

Full Length Research Paper

Contribution of tourist hotels in socio-economic development of local communities in Monduli District, Northern Tanzania

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A study to assess the contribution of tourist hotels in socio-economic development was carried out in Mto wa Mbu Ward in Monduli District. Survey data were collected using household questionnaire survey, focus group discussion, semi-structured interviews, and by physical visits. The study revealed that tourist hotels and/or lodges realized TZS 665, 496,000 (US \$ 443,664) per annum and offered employment to 143 people, out of which 19% were females. In addition, hotels and/or lodges investors helped village governments in implementing different socio-economic development projects such as schools, dispensaries, and provision of clean water. Despite these livelihood achievements, only 9.3% of the local communities had the opinion that these investments were of beneficial to them. The study concludes that these investments have the potential of improving local communities' livelihood. To achieve this, the study recommends active local participation in the tourism development process by involving government and other tourist stakeholders such as tour companies and travel agencies.

Key words: Conservation, governance, development, livelihood, Monduli, tourism.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a growing body of literature that addresses tourism as a viable economic option for local community development. However, there is little evidence on the literature that depicts specific the role of tourist hotels to local communities' development which is one of the core elements for developing a viable tourism industry in a destination (Muganda et al., 2010). While the literature recognizes that the inclusion of the local community in tourism development is considerable, there

have been some debates about their role. According to Godfrey and Clarke (2000) communities form a basic element in modern tourism as they are the focal point for the supply of accommodation, catering, information, transport facilities and services. In the second half of the twentieth century the service sector like hotels, lodges, and rest houses emerged in the world as a major source of employment whilst the industry dwindled (Cole, 2006). This drove to the world evolution of service companies

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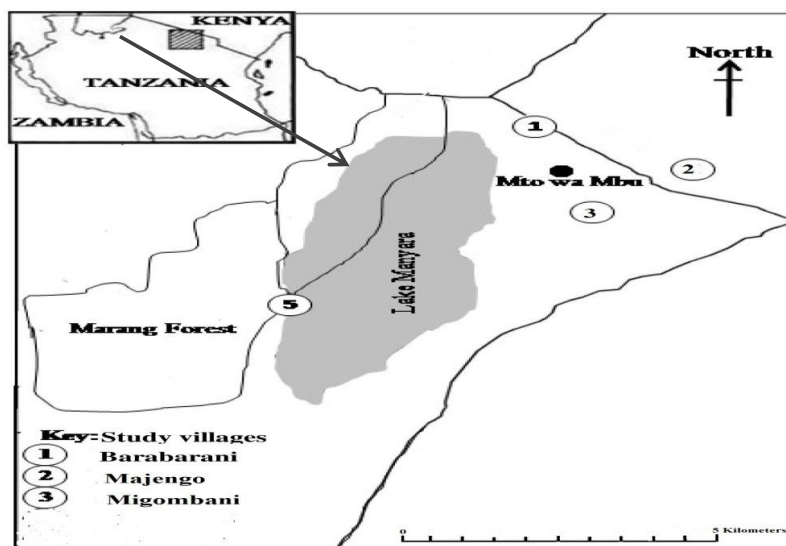


Figure 1. The study area. Source: Lugomela et al., (2006).

and sectors, including railways, shipping, airlines and banking (Blake et al., 2008). For the hotel industry, published research illustrates development, ranging from 43 A.D to the early 21st century (Kisembo, 2008). This is particularly the case in developed countries, where hotel industries have become an important economic sector with a great number of indicators showing the signs of economic growth as predicted by the International Monetary Fund. This growth will be distributed unevenly in developing countries (6.4 and 2.2 %) in advanced nations by 2010 (Ateljevic et al., 2008). Hotels and restaurant are one of the sources of economic growth.

In Tanzania tourism industry has been facing mushrooming modern hotels/lodges in tourist attractions circuits; to cope with this tremendous development some communities have managed to organize themselves and use tourism as a tool for addressing poverty issues (Makame and Boon, 2008). Although there is mushrooming of hotels, resorts, lodges and rest houses in rural Tanzania, it is not known how the same help mitigate income poverty in the surrounding communities. Using case study of Mto wa Mbu Ward near Manyara National Park in Northern Tanzania, the current study attempted to understand how local communities benefits from the presence of such tourists facilities.

