

Tourism Development and Poverty Reduction Initiatives from Tanzania: Lessons for practice

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Abstract

In recent years, the number of tourist arrivals in Tanzania has increased from 295,312 in 1995 to 576,000 in 2003. Income realized also shows an improvement from US\$ 259.4 million in 1995 to US\$ 731 million in 2003, an increase of about 35 percent. Overall growth is about 25 percent of total export of goods and services. This increase is also reflected in the number of hotels, tented camps, lodges and employment. Increase is also experienced in sectors that support tourism such as transport, communication, agriculture and trade in general

Although there has been such a tremendous increase over the years, overall, tourism contribution to poverty reduction among the local communities has remained marginal and isolated. Local economies in most of the destination area have not improved in tandem with the development of tourism witnessed in those areas. Tourism development in these areas is not linked to other sectors. For example, most of skilled jobs are given to foreigners, while local people take up unskilled and low paying jobs such as watchmen, room attendants and gardening. In some of the hotels, food is imported if not from outside the country then from outside the local destination areas.

While this is a common trend, there are also isolated cases where communities have managed to organize themselves and use tourism to address poverty issues. Some of these areas are in the northern and south-western parts of Tanzania where villagers have grouped themselves and entered in tourism activities. Considerable income is generated from such ventures and one of them; proceeds in excess of US\$ 50,000 per year are used to finance community education, health and transport programmes as well as to pay for anti-poaching activities. This paper discusses these success cases highlighting conditions for success, impact on poverty reduction and enhanced governance, and draws lessons for practice elsewhere. It also discusses some of the critical implementation problems and makes general suggestions and recommendations.

1.0. Introduction

The number of tourists arriving in Tanzania increased from 295,312 in 1995 to 576,000 in 2003. Income realized also shows an improvement from US\$ 259.4 million in 1995 to US\$ 725 million in 2001 (URT, 2002d) and to US\$ 731 million in 2003. Tourist earnings have picked up and show consistent growth from 1986, partly due to a higher

number of tourists visiting the country. Other factors are an increase in private tour operators and agents, better advertising of Tanzanian tourist attractions abroad and a greater capacity to cater for more tourists (Kulindwa et al. 2001). Between 1995 and 2001, about 59% of the visitors came to Tanzania for leisure, recreation and holidays compared to those who came for conferences, professionals and others (i.e. 41%). This category of visitors includes groups that could indulge in tourist activities that yield more revenue. Tourist hunting for instance is one of the activities with a higher value compared with the rest. Significant income came from tourist hunting where the average annual income is about US\$ 10 million, although more could actually be realized had this component of the sector been rationalized and well managed.

While tourism is fast developing in traditional destinations, such as the Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Kilimanjaro mountain and Zanzibar, efforts to promote community based tourism are underway and considerable work has already been done as few successes recorded. Most of the success stories from community based tourism initiatives in semi-arid and arid areas of Tanzania provide lessons for improving the livelihood of the local people in the respective areas. Some of the documented changes include: favourable changes in environmental conditions, increased socio-economic benefits, improved governance and positive contributions to changes in behaviour and well being at the community level (Janis et al., 2002). An assessment of Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Best Practices in Tanzania conducted by Janis et al (2002), also covering semi-arid areas notes the following conditions for success: the need to start small; the use of participatory methods to identify root causes for environmental degradation and poverty; understanding of linkages between poverty, environment and livelihoods; trust between partners and the involvement of all stakeholders. Other factors include community willingness to invest in management measures; community ownership of the resources and equitable benefit sharing. Financial transparency, local empowerment and devolution of authority for resource management and democratic institutions (Janis et al., 2002) also contributed to the successes.

This paper examines the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction in Tanzania, highlighting some of the “best practices” that have begun to show positive changes. Two main case studies are examined in detail below.

2.0: Case Study Experiences

The case studies in this paper namely Ololosokwan, in Ngorongoro District, Arusha Region and MBOMIPA in Iringa Rural District, Iringa Region have been selected because they provide insights on linkages between tourism, livelihoods and poverty reduction efforts in semi-arid areas. These areas are rich in resources such as wildlife, livestock, land, minerals and mines and forestry that provides for the subsistence of the local people. Although these areas are rich in natural resources, poverty is rampant and growing. While poverty data for specific areas, including arid and semi-arid areas is not available, the Household Budget Survey of 2000/01 indicates that overall poverty has increased in rural areas. Both income and non-income poverty indicators show an increase in rural areas than in most urban areas. Most of the semi-arid areas are rural.

