

Tourism and women empowerment in Monduli District, Arusha-Tanzania

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Abstract

This study looks at the role of tourism on women empowerment and was carried out in Monduli District, Arusha- Tanzania. Survey data was collected using a household questionnaire survey, focus group discussion, semi-structured interviews, and also by means of physical visits. It also combined secondary data through literature review of previous studies and aimed at provide an overview of the potential of tourism in contributing to women's empowerment, tensions and complexities in the environment facing women and also offered tentative recommendations for better benefits for women. Moreover the study revealed that the relationship between tourism and development has been carefully explored in the discipline of tourism studies and also in the community development environment. However, very little research has been carried out into the women empowerment dimensions of this relationship and less attention has been paid to the unequal ways in which the benefits of tourism are distributed between men and women, particularly in the area of Monduli. Tourism presents both opportunities and challenges for gender equality and women's empowerment. This paper attempts to unpack some of the issues involved in such an undertaking, and it provides an overview of some of the key empirical areas that need to be taken into account for better women empowerment through tourism. It also suggests an agenda for future research to meet the Millennium Development Goal – gender equality and women's empowerment.

Key Words: Tourism as Development Strategy, Women's Empowerment, Sustainable Development, Monduli, Millennium Goals.



Source:<http://tanzaniaidshuron.wikispaces.com/file/view/untitled.JPG/204459596/348x280/untitled.JPG>

Introduction

Since the 1848 Seneca Falls Women's Rights Conference and the subsequent *Declaration of Sentiments*, issues of promoting women empowerment and the enjoyment of human rights by women are goals in their own right in Tanzania and also instrumental and key to achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the implementation of the Beijing platform for Action, the Cairo Programme of Action, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Ampumuza 2012). Tourism is one of the issues that engages both the global and the local aspects of the issue and there has been no exception to this goal. There is no more profound avenue to demonstrate that women empowerment has entered the realms of the most popular and rapidly growing global industry than the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)'s resolution to include women empowerment among its 'triple commitment' objectives to the Millennium Development goals UNWTO (2011).

As the fastest growing industry, tourism has shown potential in not only contributing to but also championing women empowerment initiatives. UNWTO (2008) for example, reveals that women make 60-70% of the total tourism workforce. And elsewhere (Ong, 2009) clearly reveals how tourism, with the embedded element of social entrepreneurship, can perfectly work as the input to Unlock doors for women. From this phenomenon, it is therefore clear that tourism has created chances and opportunities for women empowerment.

Because of the role of tourism in poverty reduction there are many researchers' who are still skeptical about the potential of tourism to open doors for the rural poor. This study focussed mainly on women empowerment. For example, Chok, Macbeth and Warren, (2007) and Scheyvens, (2000) are doubtful suggesting further study of the proposition

that tourism can alleviate poverty and empower women. Equations (2007), adds that tourism keeps women in traditional tasks such as housekeeping, waitresses and running accommodation units. Citing from developing countries as a case in point, this paper uses a critical perspective to challenge such arguments and bring hope to all involved in the noble task of making tourism work for women by critically unpacking the different ceilings that have been shattered thus far (Bansal, S.P. & Kumar, J. 2012).

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), it is evident that in 1950, the top 15 destinations of the world absorbed 88% of international arrivals, and in 1970 this proportion dipped to 75% and even further to 57% in 2010, reflecting the emergence of new destinations, many of them in developing countries (URT, 2011). In this regard, this paper focuses on what this growth has meant for women empowerment – particularly from a Tanzania- Monduli district perspective. The paper examines the status of women and their position in tourism, the nature of women's employment in tourism, women in tourism's informal sector, the effect of depletion of natural resources on women and the challenges to women's rights as stakeholders in all aspects of tourism development. Monduli District has several tourist attractions and fast growing sub-town like Mto wa Mbu due to various tourism activities taking place in the area such as *inter-alia* curio shops, cultural tourism, tourist hotel/lodges, agricultural and travelling agencies (Mariki, *et al.*, 2006). This paper addresses the tourism-women empowerment debate to hopefully bring an understanding of how the initially perceived 'order' has been changed, that is, re-ordered to a time when women empowerment through tourism has become a major topic in academic and non-academic debates at the local and global levels.

