

**TOURISM CONTRIBUTION IN LOCAL ECONOMIES: FOCUS ON POVERTY  
REDUCTION IN KENYA**

**BY**

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**ABSTRACT**

Poverty, famine, HIV/AIDS are national disasters in Kenya. The reduction of poverty has become one of the most compelling challenges of our time. Poverty is more than a lack of income – it is multidimensional and complex phenomenon with an intricate relationship to issues such as disease, illiteracy, infant mortality, environmental degradation and many other aspects. Tourism has, up to now, not been seriously considered in most of the poverty reduction strategies of international aid and development agencies. Tourism development has often been focused at the macro level, on international promotion, attracting inward investment, major hotel and resort developments and on national and regional master planning. There needs to be a shift towards building partnerships which bring to the international and national market places tourism experiences which reflect the characteristics of the destination, involving local communities and giving them a degree of control as hosts. Participation by, and the empowerment of, local people were clearly identified within Agenda 21 as among the important aims of sustainable development programmes. As a process of empowerment, participation helps local people to identify problems and become involved in decision-making and implementation, all of which contributes to sustainable development. The amount of control local people are able to assume within tourism developments is limited by the neo-colonial nature of this global industry. This paper attempts to highlight the issues of true community participation and empowerment in tourism initiatives with special emphasis to Kenya. It also addresses the issues of employment, including gender distribution, and access for local entrepreneurs from the formal and informal sectors to the tourism market which are essential to poverty elimination.

**KEY WORDS: KENYA, LOCAL COMMUNITIES/ ECONOMIES, POOR, POVERTY,  
TOURISM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism has, up to now, not been seriously considered in most of the poverty reduction strategies of international aid and development agencies. Tourism development has often been focused at the macro level, on international promotion, attracting inward investment, major hotel and resort developments and on national and regional master planning. There needs to be a shift towards building partnerships which bring to the international and national market places tourism experiences which reflect the characteristics of the destination, involving local communities and giving them a degree of control as hosts. The development of appropriate complementary products will increase the attractiveness of the destination and increase tourist spending in the local economy. In existing destinations, hoteliers and tour operators, local government and local communities all need to be empowered to take control of their destination within the context of the domestic and international tourism market. Local benefits, including poverty elimination, will be maximized where tourism develops strong linkages into the local economy.

The distribution of employment, including gender distribution, and access for local entrepreneurs from the formal and informal sectors to the tourism market are essential to poverty elimination. Infrastructural development can also be planned so as to benefit local communities through the provision of roads, telephones, piped and treated water supplies, waste disposal and recycling and sewage treatment. There is considerable scope for using this kind of planning gain to generate infrastructural benefits, which can directly benefit the poor. All tourism business should be approached with the idea of sustainability so that decisions made today will not result in depriving the following generations of a quality environment. Tourist service providers should be always up-front, forthright, and honest in all business dealings, including interactions with guests, staff, other businesses, and the land agencies for which we are permitted. Each firm is supposed to model and describe ideas, techniques and systems so that other businesses may follow in the pursuit of sustainable tourism and a socially responsible business.

Our most precious resource is the people and their potential to work for the collective betterment of our nation. Poverty wastes this resource and its potential. Poverty has numerous manifestations including low and unreliable income, poor health, low levels of education and literacy, insecurity and uncertain access to justice, disempowerment, and isolation from the mainstream of socio-economic development. It is, therefore, necessary to devise multi-dimensional policies and interventions that will provide a permanent solution. The poor must be provided with the means to help themselves through income earning opportunities, ready access to means of production, the provision of affordable, basic services and the protection of the law. This will not be achieved through temporary relief programmes but only through a deliberate and long-term policy to increase equity of opportunity and to ensure that all members of our society can participate fully in the socio-economic development of Kenya.

