

# The Role of Tourism on Poverty Reduction of People: A Case Study of Magambo Sub County in Rubirizi District

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**Abstract:** *The study was about the role of tourism in poverty reduction in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district and was guided by the following objectives: To examine the relationship between tourism and poverty reduction in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district, to assess the barriers to poverty alleviation in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district and to establish the perceptions and experiences of poor people in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district. The study used a population of 200 individuals who comprised of Tour operators, tourism officials and the community members and a sample of 130 respondents. The research design that was used is a descriptive analytical study that consisted of both Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Generally, this research explored primary and secondary data about the role of tourism in poverty reduction in Uganda with specific objectives. Findings indicate that out of 130 respondents who were reached, 50(38.5%) respondents said that tourism brings the jobs to mostly the youth and the women followed by 40(30.8%) of the respondents who said that it is a Source of direct revenue to the local people and 20(15.4%) of the respondents said that tourism promotes the programmes geared at the development of the local people and also promotes modernization. Findings revealed that lack of capital that was represented by 53.8% of the respondents, lack of education and knowledge that was represented by 50(38.5%) of the respondents and preference of low risk and low profit options represented by 10(7.7%) of the respondents were the main barriers to poverty alleviation in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district. Findings also indicates that 60(46.1%) of the respondents revealed that Poverty is attributed to attitudes and behaviour of poor people and people perceive poverty as being caused by lack of arable land and unfavorable climatic conditions and 10(7.6%) of the respondents perceive that the poor people have no choice. The study suggests the following recommendations. To expand employment benefits from tourism, the study suggests that the governments and other tourist stakeholders should provide tourism education to her 72 people, as many business owners list a lack of skilled labor as a key challenge. This should be given especial high attention in Rubirizi district because the study noted that the tourism sector in Rubirizi district is experiencing problems in the recruitment and retention of competent skilled managers and middle management staff. Most of the big hotels hire managers from outside Rubirizi district. Tourism and its related activities should be promoted not only for accessibility of infrastructure, but also for empowering individual or collective group of local communities who are willing to engage in the tourism related activities in order to increase benefits for local communities within and outside the study areas with tourist attractions. The study suggests that the government should ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socioeconomic benefits to all tourism stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities and contributing to poverty alleviation*

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Background to the Study

This research examines the interrelationships between tourism, poverty alleviation in Magambo village in Rubirizi district. Building upon the perceived contribution of tourism to economic growth (Akyeampong 2011; Rogerson 2006, 2012), it argues that growth is necessary but insufficient by itself to alleviate poverty (Bolwell & Weinz 2008; Bowden 2005; Butcher 2003; Choke et al. 2007; Dagdariven et al. 2002; George & Frey 2010; Lansing & de Vries 2007; Neto 2003; Wattanakuljarus & Coxhead 2008; Winters et al. 2013).

Although the tourism sector in developing countries almost doubled its total tourist arrivals from 257 million in 2000 to 442 million in 2010 (United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 2011b), it has not alleviated poverty on any broad scale (Donaldson 2007; Muganda et al. 2010; Pleumarom 2012; Scheyvens 2007).

Research suggests that most tourism benefits have not gone to the poorest groups, but instead to the less poor and to tour operators (Nguyen et al. 2007; Pleumarom 2012; Rogers & Harman 2010; Scheyvens 2011; Stronza & Gordillo 2008; Suntikul et al. 2009).

At the 2000 Millennium Summit, the United Nations (UN) identified poverty alleviation as one of the most crucial tasks and adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) where the first goal was to halve the number of people living on less than US\$1.25 a day by 2015. The UNWTO promptly embraced this challenge, adopting the pro-poor tourism (PPT) concept which was defined as tourism that “increases net benefits for the poor and ensures that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction” (Ashley et al. 2001, p. viii). It then endorsed the Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Initiative and Foundation (UNWTO 2011a). In particular, the UNWTO considered 2007 a critical year where tourism was recognized as a key agent in poverty alleviation and a significant contributor to sustainable development (UNWTO 2007). On the one hand, this change demonstrates the UNWTO’s increased commitment to achieving the MDGs as a UN specialized agency. On the other, it indicates the UNWTO’s improved perception of the importance of poverty alleviation to sustainable tourism and sustainable development overall. The UNWTO has since placed poverty alleviation at the Centre of the sustainable tourism agenda, as partly evidenced by a greater pro-poor focus in its important publications (UNWTO 1999, 2002a, 2002b, 2004, 2005a, 2005c, 2006, 2011a). In Vietnam, the traditional cultures, historical relics, scenic landscapes, and political stability have contributed to the country’s increasing popularity as an international tourist destination (Huynh 2011; Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT) 2011a). Vietnam’s tourism sector witnessed growing numbers of foreign tourists from 2.4 million in 2003 to 7.5 million in 2013 (General Statistics Office of Vietnam (GSOV) 2010; VNAT 2011b, 2014b).