The study area

Monduli District is one of ten districts in the Arusha region of Tanzania. The total

land area of Monduli is 1,420,000 hectares and it borders Arumeru and Rombo districts to the east, Ngorongoro and Karatu districts to the west, Mbulu and Babati districts to the southwest and Simanjiro district to the south. To the north lies Kenya. Most areas in Monduli District have poor soil fertility and are marginal with the exception of a few areas of Mto wa Mbu and Monduli Juu. The land use types at Monduli district is divided in the following hectares Agriculture 198, 800, Grazing 994,000, Forests 14,200 and Woodlands 213,000 Human Population: According to Census Monduli District has a population of 109,292 and in the year 2000 it rose to 181,134 with growth rate of 4.3%. Income per capita GDP is 140,000 Tanzanian shillings (US\$160) (Muganda, M. 2009).

Study Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore in more depth, issues related to tourism and women empowerment in Monduli district Arusha. The guided specific objectives were the following:

Investigate whether the unstoppable tourism growth contributed to women's empowerment in the area

Identify challenges facing women from harnessing tourism opportunities available

Investigate whether tourism business venture give equal opportunity for women empowerment

Suggest alternative mechanisms which can improve/accelerate women benefit from tourism industry.

Materials and Methods

Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open ended questions. The aspects covered in the questionnaire included: demographic information, social-economic information, benefit flow for women empowerment, challenges facing women empowerment and suggestion for improvements. Before administering the questionnaires, they were pre-tested and

revisions were made for questions which were ambiguous. A total 25 households which were randomly sampled were selected in each village.

Focus group discussions

Focus group discussion with groups comprising of 10-14 respondents was used to collect in-depth information from, elders, girls and women. Issues which were discussed included benefits realised by women from tourism activities in the area, women barriers in access benefits and suggestions to increase benefits.

Key Informant Interviews

Interviews with various tourism stakeholders such as tourism entrepreneurs, village government leaders, ward executive officers; women and local communities were done. These stakeholders were thought to be important due to their extensive local knowledge, experience, expertise, and their involvement with the tourism sector in the study area in question.

Physical visits

Visits to some women in tourism related projects in the study area were conducted with the intention of physically seeing, among other things, the current status of development projects in the study area. The visits also enabled the researchers to personally view various socio-economic activities initiated by woman in the area, and also provided better understanding of what happens on the ground in relation to tourism investment and benefits flow.

Secondary data review

Publications relevant to the study were accessed from libraries, search engines and government offices.

Data analysis

The edited and coded data obtained through the questionnaire was subjected to analysis using **Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)**. Responses were summarized into a number of different categories for entry into SPSS, and the categories were identified after looking through the range of responses

received from each respondent, and then each response categories were assigned numbers.

Literature Review

Empowerment is defined as a critical aspect of gender equality and implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights and obligations in all spheres of life. A critical aspect of promoting gender equality is the empowerment of women, with a focus on identifying and redressing power imbalances and giving women more autonomy to manage their own lives. Women's empowerment is vital to sustainable development and the realization of human right for all. Tourism is a tool to empower women in various ways. Tourism could assist women to increase their power and control over the natural resources; economic empowerment; educational empowerment and political empowerment (Ateljevic *et al.*, 2008).

According to Swain (1990) men and women are 'unequally impacted' by tourism. Tourism becomes a vehicle for exploring the differences and commonalities among women Bolles (1997). Scheyvens (2000) describes experiences from the Third World in the promotion of women's empowerment for example, through involvement in ecotourism. Gupta and Shah (1999) present a case where women in Himachal Pradesh, India took advantage of the tourist industry's reliance on beautiful stable mountainsides, to mobilize resistance against deforestation. The ecotourism needs enabled the women to strengthen their case for inclusion in important work. This means that their involvement in joint forest management increased (UNWTO 2011). In this way they had control of how other tourism activities in the area should be ordered- not letting the male dominated accommodation enterprises deplete forests for fuel needed for the tourist's

heating needs. Wearing and Larsen (1996) state that in many cases women have a closer connection with the physical environment of their community. For example the Maasai women generally have special knowledge of walking routes, craft production and useful plants, all of which can be related to the development of tourism products and services (van der Cammen, 1997). In such contexts it would seem logical that these women will become more involved in managing tourism projects. Ghodsee (2003) argues that assisting economic sectors like tourism employing large percentages of women at comparatively high wages will help improve the relative economic well-being of women. In other cases however, in terms of formal employment, local women are often overlooked when lodges and other tourist sites are developed, due to gender discrimination.

