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Enhancing community involvement in wildlife tourism: Issues and challenges

Caroline Ashley and Dilys Roe

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**ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN WILDLIFE
TOURISM:
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Consider Community Involvement in Tourism?

Tourism is affecting the lives of rural people across the world. For some communities, it is a driving force of development, for others it brings mainly negative impacts. In most communities, the impacts are highly differentiated. In either case, the type of involvement people have helps shape the benefits and costs they experience as a result. This paper looks at how to *enhance* the involvement of rural people and communities in wildlife tourism, so as to expand the opportunities for local benefit and minimise the costs.

Nature-based tourism, and tourism to developing countries are among the fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry, (Wells 1997; Ceballos-Lascuarin 1996) which is itself the world's largest and fastest-growing industry. Tourism currently generates ten per cent of world income, and employs ten percent of the world's workforce. It is expected to have doubled in size by the year 2015, with an anticipated one billion tourists per year (Newbery 1998), of which, 25 per cent of are expected to be visiting a developing country (Newbery 1998). These statistics mean that tourism has enormous potential to influence development in the South, particularly in rural communities where much nature tourism occurs, and where the search for ever-more exotic destinations continues.

To date, tourism has generated significant benefits for some developing countries, becoming an economic mainstay, and significant source of foreign exchange and employment. For example in many of the Caribbean islands, tourism has overtaken agriculture as the major contributor to GDP. It has brought economic development to remote areas with little comparative advantage in other industries. However, in several places the economic benefits have been minimised through 'leakage' while tourism has also led to displacement of local people to make way for tourist developments, depletion of local water supplies, over-burdening of local infrastructure etc. The assumption on which this paper is based is that tourism will continue to affect rural communities in the decades ahead. Enhancing their active *involvement* in the industry is essential if the potential benefits of tourism are to be maximised and the negatives minimised.

The remainder of this introduction defines communities and the types of tourism covered here, and outlines who is interested in community involvement in tourism and for what reasons. Section 2 reviews the benefits and limitations of tourism, to identify the major challenges facing communities. Section 3 then draws on international experience to date to highlight some strategies for dealing with the challenges and enhancing community involvement in tourism.

1.2 Defining Community Involvement in Tourism

1.2.1 What kind of 'community'?

This review considers the term 'community' in its broadest sense as encompassing a heterogeneous set of local people. It recognises that a community has a common interest in the resources of an area, but within any

The use of the term 'community' is sometimes based on an incorrect assumption that it comprises a single homogeneous unit (Blench 1998, Kothari et al 1997). However, social stratification is a common phenomenon in almost all communities and different strata have differing interests/stakes in the natural resource base. Therefore a community may not have an inherent potential to come together to manage a common resource. In terms of community-based natural resource management, Gilmour and Fisher (1992) suggest that a community should be defined as a set of people with a mutually recognised interest in the resources of a particular area rather than as people living in that area. A community therefore represents users of a resource rather than a homogenous resident unit.

community there will be stratification and conflicting interests. The review focuses on those communities living in, or adjacent to, wildlife areas.

1.2.2 What kind of 'tourism?'

The review encompasses both consumptive and non-consumptive forms of tourism, and addresses tourism that occurs within and outside protected areas. As such, it includes but is not limited to ecotourism¹.

1.2.3 What kind of 'involvement?'

Tourism can *involve* and affect local residents without being driven and *controlled* by the community. Although the latter situation might be desired, the former situation needs to be analysed and addressed. This review does not, therefore, focus only on community-driven tourism, but on many forms of local involvement (Table 1.1). These may include local employment in tourism industries; enterprises run by local entrepreneurs or communities; self-employment; communities or individuals leasing out their land for tourism, selling hunting concessions, or making partnership agreements with tourism operators; and local residents participating in local planning of tourism, wildlife, parks, and related land uses. ie: we look at passive involvement as well as active participation, and at both individuals and organised communities as actors.

Table 1.1: Different Forms of Community Involvement in Tourism

Type of enterprise/institution	Nature of local involvement	Examples
Private business run by outsider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment • Supply goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kitchen staff in a lodge • Sale of food, building materials etc
Enterprise or informal sector operation run by local entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise ownership • Self employment • Supply of goods and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft sales, food kiosk, campsite, home stays • Guiding services • Hawking, sale of fuelwood, food
Community enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective ownership • Collective or individual management • Supply of goods & services • Employment or contributed labour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community campsite • Craft centre • Cultural centre
Joint venture between community and private operator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual commitments • Shares in revenue • Lease/investment of resources • Participation in decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue-sharing from lodge to local community on agreed terms • Community leases land/resources/concession to lodge • Community holds equity in lodge
Tourism planning body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation • Representation • Participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local consultation in regional tourism planning • Community representatives on tourism board and in planning fora

¹ Ecotourism is itself variously defined. In reality it has become widely adopted as a generic term to describe low-impact nature-based tourism. Inherent in the term is the assumption that local communities should benefit from tourism and will help to conserve nature in the process (Goodwin 1996; Roe et al 1997).

1.3 Interest in Community Involvement in Tourism

In recent years, CIT has been receiving increasing attention from a variety of sources and for a variety of reasons:

1. As an element of local economic development, CIT represents a new opportunity and an alternative to existing livelihood strategies.
2. As an element of conservation, CIT represents a means of realising tangible benefits from wildlife management and hence an incentive for continued conservation.
3. As an element of the global tourism industry, CIT represents an opportunity to diversify the product and to 'cash in' on new marketable assets.

Thus there are essentially three goals of CIT: rural development, conservation, industry development. CIT involves a number of different stakeholders all of whom have an interest in one or more of these perspectives. The degree to which one or other perspective dominates a particular initiative will depend upon the mix of stakeholders involved and their relative power (Table 1.2).

- To **residents** living in or near wildlife areas, tourism can offer new opportunities for jobs, enterprises and skill development. It can also be a way to earn benefits from parks, wildlife and tourists that in the past have only brought costs, a means to make wildlife management financially viable, or a strategy for securing more community control over use of land and natural resources.
- **Rural development agencies** (including donor organisations, government agencies and NGOs), recognising that tourism is an expanding industry in rural areas of the South are focusing on tourism as a strategy for diversifying rural economies and developing local capacity. This category includes economists, who traditionally have sought to maximise the *macro-economic* benefits of tourism, such as foreign exchange. But with recognition of the limitations of 'trickle-down' and the importance of economic strategies for the local level, tourism is now also being promoted to develop enterprise and employment opportunities at the *local level*.
- Most **conservationists** now recognise the crucial role played by local people in managing wildlife and habitat, and many have adopted the 'if it pays it stays' principle. Tourism is often seen a means by which tangible benefits of wildlife management can be realised and, hence, incentives for conservation created (Roe et al 1997).
- The **tourism industry** is recognising the need to work with local people because of their central role in maintaining cultural and natural heritage, which are of interest to tourists. Some operators are focusing on involvement of local people as an element of 'ecotourism,' in response to market trends which now emphasise that tourism should be socially, as well as environmentally, responsible. The 'ecotourism' label can, however, be used simply as a marketing gimmick.
- **Donors** are increasingly interested in funding projects which combine tourism development with a high degree of community-involvement or local participation. Such projects fit within strategies to make tourism more pro-poor, and/or to promote local benefits from sustainable use of natural resources, hence integrating conservation and development.

In any area where CIT is developing, there may be stakeholders with each of these different perspectives or a project with multiple objectives. For example, community-based wildlife management projects may combine the development perspective (diversification through wildlife) and the conservation perspective (creating conservation incentives, revaluing natural heritage) but to highly varying degrees. They will also

vary in the extent to which they are driven by local residents' perspectives. For example, for projects inside and adjacent to national parks, conservation is more likely to be the goal, and meeting local development needs one of the means, whereas in rural development projects the reverse might be true. This paper assesses CIT from a range of perspectives, covering both development and conservation objectives.

Table 1.2: Priorities of Different Stakeholders in CIT

Perspective	Rural Development	Conservation	Industry Development
<i>Stakeholder</i>			
<i>Local residents</i>	XX	X	
<i>Rural development proponents</i>	XX	X	
<i>Conservationists</i>	X	XX	
<i>Tourism industry</i>		X	XX
<i>Donors</i>	XX	XX	X

1.4 Purpose of this Paper

In many countries, efforts are already being made to enhance involvement of rural communities and the poor in the tourism industry. However, experience to date has thrown up many limitations and challenges. This paper explores some of those challenges and identifies strategies for addressing them, based on experience in a range of countries. It aims to provide practical examples and an analysis of key issues. The review of advantages and limitations of CIT in Section 2 sets the discussion in context. The bulk of the paper then assesses twelve key issues, describing the problems encountered by practitioners and strategies that have been used to address these. This discussion does not claim to provide 'answers' but aims to identify the right questions, illustrate progress to date, and prompt further analysis of possible solutions.