Mto wa Mbu Ward which is located adjacent to Lake Manyara National Park is one of the tourist attraction centres in Monduli district with a large number of tourist hotels and/or lodges. However, the investments contribution to the development of the area remains unknown. This article attempts to assess the contribution of the tourists' hotels in socio-economic development of the area.

The study area

Mto wa Mbu ward is in Monduli District in Arusha region, Tanzania (Figure 1). Villages in the ward include Migombani Majengo and Barabarani. The ward, Mto wa Mbu - *the River of Mosquitoes or mosquito creek* in English, is a small most popular town found in the famous northern tourism circuit of Tanzania. The area is situated under the Great East African Rift Valley escarpment (Tanzania Tourist Board, 2000). It is the host town at an entry-point and close to the entrance gate to the Lake Manyara National Park (Norton, 1991). Arguably, its position within a short distance to the entrance to the Lake Manyara National Park make Mto wa Mbu is easily connected to wildlife safari tourism activities (Van der Duim et al. 2006). It is also conveniently located on the way to the two world renowned tourism attractions: the Ngorongoro Crater and the great Serengeti National Park, which together make Mto wa Mbu an ideal rest place for most safari travellers.

Its geographical coordinates are 3° 21' 0" South, 35° 51' 0" East, (Rohde and Hilhorst, 2001). The area also is situated under the Great East African Rift Valley escarpment. The climate of the area is semi-arid with two distinct rain seasons; short rains in October to December and long rain during March to May (Rohde and Hilhorst, 2001). The mean annual rainfall is less than 700 mm. The soils vary from alkaline to non-saline-alkaline in reaction. The soil textures of the area are clay, clay-loam, loam, loamy/sand-loam and sandy-loam/sandy-clay-loam. Soils vary from fertile highly erodible volcanic material to a variety of moderate to low fertility sedimentary and basement soil (Cohen et al., 1993). The

main economic activities include irrigation agriculture (rice/banana), tourism and petty enterprises.

The decision to undertake this study in Mto wa Mbu ward, Monduli District was largely based on a combination of factors. The area's location supports tourism activities and it is found within the tourism nodes of the well-established and famous northern tourism circuit (Muganda et al., 2010). Also the history of the area and the number of ethnic groups found that in the area support tourism, like cultural tourism program and various small-scale formal and informal local tourism groups. Also, it has a number of tourism establishments such as tourist hotels, lodges, and campsites; while the economy of the area accommodates community living under one dollar per day (ibid). Background information about the area and the evidences that there are already tourism activities going on are clear enough to make this study useful in the area (Figure 1).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Different methods and tools were used in data collection i.e. household questionnaire survey, Focus Group Discussion, interviews and physical visits. The details are as follows:

Questionnaires surveys

The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open ended questions. The aspects covered in the questionnaire included: demographic information, social-economic information, benefit flow, impact of tourist hotels/Lodges and suggestion for improvements. Before administering the questionnaires, they were pre-tested and revisions were made for questions which were ambiguous. The survey technique was carried through the established questionnaires and interview guides which were applied to a total of 75 household respondents who were randomly selected through the stratified sampling technique. This means a total 25 households were randomly sampled from each village. Spenceley (2008), Harrison (2008) and Carbone (2005) argue that questionnaire-based household survey is a method of data collection which typically uses random sampling. Therefore random sampling was used as it fitted the nature of the study.

Village registry was used to randomly select the households visited where the head of the household and their spouses were asked questions. Heads of households were chosen since they were major decision makers and have influence in the daily livelihood of the household.

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussion comprising 10-14 people was used to collect in depth information from youths, elders and women. Issues which were discussed included benefits realised from hotel investments, barriers to access benefits and suggestions to increase benefits.