2.1: Ololosokwan Village: Land, Tourism, and Wildlife

Tanzania has the greatest abundance and diversity of large terrestrial mammals of any country in the world, thus making wildlife the most important natural resources. Wildlife is the basis for the tourism industry, which has grown rapidly over the past decade, to an annual worth of \$725 million at the national level and accounting for 12% of GDP (World Bank/MIGA, 2002). This section examines the experiences with tourism and wildlife of Ololosokwan village in Loliondo Division, Ngorongoro District; a semi –arid area in the northern part of the country.

Ololosokwan village is located in the northwestern corner of Loliondo Division, Ngorongoro District, bordering with the Serengeti National Park to the west and the Kenyan border to the north. The village is the home to about 3,500 pastoralists, the majority of whom are Maasai of the Ilpurko section. The village's land comprises 46,000 ha. of *Acacia* savannah and grasslands with a rolling topography and a number of permanent watercourses draining into the Lake Victoria basin to the west.

The livelihood of the people in Ololosokwan depends primarily on livestock herding following traditional transhumant pastoralist practices. Traditional pastoralist movements between dry and wet season grazing areas are, however, now curtailed by more changes such as the creation of the Kenyan border and the Serengeti National Park, which does not allow free access for grazing. In addition to livestock, over 90% of the households in Loliondo villages are directly or indirectly engaged in agricultural cultivation (O'Malley, 2000). Such cultivation is not the main form of economic activity but a strategy that pastoralists in this area use to diversify opportunities and take advantage of favourable rainfall conditions to enhance food production (O'Malley, 2000).

On a relative basis, the pastoralist communities of Loliondo are slightly better off than most of the others because, the per capita livestock holdings in Loliondo are roughly three times those of pastoralists in the neighbouring Ngorongoro Conservation Area (Galvin and Thornton, 2001). Loliondo is also a remote area with limited infrastructure and social services and limited access to markets (Homewood et al., 2001).

The livestock economy in Tanzania has generally declined over the past years due to factors such as land losses and declining state support to livestock keepers. All these factors are related to macroeconomic policy changes adopted in the late 1980's. In Loliondo, a proposal was put forward by the government in the late 1980's to convert large tracts of pastoralist lands to agricultural plantations. This plan was averted following local protest and land use planning initiative, although other pastoralist areas such as Simanjiro were not as fortunate and experienced extensive encroachment on pastoralist rangeland from land cultivators (Shivji, 1998).

Alienating land from the local people either through state alienation for investments or through village allocations to outsiders has often undermined the viability of pastoralist production systems. The adoption of structural adjustment policies in the late 1980's

rapidly cut government subsidies for livestock and agriculture in rural areas (Bagachwa et al., 1995). Livestock drugs previously provided at reduced prices and through government extension services increased in price and became less available, resulting in the resurgence of diseases such as East Coast Fever among livestock populations in northern Tanzania (ESRF, 2003).

An important part of the Ololosokwan village is the wildlife populations of the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem. Ololosokwan has abundant resident wildlife species such as giraffe, impala, buffalo, and other large mammals, as well as predators such as lion, hyena, and cheetah (Maddox, 2001). In addition, during the beginning of the wet season hundreds of thousands of wildebeest and zebra pass through the village's lands on their way to the Serengeti plains. Ololosokwan and neighbouring communities thus provide important habitats for this important wildlife resource.

The history of wildlife management and conservation in the Serengeti area plays an important role in the livelihood strategies of the villagers in Ololosokwan. Members of the Ololosokwan community once lived inside what is now Serengeti National Park, and concerns exist locally in terms of past, present, and potentially future exclusion from wildlife conservation areas. Land tenure concerns relating to wildlife combined with the threat of widespread alienation of pastoralist lands during the 1980's for agricultural development to created considerable land tenure insecurity among the pastoralist communities in Loliondo.

Within the context of these tensions over land use and tenure in Ololosokwan and surrounding communities during the 1980's and 1990's, a number of positive developments relating to wildlife management also occurred at the local level. Tourism development in the 1990's spread onto village lands and a number of early ventures between private companies and village governments that had obtained title deeds to community lands were developed in, including in some of the Loliondo villages (Dorobo Tours and Oliver's Camps Ltd., 1996).