The paper does not seek to claim that involvement in tourism is always good for communities. Nor does the exposition of the many problems tourism brings aim to reject any notion of benefit. On the assumption that many communities *will* be involved in tourism (whether through choice or not), and that this will bring both costs and benefits, the aim is to identify ways to enhance that involvement for greater local development and conservation. The thesis of this paper is that with active intervention, tourism can be shaped to be more appropriate, and specifically to offer greater benefit and involvement for local residents.

2. CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM

As a strategy for rural development, tourism has a number of potential advantages over other sectors, particularly since it is one of the few industries suited to rural, remote and/or undeveloped areas, and to marginal land (IIED 1994)². It can therefore be an effective strategy for diversifying agriculturally-based rural economies - particularly in drought-prone areas or where agricultural incomes are in decline. The industry brings the northern customer to the South, instead of transporting southern products into - often protected - northern markets. In rural areas tourism is based on renewable resources (wildlife and habitat), so can, in principle, be ecologically sustainable. It can also be less consuming of resources, such as energy and raw materials, than other industries. In addition, it attracts private sector investment, unlike some other rural development initiatives.

While tourism may therefore have some advantages over other sectors or other development strategies, it is not a panacea for rural communities. Some communities simply are not situated in locations that are appropriate, or have enough potential, for tourism development. Those that do develop tourism can find the purported benefits to be limited, or off-set by disadvantages. Many of these disadvantages are common to almost any economic sector, and are therefore not an argument against tourism per se. But they still need to be taken into account in planning tourism strategies. A few of the disadvantages can be particular to the tourism industry, given its highly sophisticated international structure and competitive nature. This section briefly reviews the benefits, limitations and challenges of CIT as a strategy for rural development and conservation.

2.1 Financial Impacts of Tourism on Communities

2.1.1 Local incomes and jobs

Tourism can generate a range of economic benefits for communities living in or near wildlife areas, including (Koch 1994, Drake 1991, Ashley 1995):

- employment;
- business opportunities;
- linkages with other sectors, especially agriculture;
- upgrading of infrastructure and links to markets.

The potential for local employment opportunities is considerable, since it is a relatively labour intensive service sector, with limited opportunities for replacing people with new technology and capital (Wheat, 1998). Aside from direct employment, tourism also offers the potential for linkages with the local economy to be made, through development of enterprises supplying inputs to the tourism trade. In areas where communities control access to tourism assets (eg as owners or custodians of land or cultural tradition) income can also be earned through leasing access to those assets. The sheer numbers of tourists arriving in remote areas of developing countries would imply considerable financial benefits for the people that live there. However, local incomes from tourism may be limited, for a number of reasons.

2.1.2 Leakage

There is evidence that very little of tourist expenditure actually stays in the locality visited (the problem of 'leakage'). For example, luxury tourism often requires specialised marketing, international communication, and luxury goods, so much of the tourists' expenditure is paid to international companies or spent on goods and skills imported to the locality. Budget tourists probably pay less to companies in distant capital cities but can enjoy an area while spending very little there - particularly overland trucks

² Assuming there is access to the area for potential tourists.

that even bring their food. A variety of studies covering 17 countries over 20 years estimated that 11 to 90 per cent of total tourism expenditure leaks out of the host country (Smith and Jenner, 1992). The degree of leakage varies enormously depending on who owns the enterprises and where goods and skills are sourced. However, most measures of leakage concern the national level. Even if leakage from the national economy is minimised, little tourist expenditure may stay within the local economy.

2.1.3 Lack of linkages

Aside from direct expenditure, tourism can, in theory, generate local spin-off enterprises and a multiplier effect in the local economy. However, such *economic linkages* are in practice often low (Box 2.1). There are usually many barriers to local tourism enterprise initiatives in poor rural areas, such as lack of credit, business experience, marketing experience, and the need for investments that often carry high risk and a one-two year delay before returns are seen. Potential suppliers of goods and services (food, crafts, guiding services) to the tourism industry often lack market access, particularly where tourism is geographically isolated from the population, or where the industry is vertically integrated, such that the tourism company provides all services ('enclave tourism') (Goodwin, 1997a). Comparative research by the Development Bank of Southern Africa found that economic linkages can be created if concerted efforts are made, but that in most cases, they are not (de Beer and Elliffe 1997).

Box 2.1: Just Plain Bananas!

A Caribbean example illustrates the problem of the lack of linkage to the local economy. Tourism and agriculture are the twin pillars of the region's economy, but there has been a failure to link the two sectors so that local farmers service the tourist industry. The result is that tourists eat bananas imported from Latin America while local farmers struggle to make a living. 'The Caribbean produces what it does not eat, and eats what it does not produce' (Pattullo 1996).

2.1.4 Exploitation

Financial benefits may also be lower than hoped because communities don't have the skills and capital to make best use of their resources, but when outside investors come in, the communities get exploited. Although there are examples of communities earning substantial income from partnerships with tourism investors, many communities lack market information and negotiating power to ensure a fair deal. In Chiang Rai, in Northern Thailand trekking operators promised the local community that tourists would bring financial benefits, strengthen cultural traditions and quell the emigration of young people to the city. However the reality has been that all the decisions regarding tourist flows and behaviour have been made by the Chiang Mai-based operators and tour agencies while the villagers receive just 20 baht (US\$0.50) for each tourist they accommodate and feed (Daniel 1998).

2.1.5 Financial benefits for only a few

While financial benefits may be limited, those benefits that do accrue may be captured by a small elite within the community. Local elites, particularly men, often dominate community-based development and can easily monopolise the benefits of tourism (Scheyvens 1998). Those with most power, education, language skills or who happen to live in the right place, are most likely to get new jobs, set up enterprises, make deals with outsiders, or control collective income earned by the community. For example, in the Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Nepal, economic benefits generated by trekking tourism do not appear to have spread beyond the 100-150 families who own tea shops or lodges in the area into the local economy (Kothari et al 1997). Those who receive nothing still share in the costs of tourism, such as inflated prices of land and goods (McLaren 1998).

2.1.6 Menial and short-term jobs

Tourism is a significant source of jobs for local people. However, these are often unskilled jobs (Box 2.2), such as cleaning and cooking in hotels and lodges, with few promotion prospects (Hasler, 1996, Cater 1996). Self-employment such as tourism guiding might be profitable for young men, but may lead to little in the future. For example young men and boys are often employed as tourist guides on Lake Malawi but are overlooked by tourists as they get older as younger, more attractive guides appear on the scene (Abbot, 1994). Few tourism companies or governments are willing or able to invest sufficiently in training to enable local people to graduate to managerial and professional jobs. It should be emphasised though, that however menial the job, wage labour can not be ignored as a means of improving people's livelihoods, and tourism can offer vital employment to the most marginal groups - women, youth and the unskilled (de Beer and Wheeler 1997).

Box 2.2: Waiters and Chamber Maids in Peru

Studies of the impact of tourism in Cuzco, Peru have shown that of the 280,000 economically active people in the region, only 6,000 (just over 2 per cent) are directly or indirectly employed by the tourism industry. Local people are employed mainly in service-level positions as waiters, maids, porters) while ex-pats fill the mid- and top-management positions. Very rarely - if they have exceptional language skills - are locals sent abroad for management training.

Source: McLaren 1998

2.2 Tourism and Rural Livelihoods

2.2.1 Diversifying livelihoods

Rural households rarely rely on one activity or source of income. In order to diversify risk and exploit available opportunities they combine on-farm and off-farm income sources, drawing on a range of natural resources, and build up physical, social and human assets for long term security. Tourism can be a way to complement existing livelihood strategies of rural communities, by diversifying off-farm income and spreading risk. This is particularly important in drought-prone areas. Although tourism is also cyclical, the impact of drought on tourism is likely to be smaller and more lagged than the impacts on agriculture. So it can continue to provide income at critical times. It also helps reduce risk for primary commodity exporters, particularly as tourism has suffered less price fluctuation than many other export industries, such as minerals and agricultural goods. (Brandon, 1993). The recent crisis in Asian economies demonstrates another advantage of tourism during crises: if a currency collapses tourism is likely to suffer less than the rest of the economy (as cheaper currency attracts more tourists), leaving those with access to the tourism industry less vulnerable than others.

Box 2.3: Livelihood Conflicts in Keoladeo National Park

A survey of villages adjacent to Keoladeo National Park in Rajasthan, India found that although the communities were aware of the potential for local handicraft production, labour was already taken up by cutting grass for cattle fodder for which the benefits were largely guaranteed. In addition, the peak tourism season in Keoladeo NP coincides with the busy harvest of *kharif* (monsoon) crops, and continues through the planting and care of high value *rabi* (winter) crops.

Source: Goodwin et al 1998

Tourism can complement other livelihood activities in a number of ways. Development of transport, markets and other infrastructure can boost other productive activities and achieve economies of scale. Skills earned through tourism can be transferred to other industries. If tourism supports local

conservation, this in turn can help sustain other aspects of livelihoods that depend on the natural resource base.

