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TITLE OF PAPER: Practical initiatives to responsible tourism in destinations: Community and nature based tourism in South Africa

ABSTRACT: Practical initiatives to realize RT in destinations: development of an online directory and market access training program for CBTEs in southern Africa, by UNWTO/RETOSA/SNV and interventions by the International Trade Centre of UNCTAD to stimulate local SMMEs in destinations to support the tourism industry (Senegal, Mozambique, Brazil). Generation of greater economic benefits for local people and enhancing the well-being of host communities. Commercial characteristics of CBT in southern African (12 countries), Local economic impacts of CBT in southern Africa (12 countries) and Impacts of wildlife tourism on rural livelihoods in southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe).

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Practical initiatives to responsible tourism in destinations : Development of an online directory and market access training program for Community-based tourism enterprises in Southern Africa

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Abstract

A review of southern African community-based tourism enterprises (CBTEs) was undertaken as an initiative from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Regional Tourism Organization for Southern Africa (RETOSA), and the Dutch development Agency SNV. The objective was to use the information collected to develop an online CBTE directory that would help the enterprises reach tourists and tour operators internationally, and thereby improve their market access.

This paper reviews development of the directory and market access training program. The process incorporated developing a working definition of CBTE and reviewing existing information on CBTEs operating in southern Africa. A cost effective method of evaluating enterprises was developed using in-country volunteers and local coordinating institutions, structured questionnaires and guidelines for assessment, and data entry by volunteers onto a dynamic online database. A quality assurance system ensured that 12% of enterprise assessments were audited, and by checking data that had been entered online. In all 218 CBTEs were evaluated in twelve southern African countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. At the initial

launch of the site 214 CBTEs of sufficient quality became accessible on the directory at www.community-tourism-africa.com in November 2006.

Pilot market access training materials for CBTEs were developed, tested, and delivered using three approaches: one-on-one training sessions with CBTE managers at their enterprise; training CBTEs in a workshop setting; and train-the-trainer processes with intermediaries.

The first phase of the program ended in November 2006 and an evaluation process of the work revealed that a second phase was required to reconfigure the public side (the website) of the database, re-engineer the database to include more consumer orientated items (i.e. including maps and photos), confirm that listings of the CBTEs were correct; and to develop capacity within RETOSA to maintain the data in the database.

The review also includes information on the type of tourism operated by CBTEs, their commercial viability (i.e. visitation, revenue, human resources) and their socio-economic impacts on local communities (i.e. employment, revenue generation, visitation, local procurement of goods and services).

This paper presents a replicable model for developing online directories for CBTEs, and enterprises that promote community-based, in order to enhance their commercial viability through improved promotion and increasing bookings.

Key words: community-based tourism, online directory, market access, local benefits of tourism, Southern Africa,

Introduction

Online Tourism

Tourism websites mainly come in two forms: transactable and non-transactable. Transactable sites allow a tourism product to be selected, an enquiry can be placed, payment can be made and a coupon can be produced. Within this classification there are mainly five types of sites: 1) online travel aggregators like expedia.com or hostelworld.com; 2) destination e-marketplaces like worldhotel-link.com (WHL); 3) online tour operators like responsibletravel.com; 4) individual hotel or corporate central reservations systems like marriot.com or hilton.com and 5) meta-search engines like kayak.com or sidestep.com. Non-transactable sites can come in variety of manners that focus on market niches, destinations, blogs and are produced by a huge variety of authors from national Tourism Boards to individual travellers.

The advantage of using a website to construct a CBTE database versus creating off-line brochures are numerous. For example, potential distribution is increased; one can connect with the traveller at a point in which they are making a travel decision; costs are low since there are no printing costs; and data can be updated regularly. However, putting a database online is not a panacea for marketing and promotion, without

proper marketing, utilization and management. Tourists expect websites to be modern, engaging and have current and correct data. The common misperception, particularly with SMMEs, is that “if you build they will come.” This not only applies to infrastructure, but also to websites.