In 1998 and 1999 Ololosokwan developed two major tourism ventures on village lands managed in collaboration with private companies. One of these provided a concession to a luxury company for a small lodge, and the other provided for use of a campsite with no permanent developments. Income from these developments has increased gradually since 1999 and now earns the village about US\$55,000 annually (Figure 1).

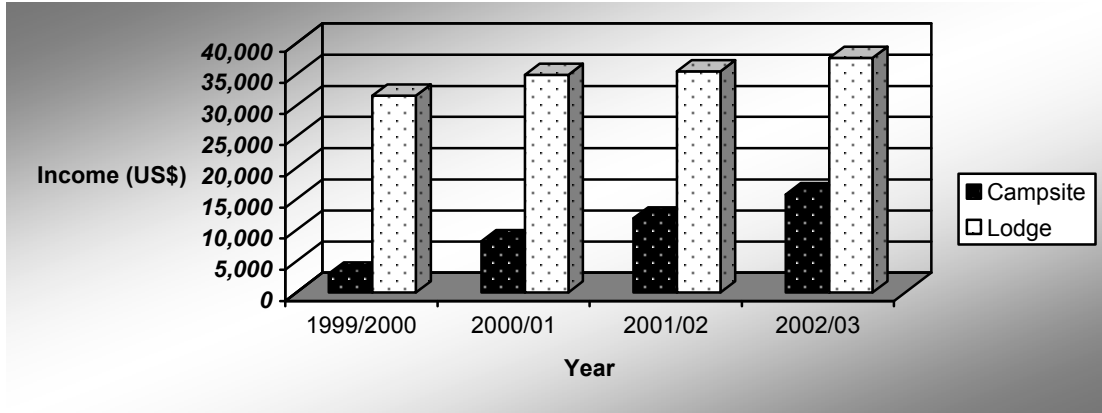


Figure 1: Income from tourism to Ololosokwan village. Source: Nelson and Ole Makko, 2003

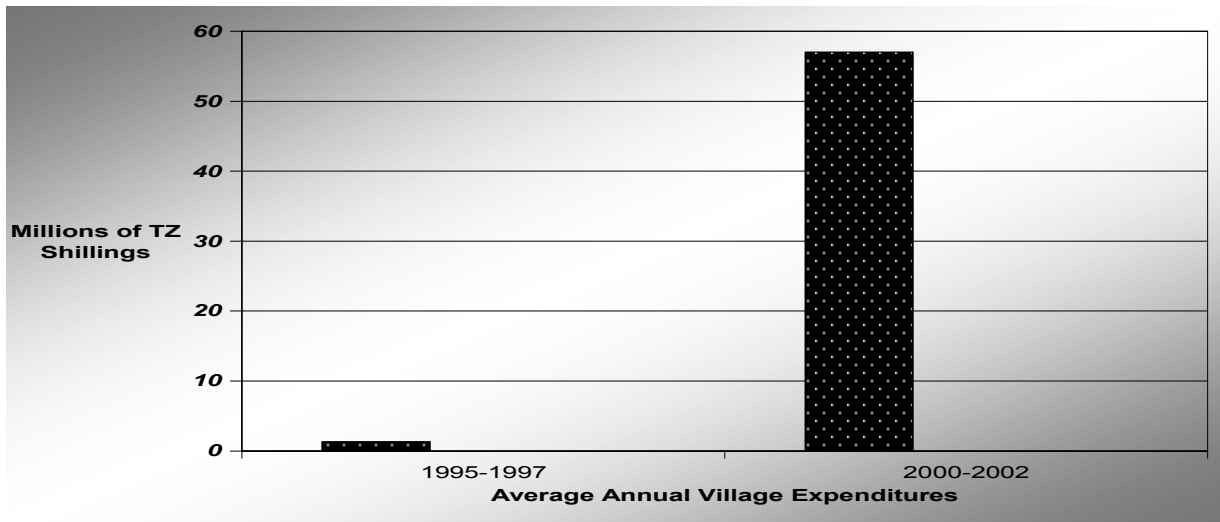


Figure 2: Increase in Ololosokwan village expenditures from 1995-1997 to 2000-2002 as a result of growth in tourism revenues. Source: Nelson and Ole Makko, 2003.

Tourism accounts for over 90% of the village’s available revenue, and has enabled investment by the community in social services and other developments to increase from around Tshs. 2.5 million annually in 1995-1997 to approximately Tshs. 57 million annually in 2000-2002 (Figure 2).

