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Albert Johannes Strydom, Dinah Mangope, Unathi Sonwabile Henama
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SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN AFRICA

Lessons from Uganda and Kenya

Albert Johannes Strydom, Dinah Mangope, and Unathi Sonwabile Henama

24.1 Introduction

The tourism industry has grown in leaps and bound in African countries, making it a growth miracle. The resource-base to develop tourism in Africa is vast, characterized by a plethora of different fauna and flora. Tourism is designed to attract new money into a locality, which will then be used to diversify the economy, create jobs and generate economic growth. Tourism has become an important sector for attracting foreign exchange and investment. Africa continues to receive less than 10% of global tourism arrivals, which means that there is much scope to grow the tourism industry. Inasmuch as Africa’s share is small, tourism is disproportionately essential for African countries.

The role and importance of tourism, as an important economic sector has been generally recognized, because it affects many aspects of the economy, such as the increase in Gross National Product, the improvement of balance of payments, the creation of new workplaces, the increase of investments and the promotion of national, regional and local development.

Rusu (2011) noted that tourism not only creates jobs in the tertiary sector, it also encourages growth in the primary and secondary sectors of the industry. 'Internationally, the promotion of the tourism sector by government and donor organizations has typically aimed at encouraging private sector investment, macroeconomic growth and foreign exchange earnings,' according to Mahony and Van Zyl (2002).

The majority of tourism expenditure occurs at the tourism destination, which is the site for the simultaneous consumption and production of the tourism product offering. It is at the tourism destination, where tourism demand (the tourists) comes into contact with tourism supply (service providers). This means that the majority of value-addition occurs at the destination level. This creates opportunities for increasing the contribution of the tourism industry to other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing. The tourism industry does not naturally contribute to development, unless it was planned to be developmental in nature. In the past, the tourism industry contributed towards less towards domestic development due to leakages, due
to foreign ownership. This type of tourism has been rejected, as it reflects a tourism economy similar to colonialism or a plantation economy. Retaining the economic investment that comes from tourists is imperative to maintaining developmental benefits. African countries experience a high rate of tourism leakage, which reduces the benefit of tourism expenditure. Tourism is supposed to increase the Quality-of-Life and standard of living of the locals, and to improve the economic life of an area; if it does so, it will accrue support from locals. Community-based tourism (CBT) has gained popularity as a developmental form of tourism that benefits locals and allows for local ownership and local management of the tourism industry.

24.2 Research methodology: literature review

A literature synthesis of successful case studies of CBT in Africa is the research methodology used in this chapter. The literature synthesis uses case studies from various forms of secondary literature to present a well-researched and coherent understanding of successful CBT in an African context, turning the academic gaze to a neglected area in African tourism. Some commentators treat the case study as a method to be used as and when appropriate, depending on the problem under investigation. Like other methods, it is believed to have both advantages and disadvantages. However, even from this point of view, there can be variations in the specific form that case study research takes:

- In the number of cases studied and the role of comparison;
- In how detailed the case studies are;
- The size of the case(s) death with;
- In the extent to which researchers document the context of the case and
- ‘In the extent to which they restrict themselves to description and explanation or engaging in evaluation and prescription’ Gomm et al. (2000).

24.3 Theoretical framework: pro-poor tourism

The tourism industry’s production occurs at the destination area, and this creates ample opportunities for value-addition in the destination area. The tourism industry does not naturally contribute towards tourism development unless intentional interventions are made to include the poor within the tourism supply chain. Tourism must benefit the host community through employment opportunities and as suppliers to the tourism supply chain. The tourism industry must be developed to become developmental at the destination area. It must be planned and operated using pro-poor principles. The poor and the destination area must benefit economically from the operation of the tourism industry. Spenceley and Meyer (2012) noted that tourism could provide a mechanism to redistribute wealth from the rich to the poor. In the case of South Africa, as indicated by Steinbrink (2012), poor urban settlements are marketed for tourism, as slum tourism. Chok et al. (2007) identified the following pro-poor tourism principles:

- Participation: Poor people must participate in tourism decisions if their livelihood priorities are to be reflected in the way tourism is developed.
- Holistic livelihoods approach: Recognition of the range of livelihood concerns of the poor (economic, social and environmental; short term and long term).
- Balanced approach: Diversity of actions needed, from the micro to macro level.
• Wide application: Pro-poor principles apply to any tourism segment, through strategies that may vary between them.
• Distribution: Promoting pro-poor tourism requires some analysis of the distribution of both benefits and costs, and how to influence them.
• Flexibility: The pace and scale of development may need to be adapted, appropriate strategies and positive impacts will take time to develop; situations are widely divergent.
• Commercial realism: Pro-poor tourism strategies have to work within the constraints of commercial viability.
• Cross-disciplinary learning: Learning from experience is essential. Pro-poor tourism needs to draw on lessons from poverty analysis, environmental management, good governance and small-enterprise development.

