



The Potential of Tourism as a Poverty Reduction Strategy in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between tourism and poverty reduction has been emphasized by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and, it is a topic for the global economic agenda. Yet, for over three decades, tourism has been assumed to have the capacity to ensure effective development in developing countries. But, until now evidences on positive contribution of tourism on aspect such as poverty reduction in developing countries, particularly at local level, are patchy. Tourism has therefore been under criticism in recent years, as it seems to be failing to demonstrate its potential as a tool for poverty reduction and overall development. Due to the lack of research into how exactly the benefits received by the poor from tourism (if any) contribute to improving their livelihoods, this study saw the need to deepen the understanding on the potential of tourism as a poverty reduction strategy in Rwanda. Hopefully, systematic research in this regard will contribute to put this sector firmly on future anti-poverty agendas. Essentially, the paper investigates the role of tourism in improving the lives of communities around Volcanoes National Park in Kinigi sector. A framework used in the study area is the Rogerson's Tourism–Poverty Model. The reason for using this model is to make a comparative analysis of Rogerson's tourism-poverty elements vis-a-vis tourism in KINIGI Sector around VOLCANOES national Park. These elements include inter alia: education and training, empowerment, enterprise development, corporate social investment, creation of employment opportunities and others. Among others, it was found out that tourism is capable of creating a substantial number of jobs for local people.

Keywords: UNWTO, poverty, VOLCANOES, jobs, tourism

The relationship between tourism and poverty reduction has been emphasized by the United Nations World Tourism organization (UNWTO) (2005) and, it is a topic for the global economic agenda. Yet,

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for over three decades, tourism has been assumed to have the capacity to ensure effective development in developing countries (Sharpley 2009: 337 – 338). But, until now evidences on positive contribution of tourism on aspect such as poverty reduction in developing countries, particularly at local level, are patchy (Mitchell and Ashley 2010: 31). Tourism has therefore been under criticism in recent years, as it seems to be failing to demonstrate its potential as a tool for poverty reduction and overall development. Some tourism detractors have questioned how a private sector activity like tourism could be regarded as a tool that can improve the livelihoods of the poor in developing countries. The detractors believe that the promotion of tourism, particularly the pro-poor based, as a tool for poverty reduction, is apparent effort by tourism proponents particularly the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to calm the criticism that tourism, in achieving its obligations to deliver profits to tourism businesses and exclusive holidays to tourists, it has been unsuccessful in improving the livelihoods of the poor people who host them (Higgins-Desbiolles 2008: 350).

Conversely, Mitchell and Ashley (2010) disagree with all literature studies arguing that tourism is not beneficial to the poor. In their work, they assert that there are significant flows of benefit from tourism to poor people in all tourism destinations, although the share received by the poor from tourism varies considerably. However, Mitchell and Ashley also concede that, there is virtually lack of data to explain what difference the cash benefits from tourism make on poverty levels around tourist destinations; or how they compare with non-financial and dynamic effects (Mitchell and Ashley 2010: 30 - 31).

Given this lack of research into how exactly the benefits received by the poor from tourism (if any) contribute to improving their livelihoods, this study saw the need to deepen the understanding on the role of tourism in poverty reduction. In contrast to the study of Mitchell and Ashley (2010) whose work focused on aggregating and reviewing secondary data, this study took a different path, understanding the role of tourism in poverty reduction. The case of communities adjacent to Virunga National Park in Kinigi Sector, Rwanda attempted to amalgamate secondary data and primary data, but with more emphasis on reporting participants' views on how they considered tourism as agent for improving their livelihoods. The approach adapted in this study was an effort to ascertain pragmatic research findings, from the side (i.e. the rural poor) whose opinions are occasionally heard in tourism literature studies; despite their views being at the heart of conclusions on whether tourism does or can improve their livelihoods or not. The range of opinions differs with some scholars suggesting that tourism could create socio-economic opportunities for local people, through employment and income opportunities and, it is recognized that tourism development and its contribution to poverty reduction are rooted in debates over the most theoretical frameworks and paradigms for development policies since 1950s(Sharpley, 2002). These frameworks emphasize macro-economic growth and trickle down processes as means of creating benefits for the poor.