2.2.2 Trade-offs with other livelihood activities

While tourism can complement other livelihood activities and priorities, it can also conflict with them (Ngobese 1994, Ashley 1997) if, for example, water is used for tourism rather than crop production, wildlife compete with livestock for vegetation, or access to forest areas for gathering wild products is reduced due to declaration of exclusive wildlife or tourism areas. Trade-offs with agriculture are particularly acute, not only due to competition for land, but also due to wildlife damage to agriculture, (elephants eating crops, and predators attacking livestock), and, if the agricultural and tourism seasons coincide, competition for time (Box 2.3).

2.2.3 Loss of natural resources

If tourism reduces access to, or productivity of, natural resources, this can critically affect rural livelihood security. Tourists can damage natural resources such as vegetation, and water, through over-use or unrestrained activity. They can also undermine natural resource management in indirect ways, for example by increasing competition for land and resources, exacerbating conflicts (as discussed below), or undermining support (local or political) for traditional management practices. In many cases communities have been forcibly displaced from land or denied access to resources, in order to make way for tourism developments. For example, the Maasai in Kenya lost access to significant portions of their land with the gazettement of parks and reserves. Nairobi and Amboseli Parks were excised from land that had provided permanent water sources and dry season grazing (Berger 1996).

It is not just pressure from outsiders that can result in lost access to local communities. Even within communities, if a powerful elite are able to increase their claim over profitable resources, the majority become disenfranchised. For example, among the Maasai in Kenya, the first deals between white hunters and powerful Maasai individuals were 'the first step in disenfranchising the Maasai majority from their land rights' because land was, for the first time, put under title by individual Maasai men. The outcome of these transactions was inevitably a loss of majority rights and access to resources. (Berger 1996).

2.2.4 Risk

Although tourism helps to diversify risk by diversifying a households' livelihood portfolio, it is in itself a risky activity. Although it is generally growing, it is prone to cyclical variability and sudden downswings (Box 2.6). For example, foreign media coverage of violence or insecurity in the host country will divert tourists elsewhere, while recession in the north affects the tourism industry as a whole. Local tourism industries are vulnerable to a range of national and global events that lie beyond the control of local people in host countries (Goodwin et al 1998) An over-reliance on international tourists in particular makes the industry extremely vulnerable to economic downswings in the tourist-sending countries (Koch 1998) Those who depend on tourism are therefore vulnerable to a collapse in their source of income, just as they are in other export industries. Where tourism earnings are unreliable, involve high investment, and a delay before earnings flow, they will conflict with livelihood strategies of poor households to maintain flexibility and minimise risk.

2.2.5 Lack of control

Local residents might earn significant cash benefits from tourism, but still have no control over the development of tourism in their area, no right to participate in decisions, nor ability to initiate new

developments (Koch 1994, Wells and Brandon 1992, Baez 1996, Gakahu 1992). This contrasts with traditional livelihood activities, such as farming and gathering, which are generally controlled by the individual or household. If tourism is controlled by outsiders and decision-making removed from resident, this can disempower them and undermine development, despite the creation of jobs.

2.3 Tourism and Social Cohesion

2.3.1 *Pride and recognition*

Community involvement in tourism can result in increased pride in, and recognition of, the cultural and natural assets of an area that are attractive to tourists. It can strengthen cultural and social traditions (eg through the development of cultural centres, the resurrection of traditional crafts, displays of traditional dancing etc).

2.3.2 *Competition and conflict*

Tourism can, however, also exacerbate social conflict in communities. Competition for the benefits or control of tourism is likely within and between communities. Increasing disparities in income, or inequalities in its distribution can exacerbate conflicts within a community (Boonzaier, 1996b) (Box 2.4) or in some cases disrupt traditional systems of sharing risk and managing resources collectively. In Chiang Rai, Thailand, even the meagre payments received from tourists have caused conflict in the community, as only the 'friends' of the tour guides get selected as hosts for tourists while other families receive nothing (Daniel 1998).

Box 2.4: Fireflies Cause Conflict in Malaysia

Firefly watching first began to develop in the late 1980s after villagers in Kampung Kuantan, Selangor State, drew the attention of a local conservation organisation to the extraordinary phenomenon of synchronised flashing amongst the mangroves on the Selangor river. Initial interest in the discovery was restricted to a limited number of biologists, naturalists and conservationists who paid local boatmen to take them to view the fireflies. As interest grew, so did employment for the boatmen, and because the mangrove banks are sensitive to erosion, villagers agreed amongst themselves not to use power boats and to limit access to the river to traditional, non-motorised boats.

However, as tourist interest in the fireflies grew the initiative became a victim of its own success. While firefly tourism contributes a major source of income and employment for the village tensions have developed within the community between those villagers who benefit from the fireflies (principally households with boatmen who are part of the company that now controls access) and those who don't. Rival groups within the village and from nearby villages are using powerboats to bring tourists to the mangroves in order to grab a share of the revenue, and village level efforts to protect and manage the mangroves along the river banks have been suspended as relations between the villagers have deteriorated.

Source: Hughes 1997

Conflicts generated by profits and inequality of income are likely to arise as any economic sector develops. But tourism is particularly likely to create conflicts over access to land and resources between community members and powerful individuals or other, external, stakeholders, as these are the critical inputs. For example, conflicts arise between tourism operators or park managers who want an exclusive wildlife/tourism area, and residents who want access and resource harvesting; between tour-boats or divers and the local fishermen who use a lake or river; between carvers and fuelwood collectors over trees. Local residents are often the least powerful, and therefore the losers.

2.3.3 Cultural disruption

Social disruption can be brought about directly by tourists themselves as well as through conflicts over resources or benefit-sharing. Tourist intrusion can lead to loss of privacy and disruption. In some cases tourism is also blamed for erosion of culture and importation of outside influence. For example, monetization of the Sherpa economy in Nepal is said to have financed reconstruction of religious artefacts while destroying the spirit that created them and damaged religious life (Zurick 1992, quoted in Brown et al, 1995). Tourists are also blamed for bringing prostitution and drug abuse (Pleumaron 1997) At the opposite extreme, tourism can also sometimes try to force people back into the past (Box 4.5). In Chiang Rai, Northern Thailand, tourist gifts of T-shirts and baseball caps have meant that Western clothing has now replaced traditional dress in the village. One of the tour guides has complained that as a result the village has become 'too modern' and that consequently he will be moving on to a more 'authentic' village (Daniel 1998).

Box 2.6: Kenya: Lost Resources, Inequitable Benefits, Conflict, Violence, and a Tourism Slump

Communities on the Kenyan coast have experienced many of the problems of tourism described above, with each compounding the next. Coastal communities have been forcibly removed from some areas and denied access to certain resources that are monopolised for tourism purposes. At the same time, many of the jobs generated by the industry have been taken up by better educated people who have migrated into the coastal area. The resulting tensions laid the basis for the violent clashes that occurred in the run-up to Kenya's 1998 elections which led foreign governments to advise tourists to avoid the area for security reasons and left many of the country's coastal resorts empty (de Beer, and Wheeler 1997). Hence even those that benefited from tourism before are now suffering.

2.4 Community Involvement in Tourism as Strategy for Conservation

2.4.1 Generating local incentives for conservation

Traditionally the benefits of conserving wildlife are received at an international level while the costs (loss of access to protected areas, damage to crops etc) have been borne at a local level - and especially by poor, rural communities. These costs have often proved to be a powerful *disincentive* for conservation (Wells 1997). Tourism provides a vehicle by which tangible economic benefits of wildlife conservation can be realised by local communities, and the dis-incentives reversed. If local people can earn money from foreigners' appreciation of wildlife and habitat through tourism, wildlife becomes a net benefit for local residents and hence an asset to protect. Tourism can often generate higher cash returns than other uses of wildlife, so has most potential for local revenue. In areas of high tourism potential, returns can exceed returns from other land uses, and so justify maintaining or restoring wildlife habitat (Box 2.5).

The value that tourists place on local natural and cultural resources can in turn increase the recognition of their value among local residents. For example, in Monteverde, Costa Rica, conservation is now considered to be a 'way of life' as a result of the local community's recognition of the value of natural resources for tourism (Baez, 1996).

Box 2.5: Tourism Used to Justify Wildlife as a Land Use in South Africa

Madikwe National Park in South Africa was created in large part because tourism was shown to offer higher financial returns than agriculture (Koch 1994). Prior to its designation as a national park, a team of consultants were commissioned to assess the most appropriate land use for the area. The results of the study showed that wildlife-based tourism was the best form of land use for several reasons (Davies 1997 cited in Magome et al 1998): once fully established Madikwe could generate over 1200 jobs; the spin-off effects of Madikwe to the local economy would be much higher than that for cattle ranching; and, the local economy, highly dependent on agriculture, would be diversified (note: the full potential benefits have not yet been realised. (Magome et al 1998)). A recent decision to prevent mining at St. Lucia (South Africa) and maintain it as a reserve, was also based on analysis that tourism could match returns from mining in the long term (Koch 1994).