In many contexts women miss out on formal employment opportunities in tourism because social norms continue to restrict the type of economic activities in which women may engage. Scheyvens (2000) also mentions that the representation of women in decision-making structures is notoriously poor beyond the village level because meetings often necessitate travel. This may be a problem for women, both because it can involve taking them away from their traditional roles and obligations for periods of time, and also because of the suspicion that a woman travelling alone will probably commit adultery. Swain (1990) claims that the production of ethnic art by Kuna women in Panama and Sani women in China serves as a viable way to resist cultural assimilation. Most of the women producers seems to be empowered at the household level by the production of ethnic arts. In communities where culturally and environmentally appropriate forms of tourism are occurring, and where women are involved in running or servicing tourism ventures, this often leads both to greater respect for women and a

reconsideration of gender role stereotypes (Scheyvens, 2000).

Ateljevic I. *et al.*, (2008) state that ensuring that women have some control over income derived from ecotourism is particularly difficult in societies where men control household finances. In some cases, women's groups use tourism as a source of revenue for community projects. For example in Nepal, the Langtang women perform cultural dances for tourists and use the funds raised to restore their local monastery (Lama, 1998). While commenting on tourism and women development in Nepal, Lama (2000) further reveals that tourism enterprises such as guiding and providing accommodation and food to the tourists provides the women with an opportunity to communicate and express their views. He argues that through their interaction with tourists, communication and expression, the women who have for long been kept in house chores and child rearing get

empowered psychologically by learning English. Rogerson (2004) reveals that the once white dominated bed and breakfast sector in South Africa's tourism is now dominated by black women. His research shows that among the 44 enterprises studied, 35 were operated by women. He further indicates the women's past experiences in tourism empowered them to start up the bed and breakfast enterprises

Results and Discussion

Respondent's social characteristics

The socio-economic characteristics of the study area are presented in Table 1. At Migombani village 80% of the respondents were males and 20% were females while in Barabarani village 52% were males and 48% were females. In Majengo village 84% were males and 16% females.

Table 1: Household Social Characteristic

Village	N	Sex%		Age%				Economic Activities					
		Male	Female	18-35	36-45	46-55	>55	LV	BS	EM	AG	CP	ST
Migombani	25	80	20	48	32	8	12	16	8	4	64	4	4
Barabarani	25	52	48	48	20	8	24	12	30	12	24	6	16
Majengo	25	84	16	40	44	8	8	28	16	2	48	2	4
Average	25	72	28	45	32	8	15	19	18	6	45	4	8

Source: Field data (2011)