To build a database and post it online is not enough, because the data is static and therefore out of date quickly. Without necessary coding skills, one would have to pay a website developer to update the website every time there is a change to any one of the 218 CBTEs. Therefore, by building the CBTE database on a Content Management System (CMS) many of these challenges are alleviated because any user with basic MSWord skills can update the database entries and the updates are automatically reflected on the public website.

Community-based tourism

International agencies increasingly promote tourism, and particularly community-based tourism as a means to reduce poverty in developing countries. Community-based initiatives have proliferated across Africa, Asia and the Neotropics (Walpole, 1997) and there have been many theoretical and practical studies examining them (Kiss, 1990; Zube and Busch, 1990; Brown and Wyckoff-Baird, 1992; Wells and Brandon, 1992; von Loebenstein *et al.*, 1993; Wells and Brandon, 1993; IIED, 1994). As an example, in Zimbabwe, landowners and rural district councils are granted the appropriate authority to utilise wildlife on their land (Murphree, 1996). The devolution of control has allowed community based resource use schemes such as the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources to develop. Revenue from tourism reaching the communities is distributed by them, in accordance with their wishes; either split between all the inhabitants equally, or invested in infrastructure such as schools, roads, and clinics (Baker, 1997).

Community involvement in tourism has been widely supported in the literature as essential for sustainability (Murphy, 1985; Wilkinson, 1989; de Kadt, 1990; Drake, 1991). It is emphasised from a moral point of view, an equity perspective, a developmental perspective, and from a business management view (de Kadt, 1990; Cater, 1996; Wilkinson, 1989; Brohman, 1996). Community ownership provides livelihood security, minimal leakage, efficient conflict resolution, increases in the local populations social carrying capacity, and improved conservation (Steele, 1995).

Costs associated with community tourism projects include that they are expensive, they generate high expectations which may not be feasible, new conflicts may arise as marginal groups become more empowered while elites gain greater benefits through networks (Zazueta, 1995). Donor support may be fickle, and may be removed by the donor at any time, as there are no contracts to state that a donor must remain until a project is sustainable. In addition, despite attempts to empower communities to exploit tourism markets, they are frequently unable to provide the standard of service the foreign tourists require, leaving large tourism operations without competition nor any incentives to distribute wealth (Yu et al, 1997).

Kiss (2004) notes that the level and distribution of economic benefits from CBTEs depends on many factors including the attractiveness of the tourism asset, the type of

tourism operation, the nature and degree of community involvement, and whether earnings become private income or are channeled into community projects or other benefit-spreading mechanisms (Wunder, 2000). She notes that projects that simply generate local employment opportunities are sometimes a good start. Joint ventures between community groups and private tourism operators, which are increasingly popular in southern Africa, might have the greatest potential for generating significant revenues for communities, and might also be more likely to succeed than wholly community-run enterprises, particularly in the early stages. However, communities will often need outside assistance to organize themselves, obtain and assert their legal rights and understand their obligations in such partnerships (Wunder, 2000; Wells, 1997; Ashley and Garland, 1994).

Aim and objectives of the study

This paper reviews the process undertaken to develop an online CBTE directory for accommodation providers in southern Africa, and the development and piloting of market access training program. The aim of the database was to try to centralize a catalog of all CBTEs in southern Africa, and to use the data to create an online directory in an effort to increase the enterprises' reach to tourists and tour operators internationally, and thereby improve their market access. The work was undertaken in 2006 as an initiative from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Regional Tourism Organization for Southern Africa (RETOSA), and the Dutch development Agency SNV.

The initiative generated extensive information on the livelihood impacts of the CBTEs, and on the commercial characteristics of the enterprises.)