2.4.2 Difficulties of creating incentives for collective conservation

However, experience indicates that creating incentives for conservation is much more complex. Conservation of species or habitat through common property resource management usually depends on the commitment of *all* residents, or members of the producer community (Murphree 1993) whereas cash benefits from tourism will probably only be received by a minority. Maximum benefit to conservation requires that those who threaten conservation (eg poachers) should be the main target group, but they are not necessarily the main beneficiaries from tourism. Even if benefits are widely received, the *link* between income earned from tourism and conservation of the natural resource base might not be evident locally, so the 'incentive' is not felt.

Furthermore, an exclusive focus on cash incentives can be inappropriate for stimulating local conservation (Steiner and Rihoy 1994, Jones 1997). Most wildlife tourism projects emphasise a *beneficiary* approach in which local people receive cash benefits but are not empowered (Brandon 1993). However, collective resource management depends not only on incentives, but on local people having rights, responsibilities, skills and appropriate management institutions. Other, equally effective community conservation strategies may enhance these non-financial benefits, even if generating less cash benefit than tourism. In some cases it might be argued that cash benefits are not only insufficient, but also unnecessary (Western 1994) and can even be damaging. The principle of 'If it pays it stays' can be a very different approach to conservation from traditional approaches (Ngobese 1994, Boonzaier 1996a) which are based more on communal responsibility, links with the land, with ancestors and future generations.

It is not clear that tourism can generate *enough* money for wildlife to pay its way, except in a few prime areas. Only a small minority of protected areas, attract significant numbers of tourists. At these popular sites, tourism revenues may exceed protected area operating budgets, but it is unusual for these revenues to be returned directly for park management (Wells and Brandon 1992) and even more rare for them to be shared with the communities that live in or around the park. Furthermore, as parks come under increasing pressure from governments to be self-financing, there will be even less opportunity to share tourism income with residents. Outside protected areas, funds do not need to be shared between conservation bodies and residents, but prime tourism sites of greatest profitability are probably more rare.

Tourism may provide incentives for conservation of certain species - particularly the charismatic megafauna that attract tourists - but this is not the same as maintenance of biodiversity and ecosystem sustainability. Outside protected areas, conflicts between people and wildlife are often

intense, and in areas of low tourist potential different approaches must be adopted achieve this goal (Brown, 1998).

2.5 Summary

Tourism can bring an array of advantages, both for rural communities and for developing economies. But these advantages are far from guaranteed, and can be off-set by limitations and disadvantages. However, many of the disadvantages covered above can be attributed to any new economic activity in a rural area, and are not specific to tourism. For example, income disparities and conflicts over resources can increase whatever the activity. Furthermore, the points above illustrate the extreme -- tourism might not entail all these costs to local people. But the extremes are worth noting for working out whether and how these costs can be avoided by enhancing CIT. Table 2.1 summarises the two extreme scenarios, positive and negative.

The thesis of this paper is that with active intervention, tourism can be shaped to be more appropriate, and specifically to offer greater benefit and involvement for local residents. Section 3 takes up some of the key issues involved in addressing constraints and maximising benefits.

Table 2.1: Advantages and Limitations of Tourism for Development

	Advantages – the positive scenario	Limitations and disadvantages – the negative scenario
For local development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs • Community income • Enterprise opportunities • Skills • Diversify livelihoods • Infrastructure • Institutional development • Pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menial jobs only • A 'bad deal' for communities • Limited spin-off, high leakage • Limited investment in training • Inequitable distribution of all the above • Conflict with agriculture and livelihood strategies. Risky investment • Infrastructure only for tourists not residents • Local conflicts exacerbated • Control by outsiders • Disempowerment of residents • Cultural disruption
For economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing industry • Steady prices (compared to traditional exports) • Job creation, spin-off enterprises, and multiplier effects • Attracts private investment • Economic diversification • Sustainable utilisation of natural assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volatile demand • High leakage out of economy; enclave tourism with few spin-offs • Private control not partnership • Over-dependence • Over-use of natural resources
For conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased local benefits from wildlife justify wildlife as a land-use • Enhanced cultural values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits insufficient, narrowly-distributed, and not visibly linked to conservation of the resource base. • Capacity and other prerequisites lacking.

3. ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES - ENHANCING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM

The discussion of the challenges involved in community involvement in tourism in the previous section raise one overarching question: should communities get involved in tourism at all? Careful consideration of all the disadvantages tourism may bring, as well as the potential benefits, is necessary before it is promoted as a strategy for rural development and/or conservation. As we have already discussed, tourism is not a panacea and is not even a possibility in some rural areas. It is not a strategy that should be rushed into without careful thought. Furthermore, projects that promote CIT need to be aware that not all of the disadvantages can be avoided, so CIT initiatives will bring costs and well as benefits.

That said, the fact remains that the positive contribution of tourism to developing country economies can not be ignored. In addition, many rural communities are already being affected by tourism, whether directly or indirectly, through choice or not, and are experiencing both the positive and negative impacts. In those areas, strategies are required to enhance community involvement in tourism which are designed to deal with the disadvantages, as well as to maximise the benefits. The appropriate approaches will vary from place to place, but some of the challenges are common. These, and some of the useful strategies that are being employed by communities, projects, and governments, are identified here.

3.1 Increasing Financial Benefits for Residents

How can local incomes from tourism be increased, 'leakage' to distant cities and companies be reduced, and benefits other than wages be generated? Does this involve restructuring the industry? Is this possible in such a well-established, sophisticated, global industry? Tourism companies cannot be forced to employ more people, to buy more local goods, or share profits. However, incentives can be created, particularly by governments. When assessing strategies to enhance local income it is useful to distinguish between:

- i wage income from employment;
- ii earnings and profits from self-employment and local enterprise;
- iii collective income earned by the community.

(i) The most important strategy for increasing wage income is **training** of local people and development of professional tourism skills. For example, in Zimbabwe, a hotel training school at Bulawayo means that the industry hasn't had to import skills from outside the country (although it should be noted that they still might be imported from outside the locality) (McIvor, 1994). The problem is that private companies will only train a few permanent staff, governmental/national tourism training programmes are usually not focused at the rural level, while NGOs have relatively little experience in hospitality training. Therefore concerted efforts at local level training are needed.

(ii) Earnings and profits of independent entrepreneurs can be enhanced by two strategies:

- **Support to local enterprise and the informal sector:** In many cases, local cash benefits are maximised in the informal sector (Goodwin et al 1997), however, this sector often faces many constraints. In addition to conventional small-enterprise support, such as credit and training, it is important to address government policies that can inadvertently disadvantage local entrepreneurs over mainstream operators. For example, procedures to register a tourism facility or qualify as a guide may be designed for urban companies not rural residents, national marketing material may only include well-

established formal sector operations, or investment incentives may be exclusively for foreign investors. Removing these constraints can be as important as creating positive supports.

• **Creating linkages, avoiding enclaves:**

Local people often find it difficult to get direct access to tourists. In some cases they may be physically prevented from entering areas frequented by tourists - if all hotels are inside national parks, or if hotel security staff prevent access to theoretically public access beaches. Other barriers may be commercial: enclave tourism can result from vertical integration within the tourism industry, in which the tour company provides the food, transport, entertainment and all other elements of the trip itself - for example cruise ships and all-inclusive resorts. To encourage linkages government authorities can use planning procedures and regulations to prevent annexing of public beaches by large hotels, or to ensure access for entrepreneurs.

They can use 'planning gain' to influence the siting and operation of tourism facilities (ie: make planning approval conditional upon certain requirements, including use of local materials). Similarly conservation authorities can require operators inside parks to source products and services locally. Many protected area authorities now use park zoning and buffer zone approaches to ensure that visitor facilities, hotel and the like are located outside protected areas, which has the dual result of limiting development within the protected area and increasing access to tourists for local people.

(iii) Collective income earned by communities can be enhanced by **increasing their market power and negotiating strength**. An organised defined community with legal rights over resources of market value, plus market information, can earn significant income. Collective income can be earned from, for example, concession fees, bed-night levies, or hunting fees. In the case of land or wildlife, this market power depends on government being willing to *decentralise tenure* to local level. Giving communities market power can be achieved even inside national parks by leasing a concession to a community at a nominal fee, enabling them to sub-let it to a partner at market rates.

In addition to legal rights, most communities will require **capacity building and institutional support**, to enable them to develop the appropriate skills and exercise their market power. In Namibia, communities negotiating with the private sector have received support from local, national and international NGOs, government staff, and now from their own national organisation -- the Namibia Community Based Tourism Association (NACOBTA) (Jones 1997). Communities negotiating joint ventures are also in a position to maximise the other types of income, apart from collective income. For example, commitments can be negotiated concerning local employment, training, and product purchases.