N= Sample Size

LV= Livestock keepers

BS= Business People

EM= Employees

AG= Agriculture

CP= Carpenters

ST= Students

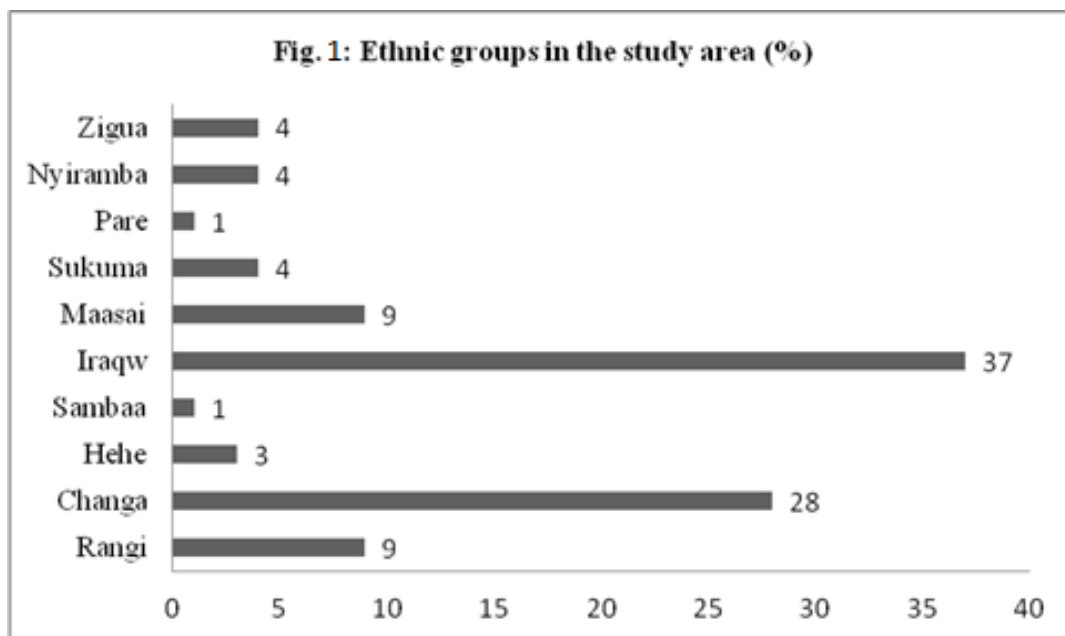
Overall in the three villages combined, the majority of the respondents were males (72%, n=75). The higher proportional of male relative to their female counterparts could have happened by chance. The case of respondent's age, most of members (45%) were in the age group of 18-35 years followed by the age group of 36-45 (32%). Respondent's social economic activities during data collection were also identified. About 45% were involved in agriculture while (19%) livestock keeping and 18% in business ventures. From the general economic

activities men were highly involved compare to women this can be associated with community cultural affairs where by some works seems of less attractive are highly done by women (Table 2).

As for ethnic groups, overall, the majority (37%) were Iraqw (Figure 1), followed by Chagga (28%). Other minor groups include, Rangi, Maasai Nyiramba, Sukuma, Zigua, Hehe, Sambaa and Pare. Mariki and Shechambo, (2003) argue that the area is the most linguistically diverse and complex in Africa. It is the only place

in the African continent where the four major African language families -Bantu, Khoisan, Cushitic and Nilotic -live together. The area has a multi-ethnic

community composed of 120 tribes out of about 126 ethnic communities in Tanzania (Aref & Ma'rof, 2009).



Source: Field data (2011)

General Tourism Activity and Gender Involvement

Tourism offers significant opportunities for both men and women to own businesses and be employed. Opportunities that may be realised vary from one village to another although they are all common to tourism activities. The variation of the social economic activities varied due to factors such as traditional norms, accessibility and location. This study revealed that overall, opportunities that are categorised as housekeepers where women score 79.1% of participation, and

men 20.9%, agriculture (women 57.2%, men 42.8%), entrepreneurs (women 52.2%, men 47.8%), hotel workers (women 47.3%, men 52.7%), travel agency (women 36%, men 60.7%). Generally at village levels, Barabarani had the highest percentages of women tourism activities involvement followed by Migombani village. This was expected mainly because these two villages are the most active villages in terms of having a high number of business ventures and larger coverage compared to Majengo village. Women are almost twice more likely to be employers in the tourism industry than in other sectors in the area

Table 2: Men and Woman proportional Involvement in Social Economic Activities

Barabaran i village	House Keeper		Travel Agency		Agriculture		Hotels Worker		Entrepreneur	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	17	8	10	15	15	10	10	15	10	15
	22	3	7	18	18	7	8	17	11	14
	19	6	7	18	14	11	15	10	13	12
Sub-Total	58	17	24	51	47	28	33	42	34	41
	77.3%	22.7%	32%	68%	62.7%	37.3%	44%	56%	45.3%	54.7%
Majengo village										
	20	5	5	20	15	10	11	14	15	10
	18	7	18	7	16	9	12	13	18	7
Sub-Total	38	12	42	27	31	19	23	27	33	17
	76%	24%	36%	54%	62%	38%	46%	54%	66%	34%
Migombani village										
	23	2	20	5	10	15	10	15	13	12
	21	4	4	21	11	14	14	11	10	15
	19	6	6	19	14	11	15	10	11	14
Sub-Total	63	12	30	45	35	40	39	36	34	41
	84%	16%	40%	60%	47%	53%	52%	48%	45.3%	54.7%
Average	79.1%	20.9%	36%	60.7%	57.2%	42.8%	47.3%	52.7%	52.2%	47.8%

