

## Tourism industry and local development around the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda

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**ABSTRACT:** Tourism is the biggest industry in the world. In Rwanda, they are especially the national parks and more particularly the national park of the volcanoes which attract tourists. The total revenues of tourism are evaluated to 33,381,369 USD for the period rising from 1994 to 2009. The contributions are respectively about 93% for the National park of Volcanoes (NPV), also called Parc of Virunga, 4% for National park of Akagera (NPA) and 3% for National park of Nyungwe (NPN).

The redistribution of tourism income made it possible to fund some projects, among which the housing for the vulnerable people, the basic infrastructures like roads, schools, the development of the agricultural sector, of the craft industry, etc around the NPV. At the same time, the private investments allowed the construction of hotels to accommodate the tourists. The presence of hotels and tourists had multiplier effects on the use and consumption of the agricultural produce of the area. People who lived on forest products became agents of protection of park and sedentary farmers. They were sensitized to create the co-operatives and profited the financing from RDB and its partners. The RDB works narrowly with the international agencies of environmental protection to carry out these actions and to thus ensure the conservation of the biodiversity.

**Keywords:** Tourism Industry, Local Population, Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda.

### 1. Introduction

Tourism is the large-scale industry of the world. The sector presents more than 10% of the world labor market, 11% of the world GDP and according to forecasts, the number of the tourist voyages will reach 1.6 billion from here up to 2020. As such, it has a major impact and growing so much on the environment and the company. The impacts can be negative as well as positive. The development and the practice misfits of tourism can cause the degradation of the habitats and the landscapes, the reduction of the natural resources and the accumulation of waste and pollution. In contrast, responsible tourism can contribute to engender an awakening and a support for the environmental protection and the local culture, and generate

economic outlooks for the countries and the communities (World Wildlife Fund, 2001).

### 2. Methodology

This article presents the conceptual framework of tourism industry through the review of the literature. The quantitative information comes primarily from the reports of RDB and SACOLA (Sabyinyo Community Lodge Association) which is an association of the bordering people with the PNV. These data make it possible to note the redistributions of the tourism income through various projects financed by RDB and partners. The study also analyzes the private investments carried out, in particular the construction of hotels and evaluates its impact on the job creation and

the consumption of the agricultural produce of the area. It is thus a bibliographical study of tourism industry and its impact on the local development. This study does not make it possible to evaluate the impact of tourism industry on the level of household; it presents the effects in a general way. The investigation of ground could make it possible to evaluate well the direct effects on the level of the households.

### **3. Conceptual framework**

1. Tourism industry is made of the amalgamation which coordinates their activities with the purpose of meeting the needs of the tourists in a voluntary way. The coordination of the activities constitutes the principal element and product analyzes is left with the profit of the actors and their interactions (LONGHI, 2004).

2. According to Fennell (2003), tourism industry is currently regarded as one of the large-scale industries of the world. It is also associated with several principal sectors of the world economy. However, it also underlines that while being incorporated in the economic, socio-cultural and environmental structure, the phenomenon became too complex, and its definition, in simple terms, proves to be problematic.

3. By considering that tourism is the most significant industry at the international level, (HUNTER, 1997; quoted by BLAMEY, 2001) stresses that it is essential initially to join together tourism unit and durable development before admitting the tourism potential to contribute to the sustainable development because the two concepts evolved separately. Also, the development of sustainable tourism is the derivative of a more general concept of sustainable development.

4. The park is a protected zone mainly for protection and the re-creation of ecosystem. A surface exclusively intended for the propagation, protection, conservation and the installation of fauna and wild flora, and for the protection

of the sites and of landscapes of a particular scientific or aesthetic value in the interest and for the recreation of the public (FENNELL, 2003).

5. According to ZIFFER (1989), the national parks are selected areas, generally picturesque, where are joined together a great number of beauties of nature (volcanic lakes, torrents, cascades, accidents, etc) and where one endeavours to preserve intact the natural flora and the fauna of the country.

6. The participation of the local populations is formally mentioned in the policy of international conservation of the strategy of the world conservation, and worked out more thoroughly in the campaign "let us take care of the earth" (caring for the earth). It is largely supposed that it is necessary to an effective conservation and a sustainable use of the resources and that the local populations can withdraw larger economic and social benefit thanks to the processes of participation (WWW, 1991).

7. The socio-economic development is a whole of transformations closely dependent which occur in the structure of an economy, which is necessary to the continuation of the standard of living of the population and which can be done by the intermediary of the income and the development of human resources (PHILIPPE and AL., 1993).