Box 3.1: Fruitful Cooperation in the Caribbean

In St Lucia, the Sunshine Harvest Fruit and Vegetable Farmer's Cooperative coordinates production and marketing of fruit and vegetables to ensure regular supplies to hotels on the island. The St Lucia Hotel Association and the Ministry of Agriculture have launched an 'adopt a farmer' scheme, whereby hotels buy produce from a specified farmer at an agreed price. Credit services for small farmers have been established, and they are encouraged to grow a range of fruit and vegetables rather than just bananas (Wheat 1998).

A key issue here is who sets the prices for local goods. In the Caribbean example, the prices are agreed between the farmers and hoteliers before planting. Around Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, local producers say they have little power to control prices and believe (correctly) that the lodges then sell their food with a vast mark-up (Emerton and Mfunda 1998).

³ In Namibia, it is estimated that communities gaining rights over wildlife in prime areas (in both communal land and park concessions) could earn as much in concession fees from a tourism lodge as local individuals will earn from employment in the lodge (Ashley 1995 and 1997). However, Koch (1998) in South Africa estimates that collective income has as yet failed to match the combined monetary value of earnings and small business/sales income.

3.2 More Equitable and Pro-poor Distribution of Cash Benefits

Income from tourism will never be shared exactly equally within a community: entrepreneurs and workers inevitably and rightly earn more, and the powerful can usually enhance their share. Intervention by outsiders to promote equity can be inappropriate or counter-productive. Nevertheless, some measures encourage a greater spread of benefits across the community, or specifically to the poor.

- **Development of sales opportunities and informal sector activities** (selling thatching grass, fuelwood, curios, vegetables etc) and not just permanent jobs, are important to create opportunities for the poor. For example, research in Namibia found that earnings from sale of products, such as vegetables, fish, fuelwood, crafts, are likely to be lower (per person and in total), than wages from regular employment, but these options are often available to more people, particularly poorer, less-skilled households and women for whom they provide vital supplementary income (Ashley 1997). Therefore efforts to expand linkages with the local economy are as important for poverty reduction as measures that boost formal employment. Healy (1994) also points out that while many forms of participation in the tourist industry such as lodging, transportation and guiding frequently require capital, command of a foreign language and other prerequisites not easily available to the poor, the production and sale of tourist merchandise offers an opportunity to even the poorest participant in the local economy.
- Expansion of **collective income**, and encouragement of **equitable distribution** of it. If collective income is used for household cash dividends, or a productive investment that is used by the poor, a more equitable distribution is possible than with wages and earnings. Measures to increase collective income are suggested above. **Sharing** of collective income can be encouraged (without removing decision-making power from the community) through measures such as: raising public awareness of the nature and timing of the income, helping communities plan a process for making decisions on the use of the income, and observing other community dividend distributions. If a private operator or park manager is paying concession fees or other collective income in return for community resources or cooperation, they can make it a condition of contract that the use of income is decided collectively and/or benefits the community at large.

This suggests that communities, NGOs, extension staff, and governments can take some measures to encourage a wider, more equitable (as opposed to equal) distribution of revenue across a community, although the limits of such interventions need to be identified and recognised. Furthermore, the distribution of cash benefits is only part of the picture. The distribution of other costs and benefits, such as lost access to natural resources, and control over assets and decisions, (discussed below) can have greater impacts on disparities or cooperation within the community.

3.3 Maintaining Access to Resources, Boosting Collective Management

The natural resources on which tourism depends (land, wildlife, water, vegetation) are often either publicly owned and run (by the state) or collectively managed (by community institutions with ownership or usufruct rights). In either case, they are usually used by local residents. The risk of *disenfranchising the majority* from access to these resources, due to commercialisation or 'privatisation' by the powerful needs to be recognised.

Inevitably in some cases, tourism will be deemed the most efficient land-use, and judgements based on public interest or politics will weigh the profits from tourism greater than the cost of excluding local resource users from public land. Nevertheless, impacts on residents can be mitigated by measures that **ensure local opinions are heard during the planning process, the true value (not necessarily market value) of local use recognised, and options for multiple land-use, alternative resources, or**

compensation explored. A more radical option is to **devolve tenure rights** over, for example, coastal plots or wildlife areas to community institutions, so that they can weigh up – and earn – the net profits. However, this depends on the existence of a defined community with management capacity. For example, the partnership models that have been developed for the new spatial development initiatives (SDIs) in South Africa specify the need for an institutional structure that represents community interests such as a Community Trust, 'Section 21' Company or Community Property Association (de Beer and Elliffe 1997)

Where tourism resources are collectively managed, the critical issue is whether the majority are able to participate in, and benefit from, resource use decisions. Where community organisation is weak, it is easy for one or two entrepreneurs to take exclusive use (de facto privatisation), where it is strong, members can reject or modify tourism activities and ensure that the benefits of private entrepreneurial activity are shared. The likelihood that collective management of resources will be maintained or strengthened as tourism develops probably depends largely on internal community dynamics and organisation and a host of local social, historical and institutional factors, which are not easily influenced from outside. Nevertheless, a few measures can be identified that **enhance collective management:**

- Governments can increase collective power by giving **secure legal rights over resources** to community level, or setting regulations that require tourism operators to gain community approval of planning decisions and/or pay fees.
- NGOs working with communities can help **ensure that this community power is actually exercised on behalf of the majority.** For example, this is more likely if within the community, community members know and are able to assert their rights, and if there are processes that identify stakeholders, and address the inevitable conflicts. Conflicting interests are more likely to be accommodated if there are systems that allow individual entrepreneurs to strive and prosper within the limits of collective rights. eg. leaving enterprise development to individual entrepreneurs, but based on an agreement with the community concerning use of collective resources, and any conditions or fees required.
- Projects that incorporate a social development component are more likely to be able to support local institutional development, than those that harness only conservation skills or tourism development expertise.

3.4 Complementing and Boosting Livelihoods

Tourism planners and local residents can have quite different understandings of the impacts of tourism. Planners may not realise the complex ways in which tourism affects other activities and resources of residents. Maximising local development benefits of tourism means **exploring local priorities and strategies for secure and sustainable livelihoods and adapting tourism to these.** Given the complexity of livelihood strategies, there will be many ways in which tourism can positively or negatively affect livelihoods (as illustrated in Table 3.1) which will vary between places, gender, and socio-economic groups.

Table 3.1: Multiple Ways in which Tourism can Indirectly Affect Livelihood Security, Positively and Negatively⁴

Tourism affects:	Possible Positive Impacts Tourism can:	Possible Negative Effects Tourism can:
Other livelihood activities	Complement other activities <i>eg: if tourism earnings peak in agricultural hungry season; development of transferable skills.</i>	Conflict with other activities <i>eg: conflicts with agriculture, if tourism imposes labour demands at busy agricultural seasons and/or results in increased wildlife damage to crops and livestock.</i>
Capital assets	Build up assets (natural, physical, financial, human, and social) <i>eg: enhanced physical assets, if earnings are invested in productive capital; enhanced natural capital, if sustainability of natural resource management is improved.</i>	Erode assets <i>eg: undermine natural capital if local people excluded from tourism areas lose access to natural resources; erode social capital if conflict over tourism undermines social and reciprocal relations.</i>
Policy and institutional influences on livelihoods	Enhance residents' power to change and improve the policy/institutional context <i>eg: if participation in tourism planning and enterprise gives them new status, information and skills to deal with outsiders.</i>	Exacerbate policy constraints <i>eg: diminish opportunities if policy-makers divert attention, resources and infra-structure investment to prioritise tourism over other local activities.</i>
Long-term priorities	'Fit' with people's underlying long-term priorities <i>eg: to diversify risk, or build buffers against drought, by developing an additional source of income which continues in drought years.</i>	Create or exacerbate threats to long-term security <i>eg: physical threats from more aggressive wild animals due to disturbance by tourists. Economic vulnerability due to dependence on volatile tourism.</i>

Three principles are important in ensuring that tourism complements rather than undermines livelihood security:

1. Recognise the complexity of rural livelihoods, and that impacts of tourism cannot be measured solely in cash terms, but depend on impacts on people's assets, opportunities, and other activities (Box 3.2).
2. Explore and understand local livelihood priorities in a tourism location, or of a specific target group.
3. Adapt tourism development to those priorities.

Often this will mean that the development impact can be enhanced by minimising costs not just maximising benefits, or by addressing indirect/intangible impacts of tourism not just

Box 3.2: Tourism Compensates for Agricultural Decline in Bolivia

Tourism offers a particularly appropriate opportunity for the Indian community of San Jose de Uchupiomonas in Bolivia, because other economic opportunities are shrinking. They are looking to tourism to create jobs and to protect their land, in the face of agricultural decline. Some families have already left the village, unable to make a living from small agricultural plots and extracting mahogany from the forest. It is hoped that development of ecotourism will create local jobs and stem migration, as well as creating economic incentives for forest conservation (Hendrix 1997).

