeholders are valid partners who are eligible for equal and concurrent consideration in policy and decision-making processes (Hardy and Beeton, 2001).

The participation of the community or local people in the planning, management, marketing, and decision-making process plays a significant role in destination promotion and competitiveness. Collaboration is central to ensuring control and responsible use of resources and tourism marketing, which will lead to socio-economic and environmental sustainability (McCool and Moisey, 2001).

Stakeholder collaboration plays a fundamental role in the sustainability of natural and cultural resources, in tourism planning, development, and management, and also in the effective implementation of destination brand promotion. Branding is an indication of

competitiveness which creates differentiation and a positive image of a tourism destination that affects the decision-making of tourists.

### **2..2.8. The role and benefits of digital technologies and social media in tourism promotion**

Information and communication technologies are the set of professional areas related to the study, design, development, implementation, maintenance, and management of computer information systems. The development of these digital technologies has changed the communication system by simplifying and easy accessing information. The era of the internet has created a great opportunity for people to promote their business easily and timely to customers all over the world. The development of the internet has an impact on the marketing practice of different industries to promote their products to international users.

Marketing is the management process responsible for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying customer requirements profitably (Chartered Institution of Marketing-WWW. Cim.co.uk). Chaffey and Smith (2012) also noted that digital marketing supports to achieve this profitability. Digital marketing is a very important tool that plays a bridge role to reach customers with a wide range of communication channels. Stokes and Quirk (2013) in their book of eMarketing state that digital marketing drives the creation of demand using the power of the internet, and satisfies this demand in new and innovative ways. They emphasised that internet marketing has changed the world by creating a new paradigm for the way in which consumers connect with brands and with each other.

In the recent year of digitalization, the internet is the most used communication technology in tourism promotion and destination marketing. The growth of this new technology increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism sector to communicate with its customers. The tourism product promotion and other tourism-related services like booking of flight and hotel rooms, accommodation services, destination choices, and car rental services were facilitated by online communication through the effective use of digital technologies. The Internet has changed from a world of information to a world of influence and its elements such as social media start to revolutionize the state of marketing, advertising, and promotions (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). Internet marketing has created more benefits by breaking different barriers of promotional activities like time zone

and locations between the customers and the marketers. The Internet is used to develop existing markets by enabling additional sales channels with potential customers.

E-tourism is one of the technologies that connect information and communication technologies to the tourism industry. E-tourism provides several benefits that enhance tourism businesses. This technology plays a crucial role in the digitization of the entire tourism industry and infrastructure for the presentation and promotion of tourism products, services, and destinations. It also ensures effective promotion and easy access to information and provides quick information to customers without geographical limitations. Moreover, this technology ensures the sustainability of tourism information, minimizes the cost of expenditure, and guarantees easy use and payment scheme due to the automation of its system.

In tourism marketing strategy, the media will play an enormous role in the development of the industry through disseminating information to tourists. Digital marketing communications differ significantly from conventional marketing communications because digital media-enabled new forms of interaction and new models for information exchange (Chaffey and Chadwick, 2016). Chaffey and Chadwick identified six key digital media channels: search marketing, online PR, partnership (affiliate) marketing, display advertising, email, and social media marketing.

Social media channels are communication channels that can be used to solve business, marketing, and communication challenges (Stokes and Quirk, 2013). According to these authors, social media is considered one element of the marketing strategies that have brought many changes in communication with customers. It is an online application tool, which allows people of common interest to come together, cooperate and collaborate to share their thoughts and opinions.

Singh (2015) states that social media is playing an imperative role in digital marketing and he suggests that this media is an appropriate tool to increase brand awareness. Social media marketing makes it possible to customers to have quick access to products from any corner of the world. Promotion through social media brings several benefits and profits to the consumers and other stakeholders in providing information to a lot of potential customers in the world with low cost, limited human capital, and time-efficient.

The most popular social media are Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, WeChat, Telegram, Viber, Snapchat, Imo, LinkedIn, etc. These media have an enormous impact on the travel and tourism business since it is one of the fastest and the most effective ways of communication to spread information. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi (2014) wrote in his inaugural that "I am a firm believer in the power of technology and social media to communicate with people across the world".

Social media is one of the biggest and most important social communication channels for the tourism industry to promote destinations, products, and services. Moreover, the benefits of social media marketing for the tourism industry are its ability to connect directly to potential tourists, social networking to share tourism information, the capability of brand awareness, and its role in converting potential tourists to actual consumers. It also influences people's travel plans of where to go, when to go, and what to see. Social media is a powerful source for travel planning and has an impact on travel decisions (Amaro and Duarte, 2014; Marchiori & Onder, 2015). Therefore, the effective and efficient utilization of this media has a crucial role in tourism destination marketing and promotion.

#### **2.2.9. Linkage of tourism, promotion, and safety and security**

According to the theory of Maslow (1943), physiological, security, belonging and love, assessment and self-esteem, and self-fulfilment are the five levels of human needs. This theory states that any travel needs security. If the need for security is not fulfilled then the individual does not proceed in the fulfilment of the other more sophisticated needs. It is well understood that peace, safety, and security are the primary conditions for the tourism sector. Safety and Security are indispensable issues for travel and tourism which influences the tourists to choose a destination. Perceptions of security and safety deeply affect the tourist's plan to visit a destination which indicates that the tourism industry is highly vulnerable to change in the global security environment. Tourism is a quite fragile sector because it is affected by political stability (Maditinos and Vassiliadis, 2008). The tourism market is sensitive to the political instability of a country which causes a decline of tourist arrivals to the destinations. Tourists seek relaxation, comfort, and safety and these can be available only when the political situation of the tourism destination is stable (Hwa Hong et al., 1999).

Tourism is sensitive to crises like civil riots and war, ethnic conflicts, illegal migrations, smuggling of weapons, etc. These crises negatively affect and harm the tourism businesses since tourist arrivals to the destination are decreasing. According to Sommez et al. (1994), a tourism crisis is a situation that can endanger all businesses related to tourism and harm the image of a tourist destination regarding the place's safety and attraction. Beirman (2003) suggested that the tourism crisis is an emergency whereas drastic management actions should be taken regarding marketing and operations to minimize the cost of the crisis and increase the confidence of employees and tourist companies.

The tourism sector is also one of the most affected sectors by the current crisis of Covid-19. Any crises or natural disasters affects the tourism destination by decreasing the tourist influx. In recent years, the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the challenges that causes numerous socio-cultural, economic, psychological, and health crises which significantly affected the tourism sector by decreasing international travel. Travel restrictions and closures of the companies in the tourism sector cause a significant influence on the sector. Therefore, since the tourism crisis is an unpredicted phenomenon, it requires strategic planning and immediate action to minimize the negative consequences of the crisis so as to improve the negative images of the destination through strategic promotion.

#### **2.2.10. The benefit of promoting destination and tourism products**

Tourism promotion is a means of encouraging the actual and potential tourists to travel to visit a destination. It plays a significant role in the marketing of tourist destinations and products and a reliable way of presenting the product to attract customers. Promotion is one of the most effective and important elements of the marketing mix used in marketing tourist destinations and products. Hassan (2015) indicates that promotion is one of the most vital elements in the marketing mix which includes many action plans to inform the present or future customers about the advancement of a good product, its price, and convenience.

The promotion of tourism resources is an important approach for many developing countries to influence tourists' destination preferences (Ghosh, 2005). It plays a vital role in modifying tourist behavior through advertising the targeted destinations to draw the attention of potential tourists to visit the area. One of the objectives of promotion is to identify the target groups and undertake effective public relations and advertising programs to attract the groups to the destinations. Many research has shown that various forms of

promotional activities play a vital role in creating a positive image of the destination and impose their impacts on the decision-making process of tourists through sharing clear information. Appropriate set of promotional mix elements and suitability of tourism activities in the destination can improve the image of the destination and create a brand (Zadel et al, 2016).

Good and creative promotional activity can be effective as well as a precondition for the achievement of the tourism industry (Esu and Ebitu, 2010). Destination marketing plays a vital role in the competitiveness of the economy of the country by promoting the destination and other infrastructure to the international community. Promoting tourism destinations increase the number of tourists at the national or domestic level which plays a significant role in the development of the economy. Tourist destination promotion initiates economic development through various networks such as building transportation linkages and linking to new markets, rising the destination profile, targeting economic development through conventions and trade shows and raising the quality of life (Kotler, 2003 and Baldemoro, 2013).

The main role of promotion is to identify one competitor or destinations or products from the other and supports the quick recognition of the destination, products, and services. It also plays a significant role to ensure that repeat visitors to the destination and attracting more extra tourists to the area. In general, promotion is a key role player in publicizing the importance of our products or services to the tourists to enhance the image, profitability, and long-term success.

#### **2.2.11. Tourism attractions and the current tourism destination development in Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is one of the oldest civilized countries in the world with wonderful tourism potentials and recorded history (Selamawit Kassaye, 2013). The country is blessed with an abundance of natural assets, and tangible cultural, religious, and historical heritages which comprise palaces, churches, monasteries cultural artifacts, and museum collections of high tourism value. The country hosts 13 incredible UNESCO registered heritage sites (nine tangible and four intangible), which includes the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela (1978), Semien National Park (1978), the Castles of Gondar (1979), Aksum (1980), Awash Valley (1980), Omo valley (1980), Tiya (1980), Harar Jugol (2006), Konso Cultural Landscape

(2011), Meskel (2013), Fichee-chambalaalla (2015), Irreechaa (2016) and Timket (2019). Among these the Stelae of Axum, the rock-hewn churches of Lalibela, the walled city of Harar (Harar Jugol), and the Castles of Gondar are the best historic sites. The Stelae of Axum is a giant high-rise structure carved stele and the cradle of Ethiopian ancient civilization architecturally designed from solid igneous rocks with false windows and doors. The Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela are also the best UNESCO registered sites which are carved out and designed from massive solid rocks through hammering and shaping. The site possesses a collection of eleven Orthodox Christian Churches that are believed to have been built in the late 12th or early 13th century. Moreover, an excellent impression, the Castles of Gondar, which served as the royal residence, palaces, and churches of Ethiopian Emperor Fasiladas and his successors at that period, and also an amusing architecturally designed walled city of Harar are the oldest civilizations of the country. The famous and unique five gates walled city of Harar was a centre of Islamic learning that contains over 99 mosques and is considered as the fourth holiest city of Islam, next to Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem (Ethiopia: a tourist paradise, brochure, MOCT 2016). These all architecturally designed historical heritages are exotic tourist destination that offers a unique combination of the fascinating history and manmade beauty of the country.

Ethiopia is a land of amazing natural beauty offering all sorts of attractions (Selamawit Kassaye, 2013). A country owns natural forests with a wide range of wild plant species, animals and birds of various species, magnificent landscapes with maintaining chains and peaks, national parks and biosphere reserves. Moreover, famous natural and volcanic crater rift valley and highland lakes, several rivers with their multiple impressive waterfalls, diversified local cultures with their distinct ethnography, art, and traditional practices and different natural wonders with their unique forms are the tourism resources of the country which can be basic for ecotourism.

The landscape and natural features of the country are enormous, especially in the highlands of Ethiopia with a variety of attractions. Enjoyable landforms and inspiring peaks in a mountainous area in combination with other attractions are playing an important role in enhancing tourist arrivals to the country. Ethiopia is also well-known for its big potential in providing recreational attractions of resort hotels and ecotourism which makes the country a major tourist destination (Selamawit Kassaye, 2013).

Ethiopia possesses the Sof-Umer cave, one of the longest caves in Africa and considered as the most spectacular and extensive underground cave in the world ([MCT](#), 2011). It also owns the rift valleys which are an important place for paleoanthropological discoveries that makes the country the origin of mankind where our species were evolved. The country is rich in history, ethnography, culture, artifacts, hand-crafts, colorful costumes, and traditional practices characterized by homogenous as well as diversified features. The Major ritual ceremonies of Irreechaa in the Gadaa governance system, fiche chembalaalla, ashenda, and various cultural activities and ways of life of the people makes the country as one of the best wonders to attract tourists. The diversity of cultural foods and drinks, coffee ceremony, various cultural dances and songs, and unique traditional dressing style are the most tourist attracting cultures in the country.

Even if Ethiopia owns all these impressive resources, the tourism sector in the country is lagging behind when we compare with neighbouring countries in East Africa who have the same geographical location (Analysis of tourism value chain in Ethiopia, 2018). Currently, the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia understands the problems of the sector and gives special attention to the matter to stimulate Ethiopian tourism again. In this regard, the Ministry of Tourism plans to renovate 40 existing tourism resources and to develop 59 new destination sites across the country through the participation of public-private partnerships (MOT, 2021).

In the past three years, the country initiated the project as a government and developed many major tourist sites like Entoto park, Unity Park, Friendship Park, and Sheger riverside project which contributes to uplifting the image of the country as well as encouraging the domestic and foreign tourists to visit the area. Entoto Park, an excellent view of Addis and a convenient place to birdwatchers is rich in mixed habitats of forest woodland, rock sloop cliffs, and marshes. The park comprises various indoor and outdoor facilities including a library, horse-riding, sports centres, entertainment, restaurants, coffee shops, an artificial lake, fountains, walkways, bike, cart routes, and a large outdoor amphitheatre that will be used for concerts, theatres, and live music ([Entoto](#) park, 2021).

Recently, building on the experience and success of Sheger projects in Addis Ababa, the government has officially launched three other projects called Gorgora, Wonchi, and

Koyish which are very attractive natural sites in the country that are considered to elevate the tourism sector of the country by attracting the tourists from any corner of the world.

### **2.3. Review of Empirical Literature**

The promotion of tourist destinations and products are an important activity to attract potential tourists to the country. In Ethiopia, there are different promotional practices that were exercised to market tourist products and destinations. This promotional work passes through different challenges that hinder the country to meet the target to be one of the best tourist destinations in Africa.

In the country, there are few researchers that are working their research paper to investigate the practices and challenges of promotional activities on some specific areas of interest. Abebaw Shimelis (2020) under take the research on the title of tourism marketing practices, challenges and strategies to analyse the existing practices, challenges and strategies of Addis Ababa. The study found that lack of basic infrastructure and ICT facilities development, insufficient tourism research centre, and absence of skilled manpower are considered as the challenges of tourism marketing in Addis Ababa. Moreover, this research paper investigates the problem of physical facilities, proper usage of technologies and lack of infrastructure development as the main challenges of promotion and recommends some additional policy measures.

In addition to this, Shewaye Sewnet (2019) also made a research paper on the practices and challenges of promoting major tourism destinations in Awi zone. This research paper addresses the practices of the Awi Zone and concluded that the existing promotional practices and tools of promotion are very poor. According to the explanation promotional activities and tools which are practiced in the area are very limited in number and almost all available tools are poor in its quality. The researcher also indicates that the area needs a strong effort of the responsible body to enhance a destination promotion and marketing activity. Moreover, the research paper indicated that the importance of improving infrastructures and promotional strategies, forming tourism partnership and collaboration with national and regional tour operators and hotels and strengthening promotional activities. tourism resources are not well promoted to the tourists due to different challenging factors. The study also tourism resources are not well promoted to the tourists due to different challenging factors. The identifies the constrain of budget, lack of

government attention, absence of effective marketing, poor promotional materials, lack of stakeholder coordination, poor service delivery, poor skilled manpower, and problem of security and infrastructure development as the major challenges.

However, both studies have their own gaps in investigating the potential challenges. For instance, the study did not address the potential impacts of the absence of digital marketing strategies, market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategies on the promotional activities of the tourism resources. Moreover, these studies have a limitation on recommending the importance of establishing the strategies of digital marketing, market segmentation, market targeting and positioning in order to have an effective and efficient promotional activity.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Research Methodology

### 3.1. Description of the study area

#### 3.1.3. The Establishment and the power of the Ministry

Proclamation No 4/1995 defines the powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Among these Ministries the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was stated under part three of the proclamation. The powers and duties of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also clearly stated in the Foreign Service Proclamation No. 790/2013. In this proclamation realizing and securing Ethiopia's national interests by establishing and strengthening political, economic and social cooperation through bilateral and multilateral relations, especially, through transfer of technology, promotion of trade, and investment, as well as widening and strengthening the horizon of cultural relations and tourism are one of the core duties and responsibilities of the ministry. In addition to this it stated that the importance of coordinating and conducting public diplomacy and public relation works abroad to further build the country's image and create an enabling environment for the development of tourism.

Moreover, article 36 of the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia briefly explains the principles of the external relations. Under this article it was indicated that ensuring the foreign relation policies of the country are based on mutual interests and equality of states as well as the international agreements should promote the interest of Ethiopia. Furthermore, it indicates the importance of forging and promoting ever growing economies to abroad.



Figure 3.1. The building of MOFA  
Source: Ethiopia Digital Diplomacy, 2021

#### **3.1.4. The structure and the responsibilities of the Ministry**

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and strategy was officially launched and changed into implementation in 2002. In this policy protecting the national interest, generating market opportunities and investment, creating the enabling environment for development and generally achieving economic diplomacy are the main objective of Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and strategy. This policy is a legal framework that paves the way for the Ministry, especially for the Directorate General of Foreign Trade and Tourism expansion, to implement its plan of tourism enhancement.

These proclamations, constitution and policy documents assist the ministry to exercise its power, duties and responsibilities in the framework of globalization. These legal documents help the ministry to craft the right vision and mission to realize its objective of protecting the national interest and playing a central role in Ethiopia's economic growth and development. To realize this, the Ministry developed its own structure lead by the ministers and three state ministers which comprises; the state minister for political affairs, state minister for economic diplomacy and diaspora Affairs (latter on the diaspora agency

established alone) and state minister for human resources and administrative affairs. There was around three permanent secretary and twenty-seven directorate generals in the Ministry including the Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism expansion.

Under the State Minister of Economic Diplomacy and Diaspora Affairs, there is an office of the Permanent secretary for Economic Diplomacy which comprises the Directorate of Foreign Investment Promotion and Technology Transfer and Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism expansion. The Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism Expansion has foreign trade promotion director as one section and foreign tourism promotion director as the second section.