Source: Field data (2011)

Women and Tourism Employment

Several women tourism employment activities were realised out of the respondents and 24% were gardeners and cleaners, 21.3% waiters, 16% housekeeper, 14.7% housekeeping, 9.3% shopkeepers, 4% security guard and tour guide/driver. Tourism activities in the area provide opportunities for women to grasp benefits in diversity although there are still notions that some of the jobs are there for women as they are considered to be weak as per the cultural values, but they use these kinds of jobs to take care their families. There are many researchers who are still doubtful about the potential of tourism to open doors for the rural poor and women empowerment. Chok, Macbeth and Warren, (2007) and Scheyvens, (2000) are very doubtful suggesting further scrutiny of the proposition that tourism can alleviate poverty and empower women. While Equations (2007) adds that tourism keeps women in traditional tasks such as housekeeping, waitresses and running accommodation units.

Drawing from African examples, this paper uses the Actor-network perspective to

challenge such arguments and bring hope to all involved in the noble task of making tourism work for women by critically unpacking the different ceilings that have been so far shattered. Although a moral imperative, very few women have the right to equal access to opportunity, reward and status as in the case of men in the tourism workplace when they undertake similar work, as well as when aspiring to be promoted and advanced. Because of historical and cultural factors, women may also merit the support of affirmative action in order to attain such equality. UNWTO (2005) reveals that women represent a talent pool in the hospitality and tourism skills economy that is at least as great as that of men in the area and there is clear commercial logic to foster this talent, both in the interests of companies and the wider economy. Despite developing tourism industry opportunities by numbers, and the apparent "diversity advantage" this brings, women continue to be under-represented in senior positions and general management roles and when it comes to women in leadership roles the sector falls short of other industries that don't demonstrate the same advantage UNWTO (2011). In general term, women are well represented in formal tourism employment. However, women are more

likely than men to be working at a clerical level, are less likely than men to reach professional-level tourism employment,

and as a result, their average take-home pay is lower than men's (Table 3).

Table 3: Women Tourism Employments

Employment	N=75	%
Managers	5	6.7
Housekeeper	12	16
House keepers	11	14.7
Shopkeepers	7	9.3
Waitresses	16	21.3
Security guard	3	4
Gardeners and Cleaners	18	24
Tour Guide/Driver	3	4
Total	75	100

Source: Field data (2011)

Tourism and Women Entrepreneurship

The study revealed that women are also getting chances to become entrepreneurs from tourism opportunities available in the area where 26.7% are farmers, 21.3% sell agricultural products, 17.3% own shops and bars, 12% own fast food shops and restaurants, 6.7% are personal guides, 4% sell traditional medicine, 2.7% serve as tour operators/Travel agency company owners. The opportunity involves even women immigrating from various part of Tanzania in order to find jobs. WTO indicates that women make up a significant proportion of the hospitality industry's work-force, and any talent management strategy that does not incorporate a focus on female human capital would thus be illogical. On this basis also, ignoring the barriers to the inclusion of women in the potential supply of talent would be illogical. However, evidence shows that the following is happening: Hospitality Industry Women hold less than 40% of all managerial and supervisory positions in the international hospitality industry (Baum, 2013) and women hold less than 20% of general management roles (Sinclair, 1997) Women are identified as owners of less than 20% of hospitality businesses and only around 10% of hotels worldwide (Sinclair, 1997).