A fundamental prerequisite for poverty reduction is economic growth that considerably outpaces population growth. Over the past few years Kenya's economy has declined in per capita terms. As a result, the standard of living for the vast majority of the population has suffered and the level of poverty has risen alarmingly. Therefore, the governments immediate priority is to restore and sustain rapid economic growth in order to generate the wealth and economic expansion necessary to reduce the incidence of poverty. Over the next couple of years, the foundations for a broad, sustained attack on poverty and the creation of a more equitable society must be strengthened. At the same time, government, working together with civil society and development partners, will have to take a number of targeted short term measures to directly address some critical causes and manifestations of poverty.

### **POVERTY IN KENYA TODAY**

The poor constitute slightly more than half the population of Kenya. Women constitute the majority of the poor and also the absolute majority of Kenyans. Three-quarters of the poor live in rural areas. The bulk of them are located within the highly populated belt stretching South to South-East from Lake Victoria to the Coast which straddles the rail and road corridors.

Preliminary results of the Welfare Monitoring Survey (WMS) show that the incidence of rural food poverty was 51%, while overall poverty reached 53% of the rural population. In urban areas, food poverty afflicted 38% and overall poverty 49% of the population. The overall national incidence of poverty stood at 52%. According to available estimates, over the past 25 years food poverty has increased more than absolute poverty. The number of poor increased from 3.7 million in 1972-3 to 11.5 million in 1994. Thereafter, numbers increased to 12.5 million in 1997 and is now estimated to have reached some 15 million. The major characteristics of the poor include landlessness and lack of education. The poor are clustered in certain socio-economic categories that include small scale farmers, pastoralists in ASAL areas, agricultural labourers, casual labourers, unskilled and semi-skilled workers, female-headed households, the physically handicapped, HIV/AIDS orphans and street children.

The poor have larger families (6.4 members compared to 4.6 for non-poor) while in general rural households are larger than urban. Geographically, North Eastern and Coast Provinces have the largest poor households. Nationally, poor women have a higher total fertility rate (rural 7.0 and urban 4.8) than non-poor women (rural 6.7 and urban 4.1). Studies in Kenya show that fertility rates decline with education while the use of family planning is higher among the non-poor. According to evidence on health status, the prevalence and incidence of sickness are similar for both the poor and non-poor. However, the response to sickness is markedly different. An overwhelming majority of the poor cannot afford private health care (76% rural and 81% urban) and rely on public health facilities.

Subsequently, 20% of the urban poor and 8% rural poor found even public health charges unaffordable. Furthermore, 58% urban and 56% rural poor reported that they do not seek public health care because of the unavailability of drugs. A further indicator of disparity is that only 37% of poor mothers gave birth in hospital compared to 58% of the non-poor mothers. Empirical evidence shows that 13% of the urban poor have never attended school at all while the comparative rural figure is 29%. Of the poor, only 12% of those in rural areas have reached secondary education while for the urban poor the figure rises to 28%.

Dropout rates have risen, as have disparities in access, due to geographic location, gender and income. The main reason for not attending school is the high cost of education. Children are also required to help at home, while for girls socio-cultural factors and early marriage are significant factors. Regardless of poverty, over 50% of Kenya's households do not have access to safe drinking water, although the proportion is higher for the poor. In urban areas, large populations living in informal settlements within the towns and cities have no access to safe water. In rural areas there are large disparities between geographic areas where in North Eastern and Eastern Provinces less than 30% of the poor have access to safe water compared to some 60% in Western Province. Certain occupations, such as subsistence farmers (46% poor) and pastoralists (60% poor), have a higher than average incidence of poverty.

Subsistence farmers account for over 50% of the total poor in Kenya. While the poor cultivate, on average, more land and have more livestock than the non-poor, the non-poor earn more than two and one half times the income from cash crops and more than one and one half times the income from livestock sales. This pattern can be partly attributed by differences in the fertility of land and the affordability of inputs to improve productivity. For livestock, cultural factors and the lack of high-grade stock and poor access to markets could account for low sales among the poor. Studies in Kenya indicate that women are more vulnerable to poverty than men. For instance, 69% of the active female population work as subsistence farmers compared to 43% of men.