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Given its widely perceived potential for economic growth, tourism has been chosen as one of the main tools available to eliminate poverty particularly in developing countries (Croes & Vanegas 2008; Pleumarom 2012; UNWTO 2011a; Winters et al. 2013). Tourism appears to have greater potential for poverty alleviation than other sectors for its particular characteristics (Ashley et al. 2001; Rogerson 2006, 2012). First, tourism is a diverse industry that provides scope for wide participation, including that of the informal sector. Second, the customer comes to the product, creating opportunities for linkages (e.g., souvenir selling). Third, tourism is dependent on resources, some of which may be owned by poor people. Fourth, tourism is labor-intensive and can generate employment for many people. Finally, compared to other sectors, a higher proportion of tourism benefits accrue to women (Ashley et al. 2001; see also Akyeampong 2011; Rogerson 2012). Since the 1990s, increased numbers of research studies and development projects have been conducted in many tourist destinations countrywide. Ugandan scholars have sought an appropriate model of tourism development, where economic benefits for poor people are often emphasized as a means of poverty alleviation. Some of these projects have achieved improved living standards and/or increased awareness of local communities (Huynh 2011; Rogers & Harman 4 2010). However, reports suggest that most tourism benefits have accrued to richer groups and tour operators, instead of poor people (Dang 2009; DiGregorio et al. 1996; Grindley 1997; Nguyen et al. 2007; Nicholson 1997; Rogers & Harman 2010; Suntikul et al. 2010). Given enormous economic earnings generated, most small and medium tourism businesses have only concentrated on making the best use of tourism resources, both natural and cultural. These business owners rarely consider whether tourism earnings have anything to do with poor people at tourist destinations in particular or whether they alleviate the country’s poverty in general (Nguyen 2002; Rogers & Harman 2010; Vu 2009). Although many of the locals have improved their awareness of and participated in tourism, they encounter various obstacles. Meanwhile, others are reluctant to change their lifestyle and hence continue to depend on natural resources for food and income (Dang 2009; Nguyen 2002; Nguyen 2006; Nguyen et al. 2007; Suntikul et al. 2010). The limited contribution of PPT endeavors may be because measures that demonstrate the impact of tourism on poverty are missing (Goodwin 2006, 2009; Harrison 2008; Mitchell & Ashley 2010; Thomas 2013; Winters et al. 2013). However, there are also suggestions that tourism has not been significantly connected with poverty alleviation (Nguyen et al. 2007; Rogerson 2012; Snyman & Spenceley 2012), the evidence being that scant research attention has been given to the concerns and aspirations of poor people (Holden 2013; Holden et al. 2011; Muganda et al. 2010). Indeed, Pleumarom (2012) argues that PPT discourses and initiatives are of little value if the voices of poor people are not duly considered. In addition, little is known of the multi-dimensional nature and various causes of poverty in tourist destinations, although the centrality of poverty alleviation to the sustainable tourism agenda has been established in the extant literature as noted above. As Amsden (2012) states, poverty reduction measures are flawed largely because they do not address the causes of poverty. Research suggests that poverty is both multi-dimensional and complex. Poverty may be attributed to internal factors (e.g., poor people’s behaviour) (Moore 2012; Niemela 2008; Sawhill 2003; Wagle 2008) and/or social and structural factors (Ajakaiye & Adeyeye 2001; Begovic et al. 2007).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The Purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of tourism development on the poverty reduction in Magambo Subcounty, Rubirizi district

### **Specific Research Objectives**

1. To investigate the interrelationships between tourism and poverty alleviation
2. To Examine the barriers to poverty alleviation in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district

3. To Explore the perceptions and experiences of poor people and key informants in Magambo Subcounty regarding tourism as a means of poverty alleviation.