Women make up between 5% and 8% of corporate board members of publically-quoted hospitality businesses (Sinclair, 1997). In a 2015 report, the WTTC highlighted the consequences of talent imbalances and talent shortages in global tourism, focusing on serious business and profitability consequences. Of the talent challenges faced by hospitality, perhaps the major issue is that of a failure to utilize talented women to the best effect within the industry, particularly at senior levels. In 2010, the International Labour Organization (ILO) highlighted the challenges faced by women in the hospitality workplace when it noted that "A divergence between qualifications and workplace reality is observable for women, who make up between 60% and 70% of the labour force. "Unskilled or semi-skilled women tend to work in the most vulnerable jobs, where they are more likely to experience poor working conditions, inequality of opportunity and treatment, violence, exploitation, stress and sexual harassment" (Baum, 2013). Entrepreneurship empowered these women economically, boosted their self-esteem and helped them earn the respect and admiration of their spouses. UNWTO (2011) shows that despite the fact that women have been in charge of enterprises in some parts in their world countries for at least thirty years, it has only been from the 1990s on that women's entrepreneurship has grown and become more visible. This

situation is related to both the social and economic circumstances, which have improved in various country even in some developing countries during recent decades (Iakovidou et al. 2007). However, conditions prevailing in rural areas are considerably different from those existing in urban areas, and the case of developing countries could be summarized in this regard by poor infrastructure, the inhabitants' low educational level, their ageing, etc. Due to these factors, the

appearance of women's entrepreneurship was delayed in the developing countries compared both with urban areas and with rural regions in other developed countries (Iakovidou *et al.* 2007). Women's entrepreneurship is heavily dependent on diversified activities outside the farm and especially rural tourism.

Table 4: Woman Tourism related Entrepreneur Activities

Activity	N=75	%
Tour operators/Travel agent	2	2.7
Fast food restaurants	9	12
Shops/Bar owner	13	17.3
Farmer	20	26.7
Traditional food restaurant	5	6.7
Renting bicycle	2	2.7
Selling traditional medicine	3	4
Personal guides	5	6.7
Selling Agriculture Product	16	21.3
Total	75	100

Source: Field data (2011)

Tourism and Women Empowerment Challenges

Major challenges are sexual exploitation (34.7%), unequal payment (26.7%), unequal opportunity (20%), discriminatory cultural norms and traditions (18.6%). The study revealed some challenges faced in attempts to use tourism to empower women and understand that these challenges are not unique to the tourism industry. Some have existed right from household level to other levels and sectors although often in covert ways. In fact tourism has shed light on all the challenges and intricate nature of the social issues and how these have always impacted women. Scheyvens (2000) wrote that Third World women social norms still prevail in determining which kind of activity women engage in thus most of them are left to informal work when tourist sites are developed. Where Equations (2007) argue that tourism has only reinforced inequalities between men and women citing sex tourism, stereotyped roles and representation of women in tourism, disparities in payments and the fact that

there are a few women in managerial positions. Therefore, a position here is that these challenges and those to come do not spell tourism's failure to empower women but are rather products of externalities. Externalities are the negative outcomes of the ordering process as different entities (women) try to reinforce and curve out their position in the network. So, climate change, sexual exploitation and disparities among others can be viewed as the externalities produced by the process of trying to get women empowered by tourism (UNWTO 2010; & Duflo, E. 2012).

Moreover climate change, terrorism and political instability are also key emerging challenges that have been identified as seriously affecting both tourism and women to the extent that many are losing hope especially on the African continent (Deutsche Bank Research, 2008; UNDP, 2008). These challenge might seem to be beyond the means of the women in

tourism, and more so for the projects however this can be seen as another chance for women globally re-assert their

role, leadership and seniority in dealing with tourism issues.

Table 5: Challenges facing women appreciate tourism opportunities

Challenge	N=75	%
Sexual exploitation	26	34.7
Unequal payment	18	24
Cultural norms and traditions	10	13.3
Unequal opportunity/treatment	13	17.3
Poor Education	8	10.7
Total	75	100

Source: Field data (2011)

Suggestions on women empowerment challenges

During focus group discussion respondents suggested three main mechanisms that could contribute in improving women benefits from tourism activities take place in the area. The first mechanism is to ensure that there is an active women participation in the tourism development process and this should be done by all stakeholders. The second is government to make the destination competitive so that it is able to attract sufficient number of tourists to provide a wide room for women to involve and diversify tourism activities. This should be done in cooperation with government and other tourist stakeholders like, tour companies, travel agencies and conservation agencies. Gartner (1996) argue that this reflects the argument that tourists are not drawn to the area simply to stay with local communities but because of the attraction base available which would provide the types of experiences that satisfy their desires. Lastly, it should be ensured that a destination is sustainable and promises a viable tourism business. There are also other determinants which may lead to women empowerment for equal benefits in tourism opportunities.