Interviews with tourism stakeholders

Interviews with various tourism stakeholders such as tourism

entrepreneurs, village government leaders, ward executive officers; hotel staff and local communities were done. These stakeholders were though important due to their extensive local knowledge, experience, expertise, and their involvement with the tourism sector in the study area.

Physical visits

The authors visited some tourism related projects in the study area with the intention of physically seeing, among other things, current status of development projects in study area. The visits also enabled the researchers to physically see various socio-economic activities initiated by local communities in the area, but also provided better understanding of what happens on the ground in relation to tourists' hotels investment benefits flow - a realistic situation, rather than just relying on reported information.

Secondary data review

Publications relevant to the study were accessed from libraries, search engines, government offices.

Data analysis

The edited and coded data obtained through questionnaire were subjected to analysis using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Responses were summarized into a number of different categories for entry into SPSS, the categories was identified after looking through the range of responses received from the respondent, and then each response categories were assigned numbers. Before entering the information from the questionnaires into SPSS it was necessary to prepare a code book. Data from focus group discussions and interviews were analyzed thematically. Repeated themes were categorized basing on their commonalities and recorded together. Also other categories of themes were recorded as they emerge. This method enabled the researchers to be consistent and to make thorough analysis under each topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent's social characteristics

The socio-economic characteristics of the study area are presented in Table 1. At Migombani village 80% of the respondents were males and 20% were females while in Barabarani village, 52% were males and 48% were females. In Majengo village 84% were males and 16%, females.

Overall in the three villages combined, the majority of the respondents were males (72% n=75) while females were 28%. The higher proportional of male relative to their female counterparts could have happened by chance although of existing women cultural stereotype. UNTO (2012) revealed that in communities where culturally and environmentally appropriate forms of tourism are occurring, and where women are involved in running or servicing tourism ventures, this often leads both to greater respect for women and a reconsideration of gender role

Table 1. Household social characteristic.

Village	N	Sex%		Age%				Economic Activities					
		Male	Female	18-35	36-45	46-55	>55	LV	BS	EM	AG	CP	ST
Migombani	25	80	20	48	32	8	12	16	8	4	64	4	4
Barabarani	25	52	48	48	20	8	24	12	30	12	24	6	16
Majengo	25	84	16	40	44	8	8	28	16	2	48	2	4
Average	25	72	28	45	32	8	15	19	18	6	45	4	8

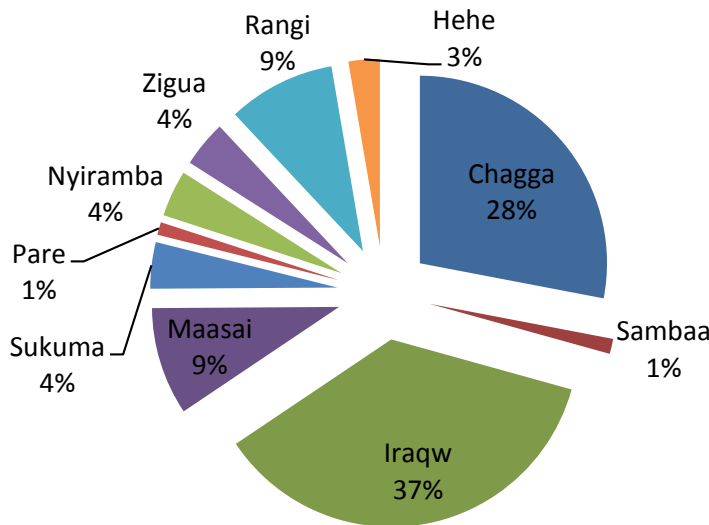


Figure 2. Ethnic groups in the study area.

stereotypes. Scheyvens (2000) argue that ensuring women have some control over income derived from ecotourism is particularly difficult in societies where men control household finances. In some cases, women’s groups use tourism as a source of revenue for community projects like in Nepal, where Langtang women perform cultural dances for tourists and are using the funds raised to restore their local monastery. Ghodsee (2003) argues that assisting economic sectors like tourism employing large percentages of women at comparatively high wages will help improve the relative economic well-being of women and their families. In other cases, however, in terms of formal employment, local women are often overlooked when lodges and other tourist sites are developed.