Methods

Community-based tourism enterprise evaluations

Scope

The geographical scope of the study was the fourteen Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, which are members of RETOSA. The SADC countries are Angola Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Defining community-based tourism enterprises

A working definition of CBTEs that would be used to guide the directory development was developed at the start of the project. In the absence of an internationally recognised and standard definition of CBTE, a definition used by RETOSA during the compilation of a previously published paper-based CBTE directory (RETOSA, 2002). Following review and comment by the project team, the working definition for the project was established as having three main criteria:

- a. located within a community (e.g. on communal land, or with community benefits such as lease fees); or
- b. owned by one or more community members (i.e. for the benefit of one or more community members); or
- c. managed by community members (i.e. community members could influence the decision making process of the enterprise).

In addition to these criteria, it was acknowledged by the project that, in general, communities involved in CBT are:

- Relatively remote from national centres of learning, economy and industry;
- Constrained by poor infrastructure, in terms of roads, electricity and water;
- Economically poor, with little or no capital for investment in the tourism industry;
- Inexperienced and under-skilled at developing and managing tourism enterprises, working with tourists,
- Rich in distinctive cultures and histories firmly rooted in the local area; and
- Largely dependent on local natural resources (such as trees, medicinal plants and wildlife).

Information on community-based accommodation enterprises and their associated activities (e.g. guided tours, traditional performances) was collected. The working definition ensured a broad scope for CBTEs that could be proposed for evaluation: CBTEs could have government assistance, they could be partnerships with the private sector or non-profit organisations, they could be township B&Bs run by individual indigenous entrepreneurs, or they could be operations run by collective community groups and managed through elected Trusts. However, the program did not collect information on other 'stand alone' tourism products and services, such as independent guides, tour operators, restaurants, entertainment or transport.

Identifying enterprises

The literature sources and institutional sources that were used included guide books, existing directories (from RETOSA and the Open Africa Initiative) and consultancy reports. Many individuals and institutions facilitated the initiative by providing additional information on CBTEs operating in the region.

CBTE evaluation process

The evaluation process of the CBTEs was as follows:

- a. Agreements were made with in-country institutions to recruit, coordinate, and pay volunteers to undertake CBTE evaluations, in return for an administration fee payable to the institution.

- b. Volunteers recruited by the institutions collected information on the CBTEs in their country using questionnaires and guidelines for assessment (see below). Evaluations consisted of a site visit to the enterprise, interview with the manager, completion of a questionnaire, and entry of that information onto an on-line database. In return, volunteers were paid an honorarium for each assessment in addition to their transportation and associated expenses.
- c. 12% of the CBTEs were re-assessed by another volunteer to ensure the reliability of data, and the validity of the evaluation process.

The institutions that coordinated assessments were the Centre for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe, GeoSavvy Development, NACOBTA, Ulendo, University of Botswana, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Sky Trails Ltd, Swaziland Tourism Authority, Tanzania Tourism Board, TechnoServe, and WWF Quirimbas.

Development of assessment materials

Since a central training program for all volunteers was not feasible given the logistics of volunteers in different countries and budget for the research, assessment materials were developed to assist the volunteers in the assessment process. These consisted of:

- **Introductory text**, explaining what data collection was for; how communities would benefit; what community-based tourism is; how institutions could get involved; how volunteers could get involved; how volunteers could use the website; downloads (i.e. the assessment and guidance materials); and links to various websites and sources of information.
- **Guidelines to plan assessments**, including useful information that volunteers could use to plan safe and interesting assessments. Suggestions were included regarding how they should contact the enterprise (i.e. to see if they were interested in participating, to ensure that they were still operating, and to arrange a site visit), how to plan their travel, how to conduct the site visit, and how to enter the information on an online database when they returned from the site visit.
- **The questionnaire** that was to be completed by the volunteers at each enterprise, to collect information on:
 - The type of accommodation, facilities, tours and prices
 - Levels of quality and security
 - How the enterprise benefited members of the local community
 - Skills and training needs
 - How they advertised and marketed their product
 - How their customers made bookings

The questionnaire went through several iterations and reviews by the project team. Two pilot tests at CBTEs were conducted by volunteers in South Africa, before a final version was produced. The content and evaluation criteria addressed incorporated aspects of other tourism questionnaires previously developed by Worldhotel-link.com (WHL, 2005), a USAID study of CBTEs undertaken in Zambia (Dixey, 2005), the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA, undated a, undated b), and the UNWTO's Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) guidelines (WTO, 2004).