However, the current tourism-poverty debate has seen further revisions of the conventional development approaches, with a shift towards alternative approaches such as sustainable development (Sharpley, 2000), Pro-poor tourism (PPT, 2004) and sustainable Tourism to Eliminate poverty (UNWTO, 2006). For the purpose of this study, the community households living adjacent to Volcanoes National Park

(one of the tourists' destinations in Rwanda) were chosen to serve the purpose of case study for this investigation.

This research seeks to explore the potential of tourism as a poverty reduction strategy in Rwanda and hopefully, systematic research in this regard will contribute to put this sector firmly on future anti-poverty agendas.

This research tries to illustrate the potential of a specific type or model of tourism that can potentially be used as a poverty-alleviation tool in Rwanda.

Over the recent years there has been an increased desire among tourism researchers to determine the significance of the link between tourism and poverty reduction in developing countries. Despite the efforts to unearth this intriguing scenario, yet, until now there has been a limited success, since evidences on positive contribution of tourism on poverty in developing countries, particularly at local level, are quite patchy (Mitchell and Ashley 2010: 31). Part of this gap is due to the fact that, no rigorous work has been done to evaluate the full range of impacts of tourism development on poverty across different groups in tourism destinations; also there is a lack of system to document and monitor the changes in poor people's livelihoods due to tourism (Ashley and Goodwin 2007). Therefore, one of the challenges facing tourism researchers today includes demonstrating how much tourism is benefiting the local economy and poor people in tourism destinations particularly in developing countries. This data is very useful to policy makers and resource poor for setting up meaningful choices about an alternative future, especially developing tourism initiatives that are more sustainable and pro-poor based (Mitchell and Ashley 2010: 108). This study is therefore an attempt to advance the tourism knowledge based on interaction between tourism and poverty reduction. It is in this context that this research into tourism's role in poverty reduction in communities around Volcanoes National Park in KINIGI Sector was conducted.

The aim of this study was to contribute to the knowledge base on the role of tourism in poverty reduction, by evaluating how tourism is perceived as agent for improving the livelihoods of poor in communities adjacent to Volcanoes National Park (VNP) in Rwanda.

From the main objective above the following specific objectives were envisaged:

- Enhance the comprehension of how the socio-economic opportunities arising from tourism can be utilized to combat poverty;
- Make recommendations for tourism policy and strategy to enhance its use in rural poverty reduction.

Given the context of tourism's role in poverty reduction in Rwanda with the particular case of community household around Volcanoes National Park in KINIGI sector, a number of research questions arise:

- How is poverty understood and experienced by the communities adjacent to National Volcanoes Park?
- How is tourism understood as an agent for reducing poverty in these communities?

This research contributed to advance thinking on the relationship between tourism development and poverty reduction, and satisfy the underlying questions of the use of tourism as a policy and strategy to tackle poverty in Rwanda. This study is important firstly because it attempted to address poverty reduction - a challenge facing many developing countries, and Rwanda in particular (Luvanga and Shitundu 2003: 1).

Lastly, this study is important because it aimed to advance tourism knowledge based on interaction between tourism and poverty reduction. This data is vital for sustainability of tourism industry, since current poverty reduction initiatives in many developing countries are blamed for concentrating on expansion of tourism impacts rather than measuring the impacts of tourism on poverty reduction in local communities. As Mitchell and Ashley (2010) observe, the expansion of tourism in developing countries is largely supported by unreliable data indicating that tourism is having an impact on poverty reduction in poor communities (Mitchell and Ashley, 2010: 5).

The main objective of this study was to investigate on the role of tourism in sense of improving the lives of communities around Volcanoes National Park in Kinigi sector. Thus the study gives response to same questions related to how tourism can enhance the comprehension of how the socio-economic opportunities arising from tourism can be utilized to combat poverty; identify the participation level of local people and the poor in the tourism industry; and investigate on local people's perception of the significance of tourism in improving their livelihood. The limitation to this study is that its findings cannot be generalized to all population surrounding the all National Parks. This study being conducted mainly on communities around Volcanoes National Park in Kinigi Sector, therefore the findings of this study will not intend to be generalized.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews the literature on the concept of tourism and poverty reduction.

Conceptual and operational definitions

In this study a number of terms and concepts in the field of tourism poverty and rural poverty, the poor in Rwandan context and pro-poor tourism will be frequently used and referred to. It is therefore important that these words be defined and clarified at the onset.

