

Tourism issues affecting the poor for use in tourism codes

Many codes of conduct include a number of social and economic concerns. Recent research on pro poor tourism did not seek to produce more guidelines or codes. But it did reveal a large number of issues that were prioritised by the poor, both positive and negative, direct and indirect. Some issues, such as access to infrastructure, health care and market information, were prioritised by the poor but are not always so apparent to outsiders. It is useful to summarise these, in order to inform the socio-economic components of existing or new codes.

The list is based on research on 'pro poor tourism strategies' and particularly on interviews with poor people involved in six case study sites (a 'site' varied from one or two lodges, to a network of 50 enterprises).

1. Site-specific issues

Earnings and economic participation

- **Jobs:** the number and quality. Commitments from operators to fill jobs locally except where skills cannot be found or trained. Commitments to train local staff to rise from menial work to management. Training programmes.
- **Small enterprise development for supplying inputs:** very little use of local food/fuel supplies. Potential for local incomes from supply inputs to increase several fold. Need credit, training, market access, information.
- **Small enterprise in tourism services and add-ons:** particularly in 'cultural' visits, displays, crafts, guiding, and camp-sites. Need business advice, marketing, credit, training.
- **Community collective income:** from lease fees, rentals, equity dividends paid by the tourism operation etc. Though funds are not always well used and are small per person, they are valued as one of the few sources of *community* income – to spend on shared investments (infrastructure, drought-coping etc.)
- **Access to credit:** may be from a tourism support programme, from staff using their wages in a credit programme, or from community collective income.

Other livelihood impacts

Which can be less tangible but just as important – and usually of significance to more people than the earnings:

- **Infrastructure:** access to infrastructure developed for tourists; shared use (e.g. of roads, water), or extension of facilities during construction. This was a priority issue in most cases although it had not been explicitly part of the pro-poor strategy of operators or govt.
- **Health care:** shared access to health facilities or programmes developed due to tourism, use of transport (e.g. lodge vehicle) and comms (e.g. radio) for medical emergencies.
- **Donations for community assets** – schools, water. Donated by tourists and/or collected by operators.
- **Social organisation and institutional change:** can be very negative (internal conflict) or positive (social mobilisation, stronger organisation)
- **Natural resources:** can be positive (providing incentives for sustainable use, involving community management where they have tenure) or negative (over-use of resources, displacement from land).

- **Information:** increased access to information and communication was a valued benefit of participating in tourism development.
- **Access to markets:** tourism development was seen as creating new opportunities, particularly in remote areas. E.g. opportunities to sell to tourists or lodges. Market information was valuable.
- **Exposure to risk:** the problem of livelihoods dependent on tourism, and vulnerability of tourism to downswings
- **Exposure to exploitation:** the more desperately the jobs are needed, the more the wages or conditions can be driven down. Wage shares are creamed off by those that provided the access.
- **Culture:** in some cases cultural tourism is welcomed for valuing local culture. In others, problems of commercialisation, plus intrusion of drugs etc.
- **Optimism and pride:** where local people had a say in decisions and planning, optimism and pride were valued.
- **Physical security:** while not highlighted in the PPT case studies this has emerged strongly in other work in Namibia and South Africa. Actions to increase security for tourists can be of great benefit to locals (South Africa). Insecurity can arise from increased numbers of wild animals, and tourist behaviour (e.g. to elephants) that makes them aggressive.

Note: *'livelihoods'* was seen as a useful term which encapsulates the many issues that affect how the poor put their living together and sustain their families, which goes beyond what is often thought of as 'economic' (earnings) or 'social' (health, culture).

2. At the level of a destination

Most of the above issues also apply. In particular, issues of infrastructure development, expansion of market opportunities, security issues, health care, training, natural resource use ... often need destination-wide treatment (to complement enterprise level treatment).

In addition, other destination-level issues:

- **Participation in planning processes.** Consultation – and more – in drawing up tourism plans and procedures.
- **Use of planning gain** to increase local benefits: e.g. awarding concessions against social as well as commercial criteria.
- **Support for partnerships:** to enable operators and communities to enter partnerships together – a difficult process that usually needs facilitation.
- **Land tenure:** often the essential pre-requisite for local and poor people to have a stake.

NB: the research also highlighted that PPT cannot exist in isolation. It is dependent on a thriving destination and commercially successful enterprises. Thus while the above are the issues that mattered to the poor, they need to be integrated to wider tourism concerns.

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Based on Ashley, Goodwin and Roe, 2001: Pro-poor tourism strategies: making tourism work for the poor.