

No. 1: Pro Poor Tourism Strategies for Businesses: Creating Linkages

In essence: What does it mean to adopt a Pro-Poor Tourism approach? What is the main activity? The answer is that there are many different strategies that enhance the impact of tourism on the poor. These include those that increase incomes of the poor, boost their livelihoods in other ways, or engage them as decision-makers. This brief outlines different types of strategies, with examples.

PPT strategies adopted by a business are about creating linkages with a number of stakeholders which can include local tourism enterprises and Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) suppliers, community organisations, local residents and neighbours, and local staff (see figure 1). The type of linkage varies depending on the stakeholders involved and the approach taken by the company. Any single company can concentrate on a number of different linkages and many linkages are interdependent. For example, a company keen to form closer links with local suppliers might become involved in joint product development as part of its local procurement strategy, place greater emphasis on joint planning and decision making, and offer training programmes and initiatives for a variety of local stakeholders including residents, local SMMEs and staff.

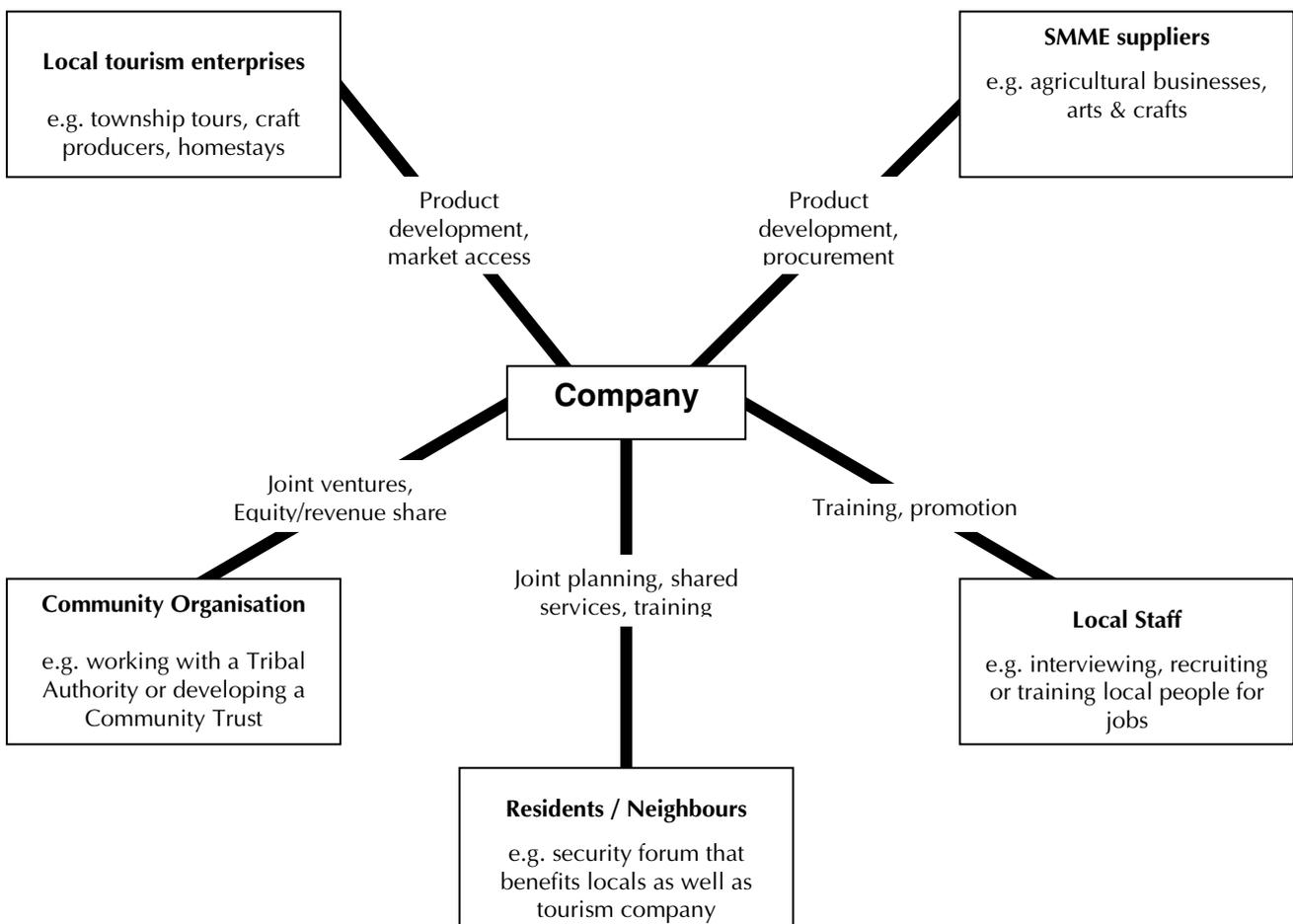


Figure 1: PPT linkages between companies and local communities

Strategies for Pro-Poor Tourism can be divided into those that generate three different types of local benefits: economic benefits, other livelihood benefits (such as physical, social or cultural improvements), and less tangible benefits of participation and involvement. Each of these can be further disaggregated into specific types of strategies, as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Types of PPT strategies