In many contexts women miss out on formal employment opportunities in tourism because social norms continue to restrict the type of economic activities in which women may engage in. For respondents’ age, most members (45%) were in the age bracket of 18-35 years followed by the age bracket of 36-45 (32%). Respondents’ social economic activities during data

collection were also identified. About 45% were involved in agriculture while 19% in livestock keeping and 18% in business ventures.

There has been an observation that Mto wa Mbu is one of the most popular small towns in the northern tourism circuit. It is one of the small towns in the country where you can find a representative from different tribe found in Tanzania as revealed by village officer during an interview.

The study aimed at identifying the extent to which tourism has been responsible for immigration of people from different part of the country to Mto wa Mbu.

As for ethnic groups, overall, the majority (37%) were Iraqw (Figure 2), followed by Chagga (28%). Other minor groups include, Rangji, Maasai Nyiramba, Sukuma, Zigua, Hehe, Samba and Pare. Mariki and Shechambo, (2003) argue that the area is the most linguistically diverse and complex in Africa. It is the only place in the African continent where the four major African language families -Bantu, Khoisan, Cushitic and Nilotic -live together. The area has a multi-ethnic community composed of 120 tribes out of about 126 ethnic

Table 2. Hotel incomes and employment status in the study area.

Hotel Name – Barabarani Village	Seasons. Average No: Tourist per day		Price/night	Average Income per Month	No of Workers		Individual Average Salary per month.
	Low	High	USD	USD	Foreign	Local	USD
Twiga Tent and Lodge	2	7	76.81	2304.83	4	16	102.98
Njake Lodge	4	13	104.74	3142.34	6	20	129.05
Serena Hotel	7	17	235.56	7332.12	10	31	170.15
Sub-Total	13	37	425.96	12,778.83	20	67	402.18
Majengo Village							
Eumoto Lodge	3	10	69.83	2094.89	2	12	110.49
Kiboko Camp and Lodge	1	4	55.86	1675.91	1	7	93.25
Sub-Total	4	14	125.69	3,770.80	3	19	203.74
Migombani Village							
Fig Camp and Lodge	3	10	83.80	2,513.87	2	8	121.54
Migunga Camp and Lodge	2	7	76.81	2,304.38	-	9	90.60
Nsia Lodge	1	6	104.74	3,142.34	3	12	92.81
Sub-Total	6	23	265.35	7,960.58	5	29	304.95
Grand Total	23	74	817.01	24,510.22	28	115	910.88
Average	3	9	102.13	3,063.78	4	14	113.86
Grand Total	23	74	817.01	24,510.22	28	115	9,10.88
Average	3	9	102.13	30,63.78	4	14	113.86

Source: Survey data (2011). Exchange Rate: 1.000 TZS = 0.00044 USD.

communities in Tanzania (Aref and Ma'rof, 2009).

Socio-economic contribution of tourist hotels and lodges in the area

Several tourist hotels and/or lodges with varying rates exist in the area (Table 2). Income realized by hotels varied from one village to another. The variation of income varied due to factors such as the quality (standard) of the hotel, accessibility and location. Overall, Barabarani hotels had 12,778.83\$/month which was 8.2% more than that realized by Majengo and Migombani hotels. The estimated total flow of funds into local households budget from tourist hotels in the area is 13,093.9\$/month. Generally at village level Barabarani had the highest share of benefits generated followed by Migombani village. This was expected mainly because two villages are the most active in terms of having a high number of business ventures and large coverage compared to Majengo village. Field data further reveals that these hotels have 143 employees of which 80% are locals' people.

This means that the presence of these hotels have a significant contribution in local communities livelihood. According to Aref and Ma'rof, (2009) argue that the contribution of livelihood intern of employment and

income realized by the hotels, this income is assumed that some of is used to purchase food staffs within the study area something which is healthy.