Poverty

Poverty, in a broad sense means a lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society – not having enough to feed and clothe the family, not having a clinic or school to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job from which to earn one's living and not having access to credit. In essence, poverty implies insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities from the main resources, processes and opportunities of mainstream society (IMF & IDA, 1999 quoted in Goodwin, 2006: 4).

According to Cattarinich (2001: 2), “poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon that consists of a ‘lack of’ certain things upon which human health, well-being, and autonomous social functioning depend, including the ability to meet “basic needs” (i.e. food, shelter and clothing).

This lack may consist of insufficient income, consumable goods or assets, entitlements, rights or security” (Cattarinich, 2001: 2). For the purpose of this study, poverty is defined as the inability to attain a minimum level of living standard measured in terms of basic consumption needs or in terms of income required to meet or satisfy these basic human needs.

Rural poverty

According to Wikipedia (2012), rural poverty refers to poverty found in rural areas, including factors of rural society, rural economy, and rural political systems that give rise to the poverty found there. Rural poverty is often discussed in conjunction with spatial inequality, which in this context refers to the inequality between urban and rural areas. Both rural poverty and spatial inequality are global phenomena, but like poverty in general, there are higher rates of rural poverty in developing countries than in developed countries. Eradicating rural poverty through effective policies and economic growth remains a challenge for the international community.

The poor

In the Rwandan context, to be poor means “the inability to attain a minimal standard of living, measured in terms of basic human needs or income that is required to satisfy them. It includes alienation from the community, to be unable to sufficiently feed your family, to live in overcrowded conditions, use basic forms of energy, lack adequately paid and secure jobs and have fragmented families” (EICV 2004).

Pro – Poor tourism

The Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) concept was introduced by the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) in 1999 following research on tourism and poverty alleviation. Many developing countries have since adopted this approach as a way to use tourism development to reduce poverty. According to PPT researchers, PPT is “tourism that generates net benefits to the poor, and seeks to ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction” (Bennett *et al.* 1999, Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001).

The role of tourism in reducing poverty

Until recently, poverty alleviation and relevant issues have only attracted a small cohort of researchers within the tourism sector, and the existing literature is basically case-study driven and oriented to practical aspects (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007). In addition, the complexity of poverty-related issues may partly account for the sparse attention that researchers of tourism have paid to poverty alleviation research (Zhao & Ritchie, *ibid*).

As a tool for poverty reduction, the challenge for tourism is how and where to intervene in order to provide better opportunities, empowerment and security to poor people at the local level, in addition to stimulating economic growth at national and regional levels. Pro-poor tourism can be introduced simultaneously in rural and urban areas and thus open various opportunities, and increase access not only for poor in their own communities. It has the potential to help reduce rural out-migration to urban areas, increase employment opportunities for the rural poor due to tourism and give people additional income to provide for their families in rural areas.

Tourism is thus an appropriate mechanism for poverty reduction. It contributes to economic growth and can also have social, environmental and cultural benefits. Tourism provides employment opportunities by diversifying and increasing income, which reduces the vulnerability of poor people. As a result of increased national income (foreign exchange earnings and taxation), additional funds can be diverted to poverty reduction programs.

Tourism directly responds to poverty reduction objectives, because the UNWTO has argued that it:

- Unlocks opportunities for pro-poor economic growth by providing formal and informal employment;
- Creates profit and collective income from locally-owned enterprises;
- Facilitates social development by increasing access tourism infrastructures, providing local people with the opportunity to access tourism infrastructure;
- Helps increase participation of the local communities in decision-making as tourism products are often assets owned by the poor;
- Reduces vulnerability by helping to diversify income opportunities;
- Promotes environmental protection as the natural and human environment is the life lines of tourism development.

The pro-poor tourism initiatives

Evolving debates in the tourism literature of recent times have also shifted towards pro-poor tourism initiatives. The pro-poor tourism scholarship has radically reshaped policy debates (including among African scholars) around development in particular by asking the key question of how tourism can be aligned to become more pro-poor (Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership, 2004 quoted in Rogerson, 2006). These emerging pro-poor debates around tourism were showcased at the World Summit on sustainable development held in Johannesburg during 2002 (Rogerson, 2006). The pro-poor tourism agenda focuses on how tourism affects the livelihoods of the poor and how its positive effects can be enhanced through sets of interventions or strategies for pro-poor tourism (Goodwin & Roe, 2001; Ashley & Mitchel, 2005) in (Rogerson, 2006).

