

TOURISM ROUTES and GATEWAYS:

Key issues for the development of tourism routes and gateways and their potential for Pro-Poor Tourism.

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1. Introduction:

The development of themed routes as tourist attractions has gained prominence in recent years. One key aim of these routes, apart from attracting tourists to an area, is to tie-up several attractions that would independently not have the potential to entice visitors to spend time and money. Using a synergy effect promises to have greater pulling power, and it also disperses visitors' money among a larger number of recipients.

A tourism route may or may not include a 'pro poor' element – that is an explicit agenda to include and promote business operations of the poor. But where small tourism operations are trying to expand, one technique to develop them is to incorporate them as a route. Thus from a Pro Poor Tourism perspective, routes can be an important tool. That said, to meet PPT objectives, certain PPT approaches need to be incorporated into implementation.

The report briefly discusses ideas of dispersal and concentration related to tourism flows. Firstly, the aims and objectives of dispersal and concentration strategies are explored. This is supported by practical examples, in particular by discussing the development of 'wine-routes' in South Africa. Secondly, some key issues and prerequisites for the success of route developments are highlighted. Strategies that are needed to maintain and achieve pro poor objectives of route development are discussed.

This report was written in the early stages of strategy development for the *PPT-Pilots in Southern Africa* project with the aim to inform and guide decision making. Several pilot sites in the programme were considering route development within their PPT approaches. The final section of this report uses one of the Pilot partners, Spier, as an example of how dispersal and concentration strategies could be applied in the development of a pro-poor tourism approach. However, we believe the general issues in here are of wider relevance to others attempting route development, particularly with potential for pro poor impact.

2. Tourism planning strategies: dispersal

Tourism is often developed because it promises to generate employment, enhance community infrastructure and assist in revitalising the flagging economies in rural areas. Declining economic activity, restructuring of the agricultural sector, dwindling rural industrialisation and out-migration of higher educated youth have led to the adoption of tourism as an alternative development strategy for the economic and social regeneration of rural areas. In Eastern Europe, for example, tourism has been identified as a catalyst to stimulate economic growth, increase the viability of underdeveloped regions and improve the standard of living of the local population.

However, tourism as a development option is also increasingly criticised for the alleged insufficiency of revenues, the inequity of benefit distribution, and the perceived social costs for residents, which seem to undermine the very objective for which the development of tourism is initiated. Tourism development is often concentrated in a small number of key destination leaving limited opportunities for more marginalised areas to benefit. In less developed countries of sub-Saharan Africa afflicted by debilitating rural poverty, tourism is increasingly seen as one of the few feasible options for economic development. It has been argued that governments under pressure to create employment and economic growth, frequently fall pray to the dangers of random ad hoc development, without due regard to the economic and cultural well-being of rural communities, the conservation of the environment or the inclusion of local people in decision making (Britton 1991, Drake 1991, Getz 1983, Long, Perdue and Allen 1990, Marsden 1992, Prentice 1993).

The dispersal of tourists and thus the dispersal of tourism's economic benefits to marginal areas coupled with a more integrated product development and marketing approach have been the underlying benefits of

route development. The integration of activities and attractions into one unified route system can serve the stimulation of cooperation and partnership between communities and can act as a vehicle for economic development in marginal areas, both in the developed and the developing world.

Dispersal in tourism planning generally refers to a strategy that aims to disperse tourists away from the main visitor concentration centres or arrival gateways. The three main objectives of dispersal are:

1. To reduce pressure on the core area where key attractions are located by enticing visitors elsewhere;
2. To disperse income from tourism as tourists represent spending power, and if they are drawn to new zones, their presence can provide new opportunities for entrepreneurs and create additional employment. Thus, encouraging tourists to venture into the peripheries of a destination can stimulate the economy in those areas and provide income and employment;
3. To increase the overall attractiveness of a destination by presenting 'new' features of the destination to its visitors, thus providing a platform for revised marketing programs, with the aim to increase length of stay and total spending.

Dispersal strategies aim to increase visitors' satisfaction with the product and thus entice them to stay longer in the destination and ultimately to spend more. It is hoped that by creating linkages to marginal areas, the product appeal is enhanced and these areas can tap into an already captive audience in the region, thus avoiding high investment in developing new economic sectors and industries.

2.1. Routes:

Tourism routes promise to bring together a variety of activities and attractions under a unified theme and thus stimulate entrepreneurial opportunity through the development of ancillary products and services (Grefe 1994, Gunn 1979, Fagence 1991, Lew 1991, Miossec 1977, Long et al 1990, Getz and Page 1997).

Generally, most routes are initiated with one or more of the following objectives in mind:

- to diffuse visitors and disperse income from tourism;
- to bring lesser known attractions and features into the tourism business/product;
- to increase the overall appeal of a destination;
- to increase length of stay and spending by tourists;
- to attract new tourists and to attract repeat visitors; and
- to increase the sustainability of the tourism product.

Underlying the attractiveness of any route is its perceived 'distance' in terms of:

- geographical distance between the generating region and the tourism destination (i.e. the actual travel distance. The willingness to cover this distance might be considerably different for various segments and is determined by the 'appeal' and attractiveness of the product).
- travel time needed to cover the geographical distance (i.e. the possibility to cover the distance as part of a 'day-tripping' excursion, or conversely the need to plan a longer trip and design a route that has sufficient attractions to appeal to longer-staying visitors).
- amount of money needed by the tourist to cover the distance (i.e. how much is a segment willing to spent on reaching and travelling the route, and does the route offer value for money, i.e. are there sufficient attractions that would entice visitation).

- cognitive distance between the generating region and the destination (i.e. the perception of the tourism product and route as being similar or distant to the home environment).

The willingness to cover these distances is of course segment specific. As with the majority of cultural and landscape routes a large percentage of visitors are domestic visitors. A study of South African wine routes estimates, for example, that a distance of 180-200km one-way is the maximum visitors would be willing to travel (Bruwer 1990). Wineries not located within such a radius from main generating areas will be forced to form liaisons with tour operators and accommodation providers to offer 2-3 day winery tours which will need to be attractive enough to entice visitors to come.

One example of using a route as dispersal strategy with the explicit aim to create linkages with suppliers in marginal areas is the Queensland Heritage Trails Network (see box 1).

Box 1: The Queensland Heritage Trails Network

The 2000-2002 Cultural Tourism Incentive Programme "The Queensland Heritage Trails Network" was initiated with the objective to "revitalise rural and regional Queensland economies through the creation of jobs and a sustainable tourism infrastructure" (Queensland Heritage Trail Network 2000:2). The project which functions in partnership with the local government aims to develop a network of thirty two major products, developed around themes for particular local areas or regions and promoting linkages which stimulate and encourage tourists to travel through the state, venturing away from major attractions and enjoying new experiences offered by the lesser known surrounding areas. The total funding of AUS\$110 million is expected to boost the tourism potential of many so far marginalised regional centres in Queensland. The programme is set up as a partnership between the state, federal governments and local communities.

The project forms a network across the Outback and along the coast by adding attractions that have the capacity to add to the tourism potential of Queensland. Gateways as part of the Queensland Heritage Trails Network, presenting a range of tourist information centres, have been established at Maryborough, Townsville and Cairns as strategic entry points to the network. These gateways to Queensland's north and west have been selected to encourage visitors to travel out from the hub destinations of Cairns and Townsville to experience regional and rural Queensland.

The main emphasis is on 'drive-tourism' and close collaborative links have been formed with the Department of Main Roads to look at issues like signage. Tourism Queensland is working with regional tourism organisations and accredited visitor information centres to help market the Heritage Trails Network attractions. Tourism Queensland has also undertaken an extensive marketing and information campaign aimed at tour operators to encourage them to incorporate these local products into their tour itineraries: "the network will provide operators with access to extra attractions and activities". (Queensland Heritage Trail Network 2000:2).

The object is for each project to increase market share and encourage visitors to stay a little longer, rather than compete against each other.

The program's objectives include:

- To provide a major stimulus to Queensland's regional and rural tourism industry;
- To establish a state-wide marketing framework and identity for road-based tourism across the state's strategic tourism routes;
- To promote the Queensland Heritage Trails Network project sites and Queensland's Heritage sites in general; and
- To enhance the experience of the motoring tourist throughout the state.

As an outcome of this initiative, it is hoped that all local governments and Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs) across the state will capitalise on the professional marketing framework provided by the Drive Tourism Program 2000 - 2002 and incorporate aspects of the program into their local areas. This will encourage the motoring tourists travelling throughout Queensland to have a state-wide seamless tourism experience, irrespective of which area they visit. The Signing Implementation Brief has been prepared to provide guidance on the implementation of the Drive Tourism Program for 2000-2002. It gives guidance in relation to sign types, design and legend (including logos), number and location of signs, installation, removal and costs associated with provision of tourist signing schemes and heritage trails and sites signage.