UNCTAD (2007) argues that tourist hotel and lodges specialized in the provision of a place to stay (accommodation) as their major service to tourists; sell food and drinks to their guests some of these products are bought directly from locals, example carvings for decorations, banana, vegetables, local wine hence contributing in building local community income for their development.

According to Muganda et al. (2010), the theories of tourism and poverty alleviation are central outcomes if the following pillars are integrated in tourism businesses. Indeed, the literatures pinpoints that tourism has a significant contribution towards poverty alleviation among local communities, especially when sustainable tourism practices arising from the principles of sustainable development and responsible tourism are taken into account. One approach to capture such contribution is through examining the extent to which local people participate in the sharing of tourism benefits.

This can be assessed by looking at three critical ways through which tourism operators (tourism businesses) can embrace the local communities. These are: local employment creation- providing job opportunities specifically for local people (Chok and Macbeth, 2007;

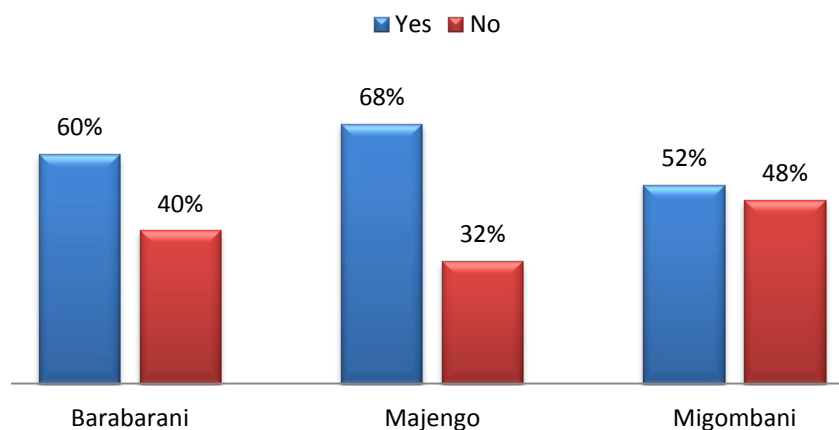


Figure 3. Household benefits satisfaction. Source: Field data (2011).

Scheyvens, 2007; Zhao and Ritchie, 2007); capacity building for local people- empowering local people to access tourism benefits through the provision of work experience opportunities, training, advice, loans or aid to enable local people to work for tourism or invest in tourism as local entrepreneurs (Tosun, 2000; Zhao and Ritchie, 2007); and sharing the tourism profits with the local community- using part of the business income to support community initiatives, purchase locally, incorporate opportunities for tourists to support local businesses, events or organizations, sponsor local charities or community based organizations, sponsor local events or sporting teams (Ashley et al, 2001; Ashley and Roe, 2003; Ashley and Haysom, 2005; Meyer, 2007). An interesting question remains whether tourism businesses in Tanzania have integrated these, and if so, to what extent these have contributed towards poverty alleviation.

Perceived benefits from hotels and lodges

Household and hotel staff respondents were asked if they were benefiting from tourist accommodation facilities available in the area. The answers were limited to Yes or No. About 60% from Barabarani village agreed that tourist hotels contributed directly and indirectly in improving their socio-economic development efforts. In Majengo 68% had similar views while in Migombani the proportion was relatively low (52%). Overall, 60% had the opinion that they were benefiting from tourist hotels and/or lodges (Figure 3).

As for hotel staff, the majority of the respondents (61%; N=75) had the opinion that they are benefiting and remaining could not agree (Figure 4). For those who could not agree, the reasons were low wages, poor working environment, wildlife threats and lack of job

security. On the side of hotel management, the Lake Manyara Serena Lodge assistant Manager had this to say:

“Communities surrounding the area have many expectations from our hotels and lodges but we can’t manage to provide them with all their requirements, we have set priorities on clean water and education services”.

When asked to identify the type of benefits realized, the main ones were employment, market for local products e.g. horticultural crops and artisanal products, foreign exchange and improvement of social services. Respondents were asked to mention the benefits realized as result of these hotels/lodges in the area. Several benefits were observed (Table 3). Despite the benefits, there are a number of barriers that limit the ability of local communities to capture created opportunities such as lack of income-generating projects/activities, entrepreneurial training, and employment opportunities for senior positions.