The director for foreign tourism promotion is the one who is responsible for tourism promotion to enhance the tourism investment and tourist flow to the country. The section is coordinated by one director and staffed with seven officers. These officers are assigned based on the needs of the department's structure in such a way that five officers are regionally allocated (Africa, Asia, Europe, America and Middle east), one officer engaged in tourism promotion, media communication, information analysis and distribution and also there is an officer who allocated for the coordination of foreign tourism. Figure 4.1 shows the structure of the Ministry.

### The Structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

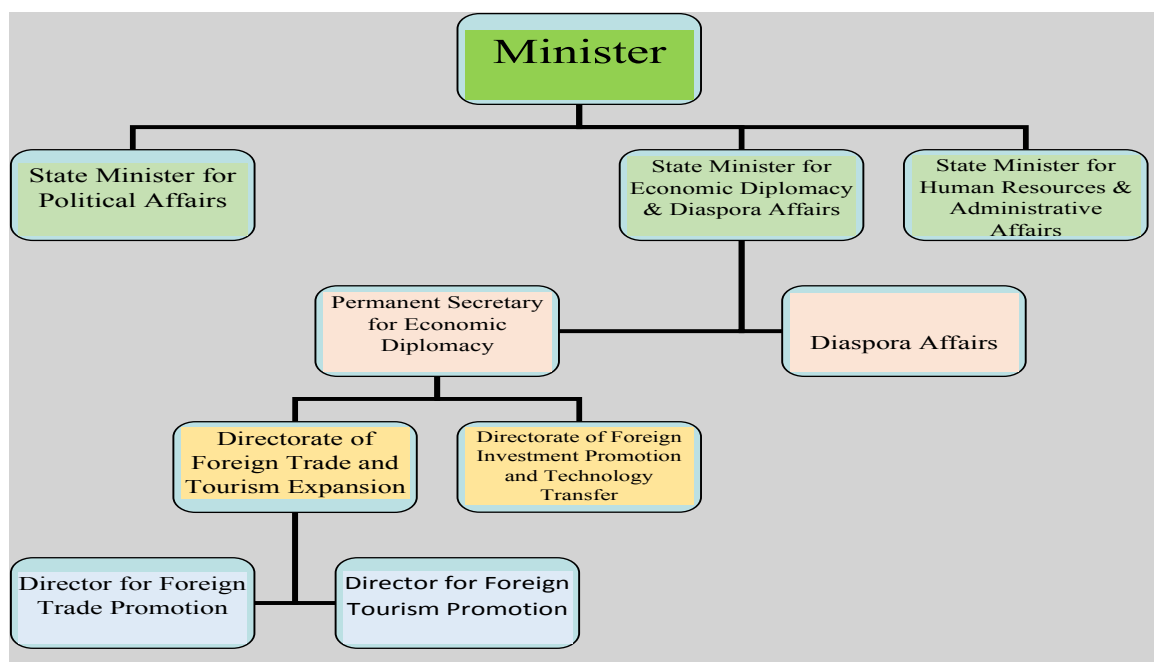


Figure 3.2. shows the structure of the Ministry.

Source: From own reading of the Ministry's structure

### **3.2. Research Design**

Research design is the framework, structure, and techniques that the researcher follows in order to realize the entire research process that enables him to meet the objective of the study. Here, the researcher collects the data through the distribution of an open-ended questionnaire, focus group discussion and key informant interview of the selected individuals so as to make it ready for analysis. In this research, the researcher chooses a descriptive type of research that follows a detailed investigative assessment of both primary and secondary sources of data and helped to understand the issue so as to enable us to see the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in promoting the tourism products.

### **3.3. Research approach**

The research approach is the procedure that we are going to follow during data collection, analysis, and interpretations. In this research, the researcher used a qualitative research method in order to get detailed views, perspectives, and evidence from those respondents of the questionnaire and participants of the interview session. This method is the best choice to get the opinions, beliefs, perceptions, experiences, and attitudes of respondents that enable the researcher to meet his objective. In this regard, the study used qualitative approaches which use open ended questionnaires, focus group and key informant interviews as primary sources of data. Qualitative data collection instruments such as open-ended questions and in-depth interviews are used to collect data from the selected individuals who are in the actual activities of the Ministry.

### **3.4. Data Source and Data Collection Methods**

For the purpose of this research, the data is collected from both primary and secondary sources. To realize the objectives of the study, the researcher used qualitative approach with an open-ended questionnaire, focus group discussion and key informant interviews of selected individuals in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Open-ended questionnaires were prepared and distributed to 15 selected respondents and also one focus group and five selected individuals were interviewed from the Ministry. The reason why the researcher selected the mentioned number of individuals for the responses open-ended questionnaires,

an interview and focus group discussion is that he believes this amount of data is enough for the study since the research approach is qualitative and also the selected individuals have an ample knowledge, experience and pertinent information on the matter. In addition to this, these selected individuals are those diplomats that are working in the department of the business directorate in the main office and in economic diplomacy section in the Mission so that they are practically engaging in the matter. Moreover, the profile of the individuals who are engaged in the response of the questionnaires and interview section are Director General for Foreign Trade and Tourism expansion, Director for tourism expansion, Minister councillor I, Minister councillor II and councillor I who have an experience of working on different positions in the Ministry both at the main office and the Mission to promote tourism.

In these questionnaires, focus group discussion and interview section the roles, the practices and challenges of the Ministry during the promotion of the destination and the products are exhaustively discussed and assessed to meet the objective of the study. Since the government of Ethiopia has more than 61 diplomatic missions in five regions of the world (African, Europe, America, Middle East, and Asian countries), the researcher chose one up to three Missions from each region based on the prioritization of the MOFA to recruit tourists and also the tourism potential and the experience we gain from those countries. The prioritized countries of the Ministry to promote tourism are US, Germany, UK, China, Italy, France, Sudan, Spain and Saudi Arabia.

Similarly, secondary data was collected from various books, articles, research papers and academic journals. Moreover, different studies, manuals, policies, proclamations, plans, reports, files, and other official documents of the Ministry that support my dissertation as evidence were used as the secondary sources of information. The facts, opinions, and arguments presented in the literature are drawn together to form a coherent argument regarding the promotional practices and challenges of the tourism destinations and products.

### **3.5. Target Population**

The researcher must select a sample design that should be reliable and appropriate for his research study (Kothari, 2004). The target population of this study is the selected individuals from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of

Ethiopia. The selected sample populations are persons who have the knowledge, experience, and pertinent information on the issue. Therefore, the open-ended questionnaires are categorized on the bases of the designed objectives of the study and distributed to fifteen targeted individuals who have professional experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. Moreover, for the interview session, one focus group and five separated individuals are identified from the Ministry based on the depth of knowledge and experience they have on the promotional practices of the destination and products.

Based on the experience gained and ministry's prioritization of countries, the researcher chose the Ethiopian Mission residing in China from Asia, Germany and UK from Europe, Saud Arabia and United Arab Emirates from Middle East, USA and Canada from America and Sudan and Egypt from Africa

### **3.6. Sampling techniques**

The sample was selected based on purposive sampling techniques. In line with these research objectives, the researcher used a purposive sampling method that selects representatives of the population based on their knowledge of the matter. This was done by selecting the population in a non-random manner and applying expert knowledge to produce a sample that can be representative of the population. In this purposive sampling, cases that are typical to the problem or important for this research will be selected. The purpose of using this purposive kind of sampling technique in this research paper is to provide as much insight as possible into the practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting tourism destinations. The researcher purposively and selectively approaches those individuals who have ample experience in tourism destination and product promotion in the Ministry. The major reason for the selection of those key individuals is based on the region they are serving as a diplomat, the professional experience and skills they have in this field at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which helps to get diverse and relevant data for the study. The other reason for selecting a potential respondent from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is because they know and understand the subject matter, and working on the position relating to the information needed for the study.

### **3.7. Method of Data Analysis and Presentations**

After the data was collected, it was analyzed by using qualitative techniques. The data collected through interviews and questionnaires were categorized and organized based on

the identified specific objectives. The qualitative data generated from selected key respondents were analyzed and presented in the form of narration qualitatively and crosschecked with the qualitative findings. Interpretations were also be made to show the practices, the gaps, and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting the tourism products and finally point out some conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter mainly deals with the roles, the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in promoting the tourism products in abroad. This section deeply analyses the roles and responsibilities, the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia during the promotion of tourism products in abroad.

To get enough information on the matter, the questionnaire is distributed to the fifteen individuals who have a lot of experience and ample knowledge in the department of trade and tourism expansion, both at the main office and Missions. On the other hand, five individuals were interviewed and one focus group discussion was undertaken to triangulate the information from different perspective. In this regard, the data was collected from the respondents of the questionnaires, focus group discussion, and key informant interviews of selective individuals in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the responses of these individuals were exhaustively assessed. In addition to these different official documents of the Ministry were thoroughly analyzed and the following findings were presented.

#### **4.2. The Roles and Responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia**

Based on the respondents and the assessment of the job description of the Ministry, the main objectives of this directorate general are to promote trade and tourism, to negotiate trade and tourism related issues, to initiate ideas and opinions related to foreign trade and tourism policy and strategy and to generate manuals, rules and regulations that enables the Ministry to accomplish its responsibilities. The Ministry has many roles and responsibilities to perform, but for the purpose of this paper the researcher chooses to focus on role and responsibilities of the Directorate of Trade and Tourism Expansion.

According to the information from the informants and job description manual, the directorate is a responsible organ in governing, planning, implementing and evaluating the embassies and consulates to identify their strength and weakness. During the interview, the director of tourism expansion said that *“the Ministry supports Missions by providing annual plans, action plans, collecting performance reports and gives feedback to their annual and monthly reports”*. Based on the information gained from the proclamation No 790/2013, the directorate has a mandate to develop manuals, rules and regulations that helps in enhancing the directorate performance. It initiates different techniques, methods and strategies that assist for the development of the sector. The directorate also solves different barriers and challenges facing the Missions by coordinating with other stakeholders.

The counsellor of tourism expansion officer said that:

*“The directorate serves as a bridge between the Ethiopian missions and stakeholders in the country by providing all the necessary information”. According to him collecting promotional materials and other necessary documents from the stakeholders and distributing to the Missions is also the mandate of the directorate. He also mansions that the directorate provides a technical support for the Missions whenever they need any assistance from main office.”*

In this regard, the activity of the directorate is indispensable in coordinating and facilitating the promotional activities to enable the stakeholders to play their real role.

According to the documents of the national coordination forum, the Ministry coordinates the responsible stakeholders (both the government and the private institutions) like the Ministry of Tourism, Investment Commission, Ethiopia Custom Authority, Ministry of Trade, Diaspora Agency, Immigration and Nationality Affairs, National Bank of Ethiopia, Ethiopia Tourism Board, Tourism Ethiopia, Ethiopia Tourism Transformation Council, etc. It also organizes a meetings and other consultative forums with the missions and other stakeholders to address challenges that face the tourism sector. It facilitates the visit of upcoming and outgoing business delegation, coordinate and leads a consultative meeting related to tourism.

Based on the information gained from the proclamation No 790/2013 and job description manual, the Missions of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in abroad are also

working to maintain and advance the bilateral relations between Ethiopia and host countries relating to political, economic and social affairs. The Missions are working to facilitate government to government relations, promotion of investment, trade and tourism, assist and mobilize diaspora, build the image through public diplomacy and communication, deliver consular services and find the development assistance from donor countries.

As it was mentioned in the Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and Strategy, the core centre of Ethiopian foreign relation is focused on economic diplomacy and the Missions are working to realize these economic interests.

Tourism promotion officer of Ethiopian Mission in London mentioned that:

*“The Embassies and Consulates are actively engaging in the promotion of trade and investment opportunities, Ethiopian cultural values and untapped tourism potentials to the international communities. Moreover, collecting the necessary information and undertaking different analysis and market study is also the role of the Missions. It undertakes market intelligence, identifies the priority areas and recommends the government to take a necessary actions and policy measures.”*

The Mission serves as a bridge to connect the available opportunities with the country’s potential. These all activities of the Missions is very important and helpful to exploit the available tourism potential of the country.

### **4.3. The Role of the Ministry in Stakeholders coordination**

Tourism is a sector that has a great contribution for the economic development of the nation. To enable the tourism sector to contribute its share in the economy and play its role in the development of the nation, it needs the collaboration and coordination of different stakeholders in promoting the tourism attractions and products to the international communities. Stakeholders from public and private sectors and the local communities play critical roles in the development and implementation of sustainable tourism (Timur & Getz, 2008). Stakeholder theory recognizes that all stakeholders are valid partners who are eligible for equal and concurrent consideration in policy and decision-making processes

(Hardy & Beeton, 2001). Therefore, coordination of the stakeholders assists to realize the sustainable promotion of tourism which enhances the visitor numbers.

The director of tourism expansion in the Ministry indicated that:

*“To make tourism promotion successful, the seamless coordination and collaboration of all stakeholders are very important. In this regard, the cooperation of the ministry of tourism, Tourism institutions at the federal level, regional tourism bureaus, tour operators, tourist hospitalities and transport industries are indispensable. According to him, without the cooperation and collaboration of relevant sectors in the tourism industry, it is impossible to make fruitful promotion and marketing of Ethiopian tourism products.”*

Generally, without the coordination of all stakeholders, it is very difficult to have a successful promotion of our tourism resources. To be successful in the tourism sector, the coordination of all relevant sectors of the government and private organization is very crucial.

According to the officer of tourism coordination forum:

*“The Ministry plays a significant role by coordinating Ethiopian Missions and different stakeholders. There are various associations such as tour operators, hotels, tour guides and culinary that is directly related to tourism industry. But, their commitment and cooperation either to work together or to collaborate with the government institution is so low and inconsistent.”*

In Ethiopia the coordination of the various associations with the relevant government sectors is not satisfactory. Therefore, to change the mind-set of this association and bring them to the right track needs awareness creation.

Based on the information gained from different documents of the Ministry and the respondent’s reflection, the collaboration among the tourism institutions in the federal level and tourism bureaus at regional level needs further improvement and strengthening. In this connection, various efforts have been made by the government to bring all relevant stakeholders in tourism industry under one umbrella for strong partnership and collaboration. But it was not that much successful till now.

Tourism expansion counsellor in the Ministry indicates that:

*“Different stakeholders are not organized in such a way that they are strong enough to have an integrated marketing communication that enables them to have a constructive and uniform communication mechanism. They are also not working as a strong team who have a common mandate and understanding to fight and win their common enemy. This needs a top leader’s attention in order to investigate the gaps and take a necessary action especially the gaps regarding the development of stakeholder’s strategy and mandate over all activities of promotion.”*

Integrated communication strategy of the stakeholders is very important for the success of promotional activities. In this regard, the top leaders should work on the legal framework in order to create an enabling environment for stakeholders to have a communication strategy that assists them to work together.

According to the information gained from different documents, the Ministry identifies Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Tourism, Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs, Ethiopian Customs Commission (ECC), Ethiopian Diaspora Agency (EDA), Ministry of Trade and Regional Coordination, Ethiopian Investment Commission, Ethiopian Airlines, Regional Tourism Bureaus, Tourism Ethiopia, Ethiopian Tour Operators Association, Hotel Association, Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council (ETTC), Ethiopia Tourism Board (ETB), Association of Hotel Professionals, Ethiopian Diaspora living Abroad, community schools and think tanks etc as its stakeholders. The role and the mandates of these stakeholders who are jointly working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are briefly discussed as follows:

#### **4.3.1. Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)**

The Office of the Prime Minister is an autonomous body that governs and supports all the public and government Ministries, Agencies, Commissions, and institutions to play their role effectively and efficiently. The office is not only governing, but also plays a significant role as one stakeholder of the national forum. In addition to the follow up activities of the sectors, the office is highly engaged in the development of the destinations which plays a

significant role in image building. It also contributes a lot in creating an enabling environment especially in governing and availing of Entoto, Sheger and Friendship parks.

#### **4.3.2. Ministry of Tourism (MOT)**

According to the informants and the information gained from official documents of the Ministry, the mandate of the Ministry of Tourism is policy-making and setting rule and regulations that enables the tourism sector to play its role effectively. The Ministry has a mandate of preparing tourism policies, guides, manuals, brochures, and also regulating and grading tourism accommodations, as well as licensing operators and tour guides.

Moreover, organizing and coordinating the national and international tourism exhibition and fairs, promoting of historical, cultural and natural sites, coordinating of tourism conferences, cultural events and artistic shows are the mandate of the Ministry. It coordinates the familiarization trips for tour operators, travel agents and media group, develops the websites, YouTube, Tweeter, Facebook and other promotional pages to accelerate the promotional activities. It coordinates with other stakeholders to prepare digital tourist payment system, available tourism services and other information by using digital technologies that assists the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, the Ministry is not successful especially in using digital technologies and digital marketing strategies to facilitate promotion and digital payment system. It also has a limitation in working with the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and organising the international exhibitions.

#### **4.3.3. Main Department for Immigration and Nationality Affairs (MDINA)**

According to the informants, one of the mandates of the Main Department of Immigration and Nationality Affairs is facilitating the easy movement of tourists through the neighbouring borders and at Bole International Airport entrance. The MDINA launched the new digital e-visa system in 2018 to allow all travellers to access tourist and business visas online. For the permanent residents of all African union countries the MDINA allows to get visas on arrival whereas, the nationals and permanent residents of all other countries are eligible for tourist visa provided that they fulfil requirements on their application of online. It gives for Kenyans and Djiboutian citizens the right of free entry to Ethiopia without requesting visa issuance. In this regard, the tourism sector is beneficiary from this free entry, on arrival and online access of visa.

During the interview, tourism coordination forum officer in the Ministry said:

*“Most of the tourists from neighboring countries are coming to Ethiopia through crossing the borders so that the immigration facilitates the entry by providing land entrance permit. Therefore, this department works with the MOFA in facilitating the border entrance by vehicle and other means of transportations, by delivering visa for tourists and investors who invest in tourism sector. But there is a limitation of MDINA in implementing its whole mandates to facilitate the smooth flow of tourists to the country.”*

The challenges and obstacles that the tourists faced during their entrance at Airport and border especially on providing a licence for tourist equipment that help them on their visit should be resolved. In this connection, it needs the coordination between MOFA and MDINA to solve the obstacles together.

#### **4.3.4. Ethiopian Investment Commission (EIC)**

Based on the information gained from the documents of the commission, one of the mandates of the EIC is the preparation of investment policy and regulations. The commission has the mandate to supervise the investment promotion and facilitation activities. It offers a range of services to foreign investors including the issuance of investment licenses, support to obtain business licenses and construction permits, and issuance of working permits.