The criteria included indicators that would elicit information regarding enterprise viability – including information on their visitation, their booking systems, limitations to their business, and training that had previously been received, and that was still required.

Face-to-face training was provided to volunteers during workshops in both Tanzania and South Africa, at the request of the two coordinating institutions based in these countries. Telephonic training was provided to the other coordinating institutions.

On site evaluations

The CBTE site visits entailed a volunteer visiting the enterprise, and through discussions with the manager and observation, completing the structured questionnaire. During each on-site evaluation, the volunteer would leave a briefing document with the enterprise. This provided the CBTE with information about the data collection process, the online-directory that was to be developed and how they could benefit from the new market access channel.

In all 251 assessments were undertaken, of which 28 were audits (i.e. repeat assessments to check evaluation quality). During 3 assessments, the enterprises were found to be no longer operating, one assessment was incomplete, and one was found not to be a CBTE under the project criteria. Therefore in total 218 individual CBTEs were assessed.

All of the CBTE entries compiled by volunteers on the on-line database were checked by the project team, and comments and corrections were relayed to the coordinating institutions for any amendments. A comparison of the initial and re-assessment data of the 25 audited enterprises revealed that on the quality issues, of 375 data entries, only 9 (0.8%) revealed completely different responses (e.g. one volunteer rating quality 'very good', and the auditor rating it as 'poor'). This indicates that the system of using volunteers who are provided with guidance information was highly reliable.

Database development

The new database was to be designed on the principles of a content management system (CMS). A CMS allows for external non-technical users to be able to login to a

management screen and to be able to make updates and input data directly into the database using a form driven template. The database is then mirrored on a public side with a graphic user interface that is the website. There were a number of advantages to using this methodology in this project, which saved resources and time. These included

- The data could be input directly into the database by the volunteers or coordinating institutions.
- The data could be retrieved and edited for any entry remotely by the manager.
- The data did not have to be entered twice for display in a website.
- Detailed reports could be generated automatically from the data.
- Modifications could be made to the database and data.

The first page of the database site included introductory information for institutions and assessors that would guide them through the process. Here they could download the assessment documents, including the questionnaire, instructions for completing the questionnaire with example responses, guidelines for planning assessments, and a briefing document to give CBTEs.

Each collaborating in-country institution had its own username and password. Volunteers could generate new CBTE entries, and edit those they had already begun during different sessions, from the country they were located in. Once they were inside the database, the entry layout was designed to be exactly the same as the questionnaire (e.g. same numbers, same questions, same layout). This facility was designed so that volunteers would find it easy to enter their findings. They would be able to view and edit all entries completed under their username and password. When entries and corrections were finalised, their password was amended by the administrators to ensure no further changes could be made.

Administrators (i.e. the project team) could enter the database and view and amend CBTE entries entered for accuracy and clarity.

A reporting function was developed which produced an extensive Excel file of all CBTE entries, and the results of each questionnaire. This function was primarily designed to allow quick comparison of audited enterprises and the originals (i.e. to verify that the process of using volunteers to collect data was reliable); and to provide a back-up of all the data entered. This report now acts as the repository of collected and collated information.

The database allows administrators to edit entries, add additional products, delete products, and also to make products visible or invisible on the public site. This last point was critical to ensure that only products of sufficient quality for tourists to visit were accessible by tourists and operators.