It is contended that to realize potential gains from tourism for local communities, “tourism development

needs to be reoriented according to the interests of local stakeholders, in particular rural poor people” (Forstner, 2004). As Ashley, Goodwin and Roe define it, pro-poor tourism is “tourism that generates net benefits to the poor” and seeks to “ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction” (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001). Pro-poor tourism according to these authors is not a specific product or sector of tourism but rather an overall approach that aims to “unlock opportunities – for economic gain, other livelihood benefits or engagement in decision-making by the poor (Ashley, Roe & Goodwin, 2001).

According to Dimoska (2008), a number of pro-poor tourism strategies aimed at unlocking opportunities and generating net benefits for the poor have been developed. These strategies include: employment of the poor in tourism enterprise/business, supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor or by enterprises employing the poor, investment in infrastructure stimulated by tourism benefitting the poor. It also encourage direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor, tax or levy on tourism income or profit with proceeds benefitting the poor and voluntary giving/support by tourists and tourism enterprises to the poor.

The potential of pro-poor tourism lies in four main areas (DFID, 1999; Ashley et al., 2001 cited in Spenceley, 2008). Tourism is highly dependent upon natural capital (e.g. wildlife and culture), which are assets that the poor may have access to – even in the absence of financial resources. Tourism can be more labour intensive than other industries such as manufacturing. Compared to other modern sectors, a high proportion of tourism-benefits (e.g. jobs and informal trade opportunities) go to women, which is crucially important especially in patriarchal societies. Tourism is a diverse industry which increases the scope for wide participation of different stakeholders and businesses including the involvement of the informal sector. The customers come to the product, which provides considerable opportunities for linkages (e.g. souvenir production and selling) for emerging entrepreneurs and small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) with a lucrative and well-endowed market of tourists.

According to the United Nations Tourism Report (2003), pro-poor tourism can be introduced both in rural and urban areas opening various opportunities and access not only for tourists but for local residents as well. The UN emphasized that since tourism operates in different geographical areas, it can be an important tool to affect poverty. Tourism can increase income generating opportunities for both the rural and urban poor through employment creation leading to additional incomes and the well-being of the affected families employed in tourism enterprises United Nations Tourism Report (2003).

According to the United Nations (2003) “pro-poor tourism is an appropriate mechanism for poverty reduction”. It does not only contribute to economic growth but can also have additional social, environmental and cultural benefits and costs. Tourism should be able to provide employment opportunities by diversifying and increasing the income of the poor which reduce their vulnerability. Through increased national income from foreign exchange earnings and taxation through tourism, additional funds can be diverted towards designing poverty-reduction strategy programs which can help improve the livelihood of poor in the rural and urban areas. Ashley and Roe (2002: 61) argue that “despite commercial constraints, much can be done to enhance the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction”. Sharpley in support of Ashley and Roe posits that “tourism has long been considered an

effective catalyst of rural socio-economic development and regeneration” (Sharpley, 2002). The two key concepts for understanding pro-poor tourism are development and distribution of tourism products which are extensively explained in the 2 subsections below.

Development of tourism products for alleviating poverty

Tourism is an amalgam of many different components, including transports, accommodation, food, attractions, activities and services. The challenge is to find ways to develop products that meets the needs of tourists while contributing to poverty alleviation for local residents at the same time. Products that are man-made as well as natural attractions, tours, packages, services for travelers such as shopping, entertainment, information provision and meetings and activity venues could be developed. Two perspectives can be used in tourism product development:

1. Involving poor people in the development and management of the product and
2. Developing products based on the assets of poor people, such as culture and way of life (WTO, 2005).

Local people could also be encouraged to become suppliers to the tourism industry by cultivating market gardens and orchards that provides fresh vegetables and fruits to established restaurants and places of accommodation. Depending on the local situation, home stays, guided walks, sampling of local foods and participation in local lifestyle activities (festivals, hunting, etc...) as well as the design and manufacture of handcraft can all be considered.