According to the explanation of the officer of tourism coordination forum in the Ministry:

*“The coordination of MOFA with EIC is very important for the smooth delivery of the services and incentive packages for those investors that have shown an interest to engage on the investment of tourism sector without any bureaucracy. However, there are challenges of coordination of this organization with the Ministry due to lack of legal frame work that clearly state the mandates of each sector.”*

The coordination of the Ethiopian Investment Commission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the one that needs a special attention and set a legal framework that enables them to work co-ordinately.

#### **4.3.5. Regional Tourism Bureaus**

Based on the information gained from different documents of the regions, the Regional Tourism Bureaus are accountable for protecting, preserving, conserving and managing the natural, cultural, historical and manmade heritages. The bureaus also collecting revenue from tourists and conserving the attraction sites. It also identifies and avails the new sites to be developed and accessed to tourists.

The officer of tourism coordination forum indicates in his interview that:

*“The regional bureaus are very important due to the fact that almost all tourism attractions are found in the regions. Without having and securing the sustainability of these tourism resources, we cannot think about promotion of the attractions. The regional governments have a mandate of hosting different tourists with different interests. They have the responsibility of securing the tourist attraction sites and welcoming the tourists to their regions.”*

If the regional government don't welcome, motivate and properly handling the investors, no body think about recruiting the other investor. Therefore, the bureaus' coordination with the ministry is very vital and indispensable for the sustainability of the tourism business. But, the coordination of the MOFA with the regional governments is very poor and there is no mechanism and legal frame work that helps to work together coordinately.

#### **4.3.6. Ethiopia Airline**

Ethiopian Airline is a national carrier owned by the government and managed by a local team of competent professionals. It is a dynamic company that has built an important air hub and flight serves for the globe to various cities abroad from Addis Ababa. The Airline is well positioned in having the right location of its offices around the world to be accessible to any prospective visitor to Ethiopia. Moreover, the activities at these offices are professionally very much compatible with the promotion of tourism as it provides more business to the airline as well.

One of the tourism promotion officers in the Ethiopian Mission abroad indicates that:

*“The office of the Ethiopian Airline has a mandate of serving those tourists that shows an interest to visit Ethiopia and gives some discount ticket for those who have a plan to make a familiarization trip to Ethiopia*

*in a group. The office has also a mandate of preparing promotional materials, promoting tourism potentials, delivering standard services to tourists, participating in tourism fairs and programs and generally promoting the brand image of the country. Beside its active promotional activities, the office provides discount tickets and special incentives for tour operators and familiarisation trips.”*

In this regard, the Ethiopian Missions should work with the office closely during the participation of different exhibitions and trade fairs to promote the Ethiopian tourism destinations and products.

#### **4.3.7. Tourism Ethiopia**

Tourism Ethiopia is formerly known by the name of Ethiopian Tourism Organisation (ETO). Tourism Ethiopia is established to realize the mandate of enhancing the benefits of tourism in a sustainable and competitive manner by mobilizing and providing leadership to tourism sector and stakeholders towards tourism destination development and marketing.

According to the information gained from the informants and different documents of the Ministry, Tourism Ethiopia actively engaged in leading, planning and coordinating the promotion. The preparation of promotion materials, marketing themes and messages, promotional strategies and tactics and finally promoting the attractions on events based on the culture and language of the host countries is the activities of Tourism Ethiopia. It has also the responsibility of organizing the familiarization trip for travel agents, media and art groups, facilitating the international offline and online medias to promote the destinations and products. In this regards, Tourism Ethiopia is the main stakeholder of the MOFA of Ethiopia and one of the key actor and promoter of the tourist attractions.

#### **4.3.8. Ethiopian Tour Operators Association (ETOA)**

ETOA was formed in 1996 to defend and protect the interests of tour operators and to play its role proactively in the development of tourism. Based on the information gained from the informants and different documents of the Ministry, the association actively engaged in the coordination and enforcement of travel agents to develop tour packages, brochures, and any other promotional materials. It participates on the tourism and travel exhibitions and promote the tourism attractions and also makes B2B or B2C with travel agents to

facilitate the enhancement of tourist flow. But the coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopian Tour Operators Association is not satisfactory and needs an effort to improve their coordination.

#### **4.3.9. Addis Ababa Hotel Owners Association (AHA)**

AHA was established in 1997 to defend the collective interest of the hospitality industry. The association has 115 active members and active chair. This association provides affordable hotel services and special incentives for tourists, supports the conference tourism by delivering quality services, participate on tourism events and promote the tourism resources specially hotel tourism.

#### **4.3.10. Association of Hotel Professionals (AHP)**

This is an association of professionals with experience in hotel operations and management. They collaborate with Ministry of Tourism to deliver training on areas of hotel management and operations. This association also provides the professional support to the officers at regional tourism Bureaus who are in charge of licensing, grading and inspecting tourism accommodations.

#### **4.3.11. Ethiopian Diaspora Agency (EDA)**

Ethiopian Diaspora Agency is established to coordinate diaspora to enable them to contribute their share to the national development and also the Agency supports the diaspora to exercise their rights. According to the information gained from the Ministry, one of the main mandates of the Agency is to coordinate the diaspora to transfer technology, to share knowledge and skill, to invest in his/her home country and to build the image of the nation. The use of the potential, the experience, the knowledge and skill of diaspora to develop the tourism sector is one of the responsibilities of the Agency that has to be done. Moreover, motivating the diaspora to undertake an investment either alone or in the form of joint venture to enhance the flow of hard currency and technology transfer is the mandate of the Agency. To use this potential of diaspora for the development of tourism sector needs the coordination of the Agency and the ministry of Foreign Affairs. But the coordination of both sectors is not that much visible.

#### **4.3.12. Ministry of Trade and Regional Coordination**

Ministry of Trade and regional coordination delivers business licenses for all kind of companies, including tourism service providers. Those tourists who are coming to Ethiopia to invest on international hotels, restaurants, lodges, conference and international exhibition needs a business license and a good service delivery to start their business. Providing a good service and treatment at home country assists the MOFA to recruit more investors to come to the country and invest in this sector.

#### **4.3.13. Ethiopian Customs Commission (ECC)**

Customs services are important for travellers who bring different equipment of tourists with them for different purpose (i.e. birdwatchers, travel journalists, photographers, videos and large sport equipment). The Customs Commission also allows duty free entrance for those investors who want to invest in a tourism sector and bring the necessary raw materials and spare parts for their investment. These investment incentives and good service delivery supports the roles and the activities of the MOFA to ensure the development of tourism infrastructure and enhance the arrivals.

#### **4.3.14. Ethiopia Tourism Board (ETB)**

Ethiopia Tourism Board, which composes eight members, supervises the Tourism Ethiopia's activities. It provides guidance, review and approve work programmes and budgets, evaluate performance of the Tourism Organization.

#### **4.3.15. Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council (ETTC)**

Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council provides leadership and set directions for tourism development and marketing, eliminates major obstacles, foster institutional collaboration and ensures implementation.

#### **4.3.16. Diasporas**

The diasporas in different regions of the world play a crucial role for their country of origin. The tourism promotion officer in the Ministry states that:

*“Ethiopian diaspora abroad can serve as a channel in promoting their Country tourism potential on daily basis where ever they work. They are highly connected in the country they live politically, economically, culturally and they speak the language of the host country.”*

Therefore, the use of these potential for the promotion of the country plays a great role in building the image of the country. It also significantly reduces the government's expenditure paying for expensive promotional activities.

The tourism promotion officer in Ethiopian Mission at United Arab Emirates said that:

*“The Diasporas are contributing a lot by sharing their skill, knowledge and experience. It also transfers the technology that is very important to modernize the tourism sector. Additionally, they invest their money and knowledge in the sector that has a key role in enhancing the development of tourism services and infrastructure.”*

In this connection, coordinating this potential and motivating them to work with the Ethiopian Mission as well as to invest in the sector is very crucial.

#### **4.3.17. Community schools**

According to the informants, even if there are only few Ethiopian community schools and they are not strong enough financially and professionally, their contribution in supporting our missions abroad so far is encouraging. They support the Embassies by engaging in promotional activities since they know the culture and the language of the host countries. They are playing a great role in image-building activities by demonstrating the diversified culture of Ethiopia such as coffee ceremony, Ethiopian traditional foods and dresses of nations and nationalities, traditional dances and music.

#### **4.3.18. Think-tanks and Ethiopia's friends**

Based on the information gained from different informants, think-tanks and Ethiopia's friends are playing their role in promoting Ethiopian tourism destinations and products by using their famous personalities. They promote the tourism sector by participating on different events and also publishing an article regarding the country's tourist destinations and attractions. An article by the title “Branding Ethiopia as an Appealing Tourist Destination” was written by Manjit Singh, Punjabi University of India in 2019 has a great role in promoting Ethiopia as tourist destinations. Many Ethiopian nationals who are living in abroad are also made a Twitter campaign on Rising Ethiopia and promoting Ethiopia as land of origin. Figure 4.3. shows different stakeholders of tourism



Figure 4.1 - Different stakeholders of tourism  
 Source: from own reading and respondent contribution

#### **4.4. The rules and regulations that support the role of the Ministry**

From the assessment of the information gained from the respondents and different documents of the Ministry, there are policies, proclamations, constitutions, manuals and directives that play a supportive role for the Ministry to play its role and responsibilities in governing and coordinating the Missions. These legal frame works provide the Ministry to coordinate and conduct promotional work and public relations abroad to further build the country's image and create an enabling environment for the development of tourism. The legal documents also provide the Ministry to have a power to generate market opportunities and investment, and to create the enabling environment for the development of economic diplomacy.

##### **4.4.1. Proclamations**

As it was mentioned in the general information of the Ministry, the proclamation No 4/1995 guaranteed the establishment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Whereas, the powers and duties of the Ministry was assured by the Foreign Service Proclamation No. 790/2013. Both proclamations assure the Ministry to play its role in the political, economic, and social activities. These proclamations give the ministry the right to promote Ethiopia's tourism potentials to the international

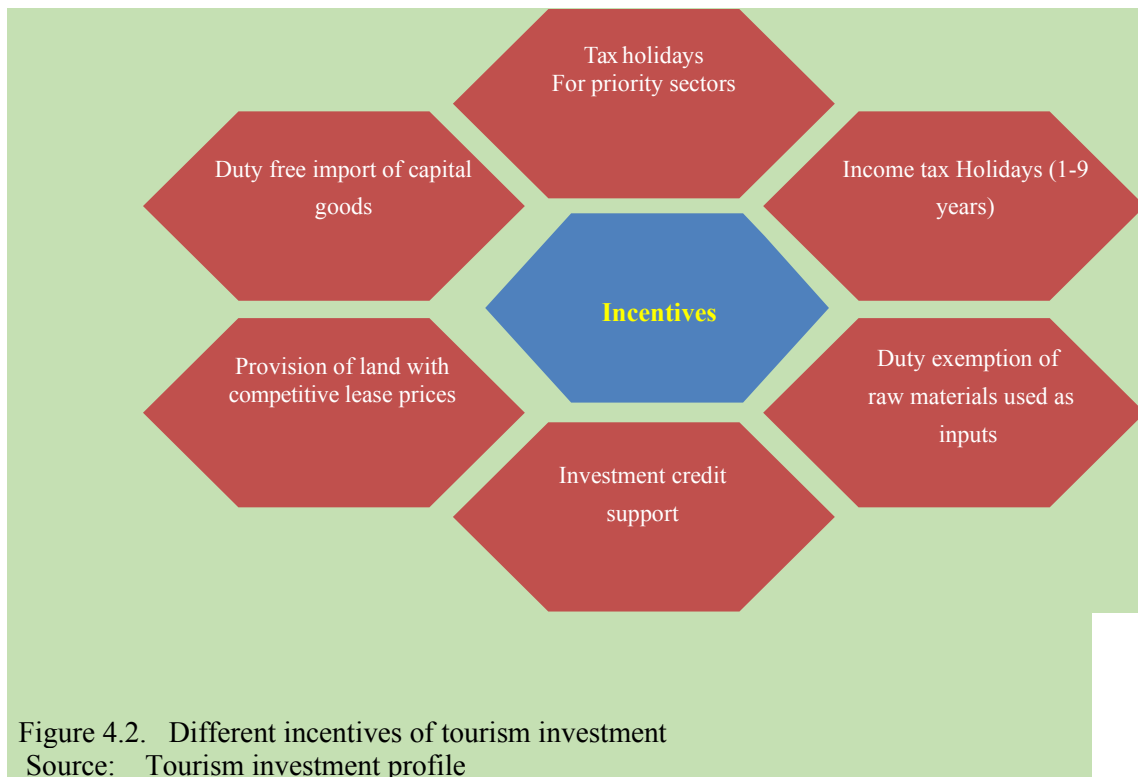
communities, to negotiate tourism related issues, to generate ideas and opinions relating to tourism policy and strategy and to produce manuals, rules and regulations that enables the ministry to play its roles.

#### **4.4.2. Investment Regulations**

Investment proclamations and regulations give a foreign investor the right to own a dwelling house and other immovable property necessary for his investment and assuring the investors through protecting his private property. The proclamations guarantee the investors against measures of expropriation or nationalization, and specifies advance payment of compensation corresponding to the prevailing market value. These regulations also give for foreign investors the right to make remittances out of Ethiopia in convertible foreign currency at the prevailing rate of exchange and provide a highly competitive financial incentive arrangement. The incentive packages that the government guarantees the investors are very important to attract the potential investors to the country. The incentive packages like the income tax exemption, duty free exemption of raw materials and investment credit support are very important and gives a confidence for the investors to run his or her business in Ethiopia.

The duration of income tax exemption is linked with the investment type, sub-sector and the location of the investment. Those investments that are overtaken in Addis Ababa and the Special Zone of Oromia is eligible for 100% income tax exemption from one up to five years, whereas, investment in other areas is eligible for 100% income tax exemption for a period of one up to six years. On the other hand, those investors that are exporting more than 80% of their products are eligible for an additional two years of tax exemption if they are located in Addis Ababa or the Special Zone of Oromia (Source-EIC, 2021).

Moreover, those investors who import a raw material to establish new or expand their existing investments have the right to import their inputs from duty free. There is also bank credit guarantee for an investor who is investing on the government priority areas. In this regard, these incentive packages give a confidence for investors to invest in the tourism sector and create an enabling environment for the promotional activities of the Ministry. Figure 4.2 shows the incentive packages.



#### 4.4.3. Policies

There are two policies that support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to play its role and exercise its responsibilities given by the proclamations. One of the policies is the Foreign Affairs and National Security Policy and strategy. In this document protecting the national interest, generating the market opportunities and investment are the core objectives of the policy. The second one is the Tourism policy document which was launched in 2009. This policy underline that the tourism sector is a basic source of foreign exchange, creates growth and employment opportunities. Ensuring the country's full benefit by sustaining competitiveness in the international tourism market, earning the foreign currency from tourism development and generating employment opportunity for citizen are indicated as the main objective of the tourism development policy. Moreover, this policy specifies undertaking the promotional work as the main implementation strategy of the tourism policy and also suggests the importance of increasing the number of visitors by promoting the tourist attractions and building the positive image of the country. This means that these two policies pave the way for the Ministry to play its role of promoting tourism by organizing different events, exhibitions and expos, recruiting tour operators, organizing the official visits and familiarization trips.

#### **4.4.4. Constitution**

The Commercial Code of 1960 provides the legal framework for undertaking business activities in Ethiopia. The provisions from article 390 to 393 of the civil code states that a foreign investor or a foreign national treated as domestic investor shall have the right to own a dwelling house and other immovable property requisite for this investment. In addition to this, article 40 of the constitution ensures property ownership right for the investors. Moreover, article 36 of the constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia briefly explains the principles of the external relations. Under this article it was stated that the foreign relation policy of the country should base a mutual interest and the international agreements should promote the interest of Ethiopia. In this regard, this constitution helps the Ministry to play its role and responsibilities by providing a legal framework.

#### **4.4.5. Business manuals**

There are three manuals namely business promotion manual, business negotiation and consensus manual and business information and analysis manual which are developed by the MOFA in 2010. The business promotion manual identifies the tourist attraction areas like historical, cultural and natural attractions as the priority areas to be promoted. It also mentions the MICE tourism as a sector of priority that attracts the attention of the government and identifies the available opportunities of conference tourism in the country. The manual also identifies the countries to be focused on to promote the available tourism resources. It identifies countries like United States of America, China, Italy, Germany, United Kingdom, Canada, Brussels, Israel, Sweden, Saudi Arabia, India, Turkey, Kuwait and Yemen as priority countries that has to be focused on to promote our tourism resources to attract more tourists. The manual explains the importance of selecting the potential tour operators and connecting them with the local operators. It also states the need of identifying the target audiences and crafting the right marketing themes that influences them to visit the country. The document mentions creativity, originality (new idea), inclusiveness, relevancy, and conciseness as the essential elements to craft marketing themes to make it very smart.

In addition to these the manual briefly explains the promotional methodology and tactics to be followed to make a successful promotion. It also underlines the selection of

promotional methodology has to focus on target audiences, tourism resources or products, competitiveness in the market and product awareness of the audiences. The manual recommends the importance of analysing the current situation, developing the tactics and defining the target audiences before promotion. It further recommends, to identify the budget and promotional material, to define the sponsorship objective (if there is sponsorship) and agree on the strategy of promotion.

On the other hand, business negotiation and consensus manual give an attention to identify and select the business institutions (related with tourism) in which the Ethiopian side are going to make a negotiation. The manual commends the importance of sector specific gathering of information, organizing of profile and preparing of discussion programs to have a successful negotiation. The third manual, the business information and analysis manual, support the two manuals by emphasizing on the collection, organization and analyses of the information relating to tourism. Therefore, these manuals have a significance for the Ministry to know its mandate and play its role and responsibilities in effective and efficient ways.

#### **4.4.6. Tourism Trade Qualification Assurance License**

Tourism trade qualification assurance license was prepared to control the quality of facilities and services in the tourism sector. This qualification assurance license assures the quality of services of those individuals or groups that are participating in the businesses like star rated hotels, motels, loges, restaurants, pensions, parks and traditional food services. Moreover, it assures travel agents and tour operators, tourism promotion and consultancy, tourism professionals and scholars either they are qualified or not. This assurance license supports the Ministry by availing a legal framework that motivates it to focus on quality and proficiency during the recruitment of tour operators and investors.