Given that subsistence farmers are among the very poor, this relative dependence of women upon subsistence farming explains the extreme vulnerability of women. These problems are most severe in arid and semi-arid areas where women spend a great portion of their time searching for water and fuel. The release of women's productive potential is pivotal to breaking the cycle of poverty so that they can share fully in the benefits of development and in the products of their own labour. In the urban areas, the proportion of poor female-headed households was higher than male-headed households in 1997. Both rural and urban women in 1997 were severely affected by poverty. This means that women are affected more by development process and the area of residence plays a major role in poverty status of women.

However, poverty is still pre-dominant in the rural areas for both men and women, meaning targeting needs to be intensified in the rural areas. Inequitable access to the means of production (land and capital), the distribution of wealth, reduced access to economic goods and services and remunerative employment are all causes of poverty. Poverty adversely affects participation in social and political processes and denies life choices while the poor are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. In terms of income distribution, Kenya ranks highly as inequitable. Estimates indicate that a high proportion of wealth is concentrated in a very small proportion of the total population.

This income concentration is the highest amongst the 22 poorest countries and is exceeded only by Guatemala (per capita income US\$1340), South Africa (US\$3,160) and Brazil (US\$3,640). The indicators demonstrate the depth and breadth of poverty in Kenya today and the magnitude of the challenge. The fight against poverty, ignorance and disease has been a major goal of Government since independence. However, it is evident that efforts to-date have been inadequate and the growth of poverty has not been reversed. In response, Government is mounting a new effort which will incorporate wider consultation and broader participation of various stakeholders. This is designed as an ongoing long-term poverty strategy for policy and programme development.

### **GENDER CONCERNS – CASE STUDY OF FAWE**

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) is a pan African non-government organization, registered in Kenya, that seeks to promote the education of women and girls in Africa. FAWE was created in 1992 to counter the slow pace of implementation of Education For All (EFA) goals in sub-Saharan Africa. It seeks to ensure that girls have access to school, complete their studies and perform well at all levels.

*When poverty engulfs a family, the youngest are the most affected and most vulnerable—their rights to survival, growth and development are at risk. A child born today in the developing world has a 4 out of 10 chance of living in extreme poverty (UNICEF: The state of the World's Children 2001 p. 32).*

*Poverty has many faces. It is much more than low income. It also reflects poor health and education, deprivation in knowledge and communication, inability to exercise human and political rights and the absence of dignity, confidence and self-respect (Human Development Report 1997 p.iii).*

Education for All (EFA) and more specifically the education of girls is a vital factor in dealing with root causes of poverty and under-development. Evidence shows a clear link between the level of girls' education and some indicators in health and well-being, most notably nutrition, maternal and child health and survival. Poverty eradication requires a multifaceted approach in which gender is very central. That girls' education directly contributes to sustainable development is no longer an issue. It is now well documented that educating the girls and women is the *single most important* investment that yields maximum returns for development. The infant mortality rates decrease, children have a higher probability of getting a good education and most importantly women become income generators, which increases the economic power-base of the family. The most important issue in any country should be the number of girls that have access to education and the quality of education they receive as measured by levels of retention and performance.

Despite several efforts to increase enrollments and reduce the gender gap, significant increases in access still show declines in the overall proportion of girls enrolled at different levels of the education system. That girls' education is a necessary and important aspect of eradicating poverty is no longer debatable. What is critical now as the third millennium progresses is what we do—at the individual level, at the family and community level, at the national level and at the global level—to ensure that our girls, the future mothers, future wives and future citizens of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are not left behind as the world moves on to greater heights in technology and information. For girls to participate fully not only in their own lives and those of their future families, but also in their country's development, the factors militating against their full participation in education must be removed so as to increase the number of girls that acquire a secondary and a post-secondary education as well as acquire appropriate skills for development. To remove these hurdles requires a deliberate effort and the adoption of an integrated approach to eradication of poverty by all stakeholders.