The growth in village revenue from wildlife-based tourism resulted to changes in local livelihoods. It enabled improvement in the village’s social infrastructure such as educational, health, and water facilities. Also, individuals have benefited by having school fees for secondary and universities paid for, and for health expenses. Employment earnings among these individuals from Ololosokwan’s campsite total about \$3,000 annually at present, and this does not include the more significant earnings from the permanent lodge.

Seasonal and permanent employment opportunities at tourism developments have enabled young men in the community to earn cash in the village instead of rushing out to

urban areas. The phenomenon of young Maasai, immigrating to urban areas in search of employment as a result of the decline of the livestock economy is an increasing trend that raises concerns. Those young Maasai are poorly positioned to obtain employment other than that of watchmen or hair plaiting, and this urban out-migration creates new dangers such as the spread of HIV-AIDS between urban areas and pastoralist communities.

Partly, as a result of these economic gains, there has been an increasing interest and involvement in natural resource management and governance by the Ololosokwan community. Village land use plan and by-laws have been prepared and passed by Ngorongoro District Council in 2000. An integrated wildlife-livestock-tourism land use practice has developed in the village, and has spin-off benefits for the conservation of the Serengeti ecosystem. The by-laws provide for the democratic management of village revenues through administration by the village council and quarterly reporting to the Village Assembly and approval from the assembly for expenditures. Conducting of these quarterly Village Assembly meetings is a significant improvement in the governance and democratic process at the village level. Indeed, there are few villages in Tanzania that run village assemblies as required by the laws. In addition, the village has four paid game scouts who work with the private tour companies to enforce the village by-laws.

However, these local initiatives have received little support from outside authorities. The district has repeatedly asserted that it, and not the village, should receive all payments from tourism companies (Masara, 2000). The Government has not adequately supported other tourism activities in Ololosokwan as a result of the perceived conflict between these activities and the use of Loliondo as a tourist hunting concession (Masara, 2000; URT, 2000a). Some local communities are obviously not in favour of setting aside land for hunting when they do not see direct benefits as opposed to the kind of arrangement that Ololosokwan has with the investors.

More recently, six villages in Loliondo including Ololosokwan have been designated for inclusion in a 'pilot' Wildlife Management Area (WMA) (URT, 2002b). WMAs are areas where local communities will set aside land for conservation and wildlife management and will be able to manage the wildlife and resources therein in order to derive benefits (URT, 1998c). Although the Wildlife Policy promotes WMAs as a mechanism for benefit sharing, in Ololosokwan WMA implementation has proven difficult. Villagers question WMA Regulations and the extent they give them secure rights to manage and benefit from wildlife on village lands. Thus at present the villages including Ololosokwan are not enthusiastic about the WMA idea and some would prefer to continue with their existing tourism developments as managed under the village land use plan and by-laws (Ngoitiko, 2003).

2.2: Community-Based Wildlife Management: The experience from Matumizi Bora ya Maliasili Idodi na Pawaga (MBOMIPA) (*Better utilization of natural resources in Idodi and Pawaga*)

The MBOMIPA project started in 1997 aiming to promote community-based conservation in villages bordering Ruaha National Park in Iringa District (Walsh, 2000).

MBOMIPA occurs in an area of approximately 4,000 km², containing 40,000 people in 19 villages, in the Lunda-Mkwambi Game Controlled Area. This area is in the semi-arid zone with about 500 mm of annual rainfall (Walsh, 2000). The villagers here are a diverse mix of small-scale farmers and migrant pastoralists. The scale of management for MBOMIPA is much larger, working with a 19 villages to collaborate together in the management of natural resources across a relatively large and diverse area.

The aim of MBOMIPA has been to enable these communities to develop wildlife as a profitable livelihood asset and competitive form of land use in order to create conservation incentives and a buffer zone to the Ruaha National Park. The need for this type of community-based conservation was evident by the early 1980s, when wildlife monitoring data showed considerable declines in the area's large mammals populations, largely as a result of uncontrolled illegal hunting (Walsh, 2000). Uncontrolled hunting was a result of factors such as poverty; need to get meat and indeed commercial interest for trophies.

MBOMIPA focused on a series of participatory actions designed to enable local communities to manage and benefit from wildlife. These steps included creating land use plans and designating areas for wildlife conservation. Given the numbers of villages under MBOMIPA, a new institution or community association was necessary in order for the area to be managed as a single unit so as to improve people's livelihoods.