### **4.5. The Practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

#### **4.5.1. The practices of the Directorate General of Trade and Tourism**

##### **Expansion**

##### **4.5.1.1. The Practices of using the manual and strategy of Promotion**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in collaboration with other stakeholders uses different promotional tactics to meet its objectives. The finding from the collected information

shows that the promotional strategies are not developed and articulated in the form of strategy document by the Ministry yet. But the Ministry has the practice of developing a business promotion manual that provides a direction on how to promote the tourism resources and other businesses to the international communities. This manual identifies the focus areas and main activities of the directorate relating to the tourism issues. According to this manual, identifying the tourism opportunities, target audiences, sponsorships, focus areas and priority countries are the key activities to be done. Moreover, the manual states the importance of developing marketing themes and messages, promotional methods and tactics as the activities that needs an attention during the preparation of an event. But this manual is not a complete document since it did not include all the detailed information and directions as the strategy documents do.

According to the informants, the Ministry has a limitation in developing its own strategies that supports the promotional activities. The diplomat who assigned for tourism promotion in China indicates that:

*“Strategy of promotion needs its own document alone to provide a direction on how to use the digital marketing strategies, social media and multi-channel communication strategy. The strategy of market segmentation, targeting and positioning, product development and diversification and budget access and fund raising needs a strategy that clearly states each and every activity that helps in the promotional work.”*

Therefore, it is a mandatory for the Ministry to develop its own strategy documents which provides a legal framework that assists the Ministry to perform the promotional activities in abroad.

#### **4.5.1.2. The practice of managing and planning**

The MOFA is a key government institution that has a mandate to coordinate the international relations of the country. This needs a good management, exhaustive planning and evaluating of each activity. As the information gained from the assessment of different documents of the Ministry and the respondents of the individuals, the Ministry leads and support all the directorate generals and Ethiopian Missions to perform their duties and responsibilities in a proper way. As planning and reporting is one of the management tools, the Ministry has a practice of developing ten or five-year plan, annual plan and three

months plan and cascading it to the Directorate Generals. According to the informants, the Directorate General of Trade and Tourism Expansion cascaded its own part and re-cascade it to the Missions regarding the activities of tourism. There is also a practice of follow up mechanism of the activities done by the Missions through the reporting mechanism. The directorate evaluation the performances of the Missions and gives feedback to identify their weakness and strength.

According to the informants, the directorate has also the practice of assisting the Missions to realize the plan of organizing an event, visiting of B2B or B2C business delegations and familiarization trip for film actors, journalist, authors and internationally well-known and imminent persons to promote Ethiopian tourist attractions. The Ministry also closely works in collaboration with other tourism stakeholders to facilitate a smooth working environment for the Embassies and Consulates to promote Ethiopia as a destination of choice.

#### **4.5.1.3. The practice of the Ministry in stakeholder coordination**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a big institution that coordinates different stakeholders to accelerate the economic benefits of the country from the tourism sector. As the information assessed from the respondents of the individuals and different reference documents, the Ministry has a practice of establishing a platform of the national coordination forum in 2003 by the name of “Yekinjit Medrek” that undertakes a consultative meeting and gives a direction on how to co-ordinate and promote the tourism resources. This forum is led by the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and includes the relevant government sectors and private stakeholders.

The tourism expansion counsellor in the Ministry mentioned that:

*“The National Coordination Forum has its own annual Plan, meeting programs, and agendas of discussion. Even if the Ministry pays a lot of duties in the coordination of stakeholders, the outcome indicates that the forum didn’t achieve its objectives entirely due to the fact that there is less commitment, lack of clear roles and mandates and also absence of rule based binding mechanisms among the stakeholders. Moreover, some stakeholders are much focus on procedural issues rather than focusing on achieving the main objectives of promoting Ethiopian tourist*

*destinations in well-coordinated and coherent manner. There is also a limitation of the Ministry in using of digital technologies like e-government system that facilitates the information sharing of different government organs to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of coordination.”*

In this regard it needs to establish a legal framework for the stakeholders that clearly indicate their mandates so as to enable them to work together in a coherent manner.

According to the information gained from the document of the Ministry and the respondents of the informants, there was a study undertaken in 2004 by the Ministry on how to improve the operation of this National Coordination Forum to overcome the existing challenges. The main objective of the study was to investigate the practical challenges of the existing national coordination forum, to find the ways on how to share the best experiences from other countries and to establish the system to empower the forum by setting a legal framework that solves the current challenges.

Based on the information gained from the document of the Ministry and the interview of the individuals, the Ministry distributes the questionnaires to all of its Missions to realize the study on the improvement the national forum. But, only 18 Missions were responding on the matter. From these respondents Ethiopian Missions in 11 countries are investigating that countries like India, Djibouti, UK, Switzerland, Turkey, S/Africa, Kuwait, Frankfort, Ghana, S/Arabia and Russia have no national coordination forum experience. Whereas, countries like France, Kenya, Cuba, Brazil, Israel and Airland have the frame work of national coordination forum and the coordination of this forum is the responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In some countries like Vietnam, the national coordination forum establishes the business diplomacy fund rising organ to solve the problem of budget constraint during the promotion. In the same way, countries like Malaysia, has a tourism expansion funding program to enable their Missions to work co-ordinately with their trade offices in the host countries to internationalize the agenda of tourism packages. On the other hand, countries like Cuba have an experience of establishing a commission that comprises different sector and set a legal frame work by signing the memorandum of understanding that enables them to work co-ordinately. Brazil and Australia have also an experience of national coordination forum and this forum extends up to the regional level

and works actively with the regional investment and tourism bureaus to solve the challenges faced in a coordinated manner.

According to the study documents, Singapore and Malaysia use the digital technologies like e-government system that facilitates the information sharing of different government organs to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the coordination. Finally, this study recommends the Ministry to establish the e-government system to make easy of information sharing, to sign the MoU between different stakeholders to create the legal framework that enhances coordination and to set a business diplomacy fund rising organs to solve the challenges of budget constraints during promotion.

However, the informants indicate that the Ministry has taken a long way without applying the findings and the recommendation of this study. But nine years back, the Ministry prepares the terms of reference (TOR) in 2013 E.C. on how to work together with different stakeholders to realize the activities of tourism promotion and marketing in the international markets. According to the information gained from the Ministry's official documents, the main objective of this TOR was to organize the promotional materials jointly by using the digital technologies, to promote tourism attractions in the international markets and to solve the challenges with the coordination of other stakeholders. This document identifies the steering and technical committees of the forum, the responsibilities and activities of each committee, the sectors included in the membership and the expected results from this committee.

The steering committee is led by the State Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whereas, the technical committee is coordinated by the Directorate of the Trade and Tourism expansion of the Ministry. In both committees the Ministry of Tourism is assigned as the vice chair to ensure the effectiveness of the forum. Moreover, the document clearly states the sectors that included as a member of this forum and identifies the main activities of all the member sectors.

According to information gained from the informants, even if the forum established the TOR, there are some gaps in the inclusion of the roles and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders. The prepared terms of references identify only the roles and responsibilities of eight sectors like MDINA, MOFA, MOT, TE, OPM, EA, ETOA and HA. This TOR does not include the role and responsibilities of other important and relevant stakeholders like the roles of Investment commission, Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council,

Ethiopia Tourism Board, Ministry of Trade and Regional Coordination, Regional Tourism Bureaus, and Association of Hotel Professionals.

Moreover, the document of the Ministry shows that there is a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was signed among the MOFA, Ministry of Tourism, and Tourism Ethiopia in 2021 to work jointly on the issues of image building, marketing and promotion, tourism investment and tourism technology transfer. Building an image of the country, enhancing tourism investment, creating job opportunities, promoting tourism and market connection are the core areas of cooperation. In addition to these, sharing the best experiences, establishing the strategic cooperation with partners and setting the effective and efficient information sharing system are also the areas of cooperation in this agreement. The document also set the responsibilities and activities of the three sectors, the meeting procedures and finally, the relational framework of the forum with other stakeholders. These two documents (TOR and MOU) assist the stakeholders to know their role and responsibilities that ensures the sectors to perform their mandates effectively.

#### **4.5.1.4. The practices in promoting the tourism destinations and products**

According to the informants, the Ministry has an experience of preparing policy, manuals and directives that identifies the roles and responsibilities of the main office as well as the Missions. The information gained from the informants and the documents of the Ministry indicates that the directorate of Trade and Tourism Expansion has a practice of actively engaged in facilitating the promotion of tourism destination and products in abroad and in coordinating the responsible organs to participate in tourism related events. It supports the promotional activities of the Ethiopian missions by providing the necessary information and promotional materials. It collects tourism promotion materials and information from concerned authorities and distributes it to the missions. It works to establish an effective and efficient management and information sharing system. Identifying the tourism information, organizing and analysing the information on the bases of the interest of the tourists and distributing to the target audiences is also the responsibilities of this directorate.

Based on the information gained from the informants, the directorate has a practice of developing the manuals, rules and regulations that assists in enhancing its performance. There is an effort by the ministry in developing different manuals that helps the ministry

to know the focus areas and priority countries. The manuals assist the Ministry on how to collect the information, on how to organize and analyze the information based on the national interest and it also contributes to the activities of the Ministry and the Missions in undertaking market intelligence and market studies. Moreover, the manual identified the tourism opportunities, target audiences, the importance of developing marketing themes and messages.

According to the informants, the Ministry shares an experience from countries that have the best practices and initiations of different techniques, methods and strategies that assists for the development of the sector. It identifies the focus areas of the government regarding the tourism sector, undertakes market intelligence and initiates the tourism promotional techniques to use the opportunities effectively. The directorate also follows up any international incidences and global policy changes related to tourism and analyse and forecast their economic impact on Ethiopia. With the coordination of its Missions and other stakeholders, the directorate collects up to dated information and conducts market research on the tourism potentials so as to provide inputs to the national tourism strategy or policy.

Based on the information collected from the interview and the open-ended questionnaires, the directorate has a practice of facilitating and coordinating tourism related official visit programs either an outgoing or incoming visits of government officials or private business delegations with the collaboration of Ethiopian Missions. It coordinates and participates on the tourism related bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements, follow up its implementation and solve any challenges faced during the implementation process. If the Missions recruit tour operators, tour guides and media peoples to make familiarization trip to Ethiopia to include the country in their tour packages, the directorate experienced in facilitating the condition to make the visit to be successful. It organizes the profile of the tour operators and other potential investors who shows an interest to invest in the sector. Besides, it arranges appointments for visitors who want to meet the relevant authorities of Ethiopia.

According to the informants, the promotional activities of the tourism destination and products in abroad needs a big budget for the preparation of promotional materials both in manuals and electronic forms, for rental of podiums, for advertising and use international medias like BBC, CNN, Al-Jazeera, and so on. But the finding shows that there is a big

constraint of budget and there is no mechanism or established strategy of fund raising both at the level of the Ministry and the Missions to perform an effective promotional activity.

The tourism promotion officer in the Ministry states that:

*“There are limitations in the ministry during its promotional activities of the destination and products. The quality of promotional materials, packaging and labelling of the products that we present for the display is not attractive. The preparation of tourist attraction documentary films, posters, stands, brochures, fliers, samples, tourist destination maps and so on, do not motivate the tourists to visit. Moreover, there is a challenge of language to promote the attraction with the language that the tourists prefer and understands the matter very easily.”*

As a country, preparation of attractive promotional material that motivates the tourist to visit the country is poor. In this regard, it is very important to give an attention for the quality of the promotional material to attract tourists to the attraction site.

The other tourism promotion officer in Ethiopian Embassy in China mentions that:

*“The low attention and focus of the Ministry to develop the basic strategies that support the promotional activities like digital marketing strategies, product segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy, multichannel and online promotion strategy, media engagement strategy, fund raising strategy and so on challenges the promotional activities of the Ministry.”*

Establishing the strategy of promotion is the main problem of the Ministry. The important strategies that assist the Ministry to promote the destination successfully on the bases of tourist interests need a special attention.

#### **4.5.1.5. The practice of assigning Tourism Ambassador**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ethiopian Tourism Board have a practice of selecting Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador to promote the country’s tourist attractions, investment and the overall image of the country. According to the official document gained from the Ministry, the Ambassadors to be selected should be famous, passionate of travel and tourism, professional and online presence on his or her social media. The role and responsibilities of these brand ambassadors are to enhance the online and offline presence

of Ethiopia as a land of origins, create awareness about Ethiopian tourism brand, promote the tourist destinations, improve the image and influence potential tourists to visit Ethiopia.

#### **4.5.2. Practices of the Ethiopia's Missions**

Ethiopia's missions in abroad have many practices in promoting tourism destinations and products to the international communities by using of different mechanisms. As the information gained from the informants, a long way experience of the Missions shows that the promotion of the tourism resources of the country was performed through one of the following mechanisms.

- 1) Using various events like tourism and trade fair, expo, exhibition, business forums, seminars and roadshows.
- 2) Use of electronic and printed media such as promoting through television, newspapers, bulletins, brochures and pamphlets.
- 3) Organizing familiarization trip that includes government officials, foreign tour operators, film makers, journalist, authors, media peoples, event organizers, photographers, internationally well-known and imminent persons to promote Ethiopian tourist attraction sites.
- 4) Selecting lobbyist and convincing foreign tour operators to include Ethiopia in their tour package and to promote Ethiopian tourist attraction and destination.
- 5) Few Missions use digital technologies like Facebook, twitter and website to promote tourism products during the organization of events.
- 6) Organizing the showroom at Embassy compound. Some Missions have the show rooms at the Embassy compound that any visitors comes either for the service or for tour information will visit the area.

##### **4.5.2.1. The practice of the Missions in organizing an event and recruiting tourists, tour operators and investors**

According to the informants, Ethiopian Missions have a lot of practices in organizing an event, recruiting tour operators, investors, Media groups, artists and imminent personalities to participate in a familiarization trip. The practice of identifying the target place and audiences, crafting the best promotional themes and messages and selecting powerful media before an event are the practical experience of the Missions. The missions collect different promotional material from the main office and other stakeholders to make ready

for the program. They have a practice of setting the promotional tactics, develop the promotion packages and programs, invite high profiled tour operators and other tourism stakeholders and finally promote the tourism destinations and products on the international events.

Based on the information gained from the informants, some missions play their role in the preparations of promotional materials by translating the source material into different languages based on the culture, language, religion and other social taboos of receiving countries either in the form of videos, brochures, leaflets, power points etc. For instance, Missions that represent the Middle East countries have an experience to translate the promotional materials into Arabic language and distribute it to the audiences.

According to the informants, the Missions have also the practices of recruiting the potential investors and tour operators that show an interest to visit Ethiopia to engage in tourism business. They recruit and organize the profile of the potential companies and send it to the main office. They have also an experience of organizing the visit and the meeting of incoming and outgoing high-level business delegation and also pre-investment visit for those who interested to invest on the areas of tourism sector. The Missions are also actively facilitating a familiarization trip for different media groups and tour operators to enable them to visit the tourism potentials of the country. Moreover, they have an experience of facilitating the tourism related agreements to be signed between the two governments or between the government and host countries' private organizations to strengthen the tourism relations.

#### **4.5.2.2. The experiences of the Missions in coordinating the stakeholders**

According to the informants, the Ethiopian missions have many practices in organizing and coordinating various promotional events by its own or in collaboration with other stakeholders. They have a good practice in coordinating and working jointly with different stakeholders in abroad like foreign tour operators, Ethiopian Airlines, Diasporas, think thanks, Ethiopian community schools, exhibitors, trade fair organizers, media groups and journalists.

Based on the information gained from the informants, the Missions have an experience of establishing a forum of stakeholders that enables to work together in promoting the

destinations and products. At the Embassy or Consulate level coordinating and equipping the diaspora, community school and think tanks is the responsibility of diplomat who assigned for business diplomacy. He/she organizes a briefing session on the approach and methodology of promotion and distributing different promotional materials like brochures, flyers, video show and so on to the stakeholders. After they are equipped with sufficient information, they are playing an amazing role by engaging themselves on promoting of the destinations and tourism products.

According to the informants, the Missions have a practice on how to use the stakeholders to contribute in sharing information about destinations, inviting different companies and their friends to come and visit Ethiopia's display and arranging a meeting of tour companies with Ethiopian missions to discuss on how to work together. Moreover, they have an experience to support and coordinate the stakeholders to play its role in image building activities. The Missions provide the promotional materials and any necessary facilities to enable the stakeholders to demonstrate the Ethiopian diversified culture such as coffee ceremony, Ethiopian traditional food and dresses of nations and nationalities, cultural dance and music, historical, cultural and natural sites. But the finding shows that there is a limitation of the Missions in coordinating and creating a strong relationship with the protentional tour and travel Agents, international media outlets and influential peoples to promote Ethiopian tourism resources.

On the other hand, the business promotion manual indicates that the Missions have a practical experience of supporting the delegations who are coming from the home country to promote Ethiopia's tourism potential in abroad. The Missions facilitates the travel including the visa issue, the hotel reservation and the podium or a place in which the delegation promotes its products. In addition to this the Missions have a practice in arranging an appointment for Ethiopian delegates to have a B2B or B2C meetings with the host country's counterparts to enable them to share an experience. Finally, the Missions evaluate the program and identifies the weakness and strength, the result registered, the challenges faced, things to be considered in the future and reports to the main office.

#### **4.5.2.3. The practices of collecting information and using digital technologies**

Now a day, information is a very important tool to use the international opportunities that enhance the development of our tourism sector. The assessment of different documents of the Ministry and individual interviews show that one of the experiences of Ethiopia's Missions are pro-actively engaging in the collection of tourism related information. The Missions actively participate in collecting and analysing the information, undertaking the market intelligence, conducting market assessment and market research to use as an input for policy making. The director of tourism expansion in the MoFA, states in his response that *“in this era of globalization, the promotion of tourism destinations and products by using digital technology is very crucial.”* Digital marketing of tourism mainly used by missions to promote Ethiopian tourism destinations and products must be based on the language and interest of their customers. Over the past few years, the practice and the presence of the Ministry on the digital medias like Facebook and twitter to promote Ethiopian tourist destinations and products showing a significant improvement with its own limitations.