Three pilot corridors have been identified (The Warrego Highway, Matilda Way and Overlanders Way) under the Corridor Management Plan (CMP). The role of the CMP is to provide a basis for on-going development of each themed corridor, the purpose of which is:

1. To increase visitor numbers and expenditure along each route
2. To maximise driver confidence to allow opportunities to take alternative routes and improve road efficiency and increase road safety
3. To raise the understanding among road travellers of the heritage and cultural assets that exist along each corridor

The National Centre for Tourism (NCT) has prepared the CMPs for the three routes, with significant input from local government authorities, Regional Tourist Organisations and other key stakeholder groups.

Tourism routes have in the past two decades mushroomed all over the world, in particular in the developed world. This is because they offer important dispersal and product development opportunities and at the same time fall in line with visitors increasingly wanting to experience new things. Evolving tourism trends have led to a shift away from standardised mass tourism to more individualistic patterns in which greater flexibility and a more meaningful experience have gained prominence (Poon 1989, Hummelbrunner and Miglbauer 1994, Gilbert 1989). It has been argued that rural tourists have a wide range of motivations, from ecological uniqueness, special adventure opportunities, cultural attractions or the peace and quiet of the countryside. Greffe (1994) suggests that this provides a unique opportunity for rural operators in terms of 'economies of scope' by establishing networks of different service providers organised in such a way as to maximise opportunity, and to offer a wide range of products and activities. For suppliers of rural tourism this emphasises the significance of the development of a product that attracts, satisfies and retains the market (Greffe 1994, Hummelbrunner and Miglbauer 1994.)

Routes seem to be a particularly good opportunity for less mature areas with high cultural resources that appeal to special interest tourists, who often not only stay longer but also spent more to pursue their particular interest. As opposed to tourism products targeted purely at long-staying visitors (such as resorts for example) routes appeal to a great variety of users such as international overnight visitors that visit the route as part of a special interest holiday, staying visitors that frequent the route (or part of it) on day excursions, or urban domestic day-visitors. Routes, however, vary considerably in length and scale, as well as theme adopted and visitors attracted both in terms of characteristics as well as numbers. Many routes that are developed with the domestic market in mind are often located in areas that are not of particular interest to international tourists but appeal to domestic visitors eager to learn more about their own culture. Routes thus have a variety of functions and attract different clienteles with a variety of leisure motivations, and this is generally reflected in the routes' theme.

The potential of tourism routes has long been realised in the developed world. In 1964 a Council of Europe working group mooted the idea of a series of European cultural routes with the prime objective of raising awareness of European culture through travelling, setting up a network of cultural tourism and utilising European cultural heritage as a means of stimulating social, economic and cultural development, thus improving the quality of life of local people. The idea came to fruition in 1980 with the establishment of the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Way (see below). This 'Cultural Tourism Route' was defined as "a route crossing one or two countries or regions, organised around a scheme whose historical, artistic or social interest is patently European. The route must be based on a number of highlights, with places particularly rich in historical association" (Council of Europe 2002:2). The programme with over 2,000 partners is based on multilateral cooperation involving a chain of projects and information sharing networks monitored and coordinated by the European Institute of Cultural Routes (see box 2).

Box 2: Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Way

In 1960 a Council of Europe working group presented a report entitled '*Collective awareness of European cultural highlights and their incorporation into the leisure culture*'. Its conclusions were moving towards the idea of discovery through travel: The working group considered it appropriate to place greater emphasis on cultural tourism, which is one of the best ways of using leisure time. Such tourism should not only serve as the visual complement and illustration of basic education acquired at school, but at the same time serve as a social experience and provide an opportunity to develop individual sensitivity" (Council of Europe 1960).

In 1987 the Council of Europe suggested that the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Ways should constitute the first cultural route with the aim to symbolise the process of European construction and to serve as a reference and example for future route projects.

The aims of the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Way were as follows:

- making Europe's common cultural identity more apparent and better appreciated and bringing the European public face to face with its shared cultural identity;
- safeguarding and enhancing European cultural heritage as a means of improving daily life and as a source of social, economic and cultural development;
- providing the public with new scope for fulfilment in their leisure hours by according a special place to cultural tourism and related practices.

To revitalise the Santiago de Compostela Pilgrim Ways, the Council of Europe set itself three objectives:

- to work with specialists from all over Europe to identify the routes and produce maps;
- to create a common emblem which would give a visual identity to the routes as a whole throughout Europe;
- to co-ordinate the activities of public and private partners, and in particular those in the voluntary sector and to encourage activities which respect both the sensitivities of pilgrims and of tourists;
- to provide, particularly to young people who are looking for new recreational opportunities, new ways of encouraging integration in society and ways of feeling more strongly their European identity.

The growing importance of the economic component in tourism, particularly in rural areas or regions experiencing industrial transformation led to the need for an improved definition of the project in terms of development and cultural and economic management. Finally, the diversification of the themes generated new models of functioning and considerably opened up new approaches.

The principles of cultural routes of the Council of Europe are:

- The priority of the cultural routes is and will remain cultural. Offshoots such as research, education, heritage, creativity and tourism are to be welcomed, but knowledge of others and exchanges are still the fundamental elements;
- The Council of Europe's message must be communicated based on its fundamental values: Human Rights, democracy, the rule of law. Cultural routes appear to be particularly well tailored to reinforcing values such as tolerance and solidarity and at combating unemployment, exclusion and the resurgence of xenophobic nationalism;
- The transfrontier and European dimension of the routes may (and must) contribute to the project's interdisciplinary aspect developing an awareness of our multiple cultural identities;
- The conservation and enhancement of the architectural and cultural heritage are an important part of the routes, but they can only take on their full significance when placed in a dynamic relation with contemporary creation;

Cultural Routes are here clearly not reduced to the development of a cultural tourist "product". They are based on a process of cultural cooperation which is constantly evolving thus necessitating constant action, research and evaluation, and the installation of European partnerships with the network.

The initial Compostela route (see below) had as its final destination Santiago. This has since been supplemented with:

- networks of local regional itineraries, constituting a single route or a number of geographically separated ones, but all with the same theme and the same history involving exchanges within Europe, for example Silk and Baroque;
- networks of towns or sites with a shared past, a shared historical approach or shared implementation characteristics like the Hanseatic cities, Cities of Discovery or Parks and Gardens;
- local itineraries as examples of ways of perceiving the mutual influences which run through European history. An initiative like the Wenceslas route in Luxembourg provides a voyage through time and space;
- routes based on the protection of minorities characterised by their itinerancy, such as the Gypsies.

Some of the currently existing European Routes are:

The Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Way, Via Francigena; Rural Habitat; The Silk Routes; The Baroque Route; The Monastic Influence Routes; Celtic Routes; Mozart Route; Schickhardt Itineraries; The Viking Routes; The Hanseatic Routes; Parks and Gardens Route; Writing Frontiers, the Pont de l'Europe; European Cities Discoveries Route; Living Arts and European Identity; The Routes of Humanism; The Wenzel Itinerary; Legacy of Al-Andalus" Route; The Northern Lights Route; Popular Festivals and Rites in Europe; and the Gypsy Route.



Map 1 – Santiago de Compostela Pilgrims Way

Note: The red route is largely designed as a walking/cycling path, while the black routes are mainly motoring secondary roads, designed to feed into the main pilgrims way with the final destination of Santiago.

The aims of the Council of Europe routes are to impose coherence on diverse and separated manifestations of contemporary European heritage by creating historical, economic, and cultural linkages between individual cities, smaller towns, tourist historic cities and regions. While the ensuing multiplicity of experiences enriches tourist consumption, itineraries also offer particular advantages in the promotion of tourism as a spatial development strategy, in that demand and expenditure can be diffused rather than concentrated on particular nodes of attractions.

The initiation of cooperation and partnership between different local areas, regions and even across borders is perceived as an additional benefit of such developments (Hill and Gibbons 1994). International co-operation and the stimulation of cross border flows are not only the explicit aims of the Council of Europe routes but also that of Open Africa (see box 3).

Box 3: Open Africa – Afrikatourism routes

Open Africa was established in 1993 as an NGO with the broad mission to elevate African values, pride and prosperity – based on respectful, restorative, sustainable, and profitable use of the unique qualities of Africa's human and natural environment (De Villiers 2000).

The basic underlying principle is a route system spanning from the Cape to Cairo. The simple reason according to De Villiers was that "route networking is the easiest way of planning and the most effective way of selling tourism, while it also has many benefits for tourists" (2000:243).