FAWE's Response to Girls' Education and Poverty Eradication is to provide a safe and conducive school environment with adequate facilities and supplies. The teachers and principals have been trained in educational management and the girls have been encouraged to form girls' clubs aimed at empowering the girls themselves. FAWE Centres of Excellence seek to reach poor girls in rural areas who would not otherwise have access to education. FAWE considers monitoring and evaluation as an integral part of its programmes and activities as this is FAWE approach in the Centres of Excellence. FAWE recognizes the need to work in collaboration and in partnership with other partners and organizations that are involved in girls' education.

Through the FAWE National Chapters, FAWE is able to work closely with governments, especially ministries of education, to influence programmes and policies in favour of girls' education. The network of National Chapters was created for identifying priority issues on the ground, generating new ideas on how to address the complex issues and disseminating relevant information on girls' education. The 33 FAWE National Chapters are at different stages of development and are undertaking a variety of activities. FAWE recognizes the need to strengthen the Chapters for efficacy in the acceleration of female participation in education. FAWE also has an observer status with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). FAWE works with UNICEF in the promotion of girls' education through community based organizations and grassroots NGOs. FAWE has also developed a partnership with universities as a way of addressing gender concerns at the university level.

## **THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN POVERTY REDUCTION**

Tourism ventures (**Table 1**) must seek environmentally sustainable economic growth while minimizing visitor impacts on wildlife, native cultures, and local communities by offering literature, briefings, leading by example, taking corrective action or other appropriate means. Tourism businesses needs to provide direct benefits to the local economy and local inhabitants thereby providing an incentive for local support and preservation of wild areas and wildlife habitat.



With the growing educational emphasis and purposeful desire for travelers to learn about the natural and cultural history of the places they visit, tourism operators should never re-label our products using the prefix "eco" so as to increase interest and consequently sales. The industry is helping the developing nations to earn the badly needed foreign exchange of which Kenya is not an exception.

**Table 1: Tourist Attractions in Kenya**

<b>DEVELOPED</b>	<b>UNDERDEVELOPED</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wildlife safaris</li> <li>• Beaches</li> <li>• Marine life</li> <li>• Urban tours</li> <li>• Balloon trips, for example Masai Mara</li> <li>• Animal orphanage</li> <li>• Plantation agriculture such as tea, coffee</li> <li>• Nature trails, example Bamburi</li> <li>• Bird watching</li> <li>• Angling</li> <li>• Dhow tours</li> <li>• Racecourse</li> <li>• Archaeological sites, historical ruins and museums</li> <li>• Traditional dancing</li> <li>• Traditional arts and crafts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camping</li> <li>• Hiking and mountain climbing</li> <li>• Forests, for example, mangroves and rainforest remnants</li> <li>• Horse riding safaris</li> <li>• Polo</li> <li>• Cruise ship and water sports</li> <li>• Golf</li> <li>• Camel safaris</li> <li>• Cultural shows</li> <li>• Cultural pluralism</li> <li>• Sculpture and handicrafts</li> <li>• Fish farms</li> <li>• Hunting</li> <li>• Trout fishing in Aberdares and Mt. Kenya, lakes and rivers</li> <li>• Wilderness holidays in Lake Turkana</li> </ul>

**Source: Sindiga (1999: 63)**

The job creation in the Travel and Tourism is growing one-and-half times faster than any other sector. The travel and tourism industry is labour intensive and it employs about 100 million people worldwide.

In Kenya it employs about 140,000 people both directly and indirectly, it's also estimated that about 850,000 dependants rely on these employee for their livelihood. The Kenya's Travel and Tourism Industry is facing the following problems; lack of a tourism career development centre, standardized tourism training, and tourism CVs database. These hindrances have decapitated the potentials of the industry to create employment, reduce poverty and gender inequality and alleviate leakages of revenue. Pro-poor tourism strategies therefore, can be applied to all sectors of the industry in Kenya. It presents an opportunity to place emphasis in tourism development on benefiting the poor and marginalized as well as to focus on local economic development in ways that benefit the poor. It is not a panacea, but where the strategy is pursued by government, the private sector and local communities, it can provide a way of benefiting the poor by improving their livelihoods and benefit the national revenues from tourism. Effort is required but it is a win-win scenario, there is much to be gained.