Based on the information gained from the Ministry's document, there is a good practice of the Ministry on twitter campaign made with the collaboration of MOFA, Tourism Ethiopia, Ethiopia Investment Commission, Ethiopian Missions and Diasporas. This campaign lasts two months on the webs starting from December 30, 2020 up to its conclusion on March 15, 2021. The campaign was launched with the moto of “Rising Ethiopia” with the objective of promoting Ethiopia's investment potential and emerging tourism destinations. This best practice that can be sited in promoting Ethiopian tourism on twitter campaign by creating an online community was primarily initiated by our Diasporas in collaboration with Ethiopian Embassy in London.

The assessment made on the effectiveness of the launched campaign by the Ministry shows that there are some efforts by few Missions of Ethiopia to promote the destinations and products by using of digital technologies like websites and social media particularly Facebook and Twitter. But practically the use of this digital technologies is not effective and efficient. Almost all of the pages are opened for the purpose of displaying the bilateral activities and councillor services, not for the purpose of tourism promotion. In this regard the finding shows that there is a great gap of the Ministry in using digital technologies for the promotional activities on the regular bases. Even the Directorate of Trade and Tourism

Expansion who governs and shapes the Missions and coordinates the stakeholders has no website, Facebook, and Twitter account to promote the tourism destinations and products. Even if the website, the Facebook and Twitter page was developed at the level of the Ministry, the pages are mostly used for the other diplomatic activities of the Ministry. Even as the level of the Ministry there is no pages developed to promote the tourism destinations and products alone.

#### **4.5.2.4. The practice of developing the marketing strategy**

According to the informants, marketing strategies are very important to promote the tourism destinations and products on the bases of the cultures of the countries. The information gained from the respondents shows that, Ethiopian Embassy in Beijing can be mentioned as an example in the activities of collaboration and developing a marketing strategy. The Embassy, in collaboration with other Ethiopian Consulates in China and Regional Office of Ethiopian Airlines, launched the Ethiopian Tourism Destination Marketing Strategy for China. The Mission creates a Tourism Council consisting of members from the Ethiopian Embassy, three consulate offices in China, Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian citizens living in China and students studying in different universities of China. This council was established to integrate resources and knowledge to promote the country in a coordinated way to China's out bound tourists.

According to the informants, the initiative of developing a marketing strategy on how to engage with China's tourist is the effort of one diplomat who assigned there on economic diplomacy. The finding shows that this type of initiative to develop the tourist engagement strategy based on the culture and language of host countries is not experienced in the other Missions as well as at the main office. Therefore, the finding indicates that the promotional activities of the Ministry do not consider the interest, the culture, and norms of the residing countries' tourist.

### **4.6. The Challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting tourist Destinations and products**

This section deals with the challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attract the major tourists to Ethiopia. The core challenge of tourist attractions to Ethiopia is mainly assessed

in this section. The tourism industry in Ethiopia is still described as the one that stake at the stage of its infancy. Even if, potential tourist attractions are available in Ethiopia, the tourism destinations are not effectively promoted due to several destination promotion and marketing challenges.

According to the informants and the information from different documents of the Ministry, the current challenges of tourism product promotion are mainly attributed to the lack of digital marketing strategy, lack of market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy, poor coordination system, challenges relating to the quality of products and product diversification, challenges in the use of digital technologies, lack of budget and fund rising mechanism, lack of skilled man power, challenges related to service delivery, challenges of peace, security and stability, and the current challenges of Covid-19. These challenges are briefly presented as follows:

#### **4.6.1. The promotional challenges of the Ministry**

##### **4.6.1.1. Lack of Digital Marketing Strategies**

In chapter two we have reviewed different literatures and seen different theories regarding different strategies especially the digital marketing strategies and digital marketing practices. We looked into the importance of knowing of your customer and understanding his or her needs and wants. The importance of developing customer relationships, customer management, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction to ensure the sustainability of the business have seen in the section. We have also seen the nine important elements of digital marketing strategies identified by Chaffey and Chadwick (2016). These strategies are very important to indicate the tactics and the ways in which the tourism business will be successful.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a core government institution that has a mandate to promote a tourism business in the international markets. According to the informants, developing digital marketing strategies is a mandatory for the Ministry to undertake an effective and efficient promotional activity. But, the MOFA of Ethiopia and its Missions has a limitation in developing its own tourism marketing strategies. The Ministry has no digital marketing strategies that leads it on how to promote the tourism products by using digital technologies. The Ministry's experience in developing the digital marketing strategies and some of its elements like the strategy of

online and social media marketing strategy, multichannel communication strategy and fund rising strategy is not visualized still now.

According to the informants, the absence of these strategies makes a great obstacle for the Ministry to promote the tourism attractions on the bases of integrated marketing communication which enables to create a strategic plan of communications among the stakeholders for the efficiency of promotional activities. If there is no legal framework that governs to do a promotional activity on digital Medias, there are no responsibilities on how to manage and use the media for the purpose of promotion. Therefore, developing these digital marketing strategies is not an optional, but it is a mandatory for the Ministry to uplift the tourism business.

#### **4.6.1.2. Lack of Market Segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP) strategy**

In chapter two, in the section of digital marketing strategy we have seen that the importance of the market segmentation, targeting and positioning and the approach of STP has to be consider demographic, customer lifecycle, customer behaviour, channel preference, and tone and style preference.

According to the informants, the strategy of market segmentation, targeting and positioning is a fundamental issue since the working behaviour of the Ministry needs the engagement of different culture, language, behaviour, religions and so on. The elements of culture that have an impact on international marketing are religion, language, history, and education (Gillespie et al., 2004). Market segmentation, targeting and positioning selects the most valuable segment and suitable products that fits the needs of the customer based on their culture for the effectiveness of the promotion of tourism. Promoting the destinations and tourism products based on the country's cultural differences is one of the best tourism product marketing strategies.

The international trade and tourism expansion director general said:

*“Once we fell on the strategy of promotion, it is very difficult to promote the destinations and products based on the interest and needs of the tourists of those countries we need to visit Ethiopia. Tourists from different countries have different interests in the areas of visiting based*

*on their educational background, religion, culture, values, and customs. The language in which we are promoting the tourism products also needs great attention to induce the message that we need to transfer.”*

According to the other informants, the product type we use and the promotional strategy we follow as the Ministry do not consider the culture, language, religious, social behaviour and norms of the host country where our missions are residing.

The tourism promotion officer in the Ethiopian Mission residing in Saudi Arabia said that:

*“Almost all of the Middle East countries are followers of the Islamic religion and they have their own cultures, values, customs, and languages to speak. Most of the tourists who come from these regions are interested to visit those areas and products that reflect the Islamic culture. They are also very interested to visit cultural and historical destinations like Al-Njashi, the walled city of Harar, and their cultural paintings. Most of the tourists coming from this region, especially from Saudi Arabia, need a destination that accommodates a family visit. This means that the area of visit must have a family hotel or restaurant that has special places or rooms that accommodate only the family since the women of Saudi are not visible in front of the other males while they are having their lunch or dinner due to the culture and religion.”*

In this regard, fulfilling the *customs*, languages, cultural interests of the countries and also the facilities that the tourists need is very fruitful to attract more tourists to Ethiopia.

The other informants from Ethiopian Embassy in United Arab Emirates mention that *“the activity of promoting the destinations on the bases of the religion, custom and language of the region (Arabic) is very important to promote tourism destinations and products.”*

Promoting the products in the Arabic language to this region helps to understand the destination or products very easily and enhances the interest of tourists to visit the country. But, our strategy of promotion does not reflect all these procedures; instead, we use mass promotion that does not consider the interest of the region in which we are promoting our products.

In the same way, other informants from Ethiopian Mission in Sudan indicate that *“the importance of developing the promotional and marketing strategies for Asian, African, and*

*Western countries based on their cultures, customs, religions and languages.*” He believes that this action helps to boost the tourist interest and awareness to visit the country. For instance, some western colonized African countries, and Western Countries of Europe and America need to visit historical places and nature-based products. They are interested to visit the destinations in the northern and eastern parts of Ethiopia. But yet, at the level of the Ministry, there is no developed strategy for each region or countries. Even, there is no information system or digital Medias are developed which targeting to provide guidance for tourists on the bases of their cultural differences. Therefore, one of the challenges of the promotional activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the absence of market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy based on the country’s cultural differences.

#### **4.6.1.3. Challenges related to Coordination and collaboration**

Coordination of stakeholders is very vital instrument that plays a fundamental role in promoting tourism and solving any challenges relating to tourism. As it was stated by stakeholder theory, all stakeholders are valid partners. Coordination and collaboration of stakeholders is playing a central role in tourism promotion and marketing activities. Timur and Getz (2008) states that stakeholders from public and private sectors and the local communities play critical roles in the development and implementation of sustainable tourism.

The main challenge in tourism promotion is lack of well-organized coordination among stakeholders. According to many informants, the coordination of the tourism stakeholders shows some fragility and not actively playing their role based on the developed terms of reference (TOR) and tripartite memorandum of understanding. Even if there is a prepared TOR that briefly states the role and responsibilities of the government sectors, public and private organizations, there are some government sectors and private organizations that do not actively engaged to play their role yet. The informants indicate that, after the establishment of national coordination forum and terms of reference, there was a hope that this arrangement will assist the sectors to know their mandate and responsibilities that enable them to perform the promotional activities effectively. But due to the absence of continuous and consistence meetings and evaluation systems, lack of preparing a common plan to digitalize the promotional activities and limited awareness creation to main

stakeholders about the digital Marketing of tourism, there is a challenge yet to build strong coordination among stakeholders. Moreover, there is an exclusion of the role of some stakeholders in the prepared TOR and still a problem of mandate issues.

According to the informants, there are many tourists who transit to other countries by using Bole international Airport. These tourists stay in Bole international Airport from one hour up to one day to fly to their next destinations. But we didn't use these tourists to visit the nearest destinations in and around Addis until their departure arrives. This is due the lack of strong legal framework that enables to bind the National Immigration, Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopian Missions, Ministry of Tourism and other stakeholders on the ways to use them.

It was mentioned that the national coordination forum sets the terms of references that states the role of stakeholders. But, based on the information gained from different documents of the Ministry, this TOR includes only the role and responsibilities of eight sectors like Main Department of Immigration, and Nationality Agency, MOFA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tourism Ethiopia, Office of Prime Minister, Ethiopia Airline, Ethiopia Tour Organization Associations and Hotel Associations. It does not include the role and responsibilities of other important and relevant stakeholders like the role of Investment Commission, Custom Authority, Regional Tourism Bureaus, Ethiopian Tourism Transformation Council and Diaspora Agency. Therefore, the TOR has a limitation since it does not include the role and responsibilities of all relevant stakeholders.

The coordination challenges are apparent from the federal institutions up to the grassroots' level. The challenges are relating to the provision of quality and standard services, the availability of necessary infrastructure and tourist facilities, protection of parks and destination areas, skilled manpower, etc that influences the promotional activities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to the informants, weak private sector associations and institutional framework, lack of collaboration, and coordination system, lack of joint multiple-destination marketing mechanisms are barriers to get things done. Most of our destinations that we promote on international exhibitions are cultural and natural heritages. But there is a limitation of

coordination with heritage managing offices like the institutions that manage cultural & natural heritages in promoting tourism products.

#### **4.6.1.4. Challenges Related to a Quality of Products and Product Diversification**

Schellenberg (1965) argues that the main components of the tourism products are cultural, natural and human heritage of the country. According to him these infrastructures include artistic and historical values, language, folklore, hospitality, customs and traditions, climate, landscape, various attraction, vegetation, flora and fauna, natural reservations and parks, accommodation, restaurant facilities, health facilities, entertainment network, tourist transport categories, tourist information network, business of tourism consumption, travel agencies etc.

According to the respondents, the product quality, product development and diversification, product accessibility, and the sustainability of product are very important for the sustainability of tourists. Conservation and maintenance of the existing destinations and building the new one with the application of all the modern technologies to make it very smart enough to attract tourists is very crucial.

According to the informants and the assessment of different documents of the Ministry, lack of product development and diversification strategy, poor destination development and protection, lack of proper destination planning and visitor management, lack of investment in product development and limited support for community-based tourism projects to ensure the product development are the main challenges as the country level. In addition to this, lack of innovation and narrow product range, inadequate measures regarding conservation of the tourist resources to ensure sustainability and generally poor competency of the industry at the country level challenges the role to be played by the Ministry to promote the sector in the international market. Inadequate quality of promotional materials, inefficient product interpretation and packaging are also the challenges that facing the Ministry during the promotional activities.

To attract the international community, it needs quality of packaging, labelling and specification of promotional materials. According to the informants, the quality as well as the quantity of the promotion materials that are available to be promoted are very poor and out dated. Promotional materials in missions are not fulfil the standard and the expected quality to be competent in the market. The practical activities yet shows that the

promotional materials are not designed with high quality material and attractiveness. Moreover, the description and labelling of the material is not considering the culture and languages of the host country that enables the tourists to understand the matter very easily.

#### **4.6.1.5.Challenges in the use of Digital technologies**

In this era of globalization, the use of digital technologies for the promotion of tourist destination and products by the countries are very efficient, effective and fast to reach to the customer. Creating sensational messages and crafting the marketing theme with different languages to promote on social medias and websites are very important to enhance the awareness of the destinations or products.

As one of the developing countries, Ethiopia is also a victim of those challenges. The use of digital technologies for promotion and marketing, the country has tangible challenges in understanding its importance, operation and management. According to the informants, since recent times, there are various efforts made by the MOFA at head office and the missions to promote Ethiopian tourism potential to the international communities by using digital technologies and electronic words of mouth. But this effort is not exercised on the regular bases and only performed actively if there are the special events that need the engagement of the main office and the Missions. This kind of activity has no continuity since there is no framework that influences the Directorate or the Missions to do so on the regular bases. According to the respondents, even if there is a trial, the Ministry do not have sufficient experience in using the digital technologies for the promotion of the destinations. In most of the Missions, digital platforms have not been properly and exhaustively exploited. Absence of developing mobile friendly applications to deliver information very easily and quickly and also the absence of online or digital payment system for easy service delivery are the main challenges of the main office and the Missions.

On the other hand, the informants mentioned that there is a misunderstanding of few peoples in the Ministry that the promotion through social media and website will not bring a great difference in the minds of tourists. Most of the time the Ministry prefers to promote the tourism attractions and products by organizing different exhibitions and international expos. At the level of the Ministry and Missions there is no website and social media only targeting to promote the tourism resources. The attention given to these technologies is

very low and there is no budget allocation for the purpose of developing these digital facilities.

Based on the information gained from the informants, the development and use of digital technologies did not get an especial attention both at the Ministry and the Missions level. Even, the established Directorate for Trade and Tourism Expansion is not developed its own website, Facebook and tweeter pages to promote its daily activities to enhance tourism. Even if there is an officer who engaged in tourism promotion, media communication, information analysis and distribution on the developed structure of the Ministry there is no role played by this officer to promote the tourism attractions by creating the website and social media account. The officer is there only to follow up and support the Mission by delivering the tourism related information and promotional materials and also collect the reports regarding the promotional activities of the Mission. Most of the Missions are also cascading the same thing from the main office regarding the effective and efficient use of website and social media. Almost all of the Missions do not have the website and social media that targeted only to promote the tourism attractions and products. Even those Missions who use the website and social media to post their diplomatic activities are not posting the tourism issue regularly, unless there are some directions from the main office to promote some issues for few times on the regular bases. On the other hand, they do not remember to up to date their displayed tourism products due to the fact that there is no follow up and attention given by the management organs.

Based on the information gained from the assessment of the documents of the Ministry, there was a general assessment made by the Directorate of Trade and Tourism Expansion in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs over the Ethiopian Missions (Embassies and Consulates) in more than 61 countries in the world. From the assessment made on the use of website, there are only 23 Missions out of 61 that shows they have their own developed websites. Of these websites 11 are in Africa, 6 are in Asia and Middle East, 3 are in Europe, 2 are in North and South America and one is in Australia. From these developed websites only the website of Ethiopia Embassy in China (Beijing) and in Washington is active and operational. In the rest of the Ethiopian Embassies, it shows as if there is website during the google search, but it is inactive and not opening. Even though, the Embassies of China and Washington mad a lot of effort to promote tourism on their website, there is no separate

website developed for the purpose of promoting tourism only. They developed the website to promote all the activities of the Missions. Therefore, the website is dominated with the display of the services that the Mission delivers. Even those displays on the website that are relating to tourism are not up to date and attractively organized.

On the other hand, the Directorate of Trade and Tourism Expansion made an assessment on the performance of twitter campaign launched in December 2020 and identifies the status of the Missions that are involved in the campaign activities. Based on this assessment around 15 Ethiopian Missions are participating to promote the “rising Ethiopia campaign” on their twitter pages very effectively. 12 Missions are not twitted about ‘Rising Ethiopia’ campaign even if they have their own tweeter account, whereas, the directorate couldn’t find the twitter account of other 12 Missions. When we see the assessment of the directorate, the Missions that did the campaign of “*Rising Ethiopia*” very effectively is only around 24.6%. This shows that even the Missions are ordered by the Ministry to make a promotional campaign of ‘Rising Ethiopia’ on their tweeter account, there is less performance. This indicates that the use of social media to promote Ethiopian destinations and products are very low. Specially, there is a very low activity of the Missions to promote the destinations and products by using digital technologies by their own initiatives.

#### **4.6.1.6.Lack of Budget and Fund-raising mechanisms**

Business promotion activities in the mission’s needs budget. As Ethiopia is a developing country, there is serious challenge to allocate the required amount of budget for promotion and service facilities. According to the informants, lack of budget hinders the Missions to promote the potential destinations and products at the international tourism exhibitions and fairs. The budget constraint also challenges the activities of the Mission to prepare standard posters, brochures and fliers. The development and translation of the promotional materials to the suitable language of the regions or countries in which we are promoting needs budget. Without having enough budgets, the Mission cannot rent the show room or stage of display at the best position to promote the products. The budget has also a negative impact on the preparation of attractive video display, employing a good translator and promoter based on the language and culture of the country and also on the preparation and decor of the whole setup of the stage.