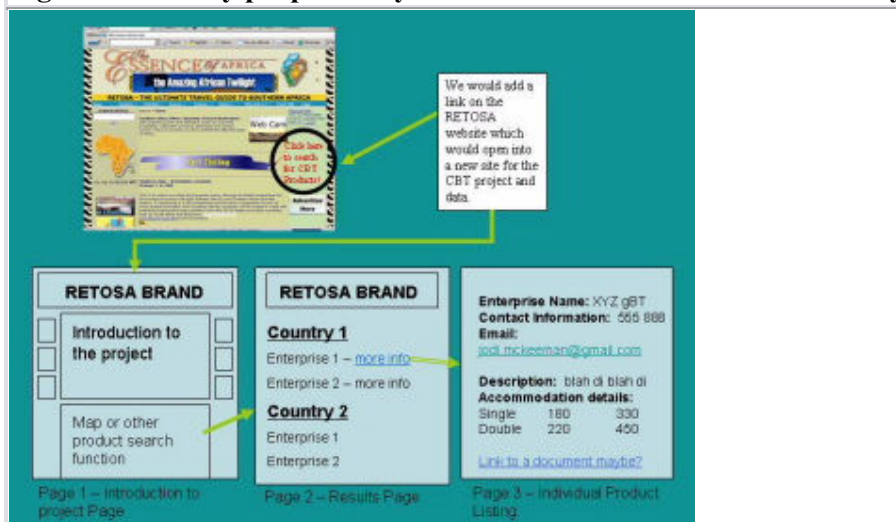
In relation to the schematic shown in [Figure 1](#) the website includes:

- **Page 1:** An introductory directory page describing how to search entries, including a map of RETOSA countries. From this page people could search

by clicking on a map or by using key search criteria (e.g. name of enterprise, country, type of enterprise)

- **Page 2:** A list of all entries meeting the search criteria would be presented. Each entry could then be clicked on to obtain more detailed information.
- **Page 3:** Details of the enterprise selected, including location, CBTE criteria (e.g. who owned the enterprise and the land it is located on; how the enterprise benefited local people; how they are involved in decision making); facilities, activities and services; types of room/camping facilities; prices and booking information.
- **Link:** A link from RETOSA's existing website (www.retosa.org) to the directory

Figure 1: Initially proposed layout for the searchable CBTE directory



Development of market access training materials

For the development of the market access training manual a review of existing material was undertaken from sources including Tourism Enterprise Programme (TEP), Fair Trade in Tourism SA (FTTSA), WHL, Mekong Private Sector Development Facility (MPDF) – part of the International Finance Corporation, George Washington University (GWU) and the UNWTO. The literature review did not reveal any existing market access training material that was suitable. Therefore a new manual was developed using ideas from the resources identified, and supplemented with information from the consultant's experience that was considered relevant to the CBTEs. The manual was split into six components:

- What is market access?

- Identifying and packaging your product through Unique Selling Points (USPs)
- Valuing and pricing your product
- Understanding commissions
- Managing advanced bookings
- Knowing local channels to market

The manual was disseminated within a pilot training process, which explored three mechanisms of delivery:

1. One-on-one trainings directly with enterprises
2. CBTEs trained in a workshop setting
3. Train the trainer

The three forms of training session were used not only to test and revise the manual, but also to identify the most efficient and cost-effective form of delivery. Prior to the team's initial understanding, it was revealed that SNV were not able to facilitate the roll-out of the market access training in the region.

Results

Enterprises on the directory site

The majority of enterprises evaluated were located in South Africa (50.3%), followed by Namibia (10.8%), Zimbabwe (8.7%), Zambia (6.7%), Botswana (5.6%), Madagascar and Malawi (4.1% each), Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland (3.1% each), and Mauritius (0.5%). No CBTEs were identified in Angola or in the DRC (Spenceley, forthcoming a).

Nearly half the enterprises were Bed and Breakfast (47.7%) or campsites where people bring their own tents (44.5%). Traditional chalets (24.8%) were also frequently identified, in addition to game lodges, guest houses and homestays (17.4% each), self catering flats (11.5%), backpackers (10.6%), campsites with electricity (6.0%) or with fixed tents (5.5%). Only a small proportion of the enterprises were hotels (4.1%) or campsites without electricity (2.3%). Some of the CBTEs had more than one type of accommodation (e.g. backpackers and camping). Most of the enterprises were small, with 1 to 5 rooms or units (49.5%) (Spenceley, forthcoming a).