### **Mechanisms for maximizing benefits for the poor from tourism**

#### ***1) Employment of the poor in tourism enterprises***

**Supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor** - This covers issues such as working conditions, contracts, flexible job opportunities and the way vacancies are advertised. It is also about strengthening the local supply chain, addressing issues such as auditing of sources, quality and reliability. Areas that still need to be addressed include international competition for jobs, the seasonality of tourism employment, the need to identify poor people, and the need for training.

#### ***2) Direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor (informal economy)***

**Establishment of tourism enterprises by the poor (formal economy)** - This covers issues of trading conditions, licensing, quality improvements amongst street traders, etc. The fundamental preconditions for success with micro or community-based businesses should be outlined together with the various types of enterprise support. The focus should be directed towards the vital importance of marketing assistance, networking between enterprises, avoiding institutional dependency, and the need for local empowerment.

### *3) Tax or levy on tourism income with proceeds benefiting the poor*

**Voluntary giving by enterprises and tourists, investment in infrastructure, stimulated by tourism, also benefiting the poor** - This covers issues such as consumer willingness to pay, hypothecation of taxes, donation processes and selection of beneficiary projects. It is also about the careful planning of infrastructure development, involving local communities. The use of taxation as an incentive to enterprises, and community participation processes should be identified.

Poverty is partly about quality of life and the availability of choices, not only a monetary measure of income per head. Tourism is the principle export for one in three of all developing countries and hence, there are many reasons why tourism can be particularly relevant to poverty alleviation, notably because of its potential in rural areas where three quarters of the world's poor are to be found. This needs to be reflected in national government policies, including ensuring that tourism is fully recognized in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and in action programmes at a destination level. In addition, there are many good examples of where the private sector of tourism has woken up to its social responsibility towards poor communities: this needs to be fostered. Discussions should be centred on issues relating to tourism knowledge and information. There is also concern about the accuracy and application of statistics, and about the need to define poverty lines at a local level. This has to do a lot with the many damaging effect of foreign countries insensitive travel advisories that Kenya for example, has had to deal with frequently.

Without the protection of its cultural and natural assets, no country could expect tourism to contribute to poverty alleviation with a long-term perspective. The role of different stakeholders in alleviating poverty through tourism, the role of government versus the private sector, the need for partnership, and the relative priority that could realistically be given to tourism vis-à-vis other pressing social problems such as HIV/AIDS need to be addressed. International Development Agencies need to pay more attention to tourism, and work together to share knowledge and avoid duplication.

Governments must ensure close integration between tourism and poverty reduction policies, and can use a range of instruments to influence action, such as planning controls, legislation, enterprise support, and marketing. Intra-regional bodies can help countries work together on this important shared aim. NGOs have a valuable role to play in representing poor communities, building capacity, supporting community-based initiatives and identifying beneficiary social projects and distribution mechanisms. Destination management organizations, such as local authorities, are often well placed to build local networks, strengthen supply chains and control the informal trading sector. Finally, private enterprises can have a strong influence on poverty through their employment practices, choice of suppliers and information given to tourists.

### **Selecting tourism as an option for poverty alleviation**

Tourism is well placed to influence poverty and tourism jobs can be very valuable in giving poor people self-esteem. We need to avoid being overly optimistic because visions are important but we must not raise false hopes. Tourism can be good as a way of addressing poverty through enterprise formation, but entry barriers are not always low. Establishment costs can be high for some types of business and seasonality may be a problem in terms of returns from tourism, but can enable tourism to be fitted in alongside other livelihood activities. Governments should therefore have a leading role to play, not in running enterprises, but in coordination, planning, as well as support. We must be aware of financial constraints, for example on Tourist Boards so that communities can benefit from the anchor provided by private investors.

Good contracts between local communities and private sector enterprises are very important though detailed advice may be required here. Local communities must get what is their right, communities must really participate, take their own decisions and if necessary learn by their mistakes, rather than becoming dependent on institutions. We may never succeed unless we tackle the ownership and empowerment issues of poor communities, which is essential for long-term benefit. People with drive and genuine commitment tend to be a key to success hence, visitors will respond and support local causes enthusiastically.