According to the informants, the proper engagement with the international media and potential foreign tour operators to convince them to promote Ethiopia and include Ethiopia in their tour packages needs a lot of budgets that challenges the Missions most of the time. If there is no financial capacity nobody cannot think about the use of international media to promote the destination. International media outlets that have many world-wide audiences need big money to promote the countries' tourism potentials. In the same manner the challenges in using digital technologies are also related to the constraint of budget. Some of the infrastructures like websites require allocating of big budget for their development.

Promotion by its nature needs huge financial resources and sophisticated message crafting strategies that can easily attract the audience's attention. Based on the information gained from the informants, participation on global trade fairs requires tens of thousands of dollars for stage payment and preparations of materials that the country cannot afford. The product quality, packaging and labelling has also a great connection with the availability of budget. Without keeping the quality of packaging and labelling of products there is no attraction of tourists. In this regard, budget is the main challenges that discourages the Missions to prepare and organize different familiarization trip for tour operators, artists, journalists and media groups and also to prepare different exhibitions and international expos to promote the destinations and products.

Furthermore, the informants indicate that Ethiopia has no fund rising mechanism at the country level as many countries did to solve the financial constrain. As it was mentioned in the above section, we see the experience of countries like Vietnam and Malaysia that they established fund raising organ to improve their budget of promotion. Therefore, since the budget constrain is the main challenges of the Ministry to do effective and efficient promotional activities, it needs to use the experiences of different countries and develop a framework of fund-raising mechanisms.

#### **4.6.1.7. Lack of skill and knowledge-based promotion**

With regard to skilled manpower, there was a serious challenge to get the necessary trained manpower in the hospitality and travel industry. Since recent time, many colleges, universities and training centres are growing in the country that produce enormous number of professionals. But there are still gaps in the area of skilled manpower in both hospitality

and travel industry that can meet the international standard and compete with other countries at equal status.

According to the informants, there is an assumption by some business owners that there is no need of professionals and experts for the accommodation and catering services. As a result, they employ their relatives or any people from other disciplines without any knowledge of tourism and hospitality. This kind of employee cannot fit in the tourism and hospitality sector since the sector is very sensitive by its nature. The customers need an employee who shows a good approach, hospitability and kindness. They need an employee who has a good gesture and provides a professional service. They also want a servant who has a passion and skill of briefing about the country's tourism potential based on the knowledge. Therefore, the assumption that there is no need of professionals for the employee who serves in accommodation and catering sector doesn't work.

Based on the information gained from the informants, promotion of tourist destinations requires a person who has knowledge of tourism promotional strategies and tactics. Tourism promotions and the field itself requires specific skills and knowledge and one cannot say all those required quality is fulfilled both at the national and at the level of the Ministry. The promotional approach should be supported by professionals and requires a person who has good gestures and approach in a promotion. According to the informants, there is a challenge of obtaining the professionals who has an ample knowledge and skill in the tourism and hospitality that has an ability of providing a knowledge-based promotion in most of the Missions. Most of the diplomats in the Ministry are generalists that are trained to have a general knowledge about the country and international relations. In this regard the diplomat who assigned for tourism promotion at Ethiopian mission is not a professional of tourism and hospitality, and has no especial background of tourism field. All most all of the diplomats who are in charge of promoting destinations have no adequate knowledge about the destinations and they are promoting the site that they did not know. This is to mean that the diplomats have no experience to visit our heritage sites and other tourist potential areas either by their own initiatives or by the Ministry programs that targeted to equipped the diplomats on the areas. In addition to this, there is a language skill gap to promote the destinations based on the language and culture of the residing countries.

Therefore, the skill and knowledge issue need a special attention to enhance the professions of diplomats to enable them to exercise the best promotional activities.

#### **4.6.1.8.Challenges related to infrastructure and service delivery**

According to the informants, the infrastructure facilities and services in the country specially the transportation, accommodation, telecommunication system, internet services, shopping and generally the tourist facilities have to be attractive enough to enhance the demand of tourists. Delivering quality of services for the customer is also one of the most important and fundamental strategy for destination marketing to attract more tourists. Providing the service for the tourists in efficient and professional way leads the tourism industry to be successful. The quality of service of the tourism and hospitality should attract the customer in order to maintain the loyalty and needs of the client. The handling of tourists starting from the point of recruitment up to the destination needs an appropriate and suitable service delivery. Based on the informants, the poor quality of services and tourism facility at the home country influences the promotional activities of the Missions to the international communities. Poor quality of infrastructures like the internet, transportation, hospitals, shops, hotels, restaurants, etc has a negative impact on the promotional activities of the Missions.

The other challenge is the challenge related to the accessibility of the destinations. As the information gained from the informants, during the organization of familiarization trip programs to the destinations, it has been observed that most of the destinations are not easily accessed by the tourists due to lack of infrastructure related to transportation and information communication technologies. Even if the destination is very attractive enough to attract international tourists, lack of communication technologies, transportation and tourist rout security hinders the tourists from visiting the area. Therefore, lack of the accessibility of the destinations are the main obstacles for the promotional activities of the MOFA that deters the tourist to visit the country.

According to the informants, lack of a system of one stop shopping services at the destinations and limited accommodation capacity of international standards are the challenges of the country. The problem of issuance of a multiple visa that enables the tourist to stay long time and also request of hotel reservation as a requirement to issue tourist visa are the main challenges that face tourists at the Mission as well as at home country.

Information is one of the services that are very vital for the tourist to know and understand the destinations and products. Tourism expansion counsellor in the Ministry states that:

*“Information about the destinations, available facilities within the destinations, its distance from the capital, transportation and accommodation facilities, internet access, the cost of park entrance, health and shopping facilities at the destinations are very important services that we have to access to tourist on the website, Twitter, Facebook and any other pages to enhance the interest of their visiting.”*

Lack of skill and knowledge of using an appropriate language based on the interest and understanding of the tourist about the destinations or products is the main challenge that creates a gap in delivering right information and right services to the customers. The efficiency and effectiveness of the information that we are disseminating is also needs an attention. Most of the time the information we are distributing is outdated and do not represent the current situation of our tourist products. Even in most of the Missions, we have no active websites and Twitter pages to distribute the right information at the right time.

Based on the information gained from the informants, the services provided by travel agencies, tour operators, hotel industries, and any other tourist-related services have their own impacts on the promotional activities of the Missions. In addition to this, toilet service is one of the most important facilities that have to be available at any destination and attraction areas. But Ethiopia as a country has a great problem with building and accessing a toilet even in the major tourist destinations including cities. In general, the inefficiency of the infrastructure and the service delivery in the country has a great impact on the destination and product promotional activities of the Ministry.

#### **4.6.1.9.Challenges of Peace, Security and Stability**

Currently, safety and security issues become the major factor causing enormous challenges in the tourism industry that determines the success or failure of a tourism destination. In chapter two, we have seen the theory of Maslow which states that security is one of the five levels of human needs and the theory explained the importance of security to travel. Maditinos and Vassiliadis (2008) also explain the fragility of the tourism sector due to its

sensitivity to the political instability of a country and Hwa Hong et al., (1999) mention the importance of destination stability and safety for tourists' relaxation and comfort.

The success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors (Ahmed, Azam & Bose, 2010). It is well known that without ensuring peace and security, it is impossible to attract tourists to visit a destination. Civil war and ethnic conflicts, terrorism and public disturbances, social and political unrests, civil violence and uprisings, and generally, natural and man-made disasters are the major factors that cause the failure of the tourism sector.

Since tourism is a security-sensitive sector, assurance of safety and security is a very crucial issue to attract tourists to Ethiopia. According to the informants, the challenges of peace and security in Ethiopia cause a great impact on the tourism sector of the country. The conflict between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and TPLF causes countless damage to the infrastructure and to the major tourist destinations. The tourists have no access and ways to visit the major tourist destination of Ethiopia like Lalibela, Axum stelae, Debre Damo and Ertale in Afar due to the fact that the area are the main conflict hosting regions in the country.

Moreover, there are many border and ethnic conflicts here and there in the country, which have the negative potential influences on the promotion of tourist destinations and products. The border conflict between Afar and Somali region, Benishangul Gumuz and Amhara region, and Tigray and Amhara region etc. are the main challenges. The ethnic conflict in Benishangul Gumuz, the conflicts in the western part of Oromia Region, and also the ethnic and border conflict in different parts of Southern Nation, Nationalities and people's region of Ethiopia are the challenges that leading the country to the dangerous situation. As it was well known, these regions of the country have a major tourist resources and attractions like the natural vegetations, wildlife, fauna and flora, reserved areas and National parks, cultural attractions and anthropological and paleontological findings that motivates the tourists to visit. But, promoting these wonders of the tourist resources to attract them to the destination is very difficult for the Mission due to the fact that the tourists now the situation and the reality on the ground.

The informants also indicates that the confrontation and unhealthy competition among the politicians, ethnic groups and religious institutions that creates a problem whenever there

is an event and religious festivals are outrageous and grueling the healthy citizen of the nation. Within these all-negative incidences, it is very difficult for the Missions to promote tourist destinations and recruit a potential tourist to visit Ethiopia. Therefore, lack of peace, security and stability are the major challenges for promoting the tourism attractions of the country and motivating the potential tourists to visit the country, since the tourism is a security sensitive sector.

#### **4.6.1.10. The problem related to the Manuals**

As it was mentioned in chapter four there are three manuals namely business promotion, business negotiation and consensus and business information and analysis manuals. These manuals help in identifying the priority areas, the tourist attraction sites, promotional methodologies and target audiences. Moreover, it helps on how to make a negotiation, collect information, organize it and analyse to make market intelligence. But the informants indicate that the manuals are serving more than 12 years without any revision. Now adays, the countries of the world are not static and are not at the place of yesterday. There are many political dynamics and economic transformations within these twelve years. For instance, the manual takes Yemen as priority country for Ethiopia for the activities of tourism business. But Yemen counts eight years since the war was breakout and there are no activities of any business are there on the ground. On the other hand, there are also countless opportunities in the world within these twelve years that requests to look in to since there are a lot of immerging countries that needs a focus in the tourism sector. Therefore, the Ministry does not able to see the new opportunities and cannot avoid unwanted issues in the manual based on the current situations.

Tourism expansion director indicate that *“there is a problem of diplomats in using the manuals as a supportive document for his/her promotional activities.”* Most of the diplomates either in the main office or in the Mission do not follow the direction of these manuals either to promote the destinations or to undertake market intelligence. Therefore, the manual needs an update based on the current status of the world and the diplomats should use the official documents of the ministry as a supportive document for the promotional activities.

#### **4.6.1.11. Challenges of Covid-19**

Covid-19 is a global challenge that creates a frustration for every human being on the earth. Its speed of distribution and mechanism of transmission was very frustrating. The shutdown of travel by many countries including Ethiopia following declaration of Covid-19 as global pandemic by WHO, has led to total closure of business, leaving all tourist service providers in the entire value chain with very little activities. There was a lock down strategy to reduce the distribution of Covid-19 all over the world. Due to this lock down there was no event to be organized by the Missions and any tour companies to promote the destinations and recruit tourists and tour operators to visit the country.

According to the informants and different evidences from written documents, Ethiopia as any country of the world faced a great challenge that altered the tourism sector due to Covid-19. As the information obtained from the previous Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the number of tourist arrivals in 2020 is decreased by 33.34% (540,985 number of tourist arrivals) when we compared it with 2019 arrivals. The reduction of the arrivals challenges the Ethiopian Airline, hotels, tour organization, travel agents, tourist destinations and generally any tour organizations which deliver the tourism services.

To improve the drastic reduction of this tourist arrivals World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) produced new global Safe Travel protocol and calling upon states to adopt their own safe travel protocol. In this regard, Ethiopia drafted National Safe Travel Protocol (NSTP) with the objective to restart and speed up the recovery of the tourism sector, to give guidance to travelers and tour operators, to rebuild confidence among travelers and to ensure the safety of travelers and workforces. The development of this safe travel protocol plays its own role in rebuilding a confidence for the tourists to travel and brings a change on the arrivals that contributes for the recovery of the sector

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

### 5.1. Summary

Tourism promotion is outreach efforts and communications that include systematic planning, identifying, and informing a key audience to enhance the market for your tourism destination or products. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, the use of the current promotional strategies and tactics are very crucial to get your destination to be one of the choices to be visited by tourists. As it was explained by Edward and Jason (2008), the development of digital marketing affected consumers' behaviour, in this case, tourists' purchase decisions in a good way. Today, thankful to the recent digital technologies, tourism destination and product promotion can be easily accessible and promoted to international tourists. In this era of digitalization, using internet technology to promote your destination is indispensable and fits the modern age to provide the necessary information effectively and efficiently. Singh (2015) states that social media is powerful and plays an imperative role in digital marketing and he suggests that social media is an appropriate tool to increase brand awareness.

Ethiopia is a country with numerous outstanding tourism destinations and amazing tourism products that have the potential to attract foreign visitors but have a great gap in promotional strategies and practices that enables the country to promote its tourism resources to the international communities. The current tourism promotional activities and practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia is not fit the recent era of globalization that brings this world into our hands by using digital technologies. In this regard, the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in promoting tourism destinations and products to the international communities were identified as the main objective of the study.

To realize this objective, different literatures are extensively reviewed. In this review of the literature, the overview of the tourism and tourism industry in Ethiopia, tourist attractions and the current tourism destination development in Ethiopia and tourism destination, destination promotion and marketing were discussed. The role of stakeholder's coordination in tourism destination competitiveness, market mix and digital marketing

strategies, digital marketing practices, the role of information and communication technologies and social media in tourism promotion were also exhaustively discussed in the literature review. Moreover, the impact of tourism promotion in enhancing tourist flow, linkage of safety and security with the promotion of tourism products and also similar works on the area were assessed to identify the gaps.

To investigate the practical experience and the challenges that the Ministry faced during the promotional activities of the destination and products, different policies, proclamations, directives, studies, manuals and reports were reviewed. To identify the real practices and challenges of the Ministry open-ended questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the selected individuals, focus group discussion and key informant interview were made. The information from the documents, responses of questionnaires and interviews were extensively discussed and analysed.

In this regard, overview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the establishment and the power of the Ministry, the structure and the responsibilities of the Ministry, the role and responsibilities of the Directorate General of Trade and Tourism Expansion, different roles of the Missions and the role of relevant stakeholders were exhaustively discussed in chapter four. There are a lot of experiences and practices of the main office, the Missions and other stakeholders which were discussed in the practical section that can be mentioned as a good experience. As it was exhaustively discussed in the practice of the MOFA, there is an effort by the ministry in developing different manuals that helps the ministry to know the focus areas and priority countries. The manuals assist the Ministry on how to collect and analyse the information based on the national interest and undertake market intelligence. Moreover, the Ministry pays a lot of efforts in coordinating a stakeholder, in assigning a tourism ambassador, in organizing different events and recruiting tourists and tour operators to undertake a familiarization trip. According to the respondents, the Ministry has many practical experiences in using different mechanism of promotion like printed materials (bruchures, posters, fliers, tourism destination map etc), advertising, documentary film related to tourism, direct mail, exhibition and trade fair. Even if, there is a great effort made by the MOFA, Ethiopian Missions and other relevant stakeholders, there is an investigation that the Ministry has a limitation in exercising its responsibilities.

The promotional activities of the tourism product by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia faced a lot of challenges that hinders the smooth ways of promotion. According to the respondents, the use of digital platforms has not been properly and exhaustively exploited. The low attention and focus of the Ministry to develop the basic strategies like digital marketing strategies, product segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy, multichannel, online promotion strategy, media engagement strategy and fund-raising strategy are not developed by the Ministry yet. There are some efforts by some Missions of Ethiopia to promote the destinations and products by using of digital technologies like websites and social media particularly Facebook and Twitter. But finding shows that the use of these digital technologies is not effective and efficient. The Missions have a great gap in using them on the regular bases for the promotional activities. The limitation in the digital promotion, the absence of developing mobile friendly applications to deliver information very easily and quickly and the absence of digital payment system for easy service delivery are the main challenges of the Ministry and the Missions.

The other issue that the Ministry pays a lot of commitment is the coordination of stakeholders. The Ministry establish a national forum, signed a tripartite agreement and develop a TOR that enables some stakeholders to work together. The Ministry with the coordination of the Missions undertake the study and made an assessment on the activities of the forum to share an experience of the others. But the findings show that the forum didn't achieve its objectives entirely due to the fact that there is less commitment by most of the stakeholders, clear roles and mandates were not established for all stakeholders and also absence of rule based binding mechanisms among all stakeholders that imposes accountability. As it was stated in the practices of coordinating the stakeholders, the developed TOR do not include the roles of all stakeholders. Furthermore, there is a limitation of the Ministry in using of digital technologies like e-government system that facilitates the information sharing of different government organs to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of coordination. Even if the coordination and the partnership of the Ethiopian Mission with the Diaspora and Ethiopian Community School is motivating, the finding shows that the coordination and the relationship of the Ethiopian Missions with the tour and travel Agents, with international media outlets, event organizers, influential peoples and government of residing countries has its own limitations.

On the other hand, the skilled man power and budget are very important to realize all the promotional activities and practices including event organization, promotion on the international Medias and preparing the promotional materials. The promotional activities of the tourism destination and products in abroad needs a big budget for the preparation of promotional materials both in manuals and electronic forms, for rental of podiums, for advertising and use international medias like BBC, CNN, Al-Jazeera, and so on. The finding shows that there is no established strategy of fund raising both at the level of the Ministry and the Missions to promote the tourism products on international Medias like CNN, BBC, Al-Jazeera and the others. There is a big constraint of budget both at the level of the Ministry and the Missions to do effective and efficient promotional activities. To cover the required budget, there is no mechanism or established strategy of fund raising as the experience that we have seen from Vietnam and Malaysia.

The findings also show that the quality of promotional materials, packaging and labelling of the products that we present for the display is not attractive. The preparation of tourist attraction documentary films, posters, stands, brochures, fliers, samples, tourist destination maps and so on, do not motivate the tourists to visit. According to the respondents, there is also a limitation of promoting the attraction on the bases of the interest, the culture, and norms of the residing countries. Moreover, there is a challenge of language to promote the attraction with the language that the tourists prefer and understands the matter very easily.