Empirical /Practical Examples on Impacts of Tourism on Poverty Reduction

This section presents some few examples on claims made about how tourism is contributing to poverty reduction in local communities in developing countries, and Africa particular. To commence with, Weru (2007) observes that in several African countries, governments have instituted mechanisms to directly allocate a percentage of entry fees to parks and reserves to neighboring communities. The allocated funds are invested in local projects, and not distributed in the form of cash to individuals. Taking Kenya as an example, Weru (2007) indicated that Kenya local governments allocate approximately 19 percent of tourism revenues to the local communities adjacent to protected areas. Similarly, Mtui (2007) indicates that in Tanzania the share of revenues collected from park fees, ranging from 7.5 percent to 25 percent are channeled back to the surrounding local communities in the form of development projects such as school and health buildings, bridges, water supply and training. In the Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority, about \$1.2 million is disbursed to the Pastoral Council whose role is to represent the local community. Nevertheless, Mitchell et al (2009) observed that, the shares of park revenue that are distributed to local communities are much smaller than often claimed by the public authorities (often only amounting to about 5 percent park fees) and there is anecdotal evidence of serious governance issues relating to the disbursement of funds through the Pastoral Council (Mitchell and Ashley 2010: 60 - 61).

To demonstrate the effect of tourism on the economy of a country, Shitundu and Luvanga (2003) studied the role of tourism in poverty alleviation in Tanzania by analyzing the direct and indirect livelihood impact from tourism on poverty alleviation. Their findings established the following effects of tourism:

It leads to the generation of employment for the local people. It was observed that there was substantial employment creation in hotels and restaurants, campsites, guesthouses, with 1,114 employees of which 1,056, (95%), being Tanzanians. Though these employment opportunities were mainly located in the lower ranks with limited educational/skills requirement and modest pay, it did, however, help to reduce poverty amongst the workers' households—

- It has helped to improve accessibility to basic needs such as food, water, clothes and shelter for local people, and improved infrastructure and social services;
- It has contributed significantly to the national economy through employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and public revenues.

Cultural tourism has emerged as an important tourist activity especially in Arusha, and Bagamoyo. This is because cultural activities do not require specialized skills and income from tourists accrues directly to the performers, thus immediately improving their livelihoods. However, despite the positive impact of tourism on the lives of the beneficiaries, there were some unquantifiable negative effects. These included environmental degradation, distortion of traditional culture and immoral behavior. The study nevertheless concluded that overall, tourism development in Tanzania has played an important role towards poverty reduction (Luvanga & Shitundu, 2003:47-48). This is an encouraging finding and other African countries should pay attention to it.

However, while empirical evidences to justify the claim that increased tourism could lead to significant benefits for the poor people may be available (Mbaiwa, 2004 and UNWTO, 2007), there are studies to indicate that demonstrating the benefits of tourism in addressing poverty is a challenge because there is little data that demonstrates the impact of tourism on poverty (WTO, 2002).

Cattarinich (2001) argues that research on tourism in developing countries has mostly focused on the positive economic, environmental and socio-cultural impact of the industry. His views are based on the fact that although the tourism industry has a potentially beneficial impact, in practice this impact has been frequently negated by negative consequences for the local populations. John Brohman, in support of Cattarinich argues that “tourism has contributed to the mal-development of many developing countries (Cattarinich, 2001). Supporting John Brohman’s argument, Goodwin (2006) argues that demonstrating the benefits of tourism in addressing poverty is a challenge because there is little data that demonstrates the impact of tourism on poverty “the industry has been managed for foreign exchange benefits rather than as a pro-poor development strategy” (WTO, 2002).

In line with these arguments, tourism development has traditionally been measured and reported in classical economic lexicon and jargon by referring to it in macro quantitative economic terms numbers of international visitor’s arrivals, contribution to employment and to the balance of payments in foreign exchange earnings. Tourism reports and the multiplier concepts i.e. how an increase in economic activity

starts a chain reaction that generates more activity than the original increase, have been used to identify the economic contribution of the industry at the national level (Jamieson *et al.* 2004). Generally, there is often an assumption that through a “trickledown” process, local communities (might) benefit from employment (directly, indirectly or by inducing such a benefit) and through tourists spending at the destination. However, there exists very little hard evidence to support this view (WTO, 2002).