The three objectives of Open Africa are:

- to stimulate the development of Afrikatourism Routes
- to gather information on Afrikatourism resources
- to disseminate information on Afrikatourism to potential participants and consumers

The first route publicised by Open Africa in 1999 was the Fynbos Route near Stanford in the Western Cape of South Africa. This route has acted as a model framework for further route development in line with Open Africa's ideals and priorities. While the concept of a tourism route is not unique the African Dream Project is clearly innovative. The Open Africa Foundation was set up by scientists, tourism experts and business people with the aim of "optimising tourism, job creation and conservation in Africa" (Open Africa 2002). The vision is to "turn Africa's natural and cultural resources into one of the most valuable products on earth, based on the business principle supply

and demand which dictates that what ever is rare is valuable... The aim is to link the splendour of Africa in a continuous network of Africatourism routes from the Cape to Cairo" (Open Africa 2002:2).

While the WTTC estimated in 1998 (WTTC 1998) that within a decade more than 170,000 direct and 516,000 indirect new jobs could be created across the broader South African economy by the growth in the travel and tourism industry, this boom had not materialised. Tourist markets, which stagnated between 1998 and 2001, have since then shown an up-turn but much has been confined to Cape Town and its environs. Employment creation and poverty alleviation in the country's marginalised rural areas has become ever more important. Open Africa's aim is to create routes that directly contribute to the alleviation of poverty in Africa's rural and marginalised areas while celebrating and fostering African culture and promoting nature conservation. South Africa has in recent years seen an immense revitalisation of cultural festivals and ceremonies that were long dormant, and it is expected that these routes will play an important part in using this revitalisation for the generation of economic benefits as well as pride.

Open Africa to date features 32 routes involving 80 towns and their rural areas in four countries. 791 tourism businesses account for 5,798 full-time and 2,334 part-time employment. Open Africa now has 2,331 individual, corporate, and professional partner members. (De Villier 2002)

In the United States heritage trails have long shown to provide the impetus for the development of a range of attractions and facilities along their routes (Hill and Gibbons 1994). Western Heritage trails in particular have served as a catalyst for the stimulation of theatrical productions, wagon trains and horseback trails. Hill and Gibbons (1994) argue that since tourists are dispersed along the length of the trail, carrying capacity management is facilitated, negative environmental impacts are reduced, and economic benefits more evenly distributed.

The essence of routes is that the route itself is an important element of the product. The route can function as a regional definition, a theme that transcends geographical diversity and distance to provide a spatially exclusive but integrated, marketable theme. Individual road-based travel also fits in with European travel behaviour in particular, where by far the most important transportation mode is the private car.

For communities or SMMEs to enter the tourism industry they need to create a tourism product that can be accessed and also will attract visitors. Since few destinations can offer a unique attraction that will guarantee to draw visitors, most have to consider their competitive advantages. By combining the attraction or a number of attraction providers into regional packages, thus creating greater access to a variety of products while at the same time increasing the product's appeal, routes are important tourism development strategies.

2.2. Concentration: the Gateway concept

Other important tourism planning principles include the establishment of tourist gateways, staging areas, and the clustering of attractions. While the concentration of facilities and the clustering of attractions is often seen as the direct opposite of the dispersal strategies described above, it is important to show how both are interlinked.

The gateway concept generally refers to 'entry points' to a country or a region in terms of transport routes, e.g. airports, ports and motorways, through which tourists have to pass when entering a destination. Related to gateways is the principle of staging, i.e. the establishment of a 'staging area' near such a gateway. Such a staging area normally contains facilities that tourists require when first entering or when leaving a destination (if the staging area is not the final destination), or if it is the final destination it generally contains all the necessary facilities such as accommodation, services, shopping etc. Frequently, national or regional gateways are located in or near major cities, and this city becomes the staging area. As an example, the staging area in relation to international/non-local travel to the Stellenbosch winelands in the Western Cape of South Africa is currently Cape Town, which means that the majority of staying visitors are based in Cape Town and visit Stellenbosch on day-trips, in fact over 90% of visitors to Stellenbosch do so. Hotel accommodation, facilities and services, and also excursion services to Stellenbosch and environs are located in Cape Town, the staging area (see figure 1).

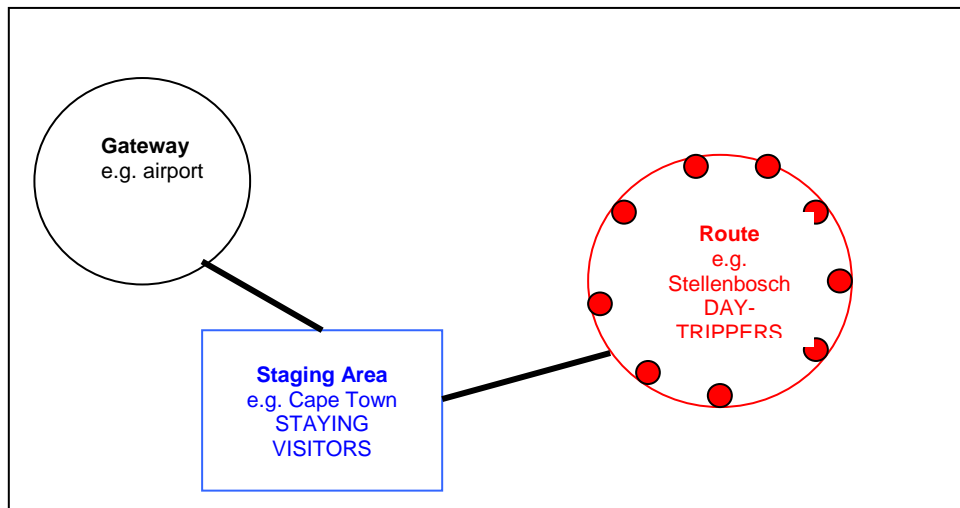


Figure 1: example of the gateway system related to the Stellenbosch wine route

According to Inskip (1995), the clustering of attractions is an important planning principle. In order to attract more tourists to an area and induce them to stay longer, as well as making it more convenient for organising tours and providing infrastructure, clustering can provide a number of advantages which include:

- better opportunities for the planning of integrated developments and application of development, design and environmental controls;
- more efficient provision of transportation access and other infrastructure;
- convenience to tourists of facilities and services being in proximity;
- capability of concentrated development to support a variety and more specialised facilities and services;
- containment of any negative environmental and socio cultural impacts in specific areas.

Concentrated development can be important in attempting to minimise the impacts of tourism on the natural as well as socio-cultural environment in the host region. Rather than uncontrolled access to fragile areas, the controlled concentration at gateways and hubs offers the opportunity to control 'overuse'. This recognises that if one aims to protect a pristine area one will need to attract the visitors either to a selected part of the park or to areas outside. i.e. 'Honeypot' sites across Europe have been successful in drawing large numbers of rural visitors to prime managed sites where impacts can be contained and better managed, thus reducing visits to threatened and vulnerable sites (Roberts and Hall 2001). Similarly, the concentration of facilities in staging areas can minimise potentially negative impacts on the socio-cultural environment in the host destination. This was a key objective in the tourism plan for the Maldives, for example, when a decision was taken not to make inhabited islands available for tourism development in the 1980s. This segregation and the creation of tourism islands was designed to minimise disruption to established socio-economic structures. Economic consideration such as infrastructure costs, appeal to visitors, marketability, product quality and design etc are also of course important. Cancun (Mexico) is one of the most successful examples of intensive tourism concentration in a resort developed from scratch. It is estimated that Cancun now generates approx. 40% of Mexico's total tourism receipts. The tiny fishing village north of Cozumel was home to less than 200 people up until 1971 when the Mexican government singled out the north-eastern coastal region of the Yucatan peninsula for development into a major resort destination. Now over 250,000 people call Cancun home on a year-round basis and the hotel zone hosts over 2 million visitors a year. The residential section of Cancun is located on the mainland, while the "Hotel Zone" is situated on Cancun Island.

Concentrated developments as such can offer controlled development, confined to tourism spaces, minimised disruption to established practices while generating economic benefits. In the early 1990s, for

example, there was an intensive debate as to the benefits of 'alternative' tourism, and some authors called for the maintenance of 'honeypot' developments coupled with economic distributive policies, rather than 'free access to all areas' (Freyer 1996).

On the other hand, Oppermann and Chon (1995) argue that the question "should concentration or dispersal be the objective of tourism?" does not arise for many developing countries. The main reason being that the lack of financial resources forces governments to concentrate tourism in areas where infrastructure is available or can be provided relatively cheaply. This lack of infrastructure is a main distinction between the situation in developed and developing countries. While governments often do not invest in tourism infrastructure development in marginal areas because basic needs investments (roads, water, electricity, etc.) are prioritised, the private sector is also less willing to carry the investment burden that they feel public authorities should provide. Private sector investment thus necessarily remains in concentrated areas (Oppermann and Brewer 1996).