The vast majority of CBTEs in southern Africa were found to be small enterprises with between 1 and 10 rooms. The total capacity identified was for 6531 people in either rooms, dormitories or camping areas, across twelve countries. Prices were generally budget, ranging between an average of US\$10.23 to \$39.08 per room. Occupancies were relatively low, and on average the enterprises had 885 visitors per year, with a range of 0 visitors to 32,000 per year. The average length of stay was 3.9 nights.

Market access training manual

The market access training manual was developed, and is now freely available on the internet (www.anna.spenceley.co.uk/Papers.htm). Outputs of delivering the three pilot training programs were:

1. **One-on-one training directly with enterprises:** Delivered to 3 CBTEs at different locations in Tanzania
2. **CBTEs trained in a workshop setting:** Delivered in a Cape Town township, attended by 10 representatives of 8 township bed & breakfasts.
3. **Train the trainer:** Delivered to the NACOBTA, an NGO which assists 22 of the enterprises listed on the UNWTO/RETOSA directory.

Testing the three training approaches revealed that the third, train-the-trainer was the most cost effective and efficient.

Online database

The data from the CBTEs that were of sufficient quality to accept tourists were placed on a searchable website (www.community-tourism-africa.com) that could be used by tourists and tour operators to identify and select enterprises to visit, and also to contact them to make bookings.

Since the initial launch each of the CBTEs were contacted either by email or post to review their listing and send in updates to the information, as required. At the end of the database management development phase, 142 of the 201 live enterprises in the database reported having an email address or an associated email address (from the donor or a member association group). Of those 142 with email addresses, 43 said they have email address set up specifically for bookings. Only 35 of the 142 enterprises ever replied to the request for updated information via email and another 5 replied via post.

1. The public side (website) of the database was not consumer orientated or user-friendly
 - a. Add pictures, add maps, re-brand the look and feel
2. The CBTEs that were listed on the site needed an opportunity to

A key strategy for generating revenue from the database has been to partner with private sector tourism businesses and share proceeds from bookings made with CBTEs. Consequently the database management company sought affiliate marketing relationships in the private sector in which the RETOSA/UNWTO site would collect 1-2% of the revenue from bookings made with these online affiliates. This income will be, by its very nature, very small until the CBTE site can achieve a solid online presence. Thus far, there are 12 CBTEs with these affiliate linkages.

Market Readiness of the CBTEs

UNWTO/SNV and RETOSA have both requested information about the number of increased bookings among the CBTEs as an indicator of the success of the project. The current CBTE site is an online directory, but is not yet e-commerce enabled nor a booking site. Anyone can be represented in an online directory intermediary but for a private sector business or RETOSA to take responsibility for traveller bookings means the products need to be at a certain market ready standard. To meet minimum standards for Market Readiness, the enterprises must:

- Have Consistent and Reliable Means of Communication
- Have Advanced Booking Methods
- Be Safe, Clean and Healthy
- Be Legal and Licensed
- Offer Minimum/Basic Tourist Facilities
- Be a Quality Product

While nobody has visited these properties since the database was initiated, it is not possible to verify that the properties are still quality products, safe, clean and healthy, or formally registered businesses. Also, since the database managers are not making bookings for these enterprises, there is no way to know if they are effectively using an advanced booking method. Any booking intermediary or tour operator would need to know this information before they can sell a CBTE.

One hundred of the 201 'live' enterprises in the database report being represented on a website. Just 24 of those 100 websites are directly related to the enterprise and have a 'contact us' icon or booking form. Twelve (12) of those 24 websites are e-commerce enabled, allowing for online booking and are all linked to the WHL.travel portals in their respective destination.