In case of Rwanda tourism, Rwanda Development Board (RDB) has been supporting projects that benefit development and welfare of communities living around national parks by using revenue sharing mechanism. Through that mechanism, RDB supports projects that benefit development and welfare of communities living around the national parks and involve those communities in conservation activities, including being park rangers and guides of the park. The government shares tourism revenues with the people and sits with them to determine profitable projects for them such as schools, Community health centres, water distribution, road maintenance, accommodation for poor people and other development projects. They also work with cooperatives in development activities such as art crafts needed by tourists, which make people to view the park not as a problem, but a solution. Over Rwf2.6 billion has been invested in 480 projects in the entire country under the tourism revenue sharing scheme and contributing to the welfare of communities surrounding national parks. Of those projects, 121 are for communities surrounding the Volcanoes National Park and cost about Rwf1 billion (<http://www.newtimes.co.rw>)

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this paper is exactly as stated in Hakizimana (2021; submitted).

Study area and theoretical Framework used

A framework used in our study area is the Rogerson’s Tourism–Poverty Model. The reason for using this model is to make a comparative analysis of Rogerson’s tourism-poverty elements vis-a-vis tourism in KINIGI Sector around VOLCANOES national Park?. These elements include inter alia: education and training, empowerment, enterprise development, corporate social investment, creation of employment opportunities and others.

The sustainable Livelihood Framework adopted from the Rogerson Tourism– poverty model (above) modified after pro-poor tourism partnership (2004) is used in this study to determine whether Tourism in KINIGI sector is adhering to the livelihood outcomes viz. increased income for its workers, reduced vulnerability, increased well-being, sustainable use of natural resources, more food security for their workers especially from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is in addition to the outcomes of Rogerson’s Tourism – Poverty Model which include: education and training, enterprise development (SMMEs), empowerment, especially of previously disadvantaged individuals; creation of employment opportunities, corporate social investment, healthcare, infrastructure and services, source of livelihood and sustainable environmental management. Objectives one and two of this study focus on the key elements of the Rogerson Tourism–Poverty Framework. The elements of this framework will be operationalized as the major themes (indicators) cutting across the whole paper.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this section, the results of the study and interpretation are presented.

Local people’s perception of the significance of tourism for their livelihood

The respondents were therefore asked to indicate the extent to which rural communities could benefit directly or indirectly from tourism in their area. Their responses show that tourism investments should reduce poverty in their households through various tourism related activities. It was indicated by respondents that the relationship between tourism and employment of local people is symbiotic in that both sides stand to benefit considerably. This addresses poverty directly by enabling rural communities to develop their own skills through actively taking part in activities for VNP enrolment conservation as well as implement VNP development project. Fig. 1 shows that a large number of respondents stated that it is of importance for them to take part in implementation of VNP development projects.

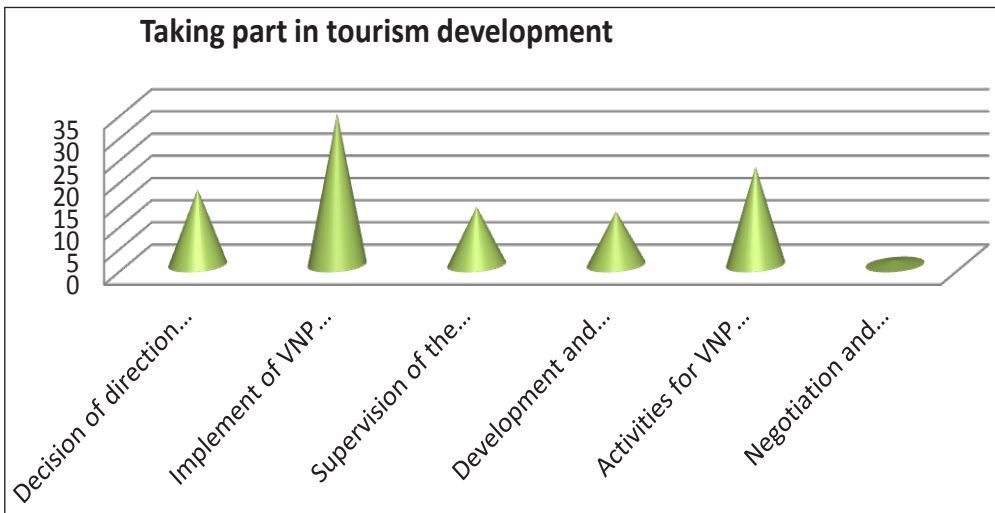


Fig. 1: Taking part in tourism development

Cash benefits

The study respondents were asked to give percentage of their annual income obtained from tourism related activities; the results showed that those with annually income was contributed on by tourism activities at least by a percentage of 10% were 21% of total respondents.