⁴ The framework for assessing livelihoods in terms of assets, activities, and policy/institutional influences draws heavily on Camey 1998 and Scoones 1998.

direct impacts. It may involve trade-offs between, for example, enhancing training opportunities and maximising immediate cash income, or between exploiting all available opportunities and avoiding dependence on a volatile industry. Participatory planning of tourism is the most direct way to ensure that local livelihood priorities influence tourism development.

3.5. Active Participation, Not Just Involvement

At its most passive, community involvement in tourism is no more than local residents filling jobs and selling products. At the other extreme, communities plan and initiate developments, and set the framework within which the other stakeholders act. There are many midway points, such as active participation at the individual level, by entrepreneurs developing new initiatives; passive involvement by communities, in which collective income is 'received' - or somewhat more actively 'earned' but still without their participation in planning. What is possible will vary enormously from place to place, and in particular will differ inside and outside protected areas (as in the latter decision-making will always be shared with conservation bodies). Table 3.2 classifies different types of local involvement in tourism, from passive to active, and from involvement of individuals, to community institutions, to full involvement of community members.

The question is how to move across the table from passive to active and also down the table from individual to collective involvement? At the top left (generating wages) tourism may lead to growth, jobs, and individual advancement, but also to development problems listed in Section 2. It may be idealistic to believe that development based on a competitive industry such as tourism will ever be a route to community development and empowerment, as represented by the bottom right extreme. However, the empowerment principles already mentioned above and often used in other types of community development work (ensuring communities have rights, and local people are aware of their rights and their role in exercising them) can be powerfully applied within tourism. This highlights the importance of **integrating social development skills** with business and conservation expertise in implementation (Box 3.3).

Box 3.3: Tourism Strengthens Community Institutions and Local Participation

In Namibia, where community-based natural resource management programmes have been going for some years, economic benefits of wildlife management are only just beginning to show, but the social and institutional benefits are already evident (Jones 1997). Communities have established new representative bodies, more open decision-making methods and have gained skills in participatory planning, in order to improve their management of wildlife. Now that collective income is being earned from tourism, it provides further impetus to institutional strengthening and participatory decision making, as new methods and institutions are developed for deciding how to earn or use funds (Ashley 1998). For example, with support from NGOs such as Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), teams of community members gather views on revenue distribution through household surveys, communities form legally registered trusts to enter tourism contracts, and funds are distributed at public distribution ceremonies. These organised and active communities are, in turn, now better able to participate in government regional tourism planning.

Experience from Zimbabwe highlights another important principle: 'grassroots decision-making may only be possible if it is sanctioned from the top' (Hasler, 1995) Rights and responsibilities related to tourism will only reach the 'bottom' if the 'top' agrees to it, so consensus-building at the political macro-level is as important as mobilisation at the local level. However, this consensus may not be easy if definitions of 'rural development' differ. Those working in central government might see jobs and economic expansion

as the primary goal, and hence ignore, or even conflict with, other objectives of boosting local capacity and control.

Table 3.2: Typology of Community Participation in Tourism: From Passive to Active, From Individual to Collective

	Passive involvement	Active involvement	Full participation
Individuals <i>Increasing participation requires:</i>	Local people fill jobs and sell resources	Enterprises run by local entrepreneurs	Network of local industries supplying majority of goods and services
Community Institutions (leaders) <i>Increasing participation requires:</i>	Receive collective income eg given by private operators as donation or to comply with regulation	Earn income eg lease resources, commit cooperation, own community enterprises Give approval for planning decisions	Decide what to earn and how Have a decisive say in planning decisions Collectively manage common resources
All Community Members <i>Increasing participation requires:</i>	Learn of 'community' decisions	Receive shares of community Are consulted on community decisions	Participation in decisions on resource-use, revenue, and conflicts

It is important to assess *who* is given opportunities for participation, to ensure the most marginal groups are not excluded. For example, in Botswana, a new system of issuing wildlife quotas to community trusts was introduced. However, this disadvantaged the San people, who previously enjoyed hunting rights through a Special Licence system, as they were not represented on the community committee that made decisions about wildlife use and benefit sharing (Jones 1997).

3.6 Cooperation With the Private Sector

Most rural economies lack the capital, business skills and international marketing links that are key features of the tourism industry.. Therefore although small-scale locally-run enterprises may well be feasible, community involvement in more sophisticated and profitable enterprises (safari hunting, luxury tours) probably will require inputs from the private sector. The key issue to address here is: **how can normal patterns of private sector involvement be adapted so that residents are not just employees, but also have some choice and control, and act as partners?** This is not likely to be

easy (Box 3.4). Establishing cooperation between communities and investors involves a lot of time, effort, and communication (significant transaction costs), to develop ways of working together and find compromises of mutual benefit. Private operators are unlikely to want to enter partnerships for the sake of it - only if they are necessary to secure profit or decrease risk in some way. Furthermore, they may have quite different ideas of the nature and purpose of community involvement, as outlined in the introduction. For example, the standard approach to CIT, epitomised by World Tourism Organisation,

welcomes community involvement in tourism because it can provide cultural interaction, visitor services, and local products (WTO, 1993). So dancing, guiding and growing vegetables would meet these narrow goals for CIT and probably satisfy private operators, but are unlikely to match the development objectives of local residents. Nevertheless, some successful partnerships between communities and private operators have been established in cases

where the benefit to both sides is clear: the communities have valuable land or wildlife and the operator has international business skills and investment funds, and both need the other to make best use of their resources.

Box 3.4: Joint Ventures - A Catch 22 Situation

In Botswana, in order to protect communities from any mismanagement corruption or maltreatment, leases for joint venture agreements are arranged on a 1-1-3-5-5 year basis: one probationary year, followed by one more, followed by three years and then two five-year leases. At the end of years one, two five and ten the community is able to change joint venture partners if they are not happy. This arrangement has however produced its own problems. Firstly, because there is no guarantee of an agreement beyond the first probationary year, joint venture partners are caught in a Catch 22 situation whereby they are understandably reluctant to invest but at the same time they need to produce jobs and infrastructure in order to gain the support of the community. This in turn has resulted in a second problem of corruption where powerful individuals within the community have been able to extract 'bribes' from the joint venture partner in order to ensure community support.

Source: Boggs 1998

There are at least two different types of measures that could assist in building private-community partnerships. Firstly, **measures that make it worthwhile to the private operator to work with local residents**, and particularly with a representative community rather than one powerful individual. For

example, if marketable assets (such as hunting rights, access to a wildlife area, or access to local cultural events) are under the control of the community or local institutions, the operator must negotiate for their use. Regulations which oblige operators to form local agreements (for example, as a condition of getting an operator's license) might lead to compliance in letter but not spirit, but still can be a useful start to the process. At the same time, the *disincentives* to working with communities can be reduced, by having an outsider facilitate the process, particularly the negotiations (ie reduce or externalise the

Box 3.5: Facilitation and Personal Commitment as Ingredients in Joint Ventures

When the Mahenye community, South East Zimbabwe, set up a partnership with ZimSun for a lodge on their land, a well-known neighbouring farmer in the Safari business, Clive Stockhill, provided invaluable facilitation. The Torra Community (Bergsig, North West Namibia) made a partnership with Wilderness Safaris, that was facilitated by the local NGO (IRDNC), with inputs from economists and lawyers, and driven by the personal commitment of a Wilderness Manager, Peter Ward, and of the community leaders (Bennie Roman and others). Communities in KwaZulu Natal are entering tripartite partnerships with business and government inside protected areas, with the facilitation of a lawyer, Peter Sutch, and others. The role of facilitator has varied in each case, but has been important in all (Goodwin 1997b, Elliot forthcoming, Davis 1998).

transaction costs). It is interesting to note that in many of the successful cases of community-private partnerships, some element of the success appears to be related to the personal commitment of a private operator, and/or support from an NGO or other facilitator (Box 3.5). This suggests that in some cases the private sector's willingness to take on the transaction costs depends largely on the individual personalities involved, and/or the degree of facilitation.

The second approach is to **help communities to know and exercise their market power effectively**. They will be better able to secure benefits if they have awareness of their market power and its limits, have means to find and select from a range of options, and have negotiating skills. Otherwise they may sign away their resources for a pittance. This means that **information provision, skills development and community mobilisation** are needed.

3.7 Minimising Environmental Damage

Minimising environmental damage of tourism and maximising social benefits to residents are often regarded as two distinct challenges addressed by different groups of people. Various environmental problems and remedial strategies are well covered elsewhere in the tourism literature (Roe and Leader-Williams, 1997). However, some environmental issues directly affect community involvement.