According to the findings, the challenges related to the tourism infrastructure development and poor service delivery are the other core problems. The accessibility of the destinations and availability of the infrastructure like the transportation network, the accommodation at hotels and destinations, telecommunication system, internet access, shopping and tourist facilities are not competent as we compare it with even other African countries. The service delivery to the customers is more important for the satisfaction of the tourists. According to the findings, the issuance of multiple visas, the hospitality we show and the handling of tourists, the problem of one stop shopping system, the challenge of online and up to dated information delivery and generally the bureaucracy on the service sector challenges the promotion made in abroad.

The current phenomenon of peace, security and stability including Covid-19 also challenges the Ministry's to persuade its mandates of promotion. The multi-faced internal

conflict of the country that needs a lot of activities to convert damages the image of the country and hinders the tourist to come and visit the country. All these challenges need a short and long way strategy on the way out to overcome the influences and create the smooth way of promotional activities.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

As it was stated in the objective, the main purpose of this dissertation is to examine the promotional practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia. In this research paper we have seen the role, the responsibilities, the practices and challenges of the Ministry, the Missions and the stakeholders. Based on the discussion and the findings the researcher concluded this research paper as follows.

The proclamations provide a lot of mandates and responsibilities to the Ministry and empower it to perform any political, economic and social activities in the international relations. One of the roles and the responsibilities of the Ministry is promoting the tourism destinations and products to the international communities, recruiting potential investors to invest in the sector and coordinating the tourism related activities in abroad. Practically the Ministry engaged in different promotional activities of the tourism potentials of the country's and registered an amicable result that can be shared as an experience. But, beside its recognised activities there are different weaknesses of the Ministry regarding the implementation of the entire mandate and playing all of its role and responsibilities given to it by the proclamations. The findings clearly shows that there is a gap of the Ministry in developing different strategies like digital marketing strategies, market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy, social media usage strategy for the promotion of tourism and so on. The researcher also strongly agree that the Ministry has a great gap in developing and using these important strategies that needs special attention in the future to tackle these problems.

In terms of the practical actions of the Ministry that we have seen in chapter four, there are countable activities that the ministry performed to actualize the promotional activities. The Ministry and the Missions play a great role in coordinating the stakeholders to realize the promotional activities of the tourism attractions. However, as it was indicated in the findings, there are a lot of limitations and challenges that deters the Ministry and the Missions to perform and realize the effective and efficient promotional activities. The

Ministry has a limitation in using the digital technologies and international Medias for the promotional activities. The limitation of skilled manpower, the constraint of budget, the absence of digital marketing strategies, lack of market segmentation and targeting are the main challenges of the Ministry. Moreover, poor stakeholders' coordination and absence of legal frame work that binding all stakeholders together with responsibility and accountability are the problems that the Ministry faced. The limitation of the diplomat to use the developed manuals as a supportive document, the problem of updating the manuals based on current situations of the world, the current challenges of peace and security in the country and covid-19 challenging the promotional activities of the Ministry. To tackle these challenges the researcher believes that the importance of establishing the strategies, legal frameworks and follow up mechanisms. Moreover, it needs to give an attention for the digital technologies, skill development and improve the standard of the manuals.

Avoiding all the limitation and overcoming the current challenges of the ministry through the establishment of different mechanisms are very crucial. Therefore, the Ministry should exercise its full power and play its roles and responsibilities to perform and realize all of its mandates. It is very advisable for the Ministry to use the manuals, the proclamations and policy documents as an important and supportive legal paper. Moreover, capacity building, establishing strong coordination, setting different strategies and fund-raising mechanisms are the fundamental issues that need a great attention. These actions enable the Ministry to play its roles and responsibilities, to improve its limitations and to solve the current challenges amicably.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

Based on the research findings, the researcher recommends the following points categorically.

✚ **The Government the FDRE:** To undertake an effective promotion to enhance the arrivals the Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Culture and Sport, Investment commission, and regional government should closely work together. These sectors should be coordinated in developing proclamations, policies, strategies, manuals and directives that assist promotional activities. Moreover, it is recommended that these sectors should be organized to develop tourism facilities and infrastructure in the country and its implementation should be coordinated by the Ministry of Tourism.

- ✚ **MOFA:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is an autonomous government organ that has a mandate to work and coordinate all the activities related to the international relations. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the Ministry should develop different manuals, directives and strategies (online and offline promotional strategy, market segmentation and targeting strategy...etc), that paves the way for the promotion of the tourism products, to identify focus areas and the priority countries for recruitment of tourists based on the current political and economic dynamism of the world. Moreover, it is recommendable that the Ministry has to set a mechanism and legal framework on how to strengthen a coordination of government sectors, private organizations and the Ethiopian Missions abroad and its implementation should be followed by the state ministry of economic diplomacy.
- ✚ **Establish the digital marketing strategies:** The Ministry should develop digital marketing strategies which pave the way to solve the problems of using digital promotion and multichannel communications. Therefore, it is highly recommendable that the Ministry should invest on the development of digital marketing strategies that provides a guidance on how to use digital technologies with accountability to promote the destinations. Regarding the implementation of this strategy, the directorate of information management and communication technology with the coordination of trade and tourism expansion in the Ministry should take the responsibility.
- ✚ **Focus on market segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP):** Since all the customers do not have identical interests or preferences, market segmentation, targeting and positioning must be consumer oriented and satisfies customers' needs and wants. In this regard, the researcher recommends the Ministry to develop the market segmentation, targeting and positioning strategy that consider demographic, psychographic, customer lifecycle, customer behaviour, channel preference, culture, norms, religious, languages and financial capabilities. The directorate of trade and tourism expansion should also responsible for the development and implementation of this strategy.
- ✚ **Establish strong coordination of stakeholders:** To solve the problem of coordination, the researcher recommends the establishment of a legal framework that binds all stake holders with responsibilities and accountabilities. Establishing Ethiopian tourism destination marketing council in foreign countries and strengthening the alignment

between the Ethiopian Diplomatic Missions and Ethiopian Airlines Offices in foreign countries is advisable. Moreover, strengthening the participation of Ethiopian students in foreign country for tourism promotion activities and establishing a cooperative partnership and entering into memorandum of understanding with tourism operations and associations are recommended. The implementation of these activities should be coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the status of the Minister.

✚ **Focus on the quality of promotional materials, product quality and diversification:**

It is very important to focus on the quality of promotional materials, product diversification, packaging and interpretation to attract more tourists. The researcher recommends to give an attention for the quality of the product and promotional materials, for the packaging, labelling and specification of promotional materials. In addition to this, the product type, the description and labelling of the material should be based on culture and languages of the host country. The implementation of these activities should be the responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Tourism.

✚ **Focus on the use digital technologies:** Now a day using a digital technology is not a luxury but it is mandatory to promote a destination and tourism products. In this regard, promotion of tourist attractions through website, Face book, Twitter, you tube, Instagram, WeChat, Telegram and so on is recommended. Moreover, the development of digital marketing strategy, digital payment system, mobile friendly application system and webinar promotional strategy is recommendable. To implement these activities the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the directorate of trade and tourism expansion as well as information management and information communication technology directorate) should work in coordination.

✚ **Establishing fund raising mechanism to solve the problem of budget constrain:**

Budget is the main role player in all the activities of promoting a tourism resource. Therefore, the researcher recommends the importance of attention from the government side to allocate budget for the activities of promotion and also establish a framework of fund-raising mechanism to support the promotional work. The directorate of trade and tourism expansion with the coordination of budget and finance directorate general should be responsible for the implementation of this activity.

- ✚ **Skill development:** Tourism and hospitality sectors are very sensitive and needs a trained man power. The promotional approach needs professionals and requires a person who has good gestures and approach in a promotion. In this regard, the researcher recommends the diplomat who assigned for tourism promotion at Ethiopian Mission should be professional in tourism and hospitality, he/she should have an adequate knowledge about the destinations and have an experience of visiting the heritage sites and other tourist potential areas. Moreover, it is recommendable to give an attention for the language and culture of the residing countries during the assigning of diplomats to the Missions. The implementation of these activities should be coordinated by the human resource management directorate general and overlooked by the Minister and state Minister of Foreign Affairs.
- ✚ **Developing the tourism infrastructure and improving the service delivery:** Developing tourism infrastructure and providing a quality of service is mandatory to be competent in the sector. In this regard, the researcher recommends the government of Ethiopia to develop smart destination which fulfils all the facilities like internet, telecommunication, transportation, health and gymnasium facilities, hotels, restaurants and loges with high quality services. To implement all these activities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs should work together with the Prime Minister Office, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture and Sport, Ethiopian Investment commission, Ethiopian Telecommunication and Ethiopian Hotel Associations.
- ✚ **Improve security problem and create stable environment:** Tourism is a sector that needs a peaceful and healthy environment. Therefore, the researcher recommends the Ethiopian security sectors should work strongly to improve the security situation in the country that creates an enabling environment for the MOFA for the promotion of the destinations.
- ✚ **Using the Business Manuals as a supportive document:** The researcher recommends the Ministry (trade and tourism expansion directorate) to update the manual based on the current political and economic situation of the world and also advise the diplomats or leaders who are engaging with the activities of tourism promotion to use the three manuals as a supportive document. The trade and tourism expansion directorate is the responsible organ for the implementation of these activities.

## References

- A.V. Seaton; M. Bennett. (2004). The marketing of tourism products: concepts, issues, and cases. 1st edition, London, Thomson.
- Abebaw Shimelis (2020). Tourism Marketing practices, Challenges and Strategy in Addis Ababa: Implications for the travel and tourism sector. St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies Marketing Management.
- Abraham H.Maslow. (1943). Theory of human motivation: Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- Affiliate Members Regional Reports (2019). Tourism in Africa: A Tool for Development, Volume 4.
- Amaro, S., & Duarte, P. (2015). An integrative model of consumers' intentions to purchase travel online. *Tourism Management*.
- American Marketing Association (2007). Resource Library. Dictionary, Term, brand. Available at: [http://www.marketingpower.com/\\_layouts/Dictionary.aspx](http://www.marketingpower.com/_layouts/Dictionary.aspx)
- Amira Fathimath. (2015). The Role of Stakeholder Collaboration in Sustainable Tourism Competitiveness: The Case of Auckland, New Zealand. A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology, School of Hospitality and Tourism.
- Arens et al. (2011). The marketing mix. University of Pretoria.
- Arens, William F., Weigold, Michael F. & Arens, Christian. (2011). Contemporary advertising and integrated marketing communications. Boston: McGraw-Hill Irwin.
- Aron Blesch. (2015). Marketing in the 21st Century. University of Rochester. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/342918696>
- Ashenafi Tafesse. (2016). The Historic Route in Ethiopian Tourism Development. *Tourism and Leisure* volume 5(2)-(2016), University of Gonder, Ethiopia.
- Atlaw Alemu (2020). Interview on Ethiopian Herald on Oct 3, 2020. Atlaw Alemu, Lecturer of Economics at Addis Ababa University.

- B.B. Esu and E. Ebitu (2010). Promoting an emerging tourism destination. Global journal of management and business research, 10(1) 21-28.
- Baldemoro, J. (2013) "Tourism promotion", SlideShare. Available on <http://www.slideshare.net/JHBlue/tourism-promotion-28432196>. Accessed 7 January 2016.
- Baldemoro, J. (2013). Tourism Promotion. Slide share. Available: <http://www.slideshare.net/JHBlue/tourism-promotion-28432196>. Accessed 7 January 2015.
- Bassey B. Esu. (2010). Promoting an emerging tourism destination. Global Journal of management and business research Vol 10 Issue 1(Ver 1.0) Nigeria.
- Business information and analysis manual (2010). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.
- Business negotiation and consensus manual (2010). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.
- Business promotion manual (2010). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.
- Carmen Altes (2018). Analysis of tourism value chain in Ethiopia final report 2018.
- Chris Cooper and C Michael Hall. (2008). Contemporary tourism: An international approach, First edition.
- Clarkson M. (1995). A stakeholder framework for analyzing and evaluating corporate social performance. Academy of management review.
- Connett 2004. Promotional Mix. University of Pretoria.
- Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Fyall, A., Gilbert, D., & Wanhill, S. (2008). Tourism principles and practice. 4th edition, London.
- D. Jobber and F. Ellis-Chadwick. (2013). Principles and practice of Marketing, 7th edition.
- Damian Ryan & Calvin Jones. (2009). Understanding Digital Marketing: Marketing strategies for engaging the digital generations. United Kingdom.

- Dann Graham M.S. (1977). Push and pull factor theory: Factors and traveller motivation.
- Dann, G. (1977). Anomie, Ego-Enhancement and Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 4 (4).
- Dave Chaffey Ellis Chadwick. (2016). *Digital Marketing Strategies, Implementation and Practice*, sixth edition published in 2016, United Kingdom.
- David Beirman. (2003). *Restoring Tourism Destinations in Crisis: A Strategic Marketing Approach*. 1st edition Oxford University Press.
- Dimitrios Buhalis. (2000). *The Competitive Destination: Marketing the competitive destination of the future growth strategies for accommodation establishments in alpine regions*. Tourism University of Westminster, London, England.
- Edgell, David and M. James (1990). Internationalizing your hotel's well comeMat. *The Cornell Quarterly*, Vol 32, No. 3 (Nov. 1990).
- Ethiopia's Tourism Sector: Strategic Paths to Competitiveness and Job Creation (2012). World Bank Group Finance and Private Sector Development and Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (2012).
- F. Benghadbane and S. Khreis. (2019). The role of tourism marketing in enhancing tourism development: a comparative study between Constantine and Amman cities. *Geo Journal of Tourism and Geo-sites* vol.24 (1).
- F. Howie. (2003). *Managing the Tourist Destination* (1st Edition). ISBN-13: 978-1844800971
- Fakeye and Crompton. (1991). Destination image and visit impact.
- Fatemehalsadat Afsahhosseini (2020). *Technology in tourism*, research center, Suktan Qaboos University.
- Foreign Service Proclamation (2013). Powers and duties of foreign service. *Foreign Service Proclamation No. 790/2013*.

- Foreign Trade Promotion Manual for Ethiopian Diplomatic Mission (2007). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Economic and Business Affairs General Directorate. Addis Ababa November 2007.
- G. Johnson, K. Scholes & R. Whittington. (2005). Exploring Corporate Strategy: Text & Cases (7th Edition). Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2005(publisher). ISBN0273687344, 9780273687344
- G.E. Belch & M.A. Belch. (2007). Advertising and promotion: An Integrated marketing communications perspective, 7th edition.
- Ghosh, B. (2005). Tourism and Travel Management. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pty. Ltd.
- Groucutt, J. (2005). Foundations of marketing. Hound mills: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Gunn, Clare A. & Var, T. (2002). Tourism planning; basics, concepts and cases. 4th edition, Taylor & Francis Group, Routledge, United Kingdom.
- Gursoy, D., Gavcar, E. (2003). International leisure tourists' involvement profile. Annals of Tourism Research, 30, 906-926.
- Hanna, R., Rohm, A., & Crittenden, V. L. (2011). We're all connected: The power of the social media ecosystem. Business Horizons.
- Hardy, A. L., & Beeton, R. J. S. (2001). Sustainable tourism or maintainable tourism: Managing resources for more than average outcomes. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 9(3), 168-192.
- Hwa Hong, J., Jones, P., & Song, H. (1999). Political risk and foreign investment decision on international hotel companies.
- Ilieska, k. (2002). Strategic marketing management in tourism, journal of tourism.
- Investment regulation 2012. Investment incentives and areas reserved for domestic investors. Investment regulation No. 270/2012.

- Kidane Geresu. (2015). Assessing the promotional practices of tour operators in Ethiopia. A Research Project Submitted to the School of Marketing Management Studies, Addis Ababa University.
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). Research methodology: Methods and techniques. 2nd edition, New age International Publishers, New Delhi.
- Kotler, P. (2000). Marketing Management: The Millennium Edition. Person Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River.
- Kotler, P. (2003). Marketing insights from A to Z, John Wiley and sons, New Jersey.
- L. Azzopardi. (2011). The international competitiveness of Malta as a tourist destination.
- Lam, T., Hsu, C. (2006). Predicting Behavioural Intention of Choosing a Travel Destination.
- Landry Singne (2018). Africa's tourism potential: Trends, drivers, opportunities, and strategies, the Brookings report 2019.
- Malcolm J.M. Cooper. (2012). Destination marketing and management: Theories and Applications. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, Japan: Annals of Tourism Research.
- Marie Huber (2017). Ethiopia and the beginnings of the UNESCO World Heritage Programme 1960-1980, University of Berlin.
- Market study Manual (2010). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.
- Martin Oliver Pedak (2018). The effect of tourism on GDP Jonkoping University International Business School.
- McCool, S. F., & Moisey, R. N. (2001). Integrating environmental and social concerns over tourism development. In S. F. McCool & R. N. Moisey, Tourism, recreation and sustainability: Linking culture and environment. Oxon, UK: CAB International.

- Mekonen T. Ayalew (2016). The role of media in tourism promotion: A case study in Ethiopia. *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism*, 7(5), 50-56. Retrieved from DOI: 10.5897/JHMT2016.0177.
- Mohamed Amin, 1996. Ethiopia A Tourist Paradise. Ethiopian Tourism Commission (January 1, 1996).
- Mohammad A. Hassan. (2015). Promotional activities in the strategic tourism development of Lapland: Tour Operator's Appearance in social media. Thesis submitted to Centrica University of Applied Sciences, Lapland, Northern part of Finland.
- MOU (2021). Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding among MOFA, Ministry of Tourism and Tourism Ethiopia, 2021, unpublished document.
- Murphy, L. (2000). Australia's image as a holiday destination – perceptions of backpacker visitors. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* 8(3), 21–45.
- National coordination forum (2012). Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia, study on the improvement of the framework of national coordination forum, unpublished document.
- Nersrin Sourak (2015). An investigation into destination management system website evaluation theory and practice.
- Philip Kotler and G. Armstrong. (2006). *Principles of marketing*. 11th Edition, Brunel University, UK. ISBN-13: 9780131469181
- Philip Kotler and Sidney J. Levy. (1969). Broadening the Concept of marketing. *Journal of Marketing* Vol. 33, No. 1 (Jan., 1969).
- Philip Kotler, Gary A., John S., & Veronica W. (1999). *Principles of Marketing: Second European Edition*, North Eastern University. Prentice Hall Europe, London New York.
- Philip Kotler. (2003). *Marketing insights from A to Z: 80 concepts every manager needs to know*, Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.
- Proclamation (1995). The powers and duties of the executive organs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Proclamation No 4/1995.

