

WHAT GOVERNMENTS CAN DO FOR COMMUNITY TOURISM

Policies matter!

Most Southern African governments hope that tourism will contribute to national economic growth *and* to *local development* in marginalised areas. They want to promote the involvement of local people and disadvantaged communities in the tourism industry (so called ‘community tourism.’), but often don’t know how, or make mistakes. This leaflet draws on experience in the Region to give some ideas for what governments can and should do.

It also gives ideas of what they *shouldn’t* do: current policy may often set *unintentional obstacles* to community involvement. Policies that weren’t designed to keep the informal sector out, can still have just that effect. In supporting community tourism, it can be as important to remove constraints as to create new supportive measures.

What is community tourism?

Tourism in which local residents (often rural, often poor and marginalised) are active participants as land-managers/users, entrepreneurs, employees, decision-makers, and conservators. It is not just community co-operatives running campsites. The aim is for residents to have a say in decisions over tourism development in their area and work with other stakeholders to develop opportunities for employment, enterprise, skill development, and other improvements in local livelihoods. Some actions, such as participation in planning, may be done by communities acting collectively and some, such as enterprise development, by local individuals and families.

Q: what can governments do? Isn’t it up to communities to develop tourism if they want to?

Governments have a crucial role to play. What communities do in tourism depends on the opportunities and power they have, the incentives and prices they face, and their access to skills, training, capital and markets. All of these are shaped by government policies, regulation and taxes.

Q: I’m not in the tourism ministry, so this leaflet isn’t for me.

It’s not only tourism policies that matter. Policies of other sectors and ministries – such as land tenure, or small enterprise support – are very influential too.

[Q’s should be from little talking heads (about the size of a word) but not in cartoons.]

Tenure and rights

A good place to start

Local people need some form of tenure over tourism resources if they are to have power in the tourism market and a genuine decision-making role in planning. Without tenure they have no security for making long term investment, and no power to charge for tourist access. There are several different models in southern Africa (see box) and no single appropriate solution. But some key principles are that:

- tenure is critical.
- for developing wildlife-viewing tourism, communities need rights to control access to land, and not just off-take of wildlife.
- devolving rights down to the lowest level gives community institutions a stake in making decisions, not just receiving revenues.
- Although tenure should belong to all the residents, it is usually best for an enterprise to be run by an *individual*, whether from inside or outside the community. This can be done through a partnership between the community and entrepreneur (see leaflets 3 and 4).

Different types of tenure and tourism rights for communities in southern Africa

- On communal land in Namibia, the government is devolving wildlife use rights to communities in 'conservancies.' They can establish their own consumptive or non-consumptive tourism, or sub-lease rights to private investors.
- In Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE programme, the local authority (district council) has authority to lease hunting and tourism rights, and then distributes revenue to local people.
- In Botswana, rights to allocate tourism concessions lie with Land Boards, but it is government policy for land boards to allocate resource-use leases for hunting and tourism to communities who have formed a legal entity. The communities also get wildlife utilisation quotas. They can sub-lease their rights to joint venture partners.
- In South Africa there are many new initiatives to give communities a secure stake in tourism enterprise *inside protected areas*. Communities can reclaim land tenure through the land adjudication process, or where tenure remains with the park authority, communities can be given an *equity share* in the venture, as has happened, for example, in the tripartite venture in Ndumo Reserve, between Kwazulu Natal Development Corporation, neighbouring communities, and Wilderness Safaris.