Conversely, when asked to rank how overall status of their poverty positively changed due to tourism, 66% of respondent responded that it positively changed a lot and 20% of them said it positively changed a little.

Table 1: Overall positive change in poverty situation

Ranking Positive change	Frequency	Percent
A lot	66	66,0
A little	20	20,0
Not at all	12	12,0
Don't know	2	2,0
Total	100	100,0

Further analysis involved t-test which was run at critical α level < 0.05 by using the SPSS computer programme to compare between respondent total income and the tourism economic activities; the data tested showed the calculated t-value = 3.1156 that was significant at p-value 0.0031 against the tabulated t-value = 1.74; and the results show that there was a highly statistical significance in total income gained and therefore, based on the respondents income from tourism related activities is an indication of the importance of tourism in the study area. These activities include regular wages from tourism jobs ; casual earning opportunities from selling agriculture goods and crafts as well as revenue sharing provided to the households around Volcanoes National Park.

The cash earned from tourism is often used for purchasing food, particularly in improving their diet. “From a food security perspective, the revenue sharing scheme that was put in place due to tourism activities in Kinigi Sector, enabled communities of Kinigi Sector to cover food expenses that were not covered when that scheme was not there”, said Executive Secretary Kinigi Sector. The view of Executive Secretary corroborated with findings of Joel (2010), who found that tourism’s activities enabled the communities adjacent to Serengeti National Park to improve their food security. In the same vein, around 23% of total respondent confirmed that their food diet was improved due to tourism activities in their region. However, there is still a lot to do to help the remaining big number (1%) of population who said that their food diet deteriorated because of tourism activities.

Employment point of view

The surveyed respondents were asked whether tourism contributed to increase employment opportunities in Kinigi Sector. It was found that it can be concluded that tourism is capable of creating a substantial number of jobs for local people. Data in Table 2 show that the majority of respondents (94%) confirmed that more profitable business were undertaken in Kinigi Sector due to tourism and 86% of total respondents agreed that there has been more job for local people thanks to tourism. Also 86% of total respondents agreed that there are more job opportunities for women, which is a good indicator for gender promotion with regard to role of tourism in reducing poverty. These findings corroborated the research findings of Economic policy research institute (2001) which indicated that there are so many other business opportunities in tourism industry, which can involve previously disadvantage people.

Table 2: Undertaking of more profitable business

More business were undertaken	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	80	80,0
Agree	14	14,0
Slightly agree	5	5,0
Strongly disagree	1	1,0
Total	100	100,0