Tourism is not a panacea for poverty, but it can be a useful tool to empower the poor to benefit from the economy. The tourism industry is dominated by small businesses and is labour intensive in nature, and this can be used to help the poor. Tourism that benefits the poor is a force for good in improving the quality of life and standard of living of the poor and the destination economy.

24.4 Theoretical framework: community-based tourism

Mtapuri and Giampiccoli (2018) noted that it is clear that the nature of CBT is more people-centred, community-oriented and resource-based than ecotourism; it is a bottom-up strategy to enhance the host community’s livelihoods. The idea behind the community-based approach is to create the potential for empowering previously disadvantaged communities, by improving their involvement in decision-making and ensuring that the motivation and encouragement to participate come from the community itself (UNHCR, 2008). Furthermore, CBT development encourages local people to have a sense of ownership and to belong, so that they are committed to controlling and managing productive resources in the interest of their own families, the community, and, of course, the visitors.

Moreover, despite a great deal of denunciation about CBT as a consequence of the different understandings of the concepts, issues, implications and practices related to it (Mayaka et al., 2012), there are recent indications that CBT is gaining popularity as a strategy for environmental conservation and social inclusion and not only as a political buzzword; there is evidence of numerous programmes in place in many countries to this effect (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010). CBT programmes are meant to decrease poverty not only by increasing income but also by providing residents of rural communities with the tools and knowledge necessary for long-term planning, critical thinking and decision-making. Tourism is no panacea; hence CBT, ecotourism and responsible tourism should be part of a wider sustainable development strategy.

24.5 Principles of community-based tourism

CBT is a unique type of tourism with characteristics and ideologies quite different from any other kind of tourism. Those who want to practice CBT need to fully understand the underlying ideas, principles and components behind it. This is because CBT is not merely a business that aims at maximizing profits for investors. Instead, it is more focussed on the impact and effects of tourism on natural resources and the local community. According to Suansri (2003), the principles of CBT are:
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- **Identity:** Respect and preserve all the characteristics of the environment, help residents reclaim historical practices, revitalize productive activities, highlight the ethnic background of the population and highlight the unique aspects of the locality, such as topography, climate, architecture, cuisine and handicrafts.

- **Roots and Customs:** Highlight local cultural practices so that communities share their cultures and traditions with tourists with authenticity. Invaluable educational opportunities such as homestays and town-hall style rounds of talks are encouraged so that tourists and local community members can mutually share cultural aspects such as food, music, folklore and goods. Both visitor and community cultures will always be treated with appreciation and respect.

- **Ecological Consciousness and Harmony:** Seek to conserve natural ecosystems and cultures by being a part of a larger development plan. All plans have a low impact on the local environment while highlighting the unique aspects of the locality, such as topography, climate and architecture. The conservation of nature and rigorous concern with the environment influence the development of infrastructure for community-based ecotourism activities (i.e., building houses, roads, showers, etc.) (Berkes, 2004).

- **Local Control:** The host community must achieve ownership and have local control of the tourism value chain to achieve CBT principles. Local leadership leads plans and encourages clear and transparent decision-making. Community members actively make decisions on strategies and acceptable levels of tourism based upon their culture, heritage and vision. Strategies also equip local communities with the tools and knowledge necessary for decision-making, and to build effective structures to enable the community to influence, manage and benefit from CBT development and practice.

- **Sustainable Economic Development:** Stimulate the local economy by generating income through the sustainable use of natural resources. All plans seek to ensure that the local population has an equitable share in benefits.