## SECTION TWO

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

The study used a case study design. A case study design is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of complex issues in its real-life context. A research design is a logical sequence that connects empirical data to a study's initial questions and eventually to its conclusions (Yin, 2003). A case study design involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system; i.e., a setting or a context (Stake, 2005). The researcher also used both qualitative and quantitative approaches for data collection and analysis to provide thorough and broader findings. The quantitative approach was used to quantify incidences in order to describe current conditions while qualitative approach was used to explain the events and describe findings using interviews and documentary review.

#### Study population

Population refers to the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate (Sekaran, 2014). The study used a population of 200 respondents comprising of tour operators and residents.

#### Sampling Size

According to Kothari (2005), a sample is a small group of the whole population taken as the representative of a whole population. The researcher used a sample of 130 respondents out of the study population. The distribution of the sample was shown in the table below;

**Table 2.1: Distribution of Sample Size**

Categories	Study population	Sample size	Sampling strategies
Tourism Operators	60	30	Purposive
Residents	140	100	Simple random sampling
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>130</b>	

Source: Primary Data, 2021

#### Sampling Strategies

The study used both purposive and simple random sampling.

#### Simple random sampling

Simple random sampling was used to select respondents. This strategy will be chosen because it gave chance to all respondents to participate in the study. Simple random sampling will be used to select 100 residents to take part in the study.

#### Purposive Sampling

The study was purposive sampling where by 30 tour operator staff will be selected to take part in the study. This helped to ensure interviewing of people with relevant information about the study.

#### Data Collection Methods

The methods for data collection included questionnaire, interviews and documentary review.

#### Questionnaire Method

The researcher used this method to collect data from residents because it was convenient as respondents would fill questionnaires during their free time and had a chance to consult for views and information about the research problem. This consisted of a number of questions printed or typed in definite order on a form or set of forms. They were designed to bring out silent aspects of the research.

This method was used because it is reliable, simple and needed minimum cost and the required data was collected with a minimum number of errors.

### **Interview Method**

The researcher used interviews during data collection from staff. The aim of using interview method is to explore the respondents' views, feelings, perceptions and experiences about the study. The interviewing method helped in collecting data directly through face-to-face interactions from respondents who will be considered to provide more in-depth data.

### **Documentary Review**

Documentary sources contain data that was collected and compiled for other purposes. The secondary sources consist of readily available information and report whose data was used by researchers for their studies. This method was used to collect secondary data by studying the available documents within the financial institutions, such as reviewing records for more information.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The researcher used different data collection instruments which include questionnaire, interview guide and documentary checklist basing on the objectives of the study.

### **Questionnaire**

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data as questions will be designed to collect data from the study respondents. This helped to gather quantitative and qualitative information regarding the variables under study. A questionnaire was used because it increases the degree of reliability due to the many items in it and it enhances the chances of getting valid data (Amin, 2005). The questionnaire was designed in Likert format (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). Questionnaires were also preferred because they were convenient as respondents filled them during their free time and had a chance to consult for views and information about the research problem.

### **Interview Guide**

This is an instrument which consists of unstructured questions used for in depth interviews with key respondents to validate the range of information (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Formal interviews were conducted by the researcher to provide in-depth information about the issues under study. Interviews are methods of data collection, information or data gathering that involves asking a series of questions. It represents a meeting or dialogue between people where personal and social interaction occur (Jupp, 2006). The interview guide was used to collect data during interviews. The reason for using this guide was to collect firsthand information that will not directly be got using a questionnaire.

### **Documentary Review Checklist**

Document analysis involves the detailed examination of documents produced across a wide range of social practices, taking a variety of forms from the written word to the visual image (Jupp, 2006). Documentary review checklist will be used for purposes of reviewing data from documents. Data was obtained through the use of published and unpublished documents. Various publications, magazines, financial statements, newspapers, reports, journals, internet, historical documents and others sources of published information were reviewed by the researcher.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis involved the conversion of raw data into information that was be interpreted. Quantitative data was analyzed separately from qualitative data and the results of both analyses was triangulated to make conclusions.

Data analysis involved editing, coding, classifying and tabulating the collected data. The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. Qualitative data, particularly responses from interviews was analyzed following the content analysis. The analysis of the quantitative data was done using descriptive statistics that is frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to show the weight of the responses. Data was recorded manually, editing, coding and tabulation was done, tables were drawn using Microsoft excel program of a computer.