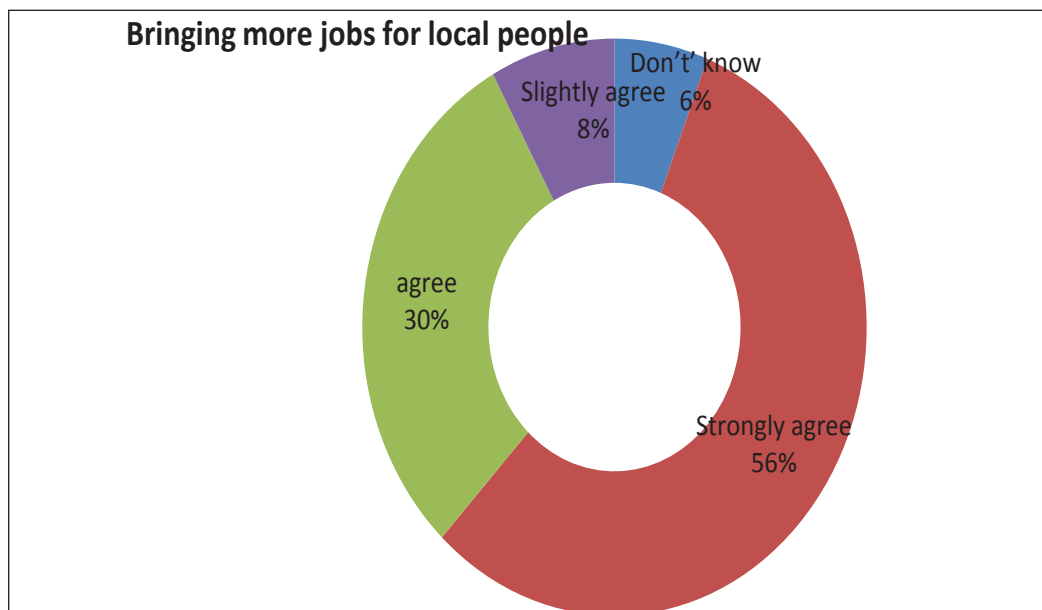


Fig. 2: Bringing more jobs for local people

This implies that tourism is perceived by members of community’s households around Volcanoes National Park as opportunities to undertake income generating enterprise in order to get out of trap of poverty. However, according to Kwizera Janvier, Community conservation warden at Volcanoes National Park, there is a need to remove any social or cultural barriers and strengthen the provision of education and training so that the communities in Kinigi Sector can highly respond to tourism business opportunities that are found there.

Looking at presented data, it can found that majority of respondents (66 respondents) said that their poverty situation positively changed. Additionally a big number of those with a positively changed poverty situation are for those who have been in Kinigi Sector for long a period; above ten years.

Table 3: Period of stay and positive change in poverty situation

How long have you been living here?	Overall, would you describe how your poverty situation and that of your household has positively changed because of tourism?				Total
	A lot	A little	Not at all	Don't know	
Under five years	21	6	8	1	36
From five to ten years	11	2	1	0	14
Above ten years	34	12	3	1	50
Total	66	20	12	2	100

Nevertheless, the Chi-square test that was conducted at significance level of 5% did show any relationship between having been in the area for a long time and perceiving a positive change on poverty situations among respondents.

CONCLUSION

This study has assessed the role of tourism on poverty reduction in communities adjacent to Volcanoes National Park in Kinigi Sector Northern province of Rwanda. The specific objectives of the study were to: Enhance the comprehension of how the socio-economic opportunities arising from tourism can be utilized to combat poverty; identify the participation level of local people and the poor in the tourism industry; and investigate on local people's perception of the significance of tourism in improving their livelihood. These objectives have been achieved.

Based on the study results, a number of lessons regarding the role of tourism on poverty reduction among community's households adjacent to Volcanoes National Park, in Kinigi Sector, are drawn. These lessons are important because of their policy implications on how poverty could be reduced in communities around tourism sites through tourism activities. In this Chapter, as conclusions of the study are presented, their related implications are also discussed.

The role of tourism activities on poverty reduction were found to be under: cash income; food security; cultural values as well as potentiality for business undertaking and employment promotion. It was concluded from these results as follows: First, considering development effect of tourism as jobs and cash is oversimplification. Local people have complex livelihood strategies based on multiple land-uses, and diversification of risks across several activities. These are affected by tourism in many different ways, positively and negatively, directly and indirectly. Secondly, different types of community tourism ventures have different types of livelihood effects. Therefore; it requires a considerable role for local people in decision making.

This can be done either by developing tourism rights to community level and helping communities with participatory planning or by ensuring that government planning processes are participatory and responsive to local needs and or by ensuring, through government incentives, that planning by private entrepreneurs is responsive to local needs. The negative effects: cultural pollution, immoral behaviour

and environmental problems which are a cost, and hence reducing positive effects or benefits from tourism, must be dealt with for sustainable development.

The potential role of tourism in the study area in rural communities was found to be under: employment; supply of goods and services by local communities; direct sales of goods and services to visitors; participating in tourism project development for community benefits and prospective income from revenue sharing scheme. It was concluded that there is a clear opportunity for communities around Volcanoes National Park to significantly change their livelihood thanks to tourism industry.

However, this study has not exhausted all aspects related to the role of tourism on poverty reduction in communities around to all tourism sites in Rwanda. This is because the role of tourism in those communities may vary geographically depending on business opportunities which are there, local administrator's commitment as well as background of people in those communities. Therefore, the study suggests the following areas for further research.

To undertake similar studies concerning the role on poverty reduction in communities around other selected tourism sites in Rwanda with National Parks. The aim will be to assess potential avenues for economic diversification of tourism investments. The results will help the local community development and economics practitioners to advise policy makers, decision makers and local administrators on how they can support local communities National parks to undertake and diversify their investments portfolios in order to reduce poverty.

To investigate the magnitude of leakages from tourism. The results will help the government to find out how this can be minimised in order that local participants could increase their earnings from tourism and subsequently reduce poverty.

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