The first determinant is the need to create economic opportunities which women must have access to and can take advantage of to change their life. The second is empowerment of local communities, especially women. This means strengthening the women's ability to act for themselves and to have voice in

the local and regional decision-making process (Duflo, E., (2012; Doran. A., 2014; Naila Kabeer 2005). It also aims to enhance their capacity to influence their interests and engage, pursue and benefit from any economic opportunity (Equations, 2007). In particular, empowerment involves getting rid of the barriers that work against the women and building their capacity to engage effectively in markets (UNWTO 2010). Adebakin and Raimi (2012) argue that since the poor have limited financial capacity and therefore limited capacity to tackle various risks such as health problem, economic shocks and natural disasters, creating opportunities and empowerment is not enough. In this case, the third component - security - is fundamental - to create the two determinants, opportunity and empowerment, and accomplish the desired objective of poverty alleviation (Duflo, 2012). In simple terms, a social security system is needed to enable empowered women to alleviate poverty through tourism while protecting them against risks mentioned above.

Scheyvens (2000), Swain (1990), UNWTO (2010), & Duflo (2012) all argue that in spite of a number of challenges, the opportunities for women in the tourism sector are still significant. Women already make up the majority of workers in the hotel and restaurant sector and are more likely to be employers, own-account workers and ministers in this sector than in other sectors. At the same time, an average of 2.1 million young people will be entering the labour market in sub Saharan Africa between 2012 and 2017. The

tourism private sector is poised to harness the significant potential of women and youth and to stem youth migration from rural to urban areas, both for the sustainability of the sector and African development as a whole (Ateljevic I. *et al.*, 2008). In addition to this potential, a complementary African policy framework is in place to support these goals. The Africa Action Plan, Tourism Action Plan, Gender Policy and Youth Charter all affirm their strong commitment to the fair inclusion of women and youth in Africa's economic development (Iakovidou, Koutsou, Partalidou & Simeonidou, 2007).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has demonstrated that tourism has the potential to assist women empowerment and developments in adjacent areas and beyond through initiating socio-economic development projects, employment, boosting the country's foreign reserves and buying of farmers produce for use in local hotels. Despite these positive achievements, there are still a number of barriers that limit the ability of women to capture tourism-created opportunities. Some of the barriers include lack of women's empowerment in accessing capital assets and quality education, social stereotypes and inadequate linkages between the tourism sector and other sectors such as agriculture so as to enable farmers to easily sell their farm products.

Recommendations

- Training and capacity building: to enable women run the tourism enterprises, so that psychological and physical empowerment is reached. Engaging in tourism enterprises will not only break the social bubble that has always kept the woman indoors, but also raises their self-esteem whilst providing an opportunity for the entire society to acknowledge what women can accomplish outside the traditional

home tending. By this, women attain social empowerment which further provides them with ladders to even political empowerment. Also empowering women through tourism has gone beyond the individual boundaries of women. Most women look beyond the self and use often meager proceeds from tourism businesses to cater for their children and entire community needs.

- Financial support: Tourist business ventures have to establish an identified system on providing soft-loans toward local women in order to support more women community initiated projects. This will increase the extent to which the local women in the area gain benefits out of these ventures surroundings their area.
- More emphasis should also be on direct benefits: Tourist business ventures need to re-look at how they can improve their benefits at individual level especially in needy communities rather than concentrating on indirect benefits only. This will increase their contributions in alleviating poverty among local communities' especial women involved in tourism related businesses.
- It is important to integrate all the key stakeholders who can contribute to ensure that women in the area benefit in the available tourist business ventures. The stakeholders may also include tour operators/travel agencies, environmental and conservation authorities, government, NGOs, and the local communities. This could also increase conservation benefits access by women who are keen to protect their areas.

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