Important is here the complementary use of both dispersing tourists while also offering a tourism hub or mini-hub. Mini-hubs and the creation of new attractions not only diversify the tourism product but also enable multiple-night stays of tourists. As such they can offer the opportunity for economic benefits while containing impacts. According to Otero (1998), a high dispersion of camp sites in the main National Parks of the Patagonian Andes in Argentina, for example, contributes to environmental degradation. The relocation of campsites and day-use areas into concentrated hubs, where other services can be centred as well, is seen as a very good opportunity to combine both the need to increase economic impacts while preserving the natural environment.

Tourism hubs or gateways to routes are ideal locations for tourist information centres and activities. Box 4 shows that this potential is often not recognised leading to inefficient and costly tourism information points.

Box 4: The Ayrshire & Arran Tourist Board – creating efficient gateway information points

The Ayrshire & Arran Tourist Board in Scotland recognises the importance of strategic gateways and included in their tourism development policy that "Glasgow and Edinburgh are important gateway cities to Scotland and need to be given the remit and support to enable them to deliver the promotion of the rest of Scotland to their visitors. Additional funding support should be provided in acknowledgement of their 'gateway' responsibilities. Customer buying patterns are changing and the current Tourist Information Centre (TIC) structure is not meeting these needs. The TIC structure is hugely expensive and we need to find more efficient and effective ways of providing information to visitors by exploiting modern technology. Investment in visitscotland.com delivered locally through a network of electronic tourism information points as joint ventures. These could be positioned in a wide range of locations including airports, visitor attractions, hotels etc. This information service needs to be developed where the visitors are going to be. Libraries would not be the best locations because they are frequently in inappropriate locations, not always open at the right times, do not have the resource or local tourism information to properly service the customer and holidaymakers do not naturally visit libraries. "Fish where the fish are". Development of Gateway network needs to have a national rationale. We have far too many TICs where we don't need them and not enough where we do need them - at the Gateway points." (A&ATB 2002)

Providing information about the destination helps meet tourist expectations and enhances appreciation of the surrounding environment. Information centres can furthermore be used to function as mediating point between the traditional facilities and emerging businesses.

Information centres are typically geared to provide a broad spectrum of information about an area, but can also include information about the local community and ways of life that need to be respected. The Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Cultural Centre (see box 5) aims to reinforce the values of the local community through responsible promotion.

Box 5: Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Cultural Centre, Australia

The Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in Central Australia is jointly managed by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency and the indigenous landowners, the Anangu people. The park houses one of Australia's most popular attractions: Ayers Rock, or Uluru. In

recent years Uluru has become a major climbing attraction for tourists, while for the Anangu people, Uluru has retained its tremendous spiritual significance. In an effort to stop visitors climbing, the Anangu and the Australian National Conservation Agency have cooperated in developing the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Cultural Centre. The centre provides information to tourists about the cultural and spiritual significance of Uluru and the surrounding area. One part of the Cultural Centre explains the sacredness of the route up to the top of Uluru and why tourists should not climb the rock. The Centre thus promotes Uluru according to cultural values. It also deepens the tourists' understanding of the place and provides a shift of focus for visiting Uluru.

The example of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (box 5) shows how visitor centres can be vehicles for unifying a community as well as revitalizing community culture. Visitor centres can become places that generate pride and help bring together visitors and the destination community.

3. Dispersal and route development – implications for Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT)

In terms of economic development and poverty reduction the dispersal of tourists to previously marginalised communities can offer a number of opportunities, among them:

- Enterprise development – increasing demand for goods and services of the poor;
- Employment and income opportunities;
- Collective income;
- Conservation and rejuvenation (cultural and natural);
- Capacity building; and
- Infrastructure development.

Tourism routes have been at the heart of dispersal strategies. It is however also important to recognise that the development of tourism routes and gateways do not necessarily imply that they are linked to an explicit PPT emphasis. For example, the Midlands Meander in South Africa as discussed by Rogerson (2002) was set up to increase the sale of products produced by the traditionally 'white' farming industry in this area of Kwazulu-Natal. While the meander has been very successful in terms of attracting visitors and increasing sales, linkages to poor producers were very limited.

Routes are generally developed, both by the public sector as well as the private sector, to increase the attractiveness of the area and the tourism product with the aim to generate income from tourism. Often, but not always, this does not have an explicit PPT focus.

Route developments can have a strong PPT focus, in that it can combine the development of a commercially successful route with increased linkages with poor producers. Commercial viability is the basis on which routes can be judged as being successful; it is also *the* requirement for being pro-poor, i.e. while it might be ideologically fantastic to create a route that involves poor producers per se, a route, or any PPT venture, is only benefiting poor producers if it is a successful commercial venture bringing in tourists and spending. This essentially often means linking in with traditional tourism structures and extending them to incorporate new features, new products and new stakeholders. Essentially this means the development of a product that is attractive to the market; a product that benefits from synergy effects due to linkages to traditional industry structures; a product that is based on resources that poor stakeholders possess and are willing to share; and the inclusion of new (and possibly difficult and untraditional) stakeholders in the planning and delivery of this 'new' product.

4. A route example: South African wine tourism and wine routes

Wine tourism is a form of special interest tourism (Hall 1998) which, in particular in Europe, has largely been developed in the form of official wine roads or wine routes (Hall, Sharples, Cambourne & Macionis 2000). Hall and Macionis (1998) define wine tourism as “visitations to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and /or experiencing the attributes of the grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors”.

The Western Australian Wine Tourism Strategy shows the strong link that exists between wine tourism and destination marketing by defining wine tourism as travel for the purpose of experiencing wineries and wine regions and their link to local lifestyles. Wine tourism, thus, encompasses both service provision and destination marketing (Government of Western Australia 1997).

In South Africa the wine industry is one of the few industries that is genuinely concentrated outside metropolitan areas and hence plays a vital role in regional development, employment generation, corporate investment, business growth, and tourism in rural areas. The South African wine industry is, however, also an ultimately ‘white’ affair, characterised by lack of black ownership and lack of linkages to ‘black’ SMMEs in particular when discussing wine routes.

The South African wine industry is one of the oldest outside Europe with the first vineyard planted in the 1650s. It is also one of the most geographically concentrated and 95% of South Africa’s 105,000ha of wine grape vineyards are found within a maximum of 200km from Cape Town City. Approximately 215,000 persons (farmers, employees and dependents) are involved in the industry’s primary, secondary and tertiary economic activities. In terms of total wine volume the South African wine industry is the 8th largest in the world, with 355 registered wine estates (Winetitles 2002), the overall majority of them are ‘white-owned’.

The wine route concept is based on the idea of a ‘bounded space’, i.e. an officially demarcated wine region which defines for members an identity that proclaims unique attributes for their wines and cultural heritage. Wine routes are characterised by natural attractions (the scenery), physical attractions (facilities such as wineries on wine estates), vineyards, and roads and markers (signposts) directing the tourist to the individual estates and guiding him/her along the route as a whole. Hall et al (2000) argue that usually a wine route consists of a designated itinerary (or several) through the wine region which is thematically signposted as well as interpreted via a leaflet and map, which notes the different vineyards and winemakers and provides information on sites with historical or other interests. The itinerary, as in South Africa, comprises traditionally the visitation of several wineries linked to the tasting and sale of wine, with a possible visit of the regions main towns for shopping and heritage purposes. However, as in South Africa, the itinerary generally does not include an interlinking with ‘black heritage’ but is purely product orientated, i.e. the marketing and sale of wine.

