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Promoting the Culture Sector through Job Creation and Small Enterprise Development in SADC Countries: The Ethno-tourism Industry

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Annex 1

Namibia – A country with marked potential for development of the ethno-tourism sector

(1) *Primary existing strengths*

- Strong tourism infrastructure
- Strong tourism presence
- Marketing
- Committed government support
- Well-developed NGO support
- Government-NGO-industry cooperation
- Commitment to development of industry
- Commitment to developing community-based projects
- Political stability

(2) *Primary existing weaknesses*

- Ethno-tourism currently not well represented
- Decline in tourism
- Lack of relevant statistics
- Legislative obstacles: (i) entry requirements; and (ii) permission to occupy permit requirements

(3) *Links of value chain to be targeted and suggested interventions.*

- Beginnings

- (a) Increase awareness of the potential of the product in Namibia.

Tour operators and communities need to be made aware of the commercial potential of their own cultural resources.

- (b) Identify potential locations and players.

The critical factors that influence the success or failure of an ethno-tourism venture are the location of the venture and the competence of the players. Suitable locations on tourism routes, which have interesting cultures with willing players, need to be identified in order to encourage new ventures that have a great opportunity for success.

- Production

- (a) Network with existing successful products in other countries.

Visits to successful ethno-tourism enterprises in neighbouring countries will provide an insight into the potential of ethno-tourism and the practicalities of operating such a venture. Such exchanges will also allow the visitors to learn from the errors of preceding experiments and will also generate confidence.

- (b) Train players/liaise with existing NGO's. Focus on hospitality and communication skills.

While the knowledge required for ethno-tourism is indigenous and endemic, many players are not skilled in communicating with tourists. They lack an understanding of tourists' needs and requirements. This is a critical area for intervention. There are NGOs that specialize in hospitality training (ZIMHOST in Zimbabwe) and there are NGOs that are dedicated to liaising with and training community-based tourism ventures (NACOBTA). The basic ingredients for this intervention exist and simply require motivation.

- Circulation

- (a) Educate local tour operators and agents about the products.

Local tour operators and agents are critical for the successful marketing of the product. It is essential that these local tour operators are aware of the existence of the products as well as the value and quality of these products. NACOBTA should be tasked with launching a domestic education programme about ethno-tourism, including educational familiarization visits for tour agents. Government may be willing to finance this exercise through the Ministry of Tourism.

- (b) Educate international travel agents and public about the products.

For the product to be successful, marketing must extend beyond the domestic tour operators and agents to include international travel agents. The Ministry of Tourism should be encouraged to use its overseas offices for this purpose. NGOs such as ACTSA in the United Kingdom could be solicited for support.

- (c) Market the product via travel shows and the Internet.

NACOBTA and the Ministry of Tourism should be attending international travel shows with the express purpose of educating foreign travel buyers about ethno-tourism in Namibia.

The Internet is rapidly becoming a vital tool for travel marketing and information dispersal. The Namibian Ministry of Tourism must commission a web site dedicated to providing information and booking of ethno-tourism products in the country. NGOs involved with these products can assist with the design and maintenance of this web site.

- Delivery

- (a) Ensure quality control of products.

Poor quality of the product has been identified as an important threat to the growth of this sector. It is essential that the quality of ethno-tourism products be established and maintained. This can be done by way of legislated requirements for licensing.

- Audience development

- (a) Encourage contributions and critiques of products by travel journalists and tour operators.

In addition to the familiarizations for tour operators and agents that was suggested above, travel journalists should be invited to visit the ethno-tourism ventures and to comment upon them.

- (b) Assess consumer response and adjust product accordingly.

Feedback from tour operators, travel agents, travel writers and clients must be taken into account in adjusting the product. This feedback should be encouraged by requesting it in questionnaires and can also be obtained by reading resulting articles. The players responsible for the product must assess the significance of the feedback and whether it warrants changes in the production and delivery of the product.

Key actors and constituents

- Department of Tourism
- Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Namibia Tourism Development Programme)
- CBNRM – Community-based Natural Resource Management Programme
- NACSO – Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations
- Namibia Community-based Tourism Association
- WIMSA – Working group for Indigenous Minorities of Southern Africa
- FENATA – Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations.