- **Distribute benefits fairly among community members.**

- **Foster cross-cultural learning.**

- **Contribute a fixed percentage of income to community projects.**

- **Respect cultural differences and human dignity.**

24.6 **Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED) – Uganda**

The Kibale Association for Rural and Environmental Development (KAFRED) is a community-based membership organization formed by six founder members, and recently the membership has grown to more than 40. The organization operates in the Magombe swamp, which is a government wetland, situated on the edge of Bigodi trading center, on the western side of Kibale Forest National Park in Kamwenge district, western Uganda. Through the works of KAFRED, the community has benefitted substantially from ecotourism trade by establishing guided tours along a boardwalk through the wetlands, supplemented by the sale of handicrafts by the village women’s group (Paul et al., 2004). According to Amooti (2012), sustainable management of the area was backed by the enactment of bylaws in 1995, developed in a participatory fashion with local government authorities. This process provided the legal foundation for the group’s work in wildlife conservation and income generation that has benefitted the national park and local stakeholders in equal measure. Corcoran et al. (2012) explain that the wetlands form an essential wildlife corridor and...
are home to rich biological diversity: the swamp, dominated by papyrus grasses, measures just eight kilometres in length and yet supports over 200 species of birds and eight species of primates. With participation from the local farming community, the original members of KAFRED were able to halt encroachment on the wetlands area and create guided wildlife trails for tourists. The revenues from tourism have been used in building a secondary school and promoting environmental education in the area, instituting a loan scheme for farming families and supporting a local women’s group producing artisanal handicrafts. The objectives of KAFRED, according to Owoyesigire (2012), are as follows:

- To initiate, encourage and promote authentic tourism activities that benefit communities by encouraging the establishment of low service level accommodation and restaurants, supply and sale of goods for the tourists, improved transport and the development of alternative attractions by individuals, groups or associations.
- Promote sustainable biodiversity conservation and community development in the Bigodi Wetlands Sanctuary and other natural areas through the proper utilization of natural resources for the benefit of both the present and future generations.
- Development of the rural communities adjacent to these natural areas by establishing support services and infrastructure like health centres, schools, colleges, roads and bridges.
- Educate and create awareness among local people about the importance of the natural environment, their interconnection and interdependence with it and the expected attitude and methods in order to live in harmony with the environment.
- Seek formal, informal, and informal technical training for guides and other employees for running the tourism industry and the protection of the environment.
- Assist local farmers in the development of improved farming methods, new crops and general improvement of agricultural practices that seek to work in harmony with nature.
- Carry out research on problems that affect the local community (Corcoran et al., 2012).

24.7 Benefits of tourism to KAFRED

According to the Safari Resources & News from East Africa Community Tourism in Kibale-Bigodi Village (2013), the benefits that accrued from this initiative are:

- Employment: The creation of employment for the local community, such as guiding around swamps, builders, managers, cooks, trail cutters, compound cleaners and guards, among others. Tour guides are recruited and trained from the nearby Kibale Forest National Park or at residential workshops organized by the Uganda Community Tourism Association.
- Supply of goods and services: Food stuffs and drinks are sold to accommodation establishments and canteens, and the handicrafts made by the Bigodi Women’s Group (an affiliate of KAFRED) are sold at the Kanyanchu tourist center of Kibale Forest National Park. As a result of tourism in the area, a market was established to sell locally produced vegetables and other dairy products.
- Direct sales of goods and services: The Bigodi Peanut Butter Group, comprising of a few women and men involved in making peanut butter and pineapple wine, sells to tourists. Also, there are tour guides who provide guiding around the swamps.
- Establishment and running of tourism enterprises: The Bigodi Women’s Group runs a canteen at the Kanyanchu Tourist Centre in Kibale Forest National Park. Some accommodation and food facilities have been established and are run by the community.
• Tax and levy on tourism income of profits: Revenues from tourism are ploughed back into community projects such as schools, health centres and sanitation. The association has built a secondary school and pays salaries for teachers and constructors. There is also a library and a visitor center that was built, which are also used by the community and tourists.

• Voluntary giving by tourism enterprises and tourists: Small grants from the American Ambassador’s Special Self-Help fund in 1994 were offered as contribution to the development of the project. Friends and well-wishers like the Tulsa and North Carolina Zoos, visiting tourists and government officials have also made donations.

• Investment in infrastructure: KAFRED used part of the revenue to construct a boardwalk for tourists to cross the swamp, which is also used by the local people to transport their farm produce from the village to the trading center. KAFRED went on to construct other bridges in the village in a bid to ease transportation.

• Private entrepreneurial activities: Tourist lodges, restaurants and bakeries have developed in the Bigodi area and employ local labour. The construction of tourist facilities, including visitor centres, receptions and kiosks, employed a number of local community members. The Bigodi Women’s Group has set up a nursery school with income from the sale of crafts. As a result of tourism development in the area, both the local and central governments have given special attention to the maintenance of the Fort Portal Kamwenge Road (Amooti, 2012).

• Other benefits: Sustainable harvesting of papyrus, grass, medicinal plants and sand mining are being done in the area to alleviate poverty. Materials for building are also purchased locally. KAFRED is entirely managed, owned and run by the community, and there are also other activities, including fish farming, beekeeping and tree planting.