Tour operators and booking intermediaries need flexible and multiple ways to reach the enterprises they sell. It is clear from the statistics above that a majority of the CBTEs are not currently very responsive or engaged with the market. In addition, as the interviewers were contacting CBTEs for the final interview, over half of the 30 enterprises called were either under new ownership, unavailable or unreachable. Even if an intermediary does not make bookings for an enterprise in over a year, they should still be able to reach the enterprise at any time. Obviously, many CBTEs which are not familiar with working with intermediaries, therefore, do not meet this minimum requirement. Those that are tied to an online booking intermediary like WHL, working with intermediaries or have their own website are usually market ready because a private sector business (the intermediary) has already verified that the minimum requirements are in place.

While not all of the CBTEs are market ready and therefore not ready to work with booking intermediaries, this project was designed to try and provide some online promotion of CBTEs and therefore an additional marketing channel for the

CBTEs. Those CBTEs that are engaged and interested in market access can use the listing to their advantage by promoting their unique URL (i.e. http://www.community-tourism-africa.com/Ngiresi_Cultural_Tourism_Programme_86) in their brochures, over the phone, etc.

Impacts of CBTEs in destinations

Many of the businesses were owned by individual entrepreneurs (52.3%) or by community trusts (29.4%). Landowners were often private individuals, companies, or leased (45.4%) or were communal (31.7%) or community organisation land (10.6%). Half of the CBTEs reported that the host community made decisions about how the enterprise was run, through meetings, elected community trusts/committees, or using a village representative or council.

The 218 enterprises employed a total of 2644 people between them, including 1587 men (60.0%), 1048 women (39.6%) and 9 youths under the age of 17 (0.3%). Of these, 2504 employees were from the local community (94.7%). The average number of employees per enterprise was 12.1 people, ranging between 0 and 300 staff. These figures have very good implications for local wages and also for the role of women in tourism.

Enterprises reported a wide range of benefits that the local community gained from the enterprise. Most frequently they reported access to finance (45.0%), employment (38.5%) and community infrastructure development (30.3%), followed by training (28.9%) and product purchasing (28.0%). However, some indicated that the community received no benefits (7.8%).

Cumulatively, the amount of money that was given to local projects by the CBTE over the previous year was the equivalent of US\$4,461,331. On average, the 186 of the enterprises (85.3%) had provided \$35,129 to local projects, with a median of \$450. 30 of the enterprises (14.8%) could not determine what amount of money was provided, while 2 provided in-kind benefits.

Local procurement of products and services was practiced by many of the enterprises. When asked what they purchased, many reported buying craft (39.5%), fruit and vegetables (28.9%) and using services such as cultural dancing, singing and entertainment (42.7%), guiding (28.9%) and catering (13.8%). On average, 196 of the enterprises (89.9% of the sample) spent the equivalent of US\$6,616 per year on products and services from the local community. Cumulatively, they spent \$965,954 locally, with a median of \$667. 22 of the enterprises could not report how much money they spent locally (10.1% of the sample).

Discussion

The online information now presented on the RETOSA directory will help travellers and operators decide whether to contact the product, and also to make bookings with CBTEs. Tourist and tour operators can also access information on how each

enterprise benefits the local community. This will help tourists make informed decisions about enterprises they want to visit - whether it is a township B&B run by an indigenous entrepreneur, a joint-venture lodge where a community has a partnership with a private sector operator, or perhaps a campsite owned, run and managed by the community itself. The accommodation standards cover a range that should suit any budget - from luxury safari camps in protected areas to township B&Bs, backpackers, homestays, traditional chalets, guesthouses, hotels, and rustic campsites in rural areas. Many also have opportunities for activities such as cultural tours, guided wildlife tours, hiking and watersports (Spenceley and Rozga, 2006).

Enterprises are not charged for their listings, because the funding for the site was financed by UNWTO. A proposed agreement relating to sharing the information listed on the site with tour operators, e-portal booking sites, and other commercial operations has been developed. This may be used by RETOSA to generate income from the directory, and also to retain intellectual ownership of the data.