Annex 2

Zimbabwe – A country with potential for development of the ethno-tourism sector

(1) *Primary existing strengths*

- Strong tourism infrastructure
- Historical tourism presence
- Culture is nationally recognized as a tourist draw-card
- Country has always included ethno-tourism in marketing
- Marketing infrastructure
- Communications infrastructure
- Existing ethno-tourism products
- Ethno-tourism dominated by micro/small enterprises
- Many aspirant entrepreneurs

(2) *Primary existing weaknesses*

- Decline in tourism
- High cost of money/unavailability of soft loans
- Lack of relevant statistics
- Legislative obstacles – entry requirements
- Absence of government support

(3) *Links of value chain to be targeted*

- Beginnings
 - (a) Identify potential/emerging/struggling locations and players

Intervention must be strategically targeted and should focus on existing enterprises that are well located and therefore have potential but are struggling to establish themselves because of a deficiency that can be provided.
 - (b) Increase awareness of Ministry of Tourism and Environment regarding industry value.

The ethno-tourism sector in Zimbabwe is not recognized as an important component of the tourism industry. Like many African countries, Zimbabwe still perceives itself narrowly as a wildlife tourist destination. The Government players need to be made aware of the potential of ethno-tourism to contribute to employment and income generation as well as the other beneficial contributions that this sector may make.
 - (c) Encourage establishment of relevant NGO for training and marketing.

Although tourism is an important employer in Zimbabwe, there are very few NGOs present. There is a tendency for the Government to control all development in the country, where shared involvement with a dedicated NGO would achieve more rapid results.

- (d) Assist in creation of a national/regional ethno-tourism route.

An ethno-tourism route that also incorporates other attractions such as wildlife and World Heritage Sites would make the product more attractive and would increase the ability to market ethno-tourism destinations.

- Production

- (a) Network with existing successful products in this and other countries.

Visits to successful ethno-tourism enterprises in neighbouring countries will provide an insight into the potential of ethno-tourism and the practicalities of operating such a venture. Such exchanges will also allow the visitors to learn from the errors of preceding experiments and will also generate confidence.

- (b) Train players. Focus on hospitality and communication skills.

While the knowledge required for ethno-tourism is indigenous and endemic, many players are not skilled in communicating with tourists. They lack an understanding of tourists' needs and requirements. This is a critical area for intervention. The NGO, ZIMHOST, based in Zimbabwe and specializing in hospitality training, is the ideal organization to assist with this intervention.

- (c) Provide financial assistance to identified players.

Within Zimbabwe there are several entrepreneurs, who have identified a niche market and possess the raw ingredients for the product, but who lack financial resources to progress any further. The cost of loaning money in Zimbabwe is prohibitively high.

- Circulation

- (a) Educate local tour operators about the products.

Local tour operators and agents are critical for the successful marketing of the product. It is essential that these local tour operators are aware of the existence of the products as well as the value and quality of these products. The ZTA should be tasked with launching a domestic education programme about ethno-tourism, including educational familiarization visits for tour agents. Government may be willing to finance this exercise through the Ministry of Tourism.

- (b) Educate international travel agents and public about the products.

For the product to be successful, marketing must extend beyond the domestic tour operators and agents to include international travel agents. The Ministry of Tourism should be encouraged to use its overseas offices for this purpose. NGOs such as ACTSA in the United Kingdom could be solicited for support.

- (c) Market the product via travel shows and Internet.

The Internet is rapidly becoming a vital tool for travel marketing and information dispersal. The Zimbabwean Ministry of Tourism must commission a web site dedicated to providing information and booking of ethno-tourism products in the country. The Zimbabwean Tourism Authority is already well represented at several international travel shows and should exploit this opportunity to increase awareness of the country's ethno-tourism products.

- (d) Assist identified players with marketing.

The players identified as having potential will need assistance with marketing. Marketing is a costly and specialized exercise.

- Delivery

- (a) Ensure quality control of products.

Poor quality of the product has been identified as an important threat to the growth of this sector. It is essential that the quality of ethno-tourism products be established and maintained. This can be done by way of legislated requirements for licensing.

- Audience development

- (a) Encourage contributions and critiques of products by travel journalists.

In addition to the familiarizations for tour operators and agents as suggested above, travel journalists should be invited to visit the ethno-tourism ventures and to comment upon them.

- (b) Assess consumer response and adjust product accordingly.

Feedback from tour operators, travel agents, travel writers and clients must be taken into account in adjusting the product. This feedback should be encouraged by requesting it in questionnaires and can also be obtained by reading resulting articles. The players responsible for the product must assess the significance of the feedback and whether it warrants changes in the production and delivery of the product.

Key actors and constituents

1. Ministry of Environment and Tourism
2. Zimbabwe Tourism Authority
3. ZIMHOST
4. CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management for Indigenous Resources)