

Best practice model for community capacity-building: A case study of community-based tourism enterprises in Kenya

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Abstracts

As tourism continues to play a major role in the global economy, key international organisations, such as the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and the World Bank, have endorsed it as a tool for poverty alleviation particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. To address this endorsement, local community involvement in tourism development is now urgent. The Local Agenda 21, for instance, advocates for participative and collaborative approaches in which the local communities play a significant role in defining their development priorities. Community-based tourism enterprises (CBTEs), have been touted as a potential route through which local community involvement in tourism can be enhanced and that they significantly contribute to socio-economic development and consequently poverty alleviation. A previous study in Kenya confirms this but reveals that CBTEs face significant capacity challenges, including deficiencies in vision and leadership for tourism product development and marketing, entrepreneurial skills, business management skills and access to credit facilities or the mobilisation of resources. This paper, through a critical review of literature on capacity-building best practice, seeks to develop a best practice model for community capacity-building suitable for Kenyan CBTEs. The paper is developed using a multiple case study of six CBTEs and in-depth semi-structured interviews with CBTE managers and leaders, tourism academics, and representatives of support organizations and the Kenyan government. The respondents' views are integrated into a unified best practice model using constructive and choice ordering projective techniques. The paper concludes with the identification of essential components for ensuring the effectiveness of community capacity-building – community approach, leadership approach, sustainable approach and an appropriate policy and legislative framework.

Keywords

capacity-building; community-based tourism; poverty alleviation; Kenya; sub-Saharan Africa