

INCLUSIVE TOURISM IN SENEGAL

ADDING VALUE WHERE IT COUNTS



PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The project ran from 2006 to 2009 with the objective of improving rural livelihoods by linking poor communities from the district of Rao to tourism in the adjacent metropolitan area of Saint-Louis, in the North of Senegal. Additional income and jobs have been generated for the rural poor through the sales of products and services to visitors and to tour operators, hotels and restaurants. The project was part of the International Trade Centre's (ITC) Export-led Poverty Reduction Programme (EPRP) which aimed to help poor community producers by enhancing their entrepreneurial capacity and to understand and meet market requirements. EPRP furthermore created and enhanced sustainable and fair market linkages between local producers and tourism markets.

THE CONTEXT

The Saint-Louis region covers 19,000 km² and has about 870,000 inhabitants, 59% of whom are under 20 years old. There is a wealth of cultural and natural diversity in this region, granting it prime positioning in terms of cultural tourism in Senegal. The project targeted especially women, youth and ethnic minorities, all of whom have a low level of purchasing power. Tourism had been identified in the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study of the Integrated Framework as a sector with development potential. The project was also designed in line with the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Accelerated Growth Strategy.

ACTIVITIES

An opportunity study was conducted by ITC to identify potential beneficiaries from three main sectors: agriculture, cultural activities, and excursions. Specific capacity building activities enabled selected community members to offer quality products and services to hotels, restaurants, tour operators and tourists. In addition, hotels were trained in specific fields such as eco-tourism and quality management. The Vakantiebeurs 2006 tourism fair in the Netherlands organized in collaboration with the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) on the European market of tour operators included a joint presentation of West African destinations, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali and Senegal and provided a unique opportunity to sell the destination.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

The quality of facilities and services for hotels has improved in Saint-Louis. The quantity and the quality for fresh fruits, vegetables, goat cheese and salt were enhanced and connected with local tourism businesses. The project furthermore enhanced the institutional capacity of tourism support organizations. The promotion of more sustainable forms of tourism has contributed to the protection of the natural and cultural heritage in Saint-Louis.

IMPACT ON THE POOR

The project helped to increase capacity of local artisans to diversify production and provided them with management skills on production and delivery time towards both the tourism market and the export market. The standard of living of rural poor rose through additional jobs and higher income.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INTERVENTION

Lessons learned from this pilot project have been instrumental for the Senegalese government in the elaboration of a new wider inclusive tourism project proposal in three regions in Senegal, namely the North region, the Saloum Delta and the Bassari country. The new project proposal which aims to integrate communities in the selected regions into the national, regional and international value chain through the development of the tourism sector in general and community activities in particular has been designed by the Senegalese Government in collaboration with ITC and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The project proposal plans to increase local populations' income and create jobs in the North Region, the Saloum Delta and the Bassari country through tourism development activities by creating and reinforcing small and medium-sized enterprises, building and reinforcing tourism infrastructures' capacity, renovating and constructing community encampments, reinforcing capacities and awareness of local populations on community-based tourism and promoting the three regions. This would be fulfilled in selected priority areas, namely tourism, handicrafts, cultural industries, agricultural production and fishery. In the long term, the project would allow poverty reduction especially in rural areas.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT



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