	Policies that help community involvement in tourism	Policies that hinder community involvement in tourism
Tenure	Community tenure over land, wildlife, and/or tourism rights.	No rights to utilise wildlife nor to charge tourists/private operators for enjoying tourism attractions in the area.
Tourism planning and policy	Clear policy statement in support of community involvement in tourism. Local participation in tourism planning. Community involvement and benefit a key criterion in government planning decisions on formal sector tourism. Enclave tourism discouraged. A planning system for approving new tourism enterprises that is easy for rural people to use.	CBT ignored in government policies. Plans of big tourism operators given priority over community developments. Tourism operators able to get planning approval with no discussion of community benefits. Urgent deadlines take priority over community consultation and development. Applications for planning approval too difficult for rural people.
Tourism marketing	Marketing of community tourism enterprises by the national tourism marketing body. Emphasis on cultures and people in national marketing, not only on wildlife/wilderness. Providing market information to community tourism enterprises.	Marketing focuses only on the 'big five' and big companies. No information on community enterprises in government information.
Tourism regulation/standards	Regulations that allow for simple tourism enterprise, within limits of health and safety. Eg category of 'home-accommodation' or 'basic campsite' with simpler standards than other types of enterprise. Registration system accessible to rural residents. Regulations for larger tourism ventures that encourage or require measures to enhance local benefits.	A tourism grading system with no 'basic' grades or categories suitable for community campsites, homestay arrangements etc. Minimum standards set too high for most informal and community enterprises to reach (ie. above basic health and safety requirements.) Difficult and expensive grading/regulation procedures, requiring access to the capital city, language skills and money.
Land use planning	Land-use planning that incorporates community views, recognises tourism as a land-use, supports multiple land-uses, and discourages enclave tourism.	No land use planning. Or planning that ignores local views, and either ignores tourism as a land-use or focuses only on tourism without assessing links with other sectors.
Tourism training & licensing	Capacity building for rural residents, organised or sponsored by government. Courses, exams and licenses that are accessible to local people, and provide qualifications that are appropriate for local enterprises. Eg locally-run courses to be registered as a local guide.	Tourism training and licensing developed for educated urbanites. Only one (high) category of qualification, with expensive courses and exams in the capital city,
Joint ventures between community & private sector)	Supportive policy. Regulations/ tenure arrangements that give power to communities. Government recognition of community institutions with legal powers to enter contracts.	No incentive for companies to negotiate with communities. No governmental recognition of joint venture arrangements.
Micro and small enterprises	Policies to maximise economic linkages between tourism sector and local enterprises. Eg: through credit, training, joint planning fora.	Assuming local enterprise links will just emerge with no help.
Information, staffing and extension	Community Tourism Officers or other staff providing information and advice (including enterprise development and social organisation) to community tourism enterprises. Information provided to the formal sector on how to work with communities and enhance local benefits.	Only conventional staff trained in tourism planning and marketing, with no community development skills or understanding. Information for the tourist industry only available in the capital, no translations.
Park pricing and development	Parks run in ways that stimulate enterprise opportunities for neighbours (eg craft market, local guides, taxis...) Providing park visitors with information on local enterprises. Complementary rather than competitive enterprise development inside park. Giving neighbouring community a tourism concession inside the park.	Undercutting accommodation outside the park through subsidised prices inside. Undermining community ventures outside the park through maximising devt. at prime sites inside.
Credit, tax, incentives	Access to credit for small enterprises.	Credit only available to large firms. Taxes/subsidies that encourage capital investment rather than labour-intensive enterprises.

Source: Ashley, C. 1998: 'Tourism, Communities and Implications for Policy: Experience in Namibia' in *Development Policy Review*, Dec 1998 Blackwells.

To go underneath Table on pages 3 and 4

Stimulating local enterprises

Tourism developments can create many new enterprise opportunities for local people.

However, research shows that these economic linkages *cannot be assumed, they need to be encouraged.*

Often local people lack the market information, skills, credit, and physical access to markets to set up businesses. Large tourism operators find it easier to import their products and develop 'enclave tourism' with no local links. However, where efforts have been made to use local goods and services, and support complementary enterprises, a wide variety of enterprise links have developed. Government has a critical role to play in:

- supporting the informal sector, as this is where local participation in tourism is often highest. Ensure that local entrepreneurs have access to capital, training and market information.
- enhancing local entrepreneurs' physical access to tourism markets through careful siting of tourism ventures or through establishment of craft markets, village tours, agricultural tours etc.
- creating incentives for big business to use local goods and services. Eg making this a criteria when allocating leases for tourism developments.
- ensuring planning decisions and park developments discourage enclave tourism.
- maximising use of local goods and services inside national parks and other government-controlled tourism operations. Bureaucratic procedures often mean that government operations are the worst offenders at ignoring local products.
- assessing how any change in fees or policy affect visitor patterns and encouraging types of tourists that spend most money locally (although these may be back-packers who spend least money in total).

Government tourism departments could adopt development of economic linkages as a key objective, in addition to their promotional functions.

At Madikwe Reserve in South Africa, the Parks Board prioritises local entrepreneurs when offering business opportunities. For example, a local entrepreneur has been contracted to patrol and maintain the perimeter fence. The private lodges inside the park have also made contracts for local goods and services, including laundry and firewood.

Proposals for the Royal Zulu Game Reserve include specific actions to stimulate local enterprise, including a specific institution (in which the community has up to 50% equity) to support local enterprises, and seed capital for them.