8. Tourism industry requires a certain number of elements, SHAW and WILLIAMS identified them in the table 1.

Table 1- Elements de tourism industry

Tourism resources	Natural resources
	Human resources
General and tourism infrastructure	Transport and communication means
	Telecommunications
	Basic infrastructures
	Social infrastructures
Means of reception	Hotels, houses of hosts, cities and villages
	Complementary residences
	Residences for the staff
	Restaurant activities
Sporting and entertainment installations	Cultural and leisure installations
	Sporting installations
Tourist reception services	Travel agencies
	Hotels and local agencies of promotion
	Tourism office
	Hiring of car
	Guides, interpreters

Source : SHAW and WILLIAMS (2002)

### Socio-economic importance of tourism

1. It was shown that tourism generates economic activities in other sectors of production and services. The sector of construction is concerned with infrastructures of lodging, Hotels and other types of the bonds upstream and downstream with the other sectors of production such as, agriculture and fishing. The tourist provisions of services and the tourists themselves create a request as regards transport, of banking and insurance services, telecommunication, medical departments, safety, retail trade, and more particularly, of artisanal articles (Mathieson and Wall, 1982).

2. One of the aspects of tourism which is generally proposed as a positive factor is the fact that it constitutes for the concerned countries a significant source of currencies. The tourist sector seems an industry of export selling its sites, its climate, its environment, its hotel and extra-hotel services with non-national

3. The receipts of the ecotourism can contribute to compensate certain restrictions relating to the use of the lands belonging to the parks and protected areas, thus ensuring financial profits for the bordering population. The tourist product comprises the whole of services and attractions which are at the disposal of tourists at the time of their visits. One can quote for example: entertaining activities like the dense cultural ones, museums, installation of the lakes and landscapes, other festivals, lodging, transport, guide, service of interpretation, etc. (OMT, 2000).

4. Even if each country proposes for its tourist products of the sales points based on its specific cultural and natural assets, one gradually sees appearing a potential request for complementary tourist products related to health care, education, the real estate, the meetings, incentives, conventions and exposures, etc. In addition to each one of these new tourist products reinforces the interactions within the national economy and increases

the receipts in currencies, the tourist products related to health have the advantage of being offered for short stays. The inhabitants of developed countries are increasingly numerous to be made look after in developing countries proposing of the health services of quality at an appreciably less low cost (UNCTAD, 2010).

### **Tourism industry in Rwanda**

1. Tourism industry is very recent in Rwanda, at least concerning international tourism. The latter was mainly developed following the pressing need for the country in currencies and for profiting from the socio-economic advantages allotted to this activity (incomes, jobs, installation of sites, etc). But it is obvious that at the present time, the touristic sector is the pillar of the economy of the country and achieves its various goals (MINICOM, 2005).

2. In Rwanda, the touristic receipts contributed to 2,4% of the GDP in 2004, this percentage is low if one compares it with those of other countries of the East Africa region mainly Kenya and Tanzania whose touristic receipts contribute respectively to 5% and between 6 to 10% of the GDP (Mondhler, 2007).

3. The RDB was created by the organic law n° 53/2008 of the 02/09/2008 on 02/08/2008 in its art. 3 Al. 4 assigns among its principal objectives, the contribution to the proposal and the execution of the policies and the strategies in connection with tourism and the conservation of the national parks and other zones protected as regards tourism, and adviser of the government as regards to the promotion of this sector.

RDB is the body of the State charged to enhance the economic development of Rwanda and to facilitate the activities of the State and the sector deprived out of matter. By instituting this body, the State of Rwanda found that tourism is a sector which could contribute to

the development of the country and begins to promote it. Nevertheless, to reach this goal, RDB with the obligation to help the government, through the Rwandan Office of Tourism and the National parks (ORTPN) which is an institution only in charge of tourism, to define policies and effective approaches favorable to the development of tourism. In other words, the sector of tourism will take care of installing a framework of protection and safeguarding of the natural resources of Rwanda, including the natural reserves and other protected surfaces, and to develop and promote a diversification range of the tourist products in the country. The major role of tourist matter RDB is to help the institutions concerned with tourism to set up strategies having for goal to promote tourism as well at the national level as at a world level. To achieve this, RDB has also the obligation to install mechanisms which integrate in the process all the actors implied in the conservation of the natural environments and tourism as well public as private in order to promote the national economy.

4. Although Rwanda is a landlocked country, it has the remarkable assets to develop its touristic industry. The government mainly gets busy to identify and develop all the places of interest, like lakes, volcanoes, rivers, national parks and other gravitational traditional sites of Rwanda (MINICOM, 2004). Rwanda has a great number of natural and panoramic sites but which require sometimes suitable installations for their optimal tourist exploitation; one raises in this respect, in particular the national lakes, museums and the memorials of genocide of Tutsi.