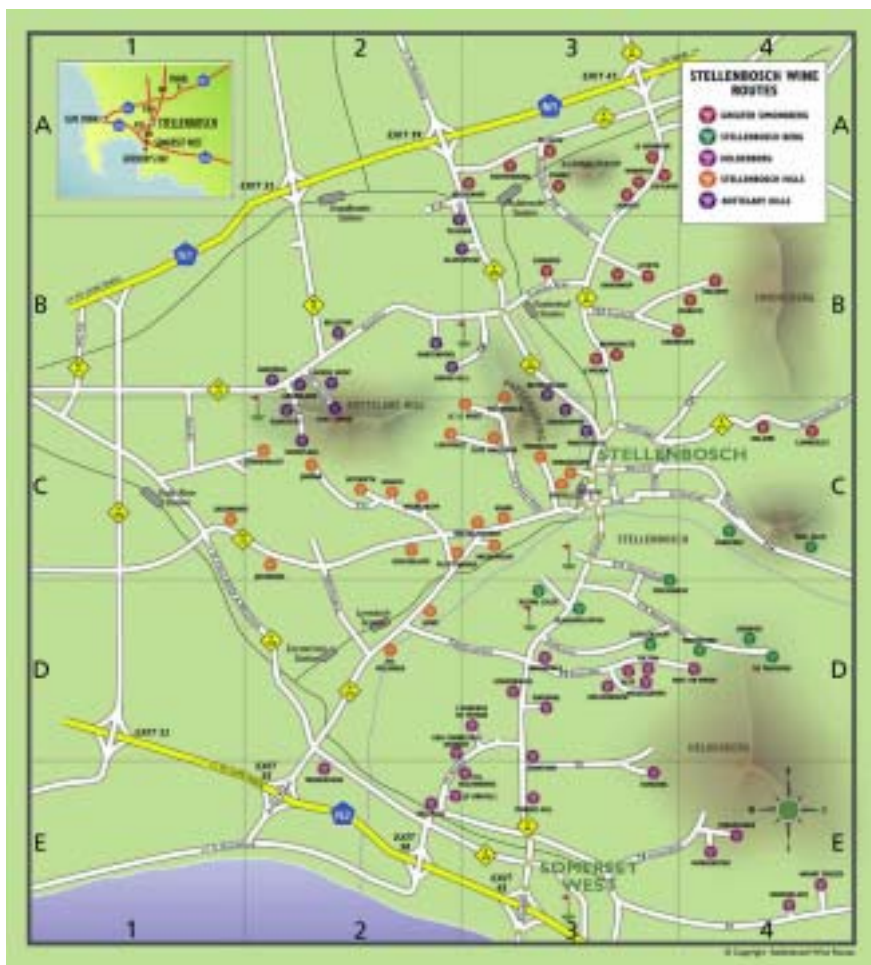
The synergy between tourism and the wine industry is that both rely heavily on regional branding thus providing an ideal combination (Fuller 1997, Hall and Macionis 1998). The mix of environmental, cultural and social features convey a distinct character to each wine route which is recognised and valued by tourists. The concept of the wine route also incorporates images that sustain the notion of exploration and discovery. This expectation is encouraged by (advertised) claims of distinctive attributes that are particular to the route.

The successful building of the brand identity and image of the winery, the wine region and the wine country of origin is arguably the single most important factor that will determine the success of the route. Tourism is fundamentally about the differences in place (Relph 1996) while wine is one of the rare commodities that is branded on the basis of its geographical origin (Merret & Whitwell 1994).

The Western Cape wine region in South Africa, while not located near South Africa’s main domestic generating area and only megametropolis Gauteng (Johannesburg, Pretoria and the East and West Rand), benefits from its proximity to Cape Town with a large domestic and rapidly increasing international market.

Stellenbosch was the first official wine route in South Africa when it was established in 1971. Since then, 15 more routes have been added to South Africa's wine route system which now enjoys the reputation of being one of the best wine route infrastructure system and winescapes in the world (Bruwer 2003). Stellenbosch is still by far the largest and most influential route (attracting 36% of all wine route visitors in South Africa) followed by the neighbouring Paarl and Franschhoek routes.

Tourism is often initiated and developed because of expectations of employment multipliers. Grape growing, harvesting and winemaking is highly seasonal and even wine tourism itself is a seasonal activity. In South Africa it is estimated that employment created through the wine industry, be it through involvement in wine making or through wine tourism, is dependent on seasonal part-time employment (i.e. 36% of all employees in the wine industry are seasonal workers).



Map 2 – the Stellenbosch wine routes

Bruwer (2003) states that if the wine tourism/tourism related component at wine route estates is isolated from the overall wine industry, it provides for only 5.2% of employment. Similarly, when the restaurant/food related component is examined it is seen that it only provides 5.5% of employment. Thus in total just over 10% of employment in the wine industry is attributed to the tourism linked activities. On the other hand, estimates for tourism induced employment in the Champagne region in France indicate nearly 20% of total employment.

In South Africa 49% of wineries are privately owned while 15% are cooperatives whose numbers are strongly decreasing. Involvement in wine tourism means a considerable amount of investment away from the core business of any estate. Bruwer (2003), for example, estimated that it would take a winery 12.3 years on average to become established as a destination on a wine route. A few wineries, those well known, attract

the majority of visitors. On the other hand the involvement of a company in wine tourism is dependent on the size of its operation. That is, smaller companies have a far higher degree of involvement (or reliance) than medium sized or larger companies. In South Africa, the largest portion of wine is produced by large companies who are generally not involved in tourism, at least not in wine routes.

The South African wine route system is well established since there has been strong and continuous involvement of wineries for over 25 years. The main advantage of South African wine routes, when compared to Australian ones for example, is their proximity to main urban generating areas (i.e. Cape Town). 74% of all South African wine estates are situated within a radius of 45-50 minutes easy driving time from the city centre of Cape Town, and the distance mean between a winery and the nearest town is on average 11.5 km. Their proximity to Cape Town guarantees a high number of resident day-trippers and also international and domestic visitors that have their holiday base in the city.

The product that the wineries offer is very uniform and what could be expected from traditional wine route members. Only 7% do not provide tasting, while only 12% do not sell through a cellar door. Apart from wine tasting and wine selling a feature of the South African system is a high proportion of wineries offering wine estate tours (53%) and 'meet the winemaker' (38%). Compared to wine routes in other countries, however there is a low presence of historic buildings and cultural attractions (only 23%). While restaurants (23%) and picnic areas (27%) feature prominently, the South African wine industry is not particularly involved in the accommodation sector. Only 13% of wineries offer accommodation and provide a total of 682 beds. This is related to the characteristics of the segment attracted and prevalence of day-tripping. It is, however, also an indication for the predominantly production orientated character of the South African wine industry (Macionis 1998, Macionis and Cambourne 1998, Hall et al 2000). Related to this production orientated character Bruwer (2003) questions the value that non-traditional facilities such as hiking/biking trails, horse/pony rides or swimming pools can add to the wine tourism product. He argues that it might actually distract from the core product and he presents a study, which shows that less than 50% of visitors are motivated by either learning about wine, meeting the winemaker, socialising with friends and family, festivals or events, eating at winery or entertainment. The three main motivators are wine purchasing, wine tasting and the scenic landscape. Again this highlights the production orientation. Routes are seen as a good opportunity to push sales rather than to diversify away from the core product. In South Africa 20% of all wine is sold on location and the cellar door sale accounts for 78% of total income derived from wine tourism (Bruwer 2003).

Wine routes in South Africa are very successfully aimed at day-tripping tourists with the objective to increase direct sale and promotion of wine. It is extremely product orientated and currently offers little opportunities for linkages with non-wine suppliers.

5. The key ingredients for successful route developments.

In essence, tourism routes, when well designed and imaginative, can deliver the following benefits:

- spreading the economic benefits more widely geographically by developing tourist facilities and services such as restaurants and shops along the tour routes, which will encourage tourist spending at those stop-over points:
- providing additional employment and income, both directly and indirectly, through local facilities and services required to operate tour programmes: and
- expanding the tourist markets and extending the average length of stay of tourists by providing a variety of attractions and activities.

However, in order to achieve this, the following **key ingredients** are needed:

1. cooperation networks, regional thinking and leadership

2. product development, infrastructure and access
3. community participation, micro-enterprise development and innovation
4. information and promotion
5. an explicit pro-poor focus

The examples of the Heritage Trail projects in the Czech Republic (box 6) and the Kabaka's Heritage Trail in Uganda (box 7) highlight the potential obstacles to trail developments, but also their achievements.

Box 6: Heritage Trails Czech Republic - Key obstacles and ingredients of success

Key challenges to rural tourism development in the Czech Republic include:

- Lack of government support;
- Need for co-ordination and local leadership to make the concept of Heritage Trails work. Because they involve a range of small-scale tourism products and providers, and the very concept rests on linking these conceptually and logistically for the tourist, co-ordination is essential. But where the local leadership to achieve this has been lacking, the HT concept has not flourished;
- Lack of statistics and feedback (via government) for adaptive management and marketing.
- Lack of resources for updating marketing material;
- Slow pace, small scale of economic impacts to date;
- Uptake of the new product. HT is constrained by strong competition from other tourism destinations in the Czech Republic (in particular Prague), and from other packages also sold by tour operators. While commercial competitiveness is sufficient for some gradual success in at least some of the sites and areas, the investment in rural tourism cannot create a sudden boom.