Strengthening resources for relevant NGOs is also important, however, one should distinguish between community-based NGOs and others since we need to understand where they are coming from and their funding cycles. Tour operators can play a very positive role, not only in marketing but also in working with communities and development organizations in informing product development. We need to set targets and monitor whether tourism is really doing something about poverty as well as to be watchful about where money from tourism goes to in the recipient communities. Benefits in kind can be more certain to meet needs and therefore it is important to have transparent auditing of how money from tourism is being distributed to, and used within, communities. Examining the supply chain to tourism enterprises and seeking changes that will bring more benefits to the poor is essential.

Subsequently, involving the whole of government in the task, and especially including tourism in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers as well as mounting an information campaign directed at tourists themselves, which suggests ways in which they can help could be of much impact to poverty alleviation. Small community projects can't stand alone – the need for marketing support is necessary. Ecotourism projects must be based on sound business planning and when involving the poor in tourism employment one must not compromise on standards. Basic customer care training is required at the grass roots communities who also need support in strengthening information and communications, including use of new technology. Help is needed on pricing issues, such as for handicrafts and access to affordable credit is also very important. Perhaps tax incentives can be used more to influence private sector investors to take on board poverty alleviation measures.

### **Developing approaches and actions**

- When deciding on approaches, we should identify who the poor are and then make interventions that are relevant to them.
- We need to be quite detailed in identifying poverty – e.g. setting poverty lines at a district level.
- We need to ask “what are the problems and needs of your community?” – and women must be listened to.
- We must avoid thinking only about national parks but also include rural tourism outside parks.
- Poverty alleviation measures through tourism must take account of the need for sustainable land use policies.
- When considering possible minimum wage levels one must take account of what is needed by people to sustain a livelihood.
- We need to be careful about limits to tourism development, which may be environmental, social and economic limits.
- Projects should not be simply product driven and especially not simply government driven. There must be a clear understanding of the market from the beginning, but projects may have a product opportunity as an initial motivator.

### **SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES**

In poor, vulnerable areas the concept of sustainability has normally been thought of in the limited context of sustainable agriculture yet for these areas to be sustainable it is inevitable that the whole range associated activities be integrated and coordinated. Poor communities are rarely capable of being economically sustainable without a diverse economic base; tourism and recreation are becoming an increasingly important part of that base. This should imply consideration of sustainability in terms of tourism opportunities, their appropriateness and their capability of attracting and sustaining visitation and how well they fit in to the mix of economic and social activities of poor rural areas and rural population.

The relative lack of attention to the sustainability of tourism in government publications and policy statements, until recently suggests that this fact was rarely considered as tourism development, was being encouraged nor does it appear that many developments were well thought out in terms of compatibility with other uses and preferences or even in terms of their long term economic viability. The present state of flux places new pressure on rural resources and threatens the established and traditional patterns of land use and increases the possibility of conflict over resources. It also disturbs the homeostasis which has evolved between use of the rural environment in certain regions because of the scale, scope and nature of changes occurring. The uneasy combination of new and traditional forms of tourism and recreation casts increasing doubt on the sustainability in the changing rural environment.

Sustaining poor rural areas in ways that the majority of observers appear to wish them sustained has as its core the maintenance of an economically viable rural population which is engaged in traditional or related rural activities, in particular family farm based agriculture. Sustainable tourism is therefore as much about sustaining rural culture and identity, as it is the physical environment. Tourism both affects and is affected by contemporary rurality, visitors favour the more traditional rural landscape created by smaller farm holdings, particularly those with horticultural or cash crops such as orchard, berry farms or vegetable producers, which offer a greater variety of recreational opportunities. Such visitation and consequent purchase of produce at the farm gate may help maintain some family farms by providing supplementary income and thus indirectly sustaining the landscape.