Policies can *unintentionally* constrain community enterprises

Examples from Namibia

Namibian Government regulations for the registration of tourism accommodation facilities and tourism guides are intended to ensure minimum standards and define grades. But the Government realised that they were unintentionally preventing rural people from getting involved in tourism. For example, the lowest category of accommodation facility required 5 bedrooms with modern plumbing, setting standards well above the minimum needed for health and safety. So there was no category suitable for bed and breakfast 'home stays'. Similarly, there was one training and qualification procedure to become a tourism guide, with training in English, in Windhoek, in all aspects of guiding such as driving and first aid. This would be inappropriate to rural residents wanting to act as local guides, interpreting their own local knowledge for tourists. The Namibian Government is now developing tourism accommodation grades that include community campsites and homestays and regulations for different types of guides.

Governments, private sector and communities: What are the right roles? How to work in partnership?

Governments are important but it is the private sector that is most likely to invest in tourism development. So how can the power of the private sector be used to support community tourism?

Private companies can't be expected to share profits and power with rural communities simply because it's a kind thing to do. But governments can create the conditions under which it is *in their interests* to work with communities by giving communities market power and giving the private sector more security of investment and incentives for partnership. For example:

- by asking private sector bidders to develop proposals for community partnership, and making this a *key criteria* in allocating tourism rights. This small change to the planning process can force every new investment to address community tourism issues.
- by devolving tenure to communities, to give them market power in forming agreements;
- by giving communities an equity share in government-private agreements (often inside parks, see example from Ndumo on page 2);

Governments can also help local residents to *become* the private sector (see section on local enterprise above)..

Government's overall approach

Policies vary from place to place and over time. It is often the *overall approach* that is most important in helping community tourism to flourish. Some tips:

- Create supportive attitudes in government.
- Let communities develop tourism over time.
- Create opportunities and remove constraints, rather than plan community tourism for them.
- Recognise that local people will have multiple livelihood objectives, not just maximising cash income. Concerns about how land or natural resources are used, or access to training, can be equally important to livelihoods.
- Enhance their power in the tourism market.
- Ensure tourism sector regulations encourage rather than exclude the informal sector.
- Welcome NGO facilitation – it's usually needed!

There are two extremes to be avoided: one is to ignore community tourism or pretend it will happen with no support from Government. The other is for government to try to do everything and do it now, without allowing time for local people to develop their ideas and skills

CONTACTS

Maxwell – please add Govt. community tourism people from Workshop list.
And NRMP contacts in each country plus

- IUCN, Regional Office for Southern Africa. 6 Lanark Road, Belgravia, P.O. Box 745, Harare, Zimbabwe, Tel: (263-4) 728266/7 706261 705714, Fax: (263-4) 720738, E-mail: ndc@iucnrosa.org.zw (Nils Christoffersen, Regional Programme Coordinator).
- Africa Resources Trust SA, PO Box A860, Avondale, Harare, Zimbabwe. Tel (263-4-735497. Fax 731719. Email: info@art.org.zw

Resources

Several papers by Development Bank of Southern Africa, including: '*Tourism Development and the Empowerment of Local Communities*', by Geoff de Beer and Sean Elliffe, Development Policy Unit, University of Cape Town, August 1997. And '*Allocation Community Benefits: Institutional Options in Support of the Empotourism Models*' by Sean Elliffe, Peter Rutsch and Geoff de Beer, South African Spatial Development Initiatives Programme, 1997. Full set in *Development Southern Africa*, Special Issue Vol 15, No 5, Summer 1998. DBSA : PO Box 1234, Midrand, HalfwayHouse, South Africa, 1685. Tel: +27 11 313 3585.

Research Discussion Papers of the Namibian Directorate of Environmental Affairs including: No 4: *Community Tourism, Why, What and How*. No. 10: *Tourism, Communities and Conservation: the potential impact of tourism on local incomes and conservation*. Also available from the DEA (or from ART): '*Tourism, Communities and National Policy: Experience in Namibia*' by Caroline Ashley, in *Development Policy Review*, December 1998. Blackwells and Overseas Development Institute, UK Address: DEA, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, P Bag 13306, Windhoek, Namibia. Tel 264 61 240915. Fax 240339.

Reality or Rhetoric? Ecotourism and Rural Reconstruction in South Africa by Eddie Koch, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10. Switzerland, Discussion Paper No.54.

Ecotourism A Comparative Analysis of Findings from Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa, by Dr Richard Hasler, Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, P O Box MP 167, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe, April 1996.

This series of leaflets on Community Tourism in Southern Africa is produced by Africa Resources Trust (ART), for the Natural Resource Management Programme (NRMP) of the Southern Africa Development Community, funded by the United States Agency for International Development. Text by Caroline Ashley, layout by
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