However, some particularly valuable elements of the Heritage Trail strategy emerge:

- On-going and repeated attempts to build institutional collaboration. Although progress has been slow, institutional collaboration does occur.
- Defining the rural product through the creation of 'heritage trails'.
- Providing approach, tools, and marketing material that could easily be replicated and taken up by others (particularly at *kraj* level). Thus the initial project work could serve effectively as a demonstration for catalysing wider change. This is important to note given the donor shift away from projects.
- Addressing marketing and customer information at the same time as developing the product and resource.
- Working with counties (*kraj*) as they have gained an administrative role, and helping them develop their interest in rural tourism promotion in very practical ways. *(Holland, Burian and Dixey 2003)*

Box 7: Obstacles and success factors for the Kabaka's Heritage Trail in Uganda

The main obstacles in the Ugandan context emerged as:

- Low level of development and lack of skills at community level. The formation of the community associations, their business planning, product development and marketing training took much longer than anticipated to reach a reasonable standard for foreign and domestic tourism markets. The practical concomitants of low development, such as lack of telephones and access to credit, also pose a challenge for building product quality.
- Limited international tourism in Uganda. While international visitors could provide a strong and culturally interested niche market, continued insecurity is constraining the growth of international arrivals. The domestic market for the trails is important but limited. Marketing to either group is slow and needs greater investment of resources. The knock-on effects on small-scale producers can be substantial: one year without tourists may mean the collapse of a small tourism enterprise without an adequate financial safety net to get through the tough times.
- Implementation obstacles: the initial project time period of two years was too short and the design over-ambitious. Resources and expertise in some areas have been insufficient, while funding delays exacerbated problems. The project did achieve most of its objectives over three years although the time period was simply insufficient to fully implement a bottom-up participatory approach to product identification and marketing and to help the communities achieve their enterprise and management objectives. However, with this type of intervention, which is always likely to depend on donor support, short-term funding cycles are likely to remain a problem unless donors change their way of operating, or investors are found from elsewhere.

Strategies that emerged as important are:

- Building community associations, not just entrepreneurs, in order to serve the social development objectives of the approach;
- Working with women and specifically with craft producers, to get activities going;
- Investing in training at community level, including exchange visits;
- Building on traditional cultural assets and tapping into the cultural niche in the market;
- Developing innovative land user rights agreements;

- Building partnerships with a range of national institutions, and building capacity in UCOTA. These partnerships become particularly important now that the concept is being extended to other sites;
- Developing a range of marketing strategies and readiness to focus on the domestic sector and on schools. Building links with tour operators;
- Focusing the pilot on sites near Kampala to minimise logistical and security problems, and maximise the benefit of support from the Kabaka (King).
(Holland, Burian and Dixey 2003)

5.1. Co-operation networks, regional thinking and leadership

The main essence of route development is the formation of co-operative networks among a multitude of often very diverse tourism suppliers. When establishing a route, a good framework for a region is to build-up and maintain collaboration agreements between government and the local council, private enterprises and associations, the tourism industry, and local communities. Cooperation is here seen as the productive factor that is necessary and able to harness the energies of all involved with regional development, for the benefit of creating jobs and economic and cultural development (Europäische Weinstrassen 1999). These collaborative associations can best be described as route networks, characterised by parties being mutually dependent on resources controlled by others and there are gains to be had by pooling the resources together (Hall et al 2000). The formal and informal arrangement between wine route estates, tour operators and the food industry, for example, highlight the significance of horizontal and vertical linkages in the network. The example of the Heritage Trail project in the Czech Republic illustrates the importance of establishing partnerships as the key entry point to the 'making of a heritage trail (see box 8).

Box 8: Heritage trails in rural areas of the Czech Republic, a project by the European Centre for Eco Agro Tourism, CZ

The key steps for establishing the Czech Heritage Trails were:

Step 1: Establish partnerships to create the Heritage Trail

- Core partners needed to be identified before funds could be received for enterprise development: e.g. a UK based organisation, and one or two destination organisations as lead partners.
- Post receipt of funding, priority work in destination is to build on these partnerships and create further partnerships through a stakeholder process that evolves from the activities outlined in the steps below.

Step 2: Identify the area and tourism products of the 'trail' with partner organisation(s)

- Clarify geographic area of the trail. This can include, rural, urban, or a mix of these environments, usually dependent on the objectives of the enterprise development intervention.
- Clarify the products to be included, such as:
 - Heritage sites – natural and cultural (tombs, museums, castles, national parks, rivers, lakes)
 - Cultural interest – traditional and modern arts, crafts, music, dance, wine & beer making.
 - Accommodation, food and drink providers (hotels, guest-houses, B&B, self-catering, campsites, restaurants)
- Decide on how these products will be accessed and how they will be linked to create the trail – i.e. what forms of transport can be used, but also what is 'unique' about the trail and what it has to offer.

Step 3: Train 'trail' stakeholders with partner organisation(s)

- Market analysis of tourism markets to identify which tourists to target
- Develop a marketing strategy that meets identified demand with tourism producer capacity.
- Train an in-bound tour operator and/or partner organisation(s) to manage arrivals, transfers, departures, and travelling between each location on the trail – walking paths, cycle routes, car hire, public transport. This includes ensuring HT sign-posts are in place on the trail and existing maps, and specially created HT maps, are available for tourist information packages.

- Decide on price that tour operators should charge for the HT package including transport to destination.

Step 4: Market the Heritage Trail

- Prepare marketing materials – brochures, maps for self-guided tourists, web site, video, CD ROM, e-zine.
- Distribute materials to identified markets – national tourist board offices, tour operators.
- Direct marketing through domestic and overseas tour operators contacted by HT management, either by visits (Travel Fairs, arranged appointments), or by email and telephone. (Holland, Burian and Dixey 2003)

An essential element of setting up routes is thus intensive cooperation as opposed to competition between the variety of attractions and tourism suppliers. The power of collaborative arrangements has been recognised in the field of tourism on a variety of scales. From local to international level, tourism planners and operators seem to have moved away from adversarial models of operation, discovering the power of collaboration (Selin 1993, Crofts, Aziz and Raschid 1998). The benefits of joining alliances have been documented by Su, Kensinger, Keown and Matrin (1997), for example, who found that in a study of 345 strategic alliances between 1983 and 1992, partnering firms showed better operating results than their non-partnering peers. In the tourism industry alliances offer the opportunities to market a product far more widely while at the same time reducing competition among suppliers as they are starting to work together. This is of particular importance when new products are developed, experience and capacity are limited, financial means and marketing power are lacking, and innovative structures, which often face severe opposition and competition from traditional set-ups, are being developed. However, establishing collaborative networks is an extremely difficult undertaking especially in the tourism industry, which is characterised by a plethora of small-scale business with highly diverse and often competing operating practices and goals.

Many collaborative networks and routes have only been established and can only be sustained because of a small number of key individuals that acted as driving force and leaders. Open Africa, but also the Stellenbosch wine routes, are good examples of how important the vision and power of a few key individuals was to the development of the idea and the success of the route. In the case of Open Africa, these were a small number of scientists and tourism specialists who wanted to contribute to the conservation, but also marketing, of the unique African heritage. In the case of Stellenbosch, these were viticulturists who saw the opportunities for increasing the sale of their core product: wine.

Networks as in the case of Open Africa, however, also allow people with common interests to share ideas and brainstorm solutions to resolve common issues. Open Africa's link to the Centre for Afrikatourism at Pretoria University is one of the outcomes of intensive network activity. Information and resource sharing is also one of the main aims of the Council of Europe's cultural routes described above. The Rethinking Tourism Project (<http://www.rethinkingtourism.org>), another example, is a network that shares current information among indigenous peoples to increase informed decision-making on issues related to tourism. Networks can benefit particularly those communities, which have limited access to up-to-date information. The start-up of networks, however, requires significant effort and funding that may not always be readily at hand, particularly in remote or disadvantaged areas.

Regional development is often at the heart of collaborative route networks. The potential of regional collaboration and the synergy effects that can derive from pooling resources are however often not realised. Moss (1998) argues for example that "there are the greater economies of scale and appropriate scale arguments for communities within a region to cooperate with or coordinate their scarce human, natural and economic resources in the context of common tourism objectives. However, this potential is seemingly seldom taken advantage of."

The European Commission on Enterprise Policy, Distributive Trades, Tourism and Cooperatives emphasises the benefits of interregional cooperation (CAC 1995). Regionality in tourism can:

- create environmentally compatible conditions,
- ease existing political tensions,
- strengthen regional competitive advantages through unity,
- create greater demand through product diversification,
- create a greater flow of goods and services as well as information systems, and
- enhance quality control through standardisation.

By adopting a regional development strategy, communities within a region can potentially avoid social disharmony caused by competition between villages or towns.

The example from the Czech Republic (box 9) highlights the synergy effects gained from collaboration in a highly competitive tourism market place, while in the instance below, the Province of Alberta (box 10) adopted a regional perspective with regard to community tourism planning, financing and marketing.

Box 9: Regional Collaboration of Czech Inspiration, Czech Republic

Czech Inspiration is a regional community-based tourism project initiated in 1995 by the mayors and councils of six small towns in South and Central Bohemia of the Czech Republic. The primary objective for initiating the project was to protect cultural and environmental resources through tourism, and to compete with the Prague capital region for income from tourist activities. The towns work together in planning and implementing their cultural calendars, regional circuit itineraries, marketing campaigns, and in identifying and dealing with tourism-related issues. Another attribute of this regional collaboration is its increased political and economic capacity to deal with public and private external forces.