### **Discussion of the results**

The impact of tourist industry can be negative as well as positive. The development and the practice misfits of tourism can involve the degradation of the milieu of the habitats and the landscapes, the reduction of the natural resources and the accumulation of waste and

pollution. On the contrary, responsible tourism can contribute to engender an awakening and a support for the environmental protection and the local culture, and generates the economic perceptives for the country and communities (WWW, 2001).

This article analyzes the impact of the redistribution of the touristic receipts and its impact on the socio-economic conditions of the bordering populations with the PNV. The

negative effects of tourism are not approached in this publication.

The table 2 presents the tourist receipts of three national parks in Rwanda. Its reading shows the importance in terms of re-entries of currencies of the PNV, it is thus the machine of the touristic incomes in Rwanda thanks to its mountain gorillas coveted by many Western tourists.

Table 2 : Comparison of the national parks revenues from 1994 to 2009

Years	Revenues in USD VNP	Revenues en USD ANP	Revenus en USD NNP	Total revenues
1994	10.475	-	-	10.475
1995	430.542	-	-	430.542
1996	346.164	7.915	596	354.675
1997	149.145	6.375	199	155.719
1998	-	10.619	581	11.200
1999	87.333	8.613	1.640	97.586
2000	281.693	10.877	1.843	294.413
2001	233.176	12.070	2.546	247.792
2002	1.024.137	13.743	6.003	1.043.883
2003	1.402.953	22.897	19.931	1.445.781
2004	2.257.898	114.554	49.102	2.421.554
2005	3.005.783	153.837	86.016	3.245.636
2006	4.523.217	206.200	133.753	4.863.170
2007	6.523.393	196.403	294.605	7.014.401
2008	6.795.533	284.597	306.895	7.387.025
2009	6.309.927	284.964	189.977	6.784.868
Total	33.381.369	1.333.664	1.093.687	35.808.720

Source: RDB-Tourism and Conservation (2009)

ANP: Akagera National Park

NNP: Parc National de Nyungwe

The touristic receipts are increasing in a general way in the three national parks, which confirms the studies of the world organization of tourism (WTO) which constant a progression since more than 50 years, 25 million in 1950 with more 763 million tourists in 2004, a sales turnover of more than 620 billion dollars (either 10% of the world GDP) and 200 million uses

(8%) employment world. The tourist re-entries know a regression between 1996 -1998, period of insecurity in the province of the north of the country. The VNP is thus an obligatory site for foreign tourists, the insecurity in the North province had a negative impact on the tourist re-entries in the other national parks.



According to statistics of RDB (2009) the total number of the people having visited the three parks amount to 38.500 and for the year 2008, the tourists were 43.000, that is to say a reduction of 11%. The reduction in the travelers would be explained by the international financial crisis of the year 2009. The tourists set out again respectively in the VNP, ANP and NNP with 49%, 39% and 12%. They are national citizens (21%), of the foreign residents (9%) and the foreign travellers (70%). 92% of the foreign tourists mainly come to visit the VNP.

Tourists come mainly from Africa (34%, including the nationals, foreigners resident), from Europe (32%) and America (26%).

### Redistribution of the tourist receipts of the VNP

A share of tourist receipts is used to finance the activities aiming at the development of the area around the PNV (school, road), the co-operatives of peasants farmers and ex-poachers. Investors in their turn, build hotels which accommodate tourists, consume the agricultural produce of the area and create jobs with peasants. The table below illustrates some projects financed by RDB by the tourist receipts.

Table 3 : Projects financed by RDB in areas surrounding the VNP (amount in Rwfr)

Schools	32 449 976
Citerns of water	56 967000
Agriculture	47 876 795
Craft industry	6 000 000
Protection of VNP	9 085 206
Total	152 378 977

Source : RDB (2009).

The redistribution of the tourist receipts allows

- The presence of schools around the Park increases the access of children to education and the creation of job in particular for teachers. The education of the children of the area contributes to reduce the potential poachers on the long term.
- The area around the VNP is considered by abundant precipitation. The redistribution of the tourist receipts made it possible to build cisterns to collect useful rainwater for the populations which do not have access to drinking water.
- The agricultural cooperatives as for them, develop activities of reinforcement of the farmers and reconversion of the poachers as sedentary farmers. The agricultural projects carried out around the VNP also relate to the construction of the storage units of the agricultural

produce and the supply of the selected seeds.