24.8 Lessons learned from KAFRED

According to Thomas et al. (2011), KAFRED has learned that it is essential that community projects involve communities from the initial planning of projects. It is also vital that all stakeholders participate in the success and sustainability of such projects. There is also a need for the communities to put in place bylaws relevant to their natural resources. There is also a need to develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy for any project. Key individuals in the community, like the elders, lay-leaders and local chiefs (resource persons) need to be consulted for the success of community projects.

24.9 Amboseli Porini Camp Selenkay Conservancy – Kenya

According to Briggs and Roberts (2010), Porini Camp is located in the Selenkay Conservation Area, a 15,000-acre private game reserve within a vast tract of land owned by the Kisonko clan of the Maasai people and located near the northern boundary of the Amboseli National Park. The Conservation Area is an important dispersal area for wildlife moving in and out of Amboseli and holds a wide diversity of species. In addition to the better-known big game like elephants, lions, leopards, cheetahs, giraffes and zebras, there are several less-common species such as caracals, African wildcats, civets, gerenuks, lesser kudus and striped hyenas. The private four-wheel-drive track links the Selenkay Conservation Area to the Amboseli National Park to provide the advantage of game drives in the park as well as in its exclusive reserves. The Selenkay Conservation Area is 100 miles from Nairobi and a three-hour drive, mostly on tarmac, down the Mombasa Road. The camp operates a daily transfer by minibus from Nairobi, which arrives at the campsite around 1 pm. The Amboseli airstrip
can also be used, with daily flights from Nairobi. According to Lagat (2004), the Porini conservation project is a joint private investor–community conservation project. Its key components consist of the local Maasai community, private investors and tourists. It is divided into two, namely, the Porini Ecotourism Conservancy – which is a non-profit making organization – and Gamewatchers Company Limited – a profit-making organization. The project started in 1996 with meetings between the Kenyan proprietor, Mr. Jake Grieves-Cook of Porini Ecotourism, and elected leaders of the Eselenkei community to consider how to generate an income for the community land. According to Ogutu (2002), the objectives of Amboseli Porini Camp are as follows:

- Conservation of the wildlife dispersal areas adjacent to Amboseli National Park;
- Provision of employment opportunities for the host community from ecotourism and to generate an alternative income to livestock rearing and
- Management of the project as a private-sector tourism enterprise so that it is financially viable and sustainable.

The project was initiated by the proprietor, Mr. Grieves-Cook, who had been working in the tourism industry, especially the Maasai Mara Reserve, for many years. The area had no other tourist attraction and the community depended on livestock rearing for a living. No other investor seemed interested in working with this community. The researcher realized that a mistake was made in the beginning when they only dealt with the officials, neglecting the community, so he then started dealing with the community directly through open public meetings. The lease agreement was done with the assistance of the Kenya Wildlife Service’s legal department (Lagat, 2004). The project was founded with the aim of conserving and developing tourism products from the natural environment with minimal interference. The camp started with a limited number of tents – six in total – and could only accommodate twelve guests at a time. It used solar energy for lighting and activated electronic equipment for visitors and charcoal briquettes, which are environmentally friendly for cooking, thus minimizing ozone-depleting emissions into the environment. Plans were made to assist the Maasai homesteads in producing cow dung briquettes as another alternative ‘green’ source of energy. They also improvised a charcoal-walled cold room, which neither uses power nor emits ozone-depleting substances. They operated on the principle of latent heat energy. The tents had flush toilets, whose wastewater went into a septic tank (Briggs & Roberts, 2010).

### 24.10 Ecotourism

The local Maasai community set aside the Selenkay Conservation Area as a reserve for wildlife and, in return, is receiving an income from tourism activities. This is used to fund community projects such as schools and water supplies. Employment opportunities have also been provided for the local Maasai people as game rangers, trackers and camp staff. Apart from the management and Head Chef, all other teams in the camp and conservation area are members of the local Maasai community. The 70 kilometres of roads in the conservation area were constructed using local labour so that members of the community gained employment. As a result of the establishment of the conservation area, wildlife numbers have recovered significantly in recent years, and elephants are now seen frequently after an absence of nearly 20 years. The Selenkay Conservation Area lies in the heart of Maasai land, well off the beaten track, and has not been visited by tourists until very recently. The animals
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are truly wild and tend to behave more naturally than those in the parks, whose animals are often habituated to the presence of vehicles (Holding et al., 2004).