Challenges in the hotel and/or lodges sector

A number of challenges were identified during FGDs involving youths, elders and women groups. The challenges were lack of local communities’ empowerment in accessing capital assets and quality education and inadequate linkage between the hotel sector and other sectors such agriculture so as to enable farmers to easily sell their farm products (Table 4). Others include under recording of revenues realized by hoteliers, inappropriate and/or contradictory policies, access to tourist’s destinations and poor hoteliers-local communities’ relationship.

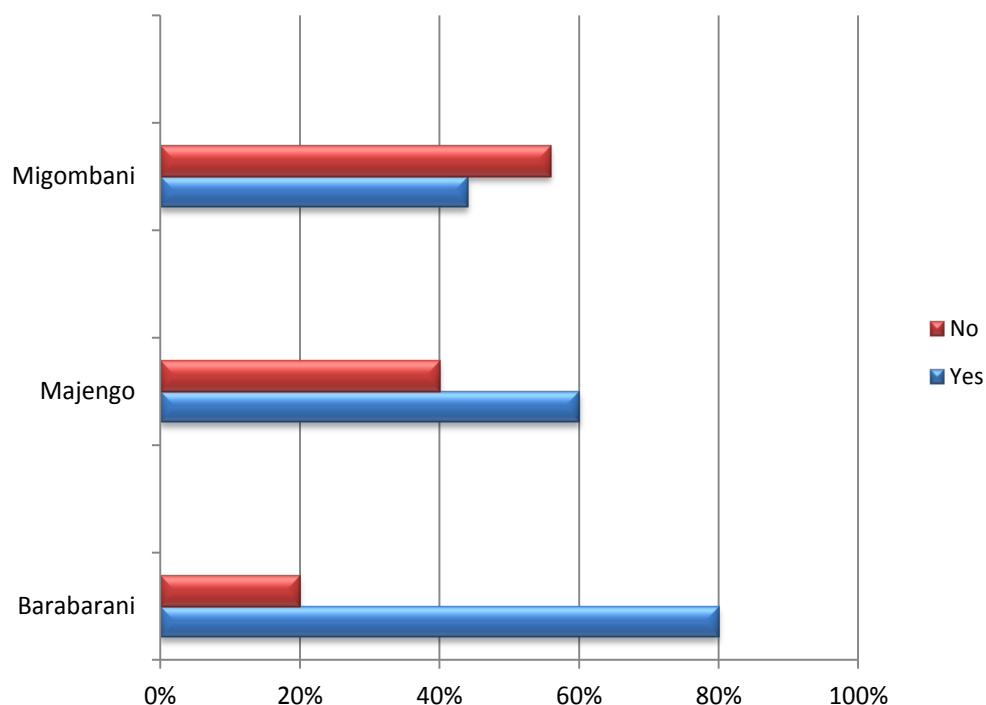


Figure 4. Hotel staff satisfaction level Source: Field data (2011).

Table 3. Household benefits from tourist hotels and lodge.

Benefits	Barabarani	Migombani	Majengo
	(N = 25)	(N = 25)	(N = 25)
	%	%	%
Receiving foreign exchange	24	16	20
Market for our local Products	20	20	28
Orphans get support direct from tourist when they make culture tourism	0	16	16
Employment opportunities	40	28	32
Improvement of social services	12	12	4
Improve relations	4	8	0
Total	100	100	100

Source: Field data (2011).

Potsma (2006) identified a wide range of challenges faced by the investors and other stakeholders in tourism industry. He categorized these obstacles into operational, cultural and structural limitations. Those categorized as operational limitations included the centralization of public administration of tourism development, lack of co-ordination between involved parties and lack of information made available to the local people and insufficient data and poor dissemination of information. Under these conditions, low public involvement in the tourism development process is obvious as people are not well-informed.