Damage by tourists themselves is dealt with through a variety of measures, such as *education, regulation, zoning, raising fees to invest in conservation* etc. Limiting environmental damage is obviously critical for local residents, not just for conservationists. However, some environmental management strategies can conflict with other local benefits. For example, restricting numbers of visitors might lead to a fall in local income, particularly if those tourists that make most use of local services are hit hardest. This is the case at Keoladeo National Park in India, where high fees would dramatically reduce the number of back-packers, who are the main customers for local services (Goodwin et al, 1997c). Other strategies can be complementary. For example, in Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve in Costa Rica and in a marine turtle project north-east Trinidad, requiring tourists to be accompanied by a guide created new job opportunities (because locally trained guides were available) while simultaneously reducing visitor impacts (Baez 1996, James & Fournillier 1993). Therefore **strategies for managing environmental impacts of tourism need to be integrated with measures for enhancing community involvement**.

In some cases, it is local residents themselves who over-use resources, such as fuelwood, coral, or ebony, to supply the tourism trade. This may be for a number of reasons: a lack of tenure over the resource or doubts about future tourism demand (leading to 'use it today before we lose it tomorrow' approaches), lack of information or skills to adopt alternative approaches, or desperation driven by poverty. Therefore the appropriate remedies will vary but will, in most cases, need to integrate environmental and livelihood concerns and reconcile conflicts between individuals who gain by short-term exploitation and others who suffer from degradation.

3.8 Modifying Tourist Behaviour, Limiting Cultural Intrusion

Both regulations and tourism education have a role to play in modifying disruptive behaviour by tourists, although both are likely to have limited impact. In some cases, local residents themselves have organised to provide tourists with codes of conduct, regulate allowable activities or set the terms of engagement (Box 3.6). Such local initiatives may have more influence than national or international codes of conduct, but **can be significantly strengthened if legitimised and promoted by local industry and government**.

Box 3.6: Residents Set the Agenda

Keeping Tourists Away From Whales in Canada's Northwest Territories

In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region in Canada's Northwest Territories a prime concern of the local communities is tourist attitudes towards native use of wildlife, especially whaling, and especially in light of the animal rights movement. Previous experience of exposing aboriginal harvesting activities to outsiders has included public outcries and boycotts. The Inuvialuit have responded by developing Tourism Guidelines for beluga-related tourism activities which are designed to prevent physical interference with whaling as well as misinterpretation of the activity. The guidelines provide the Community Hunters and Trappers Committees with authority to strictly control access and other activities in the harvesting areas and stipulate that subsistence hunting takes priority over any tourism activities. Source: Notzke, C (1998)

Hottentots Don't Live in Mud Huts

The establishment of the Richtersveld National Park in South Africa has been associated with renewed interest in the issue of the 'Nama' or 'Hottentot' culture of the resident community. For many years the Nama had been considered as the lowest of the low and had suppressed their language and distinctive customs in order to gain acceptance. With the establishment of the park however it became clear that traditional Nama culture was a marketable asset. However, the residents made it very clear that while they recognised that Nama culture was a resource that could be exploited within a tourism framework, this didn't mean that they had to become traditional Nama and live in traditional huts or wear animal skins (Boonzaier 1996b).

3.9 Creating Local Conservation Incentives

It seems to be possible, but far from inevitable, that tourism revenue will help create effective incentives for improved conservation of natural resources by local residents. The discussion in Section 2 of its limitations suggests that the incentive effect is more likely if **financial benefits are significant, widely distributed across resource users, perceived as sustainable and are linked to the resource base**. Such conditions alone might be enough to generate a positive but passive response among individuals: for example, reduced poaching or hostility to a national park. But an active response - such as increased investment in conservation, adoption of wildlife as a land use and a livelihood strategy, or collective action to stop poaching - will also depend on whether the **necessary skills, institutions, and rights exist** locally that enable residents to manage resources effectively. Other important factors are whether communities have a sense of ownership or responsibility for the resource, and whether tourism and conservation complement rather than conflict with other livelihood strategies. In many ways this reinforces the need to address participation, livelihood and resource management issues and therefore complements the 'development' agenda. However, differences between the conservation and development perspectives also need to be noted, for example concerning the spread of beneficiaries (across the ecosystem not just the social unit) and the need to publicly demonstrate the wildlife link. The fact that cash benefits are probably insufficient (even if necessary) for conservation, also highlights the need to assess the (assumed) conservation effect of local involvement in tourism more thoroughly and critically under different conditions.

3.10 Supportive Government Policies

There are many different ways in which government influences the form of tourism and the opportunities for community involvement or benefit. Some supportive policies have already been identified in preceding sections, such as using planning systems to maximise market linkages, investing in tourism training, securing tenure rights of communities, and sanctioning grass-roots involvement. These and

many other policy issues are summarised in Table 3.3, which highlights policies that can either help or hinder community involvement. Some general principles underpin the detail:

- Governments are often not aware of how their actions, or inactions, affect community involvement in tourism. The first step is therefore to **focus policy attention** on the issues.
- Often existing policies or procedures *unintentionally* constrain community involvement. Therefore **removing constraints** can be as important as creating new incentives.
- Some of the most influential policies, such as wildlife management, land tenure, land-use planning procedures, transport and credit schemes, are not under the mandate of a tourism ministry. Therefore, **coordination between various ministries** is needed to create a supportive policy framework for community involvement in tourism.
- While governments are critical for determining the planning framework, land use, financial environment, and tourism regulations, they are often not best equipped to address other issues, such as social and institutional development at local level. Involvement of **NGOs** and other organisations should therefore be welcomed.
- There is no blueprint. Therefore possibly the most important policy principle is to establish a **flexible process** with channels for local views to reach policy-makers, and for policies to adapt over time.

3.11. Exploiting the Market and Ecotourism Label

Some people see 'ecotourism' as a useful label for marketing community tourism ventures, and also a way to pass on the additional costs that are incurred in (genuine) CIT to ethical tourists who are willing to pay more for the 'socially-sound label'.⁵ However, this niche market is very limited. The majority of those attracted by ecotourism probably actually care little about local involvement⁶, and most definitions of ecotourism do not prioritise active community participation⁷. Ecotourism usually focuses on environmental matters, with social issues as an add-on. Until ecotourism is redefined to mean tourism which, among other things, secures income for, and is actively managed by, local people, it is probably no more than a woolly marketing tool that carries a risk of masking reality with rhetoric. Furthermore, focusing on ecotourism can also divert attention away from mainstream tourism, whereas modifying the often negative impacts of mainstream tourism can be just as important for communities.

⁵ The cost of enhancing CIT can be considerable, taking into account all NGO, donor, or government inputs plus time spent by community members organising local initiatives (Ashley 1997, Baez 1996, Drake 1991). If the cost of this time was included in the product price, CIT products would become uncompetitive, except in the eyes of ethical tourists willing to pay for their social concern. So if costs cannot be passed on through niche marketing to ethical tourists, some projects will remain dependent on NGOs, donors, or personal goodwill.

⁶ A Lou-Harris poll found that 4 out of 10 American travellers are interested in "life-enhancing" tourism, and this is interpreted as good news for ecotourism (Brandon, 1993). But this probably means enhancing for them, experiencing something new, rather than just joining the hordes on Costa del sunburn. It does not necessarily imply any commitment to social or environmental concerns or any ongoing concern/interest in the place visited - the "this year Galapagos, next year Antarctic" syndrome - or a desire to enhance the lives of local people. Tourists feel that they have paid a lot of money for a great adventure, and often assume they have some inalienable right to see and do whatever they want (Panos 1995).

⁷ Most definitions of ecotourism focus primarily on the environment, and secondarily on social impacts. Phrases concerning local benefits usually fail to distinguish passive individual involvement in receiving revenue from active community participation. Furthermore, most ecotourism definitions they focus on the *purpose* of travel, rather than the actual *impact*.

Table 3.3: Government Policies That Help and Hinder Community Involvement in Tourism

	Policies that help community involvement in tourism	Policies that hinder community involvement in tourism
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community tenure over land, wildlife, and/or tourism rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No rights to utilise wildlife nor to charge tourists/private operators for enjoying tourism attractions in the area.
Tourism planning and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policy statement in support of community involvement in tourism. • Local participation in tourism planning. • Community involvement and benefit a key criterion in government planning decisions on formal sector tourism. • Enclave tourism discouraged. • A planning system for approving new tourism enterprises that is easy for rural people to use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIT ignored in government policies. • Plans of big tourism operators given priority over community developments. • Tourism operators able to get planning approval with no discussion of community benefits. • Urgent deadlines take priority over community consultation and development. • Applications for planning approval too difficult for rural people.
Tourism marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing of community tourism enterprises by the national tourism marketing body. • Emphasis on cultures and people in national marketing, not only on wildlife/wilderness. • Providing market information to community tourism enterprises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing focuses only on the 'big five' and big companies. • No information on community enterprises in government information. • No effective local destination marketing • No sense of local ownership of destinations
Tourism regulation/standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulations that allow for simple tourism enterprise, within limits of health and safety - eg category of 'home-accommodation' or 'basic campsite' with simpler standards than other types of enterprise. • Registration system accessible to rural residents. • Regulations for larger tourism ventures that encourage or require measures to enhance local benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tourism grading system with no 'basic' grades or categories suitable for community campsites, homestay arrangements etc. • Minimum standards set too high for most informal and community enterprises to reach (ie. above basic health and safety requirements.) • Difficult and expensive grading/regulation procedures, requiring access to the capital city, language skills and money.
Land-use planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land-use planning that incorporates community views, recognises tourism as a land-use, supports multiple land-uses, and discourages enclave tourism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No land-use planning. Or planning that ignores local views, and either ignores tourism as a land-uses or focuses only on tourism without assessing links with other sectors.
Tourism training & licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building for rural residents, organised or sponsored by government. • Courses, exams and licenses that are accessible to local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism training and licensing developed for educated urbanites. Only one (high) category of qualification, with expensive courses and exams in the capital city.