### 24.11 Accommodation

Porini Camp consists of nine spacious tents, situated among shady *Acacia tortilis* trees, in a spot once favoured by big-game hunters. The camp is small and exclusive, accommodating a maximum of 18 guests. It is set up along the lines of a traditional hunting safari bush camp, so there are no permanent structures such as a bar, restaurant or swimming pool – this is real camping in the bush, but with much more comfortable bathroom arrangements than were available to the hunters of earlier years. The tents are large and comfortably furnished, each with a double and single bed, solar-powered electric lights and an en-suite bathroom with a shower, washbasin and flush toilet. Meals are taken under the shade of an Acacia tree, and after dinner, campers can sit around the campfire and listen to the sounds of the African night. The camp is staffed entirely by members of the local Maasai community, apart from the manager and Head Chef (Honey, 2009).

### 24.12 Benefits from tourism from Amboseli Porini Camp Selenkay Conservancy

According to Lagat (2004), the community has benefitted a lot from this initiative in the following way:

- The community receives rent for the land and collects visitor’s fees for all guests visiting the area or staying at the Porini tented camp. All roads in the conservation area have been constructed and are maintained using local labour in support of the local economy. In addition to the road’s maintenance team, ten game scouts have been employed to carry out patrols to see that the wildlife is protected while 90% of the camp staff are local community members.
- Since the establishment of the conservation site, the area has witnessed an increase and re-appearance of wildlife.
- The conservancy has helped build classrooms in two local schools as well as the nursery school. Furthermore, the project assisted several youngsters who were members of the local Eselengei group ranch through tertiary training.

### 24.13 Lessons learned from Amboseli Porini Camp Selenkay Conservancy

The following lessons were learned through the case study:

- Management: Porini has had to use a lot of resources to ensure that the conservation area is protected and maintained. This includes paying the salaries of the game scouts.
- Marketing: Game watchers market Porini Camp by operating two safaris from Nairobi every Monday and Thursday. Income from these safaris helps Porini meets its obligations under the partnership agreement.
- Community involvement: Involving the majority of a local community in decision-making is part of Porini’s strategy. This is important to ensure benefits trickle to the most vulnerable members of the city and to retain support for conservation.
- Benefit-sharing: Porini assisted the community in designing a benefit-sharing scheme that would be beneficial to all members. Social provisions like water, health and
education would be given priority in expenditure after the costs of managing the conservation area have been met.

- ** Provision of water:** This is as crucial for the community as it is for the camp and wildlife. Water is one of the primary sources of conflict between wildlife and local people. Porini has assisted the community in putting up a borehole to provide water for local use and for their herds.

- ** Staff:** Most of the employees at Porini Camp are local Maasai people from the area. This provides direct benefits to households while building the capacity of the local people in camp management.

- ** Contribution:** Porini contributes to social development in the area. The contributions include the building of a classroom, transport for the local community when possible, overseas exposure, etc.

### 24.14 Conclusions

The lesson from Uganda is that tourism revenue was used for community needs, such as the building of a secondary school. If the community were not in control of the tourism industry through CBT, they would have been at the mercy of investors who would repatriate their profits. Peaceful co-existence was achieved between the tourism asset base and attraction, which was in this case the wetlands, with the locals. This meant that the tourism industry was not planned to be an enclave. The effort to train the community in co-existence with the tourism asset was imperative in order to attain buy-in and for the sustainable use of the shared tourism resource, at a place called home. The tourism industry, by linking up with the farming community, created the conditions for social cohesion. This meant that instead of farming and tourism competing, they created avenues for collaboration, especially when the farmers’ knowledge of better farming methods was improved upon. Beneficiation from agriculture was realized, and this accrued for the greater community.

The Kenyan example proves that tribal land is an asset that could be used for tourism consumption as an asset owned by the community. Once again, the state can become an essential bridge between those with ideas and the community, which has an asset with tourism potential. The community benefited from tourism revenue, in that they could build a school and improve their supply of water. The conservation efforts have increased wildlife populations, which is imperative for the tourism market interested in wildlife. CBT is considered a panacea for the inability of the poor and developing countries to have control and ownership of the tourism industry. The developmental benefits of tourism do not naturally benefit the poor unless there is planning to ensure such. The tourism industry is primarily private-sector driven but requires a state that creates an enabling environment. Furthermore, the state is responsible for drafting tourism policy, which would seek to meet national goals linked to growth and employment. The state plays an essential role in enabling tourism growth and development. Both case studies indicate that the tourism industry requires a diligent and responsive government. Tourism is coordination-intensive industry and public servants play a critical role in making tourism grow and flourish in the destination area.

### References

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