## SECTION THREE: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

**Response Rate**

During the study, the number of the sampled respondents who participated in the study was computed to establish their adequacy for the generation of the required study data. The response rate of each category of the study respondents is presented in table below.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

Categories	Study population	Sample size	Response rate	% Response rate
Tour operators	60	30	30	100%
Local residents	140	100	100	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data, 2021

As presented in the table, the sample size of 130 was selected from the two categories of respondents. Out of the 130 selected respondents, all the 130 respondents actually participated in the study (100%) response rate.

**Relationship between tourism and poverty alleviation****Table 2: Relationship between tourism and poverty alleviation**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Brings the jobs to mostly the youth and the women	50	38.5
Contributes to modernization	20	15.4
Source of direct revenue to the local people	40	30.8
Promotes the programmes geared at development	20	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data 2021

From the table two above, out of 130 respondents who were reached, 50 (38.5%) respondents said that tourism brings the jobs to mostly the youth and the women followed by 40 (30.8%) of the respondents who said that it is a Source of direct revenue to the local people and 20 (15.4%) of the respondents said that tourism promotes the programmes geared at the development of the local people and also promotes modernization.

**Table 3: Barriers to poverty alleviation**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of capital	70	53.8
Lack of education and knowledge	50	38.5
Preference of low risk and low profit options	10	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data 2021

Findings revealed that lack of capital that was represented by 53.8% of the respondents, lack of education and knowledge that was represented by 38.5% of the respondents and preference of low risk and low profit options represented by 7.7% of the respondents were the main barriers to poverty alleviation in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district.

**Table 4: Perceptions and experiences of poor people in Magambo Subcounty in Rubirizi district**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Poverty is attributed to attitudes and behaviour of poor people	60	46.1
People perceive poverty as being caused by lack of arable land and unfavorable climatic conditions	60	46.1
The poor people have no choice	10	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Data 2021

Findings from the Table 4 above indicates that 60(46.1%) of the respondents revealed that Poverty is attributed to attitudes and behaviour of poor people and people perceive poverty as being caused by lack of arable land and unfavorable climatic conditions and 10(7.6%) of the respondents perceive that the poor people have no choice.

#### SECTION FOUR: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

##### Conclusion

Based on the objectives of the study and the finding in this study, the research concludes that tourism and its related activities had some contribution to the poverty alleviation in the Rubirizi local communities. The purpose of this study was to find out the contribution of tourism activities in poverty alleviation in Rubirizi Subcounty and to prove the belief that tourism is an important to reduce the poverty rate in the developing world. From the results of the study, it is very clear that tourism is the suitability tool for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Tourism industry in Rubirizi is a major economic sector. The findings also provide shade of light on the improvement income per day and assets ownership in the study areas. Furthermore, the employment becomes a major concern Statistic can shed light on the contributions of tourism businesses to jobs creation and assess the impact of public policy and private investments on the job creation potential of tourism characteristic activities. Although most research participants in this study indicated that tourism could play a key role in enhancing economic benefits and improving their livelihoods, however the study finding also noted some challenges faced people participation on tourism related activities and poverty alleviation such as being lack of credits (poverty), lack of awareness on how to invest in tourism, lack of incentives, and lack of qualification to work in tourism among others. These standpoints remain the main obstacle of poverty alleviation through tourism in the study areas. Last, but not least, the research participant suggested some action to address the challenges through tourism, such actions include enhancing access of credit to local communities, raising awareness about tourism, enhancing access to education, involvement and empowerment of local communities in the tourism management, enhancing capacity building programs, promoting community-based tourism. The belief of the research participant is that if the proper initiative will take to address that challenge, the proper beneficial economic and social benefit will increase drastically in Rubirizi district local communities.

##### Recommendations

To expand employment benefits from tourism, the study suggests that the governments and other tourist stakeholders should provide tourism education to her 72 people, as many business owners list a lack of skilled labor as a key challenge. This should be given especial high attention in Rubirizi district because the study noted that the tourism sector in Rubirizi district is experiencing problems in the recruitment and retention of competent skilled managers and middle management staff. Most of the big hotels hire managers from outside Rubirizi district. Tourism and its related activities should be promoted not only for accessibility of infrastructure, but also for empowering individual or collective group of local communities who are willing to engage in the tourism related activities in order to increase benefits for local communities within and outside the study areas with tourist attractions. The study suggests that the government should ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socioeconomic benefits to all tourism stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities and contributing to poverty alleviation. There is a need for a high degree of community participation in tourism planning and management process as the key for tourism prosperities and public awareness of pro poor tourism. That will enable the community to have full utilization of tourism opportunities available in their destination

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