	people, and provide qualifications that are appropriate for local enterprises Eg locally-run courses to be registered as a local guide.	
Joint ventures between community & private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive policy. • Regulations/ tenure arrangements that give power to communities. • Government recognition of community institutions with legal powers to enter contracts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No incentive for companies to negotiate with communities. • No governmental recognition of joint venture arrangements.
Micro and small enterprises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies to maximise economic linkages between tourism sector and local enterprises. Eg: through credit, training, joint planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming local enterprise links will just emerge with no help.
Information, staffing and extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community tourism officers or other staff providing information and advice (including enterprise development and social organisation) to community tourism enterprises. • Information provided to the formal sector on how to work with communities and enhance local benefits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only conventional staff trained in tourism planning and marketing, with no community development skills or understanding. Information for the tourist industry only available in the capital, no translations.
Park pricing and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks run in ways that stimulate enterprise opportunities for neighbours (eg craft markets, local guides, taxis etc). • Providing park visitors with information on local enterprises. • Complementary rather than competitive enterprise development inside park. • Giving neighbouring community a tourism concession inside the park. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undercutting accommodation outside the park through subsidised prices inside. • Undermining community ventures outside the park through maximising devt. at prime sites inside.
Credit, tax, incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to credit for small enterprises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit only available to large firms. Taxes/subsidies that encourage capital investment rather than labour-intensive enterprises.
Overall approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive attitudes in government. • Allowing time for communities to develop tourism. • Creating opportunities and removing constraints, rather than planning community tourism for them. • Recognition of multiple livelihood objectives, not just maximising cash income. • Enhancement of local residents' power in the tourism market. • Tourism sector regulations that encourage rather than exclude the informal sector. • NGO facilitation welcomed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ignoring community tourism. • Or the other extreme: government trying to do everything and do it now to establish community tourism enterprises, without allowing time for local people to develop their ideas and skills.

Source: Ashley 1998, drawing mainly on Southern African experience.

3.12 The Bottom Line: Ensuring Profitability

An underlying constraint in all the discussions above is the need to ensure that interventions to promote community involvement in tourism do not undermine profitability. Tourism is a highly competitive industry, in which the private sector is the main actor. If measures to enhance local earnings, redistribute benefits, or address environmental or livelihood issues undermine profitability, they are self-defeating.

Measures to encourage improved relations between private sector operators and local communities have to be sensitive to the fundamental need of investors to return a profit. Regulations and constraints may scare away investors, though this also depends on the competitiveness of the local product compared to other potential investment areas, and how regulations are implemented and perceived.

- Measures that provide **incentives or reduce costs** of working with communities should be considered first, such as training of local staff, facilitation of communication and marketing links between operators and local producers, or extra promotion for ethically-sound ventures.
- **Expectations should be realistic.** For example, in some joint venture negotiations, lacking an understanding of revenue, costs and profit, some communities and NGOs have been known to expect 50 per cent of revenue⁸. As communities, NGOs, and government officials gain better understanding of private sector operations, components of revenue and costs, and determinants of profit, they will realise why this is not possible.
- **Uncertainty over policy or inconsistent application of rules can exacerbate private sector concerns, so any policy must be clear and transparent.**
- If localities, countries and **regions collaborate** to promote a similar investment climate for ethically-sound investment, there is less chance for investors to go elsewhere.

Although some win-win or no-cost measures can be found that enhance community involvement without deterring investment, it should also be recognised that sometimes trade-offs will be involved. Greater community involvement in tourism might involve a slower pace, smaller scale, or different type of development. In such cases, the choice is a political one of competing priorities, but it is important that **information on the trade-offs** is available.

⁸ Even in an established enterprise, costs are likely to consume around 70% of revenue, and profit might be around 30%. A 50% share of profit would therefore be around 15% of revenue. 50 % of revenue is not possible.

4. CONCLUSION: MAKING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TOURISM WORK

Enhancing community involvement in tourism is difficult! Developing tourism in ways that are more appropriate for communities, takes considerable time and effort: extension inputs, participatory planning, conflict-resolution procedures (International Resources Group 1992, Berger 1996). Setting up local enterprises, developing relevant skills, mobilising communities to strengthen their rights and management over resources, building cooperation between residents, private operators and protected area managers, linking into the international tourism market, is not easy, either for communities or for development agents who support them. It is clear from the discussion above that government policies can considerably enhance - or inadvertently constrain - CIT. It is also evident that local level facilitation by NGOs or extension officers can help communities address some major development challenges, and that new private sector approaches are needed. But often the appropriate roles of different stakeholders are not clear or their different approaches can conflict. So efforts to enhance community involvement in tourism need to address the roles and skills of all stakeholders, and how they can be improved. **A vital first step is to focus attention of different stakeholder groups on community involvement as a priority, and not as just an add-on to macro-economic, environmental, or marketing concerns.**

Table 4.1 summarises the key constraints to successful community involvement and outlines some of the strategies that can be employed to address these constraints.

Experience to date suggests that tourism can bring as many costs as benefits to communities. But this is all the more reason to invest effort in community involvement, as many of the costs can be mitigated. In some circumstances, that is probably all that can be done, while in others, tourism can be developed in ways that contribute to secure livelihoods, generate significant local earnings, and stimulate local participation and empowerment. Tourism is a global industry driven by market forces, and local communities generally lack power to participate in the market, let alone to shape it. Nevertheless, experience documented here suggests a range of measures that can enhance communities' market power, while combining social development issues with the economic development opportunities tourism brings. While progress has been made in some countries, and many lessons learnt, new challenges continue to emerge and appropriate strategies will doubtless continue to evolve.

Table 4.1: Strategies to Enhance Community Involvement in Tourism

Constraint	Strategies
Leakage and absence of linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to local enterprise and informal sector • Creation of linkages to local suppliers and with other sectors especially agriculture. • Using planning procedures to prevent enclave tourism.
Limited financial benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the marketing and negotiating power of local communities. • Cooperation with private sector.
Unequal distribution of benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of sales opportunities and informal sector activities relevant to poorest. • Expansion of collective income with transparency over benefit sharing.
Menial jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and skills development.
Trade-offs with other livelihood strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore local livelihood strategies, and adapt tourism to them. • Promote complementarities with other activities, address conflicts.
Limited participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve residents in tourism decision making (both planning and enterprise development). • Encourage information flow and participation within community structures.
Instability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid over-reliance – complement existing livelihood strategies.
Natural resource damage and disrupted management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure environmental management strategies complement local involvement and livelihood priorities.
Intrusion and cultural disruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support local initiatives at codes of conduct and tourism regulation.
Limited contribution to conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure benefits of tourism are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • widely distributed to resource users, reach the main 'threats'; • tangibly linked to conservation; • sufficient to outweigh costs of conservation; • appropriate and relevant to local conservation attitudes.
Partnerships with private sector needed but difficult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give communities market power. • Facilitate partnerships, reduce transaction costs. • Help communities exercise negotiating strength.
Lack of supportive policy environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus attention on CIT issues. • Remove constraints, while creating incentives for CIT. • Develop inter-sectoral and inter-agency approach, which is responsive and adaptive to grass roots.

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Enhancing community involvement in wildlife tourism: Issues and challenges

The *Wildlife and Development Series* is published by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to highlight key topics in the field of sustainable wildlife use. The series is aimed at policy-makers, researchers, planners and extension workers in government and non-governmental organisations world-wide. The series arises from two sources. Firstly by invitation of IIED to others working in this field, and secondly from IIED's own work.

In many countries, efforts are being made to enhance involvement of rural communities and the poor in the tourism industry. Community involvement offers the prospect of enhanced rural development, conservation, and a more broadly-based tourism industry. However, experience to date has also thrown up many limitations and challenges. This paper explores some of those challenges and identifies strategies for addressing them, based on experience in a range of countries. It aims to provide practical examples and an analysis of key issues for those who are also wrestling with these issues.

The paper was commissioned as part of the Evaluating Eden project—a global, collaborative research project co-ordinated by IIED which aims to explore the myths and realities of community-based wildlife management. It draws on the regional reviews done for Evaluating Eden, as well as on a range of other literature.

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