Thus, the creation of livelihood benefits from wildlife at the local level has been the critical element in such community-based conservation projects, and which has proved most challenging in MBOMIPA. A number of options for creating benefits from wildlife exist, including non-consumptive (tourism) and consumptive (safari hunting, resident hunting, local meat production, live animal capture) ones. The essence of the MBOMIPA approach is to reform the centralized, state-controlled wildlife management system that has been in place in Tanzania for a long time.

Initial efforts in MBOMIPA involved the harvesting of a wild meat quota granted to the communities by the Wildlife Division and selling the quota within the villages (Walsh, 2000). However, this practice was not profitable, with the costs of harvesting the meat sometimes exceeding the earnings from the local sales, forcing the communities and the project management to seek alternative avenues of creating value from wildlife (Walsh, 2000). A change was achieved in 1996, when the MBOMIPA communities began to auction off a resident hunting quota- rather than selling it to resident hunters by the district, as is the normal practice throughout Tanzania. This immediately caused a sharp increase in wildlife-based income to the villages, with total income from the resident hunting quota rising from about Tsh. 5,000,000 in 1996 to Tsh. 15,000,000 in 1999. At the individual village level, this translated to an increase in the wildlife-based income about Tshs. 281,000 in 1996 to Tsh. 1,000,000 per village in 1999 (ibid).

These benefits from wildlife to the communities have been valuable in terms of collective expenditures on social services and development projects, as in Ololosokwan. They have also reportedly created a sense of empowerment and revitalized village governance by

increasing the collective interest and engagement in natural resource management (Walsh, 2000). Benefits accrued from community wildlife management are at the moment channelled to the improvement of social services. This is deliberate so as to ensure that benefits are extended to as many members of the community as possible, while giving more time to the community based venture to evolve into a viable economic entity that would extend more benefits to individuals. At least over 40,000 people in MBOMIPA villages stand to gain from this development.

Overall, the village level income from wildlife-based land uses in the MBOMIPA villages is about Tshs. 1-1.5 million annually, or about 2% of the annual income earned by Ololosokwan village. Relatively, this is a small proportion given the resources that are available. The critical challenge therefore, has been how to promote tourist hunting, which is the most valuable consumptive form of wildlife use to local communities. Although MBOMIPA has made great progress in creating benefits from wildlife through resident hunting, the highest value wildlife uses have remained unavailable.

3.0: Analysis and synthesis of case studies.

The case studies provide valuable lessons from for using tourism to address poverty.

3.1: Local Tenure, Access, and Capacity

Livelihood *diversification* and *flexibility* are essential strategies that people living in semi-arid and arid areas traditionally and historically employ in order to survive in what are fundamentally unpredictable and variable environments. The case studies have shown the value that diversification in these areas can have to local communities for example, new income opportunities from wildlife and tourism in Ololosokwan and in MBOMIPA.

A fundamental issue in all of the experiences reviewed here is the ability of local people to control the lands and resources that their livelihoods depend on. Ololosokwan has become one of the country's leading examples of community-based ecotourism that can generate revenue at a scale bigger than expected because the management of tourism has been fully controlled by the villagers. The village's securing a title deed for its lands in the early 1990's provided the basis for it to develop these profitable joint ventures and turn wildlife into a valued community asset, as well as to carry out improvements in natural resource management practices through land use planning and by-law formulation.

Thus a central lesson is that if rural livelihoods in semi-arid areas are to be strengthened and supported, *land and resource tenure issues* must be placed at the centre of poverty reduction priority issues. Without secure land tenure, and transparent management practices involving all villagers, both diversification and flexibility are undermined. Secure land tenure provides the foundation for further improvements in local capacity and stewardship, such as land use plans and village by-laws. Another lesson is that secure

land tenure does not always have to be based on private hands as is often perceived. It can also be at the village level as in Ololosokwan or MBOMIPA and still work for the betterment of the people and the environment.

Also, the case studies show weaknesses in the ability of local people to manage natural resources and consequent problems that this weakness creates. In Ololosokwan the village has no formal control over the use of wildlife itself, and conflicts over wildlife uses persist there. Similarly, in MBOMIPA the communities' earnings have been greatly suppressed by their inability to manage tourist-hunting activities.

Tenure issues over land, wildlife, forests and other resources as a whole, are fundamentally institutional issues related to governance. Policies, which advocate the devolution to local communities, are not translated into the institutional reforms that would put these objectives into action. Also, sectoral coordination appears limited, as for example, in the forestry sector, on the one hand, and the wildlife sector, on the other, despite being in a single ministry. These institutional issues are fundamental to the ability of local people living in dryland areas to improve their livelihoods and invest in natural resource management.