Market access training materials were developed, tested, and delivered using three approaches: one-on-one training sessions with CBT managers at their enterprise; training CBTEs in a workshop setting; and train-the-trainer settings with intermediaries. The market access training manual produced is now freely available as an electronic document from the internet directory, as are the assessment guideline documents. The product evaluation materials also helped to raise the capacity and understanding among the 214 enterprises evaluated. In addition, they have enhanced the skills of the forty-eight volunteers across southern Africa who assessed the CBTEs.

The directory development process employed (i.e. the process of identifying CBTEs, assessing them against pre-determined performance and process-based criteria, independent assessments, and audits) effectively means that all CBTEs visible on the website have passed an integrated certification process: These products were all identified as CBTEs and had sufficient quality, security and hospitality are now publicly accessible. Information on products that did not meet these criteria is retained within the database, but is not publicly available on the RETOSA website.

The review of the impacts of CBTEs in destinations reveals that they contribute positively and substantially to local economic development, and presumably poverty alleviation through their operation. The level of local employment, purchasing, and support of local projects is substantial when viewed collectively. Clearly there are also limitations and constraints to the enterprises, in particular access. Therefore, business planning and market research should be undertaken prior to the development of any tourism business, not least a CBTE. Where enterprises are already established, interventions from NGOs, government and donor agencies can help improve the viability of CBTEs by addressing their specific concerns, needs and constraints. The promise of CBTEs can raise expectations within communities to unrealistic levels, particularly within poorer areas. Therefore undertaking studies to evaluate the viability of enterprises, establishing whether the location is appropriate, and forging linkages to the rest of the tourism industry increases the chance of success, and of the sustainability of CBTEs.

Limitations and constraints

CBTEs identified were largely proposed by individuals and institutions contacted by the project team of enterprises, and by existing directories. Some enterprises, undoubtedly, will have been missed during this consultation phase, and may come to light in the future (e.g. Angola and DRC are not currently represented on the directory).

The definition of CBTE adopted by the project, which was intended to provide a wide scope rather than to be restrictive, also has influenced the nature of products included. For example, the database includes township bed and breakfasts and joint-ventures – not just cooperative community owned and operated ventures.

It was difficult and time consuming to negotiate agreements with individuals and institutions remotely by email and phone (i.e. without meeting them in person). In some regions the budgeted amount for the assessment and transportation was not accepted by the institution, and in these cases the transportation fee was raised slightly, or the institution declined to participate.

Volunteers and institutions reported several instances where they had problems evaluating CBT enterprises, including:

- Enterprise contact information was not always accurate (e.g. phone numbers).
- Enterprise managers would agree to the assessment on the phone, and then decline or not be available once the volunteer had arrived on-site.
- Slow internet connections, although their data entry was completed despite this.
- They did not have time within the contract period to assess all of the enterprises.

In instances where the volunteers and institution identified additional CBTEs during the process, these could be included.

Through the process of entering assessment information onto the online database, volunteers identified several problems with the data entry process. These mainly revolved around difficulties in saving changes to information sections (i.e. changes would not be saved, or would be corrupted). When problems were identified, these were relayed to the database developers who made the necessary amendments. The database was developed in an online dynamic format so that it will have the ability for long-term functionality and interoperability between different systems.

In the future, it will be important to collect data from the enterprises listed on the online directory to establish how the website has impacted on their business. Did it lead to increased bookings? Was their financial viability improved? Were more benefits generated for local people.

If there is to be a further phase of this project, this database and website can be used as a training tool for CBTEs to learn more about how to effectively work with booking intermediaries. It can be used as a stepping stone for CBTEs to learn more about the internet as a marketing tool. RETOSA and/or the managers of the database

should make a concerted effort to make the CBTEs aware of their listings as well as to encourage the CBTEs to input into their listings. Tied with a more direct Market Access Training programme, this database/website may not ever be a booking website specifically but it could provide the necessary intermediary step to getting these CBTEs more aware of *how* to work with booking intermediaries.

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