Suggestion for achieving a win-win situation

During focus group discussion respondents suggested three main mechanisms that could contribute in improving both local community and investors benefits. The first mechanism is to ensure that there is active local participation in the tourism development process. The second is to make the destination competitive so that it is able to attract sufficient number of tourists. This should be done in cooperation with government and other tourist stakeholders like, tour companies and travel agencies. This reflects the argument that tourists are not drawn to

Table 4. Focus groups perception on challenges.

Groups			
Village	Youth	Women	Elders
Barabarani	Empowerment and involvement Access to tourists Leakage of revenues	Empowerment and low involvement of communities	Access to tourists Appropriate policy
Migombani	Inappropriate and contradictory policies	Empowerment and low involvement of communities	Inappropriate and contradictory policies
Majengo	Access to tourist destinations Empowerment and low involvement of communities	Leakage of revenue Partnerships	Access to tourist destinations

the area simply to stay with local communities but because of the attraction base available which would provide the types of experiences that satisfy their desires (Gartner, 1996). Lastly, is to ensure that destination is sustainable to promise viable tourism business.

Zhao and Ritchie (2007) argue that there are determinants which may lead to socio-economic development to local community. The first determinant is the need to create economic opportunities which local communities must have access to and can take advantage of to change their life. The second is empowerment of local communities. This means strengthening the community's ability to act for themselves and to have voice in the local decision-making process. It also aims to enhance their capacity to influence their interests and engage, pursue and benefit from any economic opportunity. In particular, empowerment involves getting rid of the barriers that work against the local communities and building their capacity to engage effectively in markets. They further argue that, since the poor have limited financial capacity and therefore limited capacity to tackle various risks such as ill health, economic shocks and natural disasters, creating opportunities and empowerment is not enough. In this case, the third component - security - is fundamental to make the two determinants, opportunity and empowerment, accomplish the desired objective of poverty alleviation. In simple terms, a social security system is needed to enable empowered local communities to alleviate poverty through tourism while protecting them against such risks.

By Muganda (2011), to build win-win partnerships with the broader community, tourism operators often use part of their profits to support community development initiatives such as building classrooms, dispensaries, water projects etc in an attempt to improve social services and ensure mutual benefits to visitors who use such services (e.g water) on their visits and the local community. The idea of using part of the business investors income to support community initiatives is well

reflected in the literature on tourism benefit-sharing as one of the approaches of sharing tourism benefits with the local community (Ashley et al., 2001; Ashley and Roe, 2003; Ashley and Haysom, 2005; Meyer, 2007). However, in the study area, the operators' level of commitment to fulfilling such approaches is determined by a number of factors such as the nature of the business, ownership and the reasons or objectives for starting such businesses.

Understanding these issues is crucial for proper planning and managing of tourism development while ensuring mutual benefits to business operators, visitors and the local community.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study has demonstrated that tourist hotels and lodges have the potential to assist in socio-economic developments of adjacent areas and beyond through initiating socio-economic development projects, employment, boost the country's foreign reserve and buying of farmers produce for use in hotels. Despite these positive achievements, there are a number of barriers that limit the ability of local communities or other stakeholders to capture tourism created opportunities. Some of the barriers include lack of local communities' empowerment in accessing capital assets and quality education and inadequate linkage between the hotel sector and other sectors such agriculture so as to enable farmers to easily sell their farm products.

Recommendations

1. Financial support: Tourist accommodation ventures have to establish an identified system on providing soft-

loans toward locals in order to support more community initiated projects. This will increase the extent to which the local communities gain benefits out of these ventures surroundings their area.

2. More emphasis should also be on direct benefits: Tourist accommodation ventures need to re look on how to improve also the benefits at individual level especially most in need community rather than concentrating on indirect benefit. This will increase contribution in alleviating income poverty among local communities.

3. Integration of stakeholders: it is important to integrate all the key stakeholders who can contribute to insure that local communities are benefited on available tourist accommodations ventures (hotels/lodges). The stakeholder may include tour operators, national parks authority, government, NGOs, and local communities. This could increase conservation benefits access by local communities.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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