

**Country:** Kenya  
**Sector:** Tourism  
**Project:** Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Innovation for Community Empowerment in Kenya (SUS-TOUR)  
**Grantee:** Collaboration Center on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP)  
**Partner:** Ecotourism Kenya and the Federation of Community-Based Tourism Organizations

## Acknowledgements

The SWITCH Africa Green programme was developed by the European Commission to support African countries in their transition to an inclusive green economy, the main objective being to promote sustainable development. This is based on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty.

This impact sheet on *Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Innovation for Community Empowerment in Kenya (SUS-TOUR)* provides a snapshot of results and achievements of the project under the Green Business Development Component of Phase I (2014-2019) of the SWITCH Africa Green Programme. This component supported micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to apply and adopt SCP practices in their business operations.

The project was implemented by Collaboration Center on Sustainable Consumption and Production (CSCP) in partnership with Ecotourism Kenya and the Federation of Community-Based Tourism Organizations with the support of the SWITCH Africa Green National Focal point Charles Mutai, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Kenya and National Coordinator Lily Chebet Murei, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Kenya. The grants were managed by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and coordinated by Celia Marquez with support from Mercy Gatobu.

Supervision and coordination for development of the impact sheet was done by Rhoda Wachira and Patrick Mwesigye and programme support was provided by Carolyn Kilel and Sylvia Munuhe, Africa Office, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The impact sheet was compiled by UNEP consultants, Sheila Karue and Mercy Mumo. Editing, layout and design was coordinated by Communications Division, UNEP.

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## Background

In Kenya, tourism is the third largest foreign exchange earner. The tourism sector contributed 11% to the GDP in 2017 when it generated revenue amounting to KES 119.9 Billion<sup>1</sup>. The sector provided 1.1 Million direct and indirect jobs in the country in 2017<sup>2</sup>. Some of the challenges posing a threat to the tourism industry in Kenya include environmental degradation and deterioration in the quality of tourism products. About 80% of tourists mainly visit seven national parks in the country bringing about congestion and stressing natural resources, while during low seasons the resources remain unutilised.

In Kenya, some communities around the main game parks have established Community-Based Tourism (CBT) activities to enable local communities participate in efforts to promote community tourism and at the same time boost their economic living standards and utilize the wildlife habitat and other attractions as a resource. Challenges facing CBT include lack of business skills among the communities involved and disjointed marketing mechanisms of what they offer.

The project *'Enhancing Sustainable Tourism Innovation for Community Empowerment in Kenya (SUS-Tour)'* promoted community-based tourism development in Kenya based on international best tourism practices. The project facilitated creation of new high-value niche products and made it possible for tourists to experience different local cultures and traditional festivals during all seasons in the year. The SUS-Tour Project targeted tour operators, trainers and local experts to enhance their capacity and co-develop training modules on sustainable business operations.

<sup>1</sup> The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, (2017) Economic Survey

<sup>2</sup> World Travel and Tourism Council, 2017



A study of ten sustainable tourism organizations was carried out to establish the status, challenges and opportunities for community based tourism. Findings of the study provided information on the market needs which informed products that the CBTOs produced and services they provided.

## Objectives

The main objective of SUS-Tour Project was to contribute to sustainable development of tourism in Kenya through promoting customer-oriented innovation and marketing of community-based tourism (CBT) to foster improvement in rural livelihoods and conservation of culture and natural environment.

The specific objectives were to:

1. Transfer knowledge from international best practices to community-based tourism (CBT) organizations in Kenya
2. Enhance the capacity of communities to develop customer-oriented innovation, build effective partnerships and promote sustainability in CBT.

3. Promote coordinated marketing of CBT
4. Provide policy recommendations to guide CBT development in Kenya.

## Beneficiaries

The project engaged 15 MSME on collaborative innovation and marketing strategy development and 19 MSMEs on training of trainers to create high-value products and in product diversification.

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Other beneficiaries of the project include local experts like County Tourism Chief Officers, tourists, local partners like the Federation of Community Tourism Organization.



## Outputs

### Improved stakeholder participation in green economy policy development

#### Policy briefs developed

A **policy brief on community-based tourism in Kenya** was developed. The policy brief highlighted challenges facing community-based tourism faces and proposed ways to promote customer-oriented innovation and marketing of CBT, generating benefits for the community by enabling structural management and governance of the resources.

### Improved capacities of business development services to promote SCP practices by MSMEs

#### Business development service providers supported

The capacity of 53 trainers was enhanced to provide support to MSMEs on sustainable community based tourism practises such as water efficiency, energy efficiency, waste management and material use efficiency.

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#### MSMEs supported to adopt SCP practices

MSMEs were supported to improve the governance structures of the community-based tourism organizations, promote uptake of sustainable operations, develop and improve sustainable products and to improve their online and offline marketing strategies.