- Proclamation (2013). Foreign Service proclamation: the powers and duties of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Proclamation No. 790/2013.
- R.Stokes and the Minds of Quirk (2013). eMarketing: The essential Guide to Marketing in a digital world, fifth edition.
- Raising Ethiopia Twitter campaign. (2021). Assessment on the Ethiopian Missions contribution to “Raising Ethiopia” Twitter campaign. Ministry of Foreign Affairs unpublished document.
- Raju, G.P. (2009). Tourism marketing and management. Marketing of Hospitality and Tourism. Mangalam publications, Delhi, India.
- Roman Dessie (2018). Analysing the Practice of Digital Marketing in Promoting Ethiopian Tourism in the Case of Ethiopian Tourism Organizations. A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce, Addis Ababa.
- S. Vengesayi. (2009). Tourism destination attractiveness: Attractions, facilities, and people as predictors. Tourism analysis, University of Tasmania, Australia.
- Schellenberg, G. (1965). Marketing y Turismo, Instituto de Estudios Turisticos, Madrid.
- Selamawit Kassaye (2013). Thirteen months of sunshine: Improving Ethiopia’s Image as A Tourist Destination. Central University of Applied Sciences, Pietarsaari.
- Seppo E. Iso Ahola. (1982). Theory of tourism motivation, University of Maryland, USA.
- Shewaye Sewnet (2019). Practice and Challenges of Promoting Major Tourism Destinations in Awi. Addis Ababa University College of Development Studies, Department of Tourism Development and Management.
- Singh, J. (2015, December 15). How social media helps in establishing your brand in the virtual world? Retrieved from EBRIKS: <http://www.ebriks.com/blog/how-social-media-helps-in-establishing-your-brand-in-the-virtual-world>.
- Smith, L. J. (1988). —Defining tourism, a supply-side view.” *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15(2).

Sönmez, S. F., S. J. Backman, and L. R. Allen (1994). *Managing Tourism Crises: A Guidebook*. Clemson, SC: Clemson University.

Sustainable Tourism Master-plan (2015 – 2025): The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Ministry of Culture and Tourism. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Eastern Africa Sub-Region Office (SRO-EA) (2015). Retrieved from [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org).

T. Sofield. (2003). *Empowerment for sustainable tourism development*, Pergamon, Oxford (2003) ISBN 0-08-043946-2. *Tourism Management Volume 27*.

Tadesse Kidane-Mariam (2018). *Ethiopia's Material Culture: Some Notes on the Obelisks of Axum and the Rock-Hewn Churches of Lalibela*. Department of Geosciences, Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, New York, USA.

The Economic Development in Africa Report (2017): *Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth*, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), New York and Geneva, 2017.

The Economic Development in Africa Report (2017). *Tourism for Transformative and inclusive growth*. United Nations, New York and Geneva, 2017.

The role and responsibilities of the Directorate of Foreign Trade and Tourism Expansion and the Missions of The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, MOFA. Unpublished document.

Timur, S., & Getz, D. (2008). A network perspective on managing stakeholders for sustainable urban tourism. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol.20(4).

Tourism brochure (2016). *Ethiopia: a tourism paradise*. The former Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

Tourism Development Policy (2009). Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia.

Tourism Development Policy. Ministry of Culture & Tourism (2009), Addis Ababa.

Tourism facility and service quality assurance license, Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

- UNCTAD (2017). The sixty-fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Geneva, 2017.
- Victor T. C. Middleton, Alan Fyall and M. Morgan. (2009). Marketing in Travel and Tourism, fourth edition, Bournemouth University, UK.
- W. Phillips, S. Jang. (2007). Destination image and visit intention: examining the moderating role of motivation, *Tourism analysis* volume 12(4).
- Waligo, V. M., Clarke, J., & Hawkins, R. (2013). Implementing sustainable tourism: A multi-stakeholder involvement management framework. *Tourism Management*, 36, 342–353.
- Walter Jamieson. (2006). Community destination management in developing economies. 1st Edition. ISBN 9780789023872.
- Wondowossen et al. (2014). Applying destination competitiveness indicators to Ethiopia. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net>
- World Tourism Organization (2007). A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management. Published and printed by the World Tourism Organization, Madrid, Spain, first printing.
- Youcheng Wang and Abraham Pizam (2011). Destination marketing and management. Theories and practices, University of Central Florida, USA.
- Zadel, Z. (2016). Beaches in the function of primary resource of the beach tourism product, *Journal of Maritime and Transportation Sciences*, Vol. 49-50, pp. 117-130, 2016.
- Zissis Maditinos Z, Vassiliadis C. (2008). Crises and Disasters in Tourism Industry: Happen locally - Affect globally. Maditinos-Vassiliadis. [Original source: <https://studycrumb.com/alphabetizer>]



respondents to meet the targeted goals. In this regard, this questionnaire is selectively distributed to some individuals who are considered they have ample knowledge and practical experience on the matter. The key informant interview will also be undertaken with the same procedures.

Therefore, the main purpose of selecting targeted individuals is the professional experience, skills they have in this field, and their understanding of the subject matter in the Ministry. This will help to get diverse and relevant data for the study, identify the available problems, and provide as much insight as possible into the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in promoting tourism destinations and products. In this spirit, your contribution is indispensable and crucial in realizing and meeting the objective of this study.

Finally, I would like to thank you again for your kind cooperation.

Use the following addresses for any questions.

Researchers' Name: Terefe Tujuma, MA student at AAU.

Address: Cellphone: +251 953125299,

e-mail: [firahunde@gmail.com](mailto:firahunde@gmail.com)

Sincerely,

Terefe Tujuma Hundie

## **Research Questionnaires prepared to meet the objective of the study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the practices and challenges of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in Promoting tourism destinations and products to the international communities. The specific objectives that are crafted from the general objective are to examine the role and practices of the Business Directorate General, Ethiopian Embassies abroad, and other stakeholders during the promotional activities. Moreover, identifying the gaps of promotion and investigating the practical challenges faced during the promotion are the specific objectives of the study. In this regard, the questionnaires are categorized on the bases of these mentioned objectives of the study and finally distributed to fifteen targeted individuals who have professional experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia.

Please answer each question by writing your answer on the separate sheet provided below. Your genuine responses are quite vital to meeting the objectives of this study.

### **Questionnaires related to the role of Stakeholders**

1. Do you have any experience of working in Business Diplomacy (in the main office or Embassy)?
2. What are the objectives of promoting tourism destinations and products by the Ministry? Do you think that the Ministry meets its objectives?
3. What kind of tourism promotional strategies are used by the Ministry to play its role and to meet its objective? Do you think that these strategies helped the Ministry to meet its promotional goals? If not what kind of promotional strategies are recommended?
4. What are the roles and responsibilities of the Business Diplomacy Directorate General (Main office) in supporting promotional activities abroad?
  - ✓ In organizing and coordinating the related sectors(stakeholders) to facilitate promotion?
  - ✓ In supporting the Embassies with information, promotional materials, budget...etc?
  - ✓ Do you think that the Directorate plays its role successfully?
5. What are the roles of Ethiopia's Embassies and Consulates in the promotion of destination and tourism products for the international communities?

- ✓ The role in coordinating the stakeholders?
  - ✓ The role in organizing events/exhibitions to promote Ethiopian destinations?
  - ✓ The role in the preparation of promotional materials?
  - ✓ The role in developing digital technologies for promotion...etc?
  - ✓ Do you think that the missions are playing their role successfully?
6. What are the stakeholders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia (for both main office & Embassies) who are involved in the promotion of tourism destinations and products to the international communities?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of these stakeholders in promoting tourism destinations and products abroad?
    - ✓ The roles of Ethiopian Airlines office abroad?
    - ✓ The roles of Diaspora?
    - ✓ The roles and contribution of Ethiopian community schools?
    - ✓ The roles and contribution of think-thanks, Ethiopia's friends, and cultural lovers? Do you think that the Ethiopian missions successfully coordinate and use these stakeholders effectively?
  - How do you evaluate the stakeholders' collaboration with the ministry in promoting tourism destinations & products? Please, discuss the strengths and weaknesses related to stakeholder collaboration? What is your recommendation related to stakeholders' coordination?

### **Questionnaires related to the Practices**

7. What are the practices of Ethiopian Embassies in the promotion of tourism? Discuss the promotional practices of the Embassies in detail? Are there any best practices that the Ethiopian Missions registered with related to the promotion of tourism? Are the existing practices help the country in enhancing tourist arrivals?
8. What are the practices of the Ministry (main office & Embassies) in using digital technologies for tourism promotion?
- ✓ The practices of using E-tourism, website, social media like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter) Do you think that the Ministry uses these digital technologies effectively for promotional activities?
  - ✓ Are the website & other digital technologies of the Ministry being active, attractive, and accessible for tourists to get the information easily)?

9. What are the practices of the Ministry to promote tourism destinations and products during the problem of safety and security? what kind of promotional strategies are used to convince the tourists during the problem of safety and security (civil war, covid 19...etc) to visit the country?

**Questionnaires related to the contribution of promotion**

10. What are the contributions of the promotion of destinations and products?
- ✓ Contribution for the enhancement of tourist arrivals?
  - ✓ Contribution in enhancing national & individual incomes?
  - ✓ Contribution in enhancing destination and product competitiveness?
  - ✓ Contribution in enhancing image building...etc?

**Questionnaires related to the strength & the challenges**

11. What are the existing challenges of Ethiopia's Embassies and Consulates in the promotion of destination and tourism products for the international communities?
- ✓ The challenges related to the coordination?
  - ✓ The challenges related to skilled manpower?
  - ✓ The challenges related to budget?
  - ✓ The challenges/problems related to the approach of promotion?
  - ✓ The challenges related to the quality of promotional materials?
  - ✓ The challenges related to the use of digital technologies (E-tourism, website, social media like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, ...etc)?
12. What are the main strengths, and weaknesses of the existing promotional practices of the Ministry (both main office & Embassies)? What are the main gaps in the promotion of destination & products to international communities? What is your recommendation on how to solve the existing challenges and fill the gaps of promotion?

////////////////////////////////////

Thank you for your cooperation.

## Appendix II :

### Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador Selection Criteria

#### Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador – Selection Criteria by Ethiopian Tourism Board & Ministry of Foreign Affairs

##### **i. Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador**

Ethiopia is Land of Origins and invites Tourists to discover why Ethiopia is the origin of so much history and culture, vibrantly alive in a landscape of dramatic beauty. For this is a land of origins. It is the cradle of humanity, where we first walked on two legs. It is also the source of the Blue Nile and the origin of one of life's best pleasures – coffee, Ethiopia's gift to the world. Today, Ethiopia has a dynamic present but its history stretches back to before recorded time. Flamboyant and spiritually uplifting, Ethiopia's religious festivals give you the chance to be part of an experience unlike any other. Moreover, Ethiopia is a living kaleidoscope of peoples drawn from many different ethnic backgrounds and speaking 80 different languages. Some of them follow traditional ways of life and they are all united in mutual respect and genuine warmth towards guests.

An Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador is a person appointed by a country and/ or a company and represents the brand in the positive light and promotes its tourist attractions, investments and the overall image of the country or the company. He or she helps in accentuating the brand awareness and works to attract more tourists to the country.

Due to the growing market saturation and tough competition at the international tourism market, destination brands need to come up with the out-of-the-box ideas and groundbreaking strategies to sustain in the market with the competitive edge and to increase their market share of tourism. Appointing an Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador is an integral part of the brand management and it's a well thought-out and planned strategy that provides an impetus to the overall destination brand value.

##### **ii. Objectives of Selecting Ethiopian Tourism Ambassadors**

To achieve the following objectives, Tourism Ethiopia is looking for national and international Ethiopia land of Origins brand Ambassadors.

1. To enhance the online and offline presence of Ethiopia as a land of origins as well as tourist destination.

2. To create awareness about Ethiopian tourism brand and why Ethiopia invites potential tourists to discover why it is the origin of so much.
3. To influence potential tourists to make Ethiopia in their bucket list of travel.
4. To improve the image of Ethiopia as a must to visit destination.
5. To promote Ethiopian tourist destinations.

**iii. Characteristics of a destination Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador of Ethiopia Land of Origins**

❖ Famous

It is a must for tourist destination authorities to select an Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador who is quite famous amongst the target market and the location having a huge fan following as then only the person will be able to influence the market to convince the target market to make the Ethiopia in their bucket list of travel. As a result the Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador needs to have a strong legacy and a background that works as a lucrative factor for the brand in pulling new customers and expanding the reach.

❖ Passionate

It is the passion and enthusiasm that drives results and attains objectives. The chosen ambassador should be passionate in tourism, travel, culture, lifestyle, nature and wildlife. He or she should be able to help the brand **Ethiopia Land of origins** to target the untapped markets and getting new potential tourists.

❖ Professionalism

Being a destination Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador for Ethiopia land of origins brings along a lot of duties and responsibilities that include traveling to various tourist destinations in Ethiopia, representation Ethiopia at events and exhibitions, shooting commercials for television and print media, and being present at different PR activities etc. Hence, the factor of professionalism holds the utmost importance for being an Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador of Ethiopia land of origins.

❖ Established Online Presence

With the changing market scenarios, the marketing and promotional techniques require an edge of digital and social media to attain the 360-degree curvature of targeting tourists plus the digital

medium has gained a lot of significance over a period of time. The person to be selected as a Ethiopia Land of Origins Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador is expected to have established and positive online presence on his or her social media handles such as Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Google, Snapchat, Linked In, and Facebook amongst others with infinite fans and followers that treat the person as a community influencer and an opinion leader.

#### iv. The essentials for selecting Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador

To be the right fit for the brand, there are some other general considerations we have to consider while we select a land of origins Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador

- **Profile** – the Ethiopian tourism Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador needs to be highly recognizable. They need to have a profile, and a decent one at that, to enhance the awareness of Ethiopia as a tourist destination.
  - **Reputation** Before selecting and appointing as Land of Origins Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador Know what people think and say about the potential ambassador is vital. This gives good indication of how potential tourists will feel about them and how the ambassador will perform in their role.
  - **Credibility:** - This is making sure potential tourists trust the ambassador. Would they easily identify the connection between Ethiopia Land of Origins brand and the ambassador and genuinely believe to make Ethiopia in their bucket list of travel.
  - **Personality.** - The key is to choose a good Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador whose personality matches that of the brand. He or she must have strong identities that correspond with Ethiopia and the tourist attractions Ethiopia has.
    - ✓ Confident, lively, approachable, trustworthy, leader, contemporary.
    - ✓ Strong group influence must figure out how to reach people within a reference group, because of special skill, knowledge, personality, or other characteristics, exerts social influence on others.
- v. **Duties and responsibilities**
- Searches for key market influencers and works to establish arrangements that support the Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador objectives.

- Performs duties that will create brand awareness, convince potential tourists to visit Ethiopia.
  - Attend national and international events and promote Ethiopia as a tourist destination.
  - Promotes Ethiopia both on mainstream media and online media outlets.
  - Visits major tourist attractions and destinations of Ethiopia and produces commercials that promote Ethiopia.
- vi. Potential issues to be considered while selecting Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador**
1. Celebrity who has the above mentioned characteristics and essentials
  2. Celebrity best suited to become Land of Origins brand ambassador. Such as champions in Sports, Arts, Music, Creative works, Chef, entrepreneur, Scientists, fashion industry etc.
  3. Someone who has a great influence and acceptance in the countries where our embassies and consulate are based and offer diplomatic services.
  4. Who has passion & interest for showing the Universe through his/her words and actions that indeed Ethiopia is Land of Origins!
  5. Took the initiative to produce a series of videos, articles featuring various tourist destinations of Ethiopia in the past.
  6. Had great working history with Ethiopian embassy in the past and may agree to work again in a more defined role in the refreshed branding campaign with emphasis on Ethiopian tourist destinations marketing.
  7. A blogger who have a millions plus of followers and agree to use its publicity & networking's to promote Ethiopian tourism resources.
  8. Influencers who can give Tourism Ethiopia a wide reach, who can reach the right followers and can also inspire those followers of the influencer to make travel decisions.
  9. Has creative mind and makes a difference in marketing, branding & promotion.
  10. Engaging an influencer with the right professional background /Studied or works in Tourism/ to represent National Tourism brand. This must ensure that brand promotion & campaign will progress without heavy management and content checking from team Ethiopia.
  11. Public figures – Global award winners in different subjects of competition, dependable & trusted by the government to take national image building roles, known by his/her

professional achievements / Chef, Researcher, Diplomacy, reputable business ownership or company management, leadership success, role model in.

12. Ethiopian, Ethiopian Diaspora or a friend of Ethiopia.
13. Respects the cultures, history and values of Ethiopians.

**v. General guideline:-**

1. Selection of the Tourism Ambassadors is done by our Embassies. Thereby, the official letter of appointment will be issued directly by Tourism Ethiopia/Ethiopian Tourism Board/.
2. Ethiopian Tourism Ambassador is appointed for a term of 3 years period which has a possibility of extension for another one term.
3. Number of Ambassador in each country is presumed to be just one. Yet, in our core markets if the embassies strongly believe and urges for more, there can be 2 additional Ambassadors from different cities of the same country. Yet, both Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism Ethiopia must agree and approve it.
4. Tourism Ethiopia is liable to provide all necessary information, promotional materials, necessary equipment, and recognition and, if possible, finance in the long term to the Ambassador.
5. Tourism Ethiopia arranges a FAM trip for the tourism Ambassadors to visit & learn more about Ethiopian tourism resources & services.
6. Tourism Ambassadors have accountability on the principles of its work. The duty is to provide accurate information on Ethiopian tourism, promote tourist attraction sites, build country image, act as Ethiopian tourism ambassador & communicate with relevant tourism authorities & business companies. In consultation with tourism Ethiopia, it may also represent the office whenever necessary.
7. Mutually agreed Term of reference will be prepared and signed by both Tourism Ethiopia and the selected tourism Ambassador to ensure the planning & delivery of specific promotional works.
8. Up on regular follow up, guidance & evaluation; Tourism Ethiopia and Ministry of Foreign Affairs will recognize and give award for best performers among the tourism ambassadors across the globe.