3.2: Macro-Micro Linkages

The linkage between macroeconomic developments and microeconomic opportunities at the local level is now recognized as a critical issue in terms of rural poverty reduction in Tanzania (URT, 2002c). These macro-micro linkages are prominent issues in all the case studies, and the interaction is dualistic in that the local influences the national in important ways, while national economic policies have profound impacts on local livelihoods.

For example, an important issue in dryland livelihoods has been the removal of subsidies for livestock production that were previously provided in the 1970's. The loss of these outside subsidies has had a negative effect on rural livestock production. Similarly, the economic liberalization policies, which have stimulated expansion of farming into areas that otherwise, were used for grazing has undermined livestock economy. Cultivation of beans, grains and flowers has reduced land available to livestock keepers, thus affecting communities that depend largely on livestock for their livelihoods in Arusha region.

At the same time, as Ololosokwan's experience shows, the liberalized economic climate of the 1990's can create new market opportunities for rural drylands communities if basic conditions are met. First, high potential for tourism or other investments must exist in that area. Second, local communities must be able to directly access, manage, and exercise control over resources, which occur on their lands or on lands, which they provide for investment. Ololosokwan's earnings have grown to become a significant contribution to the village economy precisely because the community has been able to act in this way over the investments occurring on its land.

Another critical macro-micro linkage that Ololosokwan and MBOMIPA illustrate is the dependence on valuable resources on local management and stewardship. Conservation initiatives in Ololosokwan support management efforts in the Serengeti ecosystem, which in turn helps to attract many tourists and more revenue to Tanzania. Similarly, MBOMIPA communities are protecting key border areas adjacent to Ruaha National Park, which is becoming the central destination on the southern safari circuit. National macroeconomic growth depends on sound management of these national resources on communal lands in order to ensure sustainable resource conservation at the ecosystem level. For communities to have the maximum incentive to conserve these nationally valued resources, it is essential that they derive economic value and benefits from those resources. National policies such as those for forestry and wildlife recognize this fundamental issue, but as the case studies show, the rhetoric of policies is not easily translated into sound mechanisms for implementing their aims. Policies promote devolution to local communities but practices point to opposite direction.

Another critical macro-micro linkage issue is the question of equity and access to resources. Current policy changes have not provided sufficient equity mechanisms and opportunities to local communities to benefit from the natural resources found in their local areas. Without adequate tenure systems, equity policies, good governance and adequate support to local people, meeting poverty reduction targets in Tanzania would be very difficult.

4.0. Conclusion and Recommendations.

4.1. Conclusions:

This paper has examined two case studies from Tanzania's semi-arid and arid areas in terms of some of the links between tourism and poverty reduction. In all areas the issues of land and resource rights, access, and ownership are paramount. In all cases the critical element of being able to access these opportunities, and take advantage of macroeconomic developments such as the tourism development is possessing secure land and resource rights at the local level.

Also, this paper has noted that both Ololosokwan and MBOMIPA communities have used their revenue to improve social services. While this is a benefit extended to villagers at a general level, benefits to individual households are limited and isolated. It is also not clear on the basis of such changes, what forms of social relations have evolved out of this development and how do they shape the overall socio-economic dynamics of the areas concerned?

4.2. Recommendations

The paper makes the following recommendations:

- Land tenure issues needs to be placed at the centre stage in discussions of rural poverty reduction and livelihood improvement. Since the majority of Tanzania depends on the natural resources for their livelihoods, tenure is thus a very

important issue in poverty reduction process. Current focus on growth for poverty reduction is inadequate if tenure, access and equity issues are not fully addressed.

- Greater harmony among the different land and natural resource sectors needs to be promoted and *enforced*.
 - Legislation that provides pro-poor livelihood options is needed, particularly in the wildlife sector.
- Better monitoring mechanisms are required in terms of linkages- both positive and negative- between livelihood impacts, land tenure security and conflicts over natural resource use and management.
- Tourism investments, which promote local partnership between communities and the private sector, need to be promoted under appropriate policies and legislation. This is central to achieving better macro-micro linkages, which will effectively target rural poverty by opening up local market-based opportunities.
- Governance issues are crucial in the tourism – poverty reduction processes. If significant progress is not made on governance issues then poverty reduction efforts are likely to be undermined.
- Similarly, there is need to build institutional capacity at district and village level to ensure that technical services and advice is provided when needed.

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