Many regional authorities appear to fail to recognize that it is the visual complexity of the rural landscape and the subsequent visual fulfillment of rural images and myths that generate amenity values for locals and visitors alike. In some desperate search for economic development, a wider tax base, and employment generation, inappropriate policies and development programs may be followed. Policy measures in one sector such as the attraction of agribusiness or large foreign investment to a region may lead to a decline of the industrial value of the region to other industries such as tourism and business which are based on adding value to local production.

An integrated approach to rural resource development is therefore essential if sustainable development is to become more than wishful thinking. It should be recognized, however, that tourism may not be appropriate element to be introduced or maintained in rural areas. To succeed effectively in economic, social and environmental terms tourism requires specific conditions which meet market needs and current taste and preferences. Where these are absent tourism is unlikely to be successful, especially in the long term. Policy makers therefore need to identify and recognize the elements which make up a sustainable base for tourism and recreation and which allow them to be successfully integrated into existing rural fabric of a particular place.

### **Conclusions and final recommendations for action**

All tourism stakeholders should contribute a voice in the communities in which we operate and within organizations to which we belong, to guide Kenya's tourism toward sustainability and appropriate use of resources so that we may protect the wilderness of Africa for future generations. Tourism commercial ventures should contribute a minimum of 10% of our pre-tax earnings to conservation organizations and the poor locals in the community. The primary development goal for Kenya is to achieve a broad-based, sustainable improvement in the standards of welfare of all Kenyans. This will require a concerted effort to tackle the intolerably high incidence of poverty that now afflicts about half our population. While Government has a particular responsibility for spearheading action and creating a positive framework, the private sector, non-governmental and community based organizations all have a vital role to play in meeting the challenge of poverty reduction. Kenya must mobilize all available resources and use them efficiently and effectively in the fight against poverty since this is the background conditions for success in tourism Trade negotiations and unfair terms of trade could damage all that we do, unless they are very carefully handled. Tourism statistics are still very weak in most African countries and prevent sound planning. We need to be realistic when putting the case for tourism support and the priority we can expect governments to give to this, as against HIV/AIDs etc.



Influences on the international market at source are critically important –especially travel advisories, which need to be more accurate, specific, detailed and up to date. WTO, recipient governments and source governments all have a role in influencing travel advisories. The spin put on them by media can be critical. Security measures and guidelines about security are important for the overall performance of tourism and the success of projects. Community participation can be remedial, token or real. Remedial participation informs the people about a programme or project when everything is finalized and implementation is already underway. Token participation involves the people in design and planning but excludes them from all initial negotiations of project identification including the evaluation of available alternatives. Real participation accommodates all the views of the people, as resource owners, users and partners, in the whole process of project negotiation and identification together with all aspects of planning and implementation.

Sensitisation and education are, therefore required to bring out the problems and concerns, and to determine the available options before decisions and actions are taken. Any method incorporating the above approaches and requirements should take into consideration sociological, cultural and religious factors as well as available local person-power. Human needs are addressed through empowerment. Community-based support programmes, can help communities identify their problems and priorities, increase their awareness of what can be done and help them select from a range of components. The milieu in which popular participation or empowerment takes place focuses the emphasis on community knowledge, resources, self-reliance, initiative and decision-making. To be successful, coordination of development efforts rely heavily on clear direction and support from political leaders and on the presence of a political will to implement coordination policies. The fact that members of these communities lack basic skills and are sometimes provided with appropriate training indicates, however, that they do not have the capacity or the knowledge that will enable them to coordinate.

This paper therefore shows the importance of encouraging community participation at the onset of any tourism development. Community involvement is the best guarantee of the sustainability of tourism. The community can for instance, be most closely involved in the components for which it has direct interest. A community can also decide on the way funds made available to them through sharing benefits can be used. Members can be presented with various alternatives to choose from. Also, there is a need for a sustained programme of community awareness campaign. Involving communities in the implementation and management of a tourism development project necessitates close supervision of the activities, capacity building at the local level and a strong commitment from the communities. In the final analysis, the true test of a country is in their ability to take care of the poor, vulnerable disadvantaged groups/ communities.

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