Increase economic benefits	Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts	Enhance participation and partnership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand local employment, wages, commitment to local jobs, and training of local people • Expand local enterprise opportunities including those that provide services to tourism operations (food suppliers, etc) and those that sell to tourists (craft producers, guides, etc) • Develop collective income sources such as fees, revenue shares, equity dividends, donations, etc 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building and training • Mitigate detrimental environmental impacts • Address competing uses of natural resources • Improve social and cultural impacts • Increase local access to infrastructure and services provided for tourists (e.g. roads, communications, healthcare, transport) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a more supportive policy/planning framework that enables participation by the poor • Increase participation of the poor in decision-making by government and the private sector • Build pro-poor partnerships with the private sector • Increase flow of information and communication between stakeholders to lay the foundation for future dialogue

Strategies focused on economic benefits

In general, staff wages are a massive boost to those few that receive them. Smaller earnings generated from local enterprises help many more to make ends meet, and collective income sources such as fees can benefit the majority, but can also often be misused. Thus, all three types of economic benefit are important for reaching different poor stakeholders. Strategies to create these benefits need to tackle many obstacles to economic participation, including lack of skills, low understanding of tourism, poor product quality and limited market access.

Wilderness Safaris (South Africa) has a local employment policy, which has resulted in a high proportion of jobs at its lodges going to local people. The company also has a training programme, which enables local people to advance in the company. As well as benefiting the local community, Wilderness Safaris benefits from low staff turnover.

Strategies to enhance other (non-cash) livelihood benefits

In Ecuador, Tropic Ecological Adventures raised funds from clients to buy a radio for one remote community, which is a huge leap for them in terms of communications – especially in emergencies. Tropic also allows community members to use communication facilities at its head office and provides transport in emergencies. The community cites contact with the outside world as one of the main benefits of their involvement with Tropic.

These strategies can often begin by reducing negative impacts such as cultural intrusion, or lost access to land, but more can be done to then address these issues positively, in consultation with the poor. Opportunities to increase local access to services and infrastructure often arise when these are being developed for the needs of tourists, but with some consultation and adaptation they could also serve the needs of residents. Strategies for capacity-building may be directly linked to boosting cash income, but may also be of more long-term indirect value, such as building the management capacity of local institutions.

Strategies focused on policy, process, and participation

Implementing strategies focused on enhanced participation, policy and partnership may involve a variety of initiatives such as lobbying for policy reform, involving the poor in local planning initiatives, amplifying their voice through producer associations, and developing formal and informal links between the poor and private operators.

In the Caribbean, the St Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme is driving a process of policy reform at the national level, which will help mainstream local enterprises into the tourism industry there. In Southern Africa, the Namibia Community Based Tourism Association (NACOBTA) facilitates the development of partnerships between local communities with secure rights over wildlife resources and private operators wishing to run safari enterprises on community land.

Additional Sources of Information

This brief includes material reproduced from www.propoortourism.org.uk, which provides further background information on PPT strategies and international case studies.

These briefs were produced by the Pro Poor Tourism Pilots (Southern Africa) Programme, as a way to share practical international examples of pro poor actions with programme partners and others. PPT Pilots is a 3 year programme funded by DFID's Business Linkages Challenge Fund, facilitating adoption of pro poor practices by tourism companies in Southern Africa.

There are eight briefs so far in the Business Implementation of Pro-Poor Tourism Series. They cover a diverse range of topics from branding to supply chains and tourism-agriculture linkages. Several rely on material extracted from websites of companies and other organisations, which is provided in good faith but cannot be taken as verification of pro poor impact. The briefs were written by Dorothea Meyer, Caroline Ashley and Clive Poultney (first versions produced May 2004, revised versions uploaded December 2004).

Further programme information and the full set of briefs are on www.pptpilot.org.za. Further background on PPT internationally is on www.propoortourism.org.uk.