### Increased networking among green businesses

#### Awareness raising events organised

The project used various communication channels including the mainstream media, magazines and social media platforms to raise awareness on sustainable CBT. Over 200 community-based tourism organizations and 450 tour operators were sensitized on the development of community-based tourism.

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### Field visits to promote sustainable community based tourism

Field visits were organised to promote sustainable development of CBTOs and tour operators. Two lecturers who had been trained by the project on sustainable CBT carried out training of 5 CBTOs and 2 tour operators. The training informed development of green business plans and they made improvements in their product design.

### Improved capacities of workers in green sectors

#### Training on sustainable community based tourism

The project supported organisation of forums, innovative and mentorship workshops where over 9,000 participants were sensitized on developing and marketing sustainable community-based tourism products and services. A total of 19 MSMEs were trained on 'training of the trainers' to build capacity of sustainable community based tourism.

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### Training on SCP practices

Capacity development programmes were rolled out and staff of the CBTOs were trained on how to monitor and manage water and energy use. A total of 15 community-based tourism organizations were mentored to green their businesses.

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### Toolkits developed

The project developed 3 DIY toolkits with modules on sustainable business operations, product innovation and responsible marketing and communication. Other material developed include the Training Workbook on Sustainable CBT Strategy and Innovation; CBT Marketing Guideline and CBT SCP Checklist. The material developed was used to guide operators and trainers on sustainable CBT strategy and innovation development. The project conducted 4 training programmes on the CBT DIY toolkit of over 30 alumni and 130 students from their networks. The toolkits were disseminated to county officers, tour operator trainers, 200 community-based tourism organizations and 450 tour operators through online channels as well as hardcopies.

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### Outcomes

#### Uptake of SCP practices by MSMEs

#### SCP practices adopted by the CBTOs

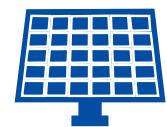
**Water management:** The CBTOs implemented water conservation practices like rainwater harvesting and installation of meters to monitor water consumption.



**CBTOs implemented water conservation practices**

**Energy management:** The CBTOs installed solar panels and replaced incandescent lighting bulbs with energy-efficient lighting bulbs. The beneficiaries also used energy-efficient cook stoves like *jiko-okoa*, that cooks faster while reducing fuel use, smoke, and toxic emissions.

**CBTOs installed solar panels and replaced incandescent lighting bulbs with energy-efficient lighting bulbs**





**Waste management:** Waste segregation was implemented through labelling disposal bins for different types of waste. Biodegradable waste from the lodges was used to make compost manure for farming and biofertilizer and pesticides were developed from rabbit urine. Waste monitoring systems and sensitization materials were also developed.

**Waste segregation was implemented through labelling disposal bins for different types of waste.**

The MSMEs used locally available materials to make handicrafts like jewellery made from bamboo and baskets and mats from reeds.

MSMEs also put in place measures to remind and encourage tourists to save water and conserve energy such notices to switch off lights and sockets when not in use.

**Impacts**

**Environmental impacts**

Environmental and social sustainability principles were implemented in the community such as biodiversity, water management, energy efficiency, and waste recycling. The newly improved cook stoves reduced wood-fuel consumption, smoke emissions and increased the cooking time.



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**Economic impacts**

**Reduction in operation costs**

One of the community-based tourism organizations, 'JATONET cottage' reported a 50% decrease in their monthly energy bills. The CBTO also saved USD 100 spent on water after they started harvesting rainwater.

**Increased number of guests**

Tourist satisfaction rate increased by 20% from providing innovative CBT products, 'JATONET cottage' received over 150 international additional visitors and 'KAKAPEL enterprise' received over 150 additional guests when they started providing new hiking routes.

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**Social impacts**

**Creation of employment**

JATONET recorded over 10 temporary jobs for community members for developing and managing cultural event and campsite. On the other hand, GEM SAURI enterprise created new jobs for creating artwork from waste.

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**Lessons Learned**

- Stakeholder engagement is key in strengthening successful project implementation and its sustainability. This was demonstrated through the synergies created among key stakeholders in community based tourism.
- Simple and easy to follow toolkits and manuals enable users to be more willing to adopt sustainability practices such as the ones developed by the project.
- Practical training enables easier uptake of sustainability practices as demonstrated by the trainings provided under the SUS-Tour project.
- Needs based mentorship and training has better results as it is informed by actual needs of the CBTOs.

“SWITCH Africa Green assisted us in so many activities, for example networking which is very important. They have brought someone who can improve the product, someone who can train for prosperity. They have also assisted us to create a website,”

James Namu, the executive secretary of Otenyo Cultural Group.



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