- The area around the national parks is recognized for its inhabitants who dealt formerly with the pottery (indigenous people). They were sensitized in order to work in the co-operative and received a financing of 6000 000 Rwfrs of RDB.
- Associations of protection of the park reinforce implication of the bordering population in the protection of the park. These last deal primarily with the formation of the organizers of the conservation.

3. With share redistribution of the tourist receipts through the projects financed by ADB, tourist industry products of the significant multiplier effects in the zones around the PNV: The area has got a boom of inns to house

the tourists. One to quote as an example (i), Guest House Kinigi (11 rooms), (ii) Sabyinyo Silverback Lodge (11 rooms), (iii) Gorillas Nest (25 rooms), (iv) Mountain Gorilla View Lodge (50 rooms), (v) Bamboo Lodge Kinigi (7 rooms), (VI) the paillotte (6 rooms). These hotels consume the agricultural produce of the area and use a share of the local labour of the personnel. That creates incomes with the farmers, the tradesmen and the taxes for the Treasury.

Transport is also an element which profits the positive effects of tourist industry. The roads are improved to allow the transport of the visitors, the travel agencies are many. The agencies international Southern North and Responsible Amahoro & Eco-turns are given the responsibility to transport the tourists. It is also necessary to mention the presence of the local conveyors (luggage stand of the tourists towards the place of interest). The carriers are gathered in a club (association), and each conveyor receives 5000 Rwf a day, pay.

The artisanal products are also a significant source of income for the bordering populations with the PNV at the time of passage of the tourists. The co-operative of craftsmen of Volcanoes (COPAV) receives support RDB and partners. It has 2 houses with Kinigi of one 24 000 000 frw (for the store of the products of art, the other for the administrative office and conference room). The members receive 85% of incomes of their products of art. 15% are used for the constitution of the reserves and

operation of the co-operative.

- The BRD employs the bordering peasants in the rehabilitation and the construction of its houses, the construction of wall baffles and slice it to fight against the savage animals, the guides.

4. Other advantages from which profit the bordering populations

It was created in 2004 an association SACOLA with the assistance of the Rwandan Office of Tourism and National parks (ORTPN), the International Programme of Conservation of Gorillas (PCGI), and the local authorities of the area. The purpose of the founder members of association were 34, representatives the remainder of the population of sectors surrounding PNV. SACOLA is an organization at Community base (OBC), it is to fight against the poverty of the bordering communities with the PNV. The recipients of the activities are evaluated with 49.490 gathered people the surroundings in 13.795 households. Association pursues two goals: (i) to promote the being as of the bordering populations of the PNV by generating activities of incomes and (ii) to promote the conservation of the natural resources of the area of the volcanoes. In its credit, association already carried out the actions in favor of the vulnerable people (construction of the houses), of public and socio-cultural infrastructures.

Table 4: Achievements of SACOLA and partners

N°	Assets of SACOLA association	Amount in Rwfrs.
1	Project of vegetable gardens	5.315.000
2	Construction de SACOLA-villages	58.819.840
3	Purchase of school desks	2.920.000
4	Construction of roads leading to SACOLA hotel 2,8 km	25.000.000
5	Construction of houses for genocide survivors	8.058.270
6	Rehabilitation of cultural centre road	3.889.000
7	Protection of 18 ravines	45.298.100
8	Construction of community walk	25.900.000
9	Construction SACOLA cultural centre	6.415.110
10	Construction of a theatre	6.385.200
11	Construction des water citerns	27.838.980
	Total	215.839.500

Source : SACOLA reports(2009).

## **Conclusion**

The tourist relation industry and the local development around the PNV are established on the one hand through different projects promised in marriage within the framework from the redistribution of the tourist receipts by ARD; other share, by the investments in infrastructure and their multiplier effects in the area. The implication of the residents in the conservation in particular by the promotion of associations of the organizers of conservation (ANICO) makes it possible to positively reinforce their image on the importance of the biodiversity. The rural populations are frequently looked like a source for the safeguarding of “the biological biodiversity” (Sally Jeanreneaud, 2002).

Other research remains however, pessimistic on the local economic, socio-cultural and ecological impact of tourism of mass in the countries of the South: increase in the inequalities, destruction of the local biodiversity and the cultural inheritance, embrittlement of social fabric, abandon of certain traditional activities, increase in land, drastic rise in the price of water, rural migration, creation of seasonal jobs very little qualified and underpaid, frequent recourse to the child work, increase in the prostitution, space concentration of the infrastructures (edges of sea, stations of mountain, historic sites or geographical). Only a very weak share of the money spent in situ is really allocated to the communities, and this one is often monopolized by local elders who are not scrupulous (Duchesne, 2003).

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