Box 10: Regional Community Tourism Action Planning: Alberta, Canada.

Alberta's Department of Tourism and Multiculturalism worked with community tourism action planning as a means for local self-help tourism development. The department provided the guidelines for development according to its provincial tourism strategy through which communities developed local area tourism plans. This provincial body encouraged self-regulation and decision-making, as well as broad community participation. It also promoted a sub-provincial regional cooperative perspective by recommending inter-community communication and exchange of ideas during the planning phase, and by considering financial assistance to regional networks.

KwaZulu-Natal is a good example of a case where the lack of collaborative arrangement has in the past been one of the main obstacles to integrated and coordinated tourism development. Too many organisations with little synergy between them were involved in tourism. The lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibility (such as the roles of the Department for Economic Development and Tourism, KZNTA and the former KZN Economic Council) have led to duplication of development plans and lack of integration. The lack of collaboration has further made it very difficult for developers who were unsure who to turn to with their development proposals. This was further exacerbated by the fact that there was a lack in tribal areas of a single overall coordinating authority for processing planning applications, particularly in those areas that were previously governed by the KwaZulu authorities. As a consequence, rural communities were unable to organise themselves in such a way that they could be easily contracted and communicated with.

A study undertaken on behalf of the South African Government in 1999 stated that 'South Africa could only hope to develop holistic, integrated strategies for tourism if "the various tiers of government, tourism agencies and private sector organisations, are able to clearly define their role and neutralise the current bitter rivalry existing between them" (Cluster Consortium 1999:7). Research confirmed these findings by concluding that "if private sector industry associations don't stop their turf war the private sector will not succeed in making its role a successful one "(Briedenhann 2000:47). Briedenhann and Wickers (2002) reported from focus group research that nothing much had changed since the Cluster Consortium study: respondents raised issues such as "conflict between policy makers and the private sector", "inter industry politics and the negative synergy it causes", "so much negativism from the industry" and "local area in-

fighting". Briedenhann and Wickers state that the problems are exacerbated by the fact that tourism is still in the hands of a minority or, as one respondent stated "I am aware that tourism is still in the minority hands. We can't mince words on this" (Ndala (2001:1) quoted by Briedenhann and Wickers (2002)).

While local governments in South Africa take over the responsibility for tourism development, it is frequently felt that the inability of local governments to take responsibility is commonplace. Local authority's lack of understanding and capacity to develop tourism, were common criticisms. It was stated that "local government must understand the value of tourism and provide a platform for the private sector to deliver" (Briedenhann and Wickers 2002). Leadership in developing routes is essential, if this is not forthcoming from the public sector, all too often the private sector fills this space. Rogerson's (2002) work on the Midlands Meander in KwaZulu-Natal but also the history of the Stellenbosch wine routes illustrates that frequently these routes serve the existing 'white' structures and are used predominantly as 'sales outlets' for established industries. While these routes are very successful, they achieve relatively little in terms of establishing linkages with SMMEs with a HDI¹ background.

5.2. Product development, infrastructure and access

The fundamental elements for designing a route are innovative product development, infrastructure and access.

Innovative product development: In the past two decades route developments have been at the forefront of dispersal strategies. They have been extremely successful in Europe and the United States in particular due to increased independent motoring holidays, a search for cultural experiences, continuous importance of domestic tourism (in particular short-stay and day-tripping) and the increased attention given by tourism planners to themed regional development and dispersal strategies. Route developments have been initiated on a number of levels. Many of the routes with a cultural or landscape focus have been developed as part of the local government's rural development strategies. Examples of this are the Northern Ireland (box 11) and the KwaZulu-Natal (box 12) tourism development strategies.

Box 11: Tourism Development Strategy Northern Ireland

The tourism development policy for Northern Ireland places great emphasis on creating routes with the objective to: attract more people to the area; make people stay longer; and make them come back more often (Inskeep 1995:194). Having seen a slump in visitor numbers and a reduction in the length of stay (and ultimately spending) the Northern Ireland Tourist Board has set its tourism development priorities as:

- enhancement of destination area
- integration by tourist trails (roads)
- improvement of tourism bases (i.e. tourism infrastructure, facilities and services)
- development of entry points (gateways).

Preliminary calculations have estimated that this promises to create an additional 3,100 jobs over the planned 15 year development period. Tourism routes and thus the integration of very diverse and dispersed tourism attraction is the key approach taken by the Northern Ireland Tourism board.

Routes that have a strong product focus such as wine routes but also the Scottish Whiskey Trails, on the other hand, were generally developed to increase marketing and sale of the core product, in these cases wine and whiskey. These routes were set-up and developed by a small number of wineries (three wineries as in the case of Stellenbosch) or distilleries. The aim was less to disperse tourism into marginal areas but rather to create additional sales-outlet. Generally, routes aim to set a guiding system for independent travellers, although many routes are of course also visited by organised tours (as in the case of the wine routes). Routes are used to convey a unified image of a region in terms of a theme. This often means that

¹ HDI – Historically Disadvantaged Individuals

not only the route itself is themed (such as the Mozart Route, or the Baroque Route in Europe) but that anything that is supplied as part of this route (e.g. accommodation, catering, services, shopping) picks up on this theme. As an example the Mozart Route incorporates the geographical places in which Mozart lived and/or worked. However, each participating hotel also draws heavily on being part of the Mozart theme by organising themed meals and music recitals, by naming rooms after events or sonatas, and by organising special events that fall within what is expected of a 'Mozart' route. Much of this is of course invented and produced and orchestrated purely to draw visitors. According to the Salzburg Tourist Board this has not simply increased visitor nights and spending but most of all helped to create a package that is easier to sell by agreeing on and promotion a unified image for the area. Image creation is crucial to draw interest from potential visitors. In a highly competitive tourism environment the image and the products that support this image are often more important than whether or not Mozart actually passed through a certain village or had a glass of wine in a certain Gasthof. Much can be created and in terms of route development it is crucial to not only take account of what heritage is available and can be developed as a product, but what ideas are out there to create an image that is at the same time attractive to visitors. Compostela is a very good example of merging reality with fantasy and motivating a wider audience to take part in exploring the route, and thus ultimately generating benefits to participating towns and villages.

While routes have mushroomed, this is often not reflected in increased variety and theme development. A study in Germany (Freyer 1994) showed for example that while there were a total of approximately 150 vehicle routes, the majority fell into three main groups: 34% were landscape routes, 46% were historic and 17% culinary routes, often with very similar themes.

For developing a route, it is essential to be familiar with the segment that is being appealed to. One of the crucial issues for European route developments in the past has been the extreme diversity of tastes and preferences that were being merged into one product design, i.e. what might have worked very well in France would not appeal to Scandinavians. Similarly, what would be extremely attractive to European visitors to Africa, i.e. heritage, township tours etc, might not appeal to the South African domestic visitors. The strategic tourism development plan for KwaZulu-Natal (box 12) illustrates that heritage attractions have been completely neglected while it is a main motivator for inter-continental visitors. The planned development of the Zulu Heritage Trail tries to compensate this by creating a product that might appeal to international visitors rather than the traditional domestic beachcombers. A survey in KwaZulu-Natal showed that what international visitors missed most was representation of heritage and cultural history as well as wildlife.

Box 12: Zulu Heritage and Cultural Trail – KwaZulu-Natal

The KwaZulu Natal Tourism Strategy places great emphasis on tourism routes with the development of the Zulu Heritage and Cultural Trail. Research on visitor behaviour and preferences have identified that the largest sector of both foreign and domestic market seek the coastal destinations. The two main disappointments for departing foreign tourists was the lack of ability to interact with traditional culture and heritage, as well as wildlife. To link into available cultural products and to provide a better product to tourists the KwaZulu-Natal tourism board is developing the Zulu Heritage and Cultural Trail, which is initially located between just North of Durban and Northern KwaZulu-Natal. It is planned that this trail will eventually meandering through the whole province.

A primary tourism product development strategy for KZN is to built a reputation for its coastal destinations, which will include the need for a more focused destination marketing strategy on KwaZulu Natals potential for growth as a domestic as well as international coastal destination, with the objective to maximise tourism numbers as well as tourism revenue. A parallel Tourism Development Strategy for the establishment of a Zulu Heritage and cultural trail, which will provide the enabling environment for broadening of ownership within the tourism sector, particularly within the rural and previously disenfranchised sector. It is also considered that this will compliment and improve the existing product mix within the context of 'the kingdom of Zulu' branding.

The KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Board has identified nodes/sites and projects using a number of criteria – one of them is that they should offer the potential of including rural / and or previously disadvantaged people in order to gain significant benefit by their involvement in the proposed tourism product. A further criteria is whether the product meets the needs of a so far untapped tourist source market, i.e. being a significant coastal/wildlife/heritage/cultural tourism asset, thereby encouraging tourism revenue growth rather than just tapping into existing markets.

The principle attraction for the rural tourism development strategy is the Zulu Heritage and Cultural Trail. The main aim is the development of a tourism route that will join together the wide variety of rural attractions and sites of historical importance. More importantly it is anticipated that it will act as a catalyst for the opening up of previously disadvantaged areas for further tourism product development.

The HandMade in America circuit (box 13) illustrates a unique example of how product design feeds directly back into 'quality of life issues' i.e. meeting the desire of local craftspeople to produce in a familiar environment with financial viability.

Box 13: HandMade in America and the Craft Heritage Driving Circuit, USA

The community-based tourism program of HandMade in America in the North Carolina Appalachian Range has its basis in the handicraft industry of a number of regional communities which are joined by a road network. These roads have been mapped out in a craft heritage trail guidebook and lead to craft studios within each of the towns but steer clear of any sites considered sacred or regarded as private by the community. In this way, tourists supply the economy through craft and service purchases in a relatively directed manner.

An economic and social impact study, conducted early on, indicated that craft production and sales are an important part of the traditional economy of the region, and that craft producers enjoy a quality of life that reaches far beyond economic measures. Of particular importance in the study were the statistics related to sales and marketing needs. Craft-producers stated their desire to spend less time travelling to fairs and craft shows and more time in the studios.

The subsequent development of guided craft-heritage trails and guidebooks have been effective in attracting tourists to the communities—into the craft studios and galleries, as well as to town shops, restaurants and lodging.

The development of the 'vision' as to what the region aims to portray is crucial. This means not only that a thorough assessment needs to be made as to what the regional features and selling-points are, but also a recognition of what is attractive and promises the development of a sustainable business in the long run. To achieve this, 'visioning', as Minzberg (1990, 1995) and Ritchie (1994) termed it, is crucial, i.e. getting all the stakeholders on one table to discuss and develop the vision of where the region is heading in future, and to develop a product that satisfies all stakeholders, and that is based on demand and creates linkages to SMMEs.

The lack of capacity within local and regional authorities in KwaZulu-Natal, for example, has been one of the biggest obstacles to tourism development in the region, in particular for tribal and regional authorities. These bodies have largely focused on the resolution of disputes; they now have to deal with economic development issues with little prior experience. The main issues are the lack of financial resources and the inability to delegate responsibility; the unfamiliar concepts of land-use planning and formulation of regional strategic development plans; and lack of clarity of the role played by traditional leaders in respect to elected officials versus traditional heads. There is limited buy-in and capacity building of the communities and development plans are often rejected by the tribal authorities as a matter of principal. There are some initiatives such as the 'cluster investment strategy' and capacity building initiatives by the DTLGA to prepare for IDPs and the Ingonyama Trust's involvement in capacity building and training – but it is limited. At the same time private banks have no appetite to finance tourism project in KwaZulu-Natal, they see it as a high risk venture mainly due to high crime rates and malaria.

Infrastructure: A second aspect, crucial for any route development is the availability of infrastructure. For one this means that the basic road or trail network on which tourists are supposed to travel needs to be available and to a standard that attracts and satisfies potential visitors. In the developing world routes generally pass along secondary roads which offer a more relaxed travelling pace and thus opportunities to stop on route. Many of these road networks are comprised of scenic routes, thus increasing the appeal of tourists to choose them as opposed to 'faster' highways. The travelling along these routes is an important product aspect that should not be underestimated. The routes as such need to be well chosen and designed and lead through attractive countryside. The landscape character for example is the third most important appeal for wine route visitors to South Africa, after pure product features such as wine tasting and wine purchasing. The scenic value of a route is even more important for day tripping tourists who often have chosen a route for its 'leisurely drive' qualities rather than to get from A to B. For any route, infrastructure is

essential. This would in the first instance comprise basic infrastructure such as signage and rest and sanitary areas. While signage is often part of the 'route-package' funded by regional, national or international agencies even more basic infrastructure such as toilets and refreshment areas are often lacking. There often seems to be a lack of initiative as to who provides these facilities that are often perceived as not being able to provide economic returns. However, the relatively simple installation of toilets, refreshment and resting areas, coupled with the 'money-makers' of basic catering, shopping and refuelling facilities are the mainstay of extremely successful motorway stations on highways all over the world. This infrastructure, although on a much smaller scale compared to the traditional service stations, needs to be available and can also provide invaluable linkages to SMMEs.

Longer routes and routes aimed at staying visitors need accommodation facilities on route. Ideally, these would be located at staging areas to minimise infrastructure development costs. For a route, wanting to appeal to over-night guests it is essential to have an accommodation-hub that can supply the required standards. While it would be extremely costly and difficult to establish this accommodation-hub within marginalised and poor communities, given the lack of infrastructure, facilities and required standards, it is nevertheless possible to link into these communities from more traditional hubs.

When creating infrastructure for tourism, a key question is if this investment competes with basic investment for the local population. Communities in the South already lack basic infrastructure (e.g. water/sanitation, communication, electricity, roads etc) and the lack of financial budgets means that tourism infrastructure development is often not included in integrated development plans or set as a high priority. Trade-offs have to be made in terms of creating infrastructure that can both benefit communities and tourism.

Access to the route is another important requirement. Apart from some kind of attractions, a community needs access to the outside world. The higher a community's position in the transport network hierarchy the more competitive its position in the tourism system. A connection to a main highway, for example, can have a profound impact on tourism development. A major impediment to regional tourism growth is transport access, (e.g. cost of airfares, public transport linkages to specific destinations and the tyranny of distance generally). The location of the route and its proximity to main generating areas will determine the clientele that can be attracted and needs to be taken into account when planning for route development. A route that is not located within day travel distance from the main generating areas needs not only to provide attractions that would engage visitors for a longer time-span, but it also needs accommodation hubs that can cater for staying tourists. The majority of routes are geared towards day-trippers, which can considerably reduce infrastructure and development costs. Routes aiming to attract staying visitors are generally related to a physical activity such as hiking or cycling routes, as the main attraction. These routes are primarily visited because visitors chose to engage in a certain activity. The example of St.Martin (box 14) shows how the physical activity (i.e. hiking) as the main motivator for visiting the area has been supplemented by cultural activities and interests, thus creating a unique product.

Box 14: Trails and the St. Martin Commune, Switzerland

Villages within the Commune of St. Martin have collaborated to revitalize and preserve the agriculture-based culture of the region through sustainable, community-based tourism. Originally developed as an alternative to a winter ski resort, the project complements other ski resorts in the area as it provides a fair-weather activity for tourists who still wish to enjoy mountain environments.

The St. Martin Commune's project takes the form of a culture-based hike-and-stay experience with a focus on traditional architecture and agriculture. The trail offers diversity of natural features (e.g. various and unique microclimates and landscapes, some of flowering prairie, woods, terraced fields, and rocky terrain) as well as man-made features (e.g. small hamlets, terraced fields and areas of tourist chalets and cabins). Tourists can thus enjoy different natural and cultural environments within a single trek, increasing the appeal of the trail by providing a more diversified product.

5.3. Community participation, micro-enterprise development and innovation

Community participation in tourism development has long become an established practice. Successful tourism calls for a 'people-centred' approach by which the voices of local people are being heard when making decision about the scale and type of development. Community participation and capacity building is of course at the heart of any approach that aims to disperse economic benefits of tourism to marginalised rural communities. Community participation thus ideally incorporates both: a) the participation of the local community in decision making about the type and scale of development and b) the participation in economic benefits. The former is particularly relevant when discussing the development of, for example, cultural routes, while the latter should ideally be the ultimate outcome of any PPT facilitation. When planning to develop cultural routes it is essential to take into account the wide scale of cultural heritage available rather than relying on traditional interpretations and stereotypes. Here community participation in the interpretation of heritage and the development of the product offers the potential to create a unique and authentic experience, one that is carried by all involved and thus given a substantially greater chance to succeed. The example of the Ugandan heritage trail (box 15) shows a strong emphasis on community participation in heritage interpretation and 'ownership'.

Box 15: The core considerations of the Kabaka's Trail in Uganda.

1. The project explicitly evolved from community-based tourism, with a focus on the social and economic benefits of a trail-based tourism product for local communities.
2. It focused on the importance and potential of cultural revitalisation. In the Kingdom of Buganda, as elsewhere in Uganda, much of Uganda's rich cultural heritage fell into disrepair during the civil strife under Presidents Amin and Obote. The Kabaka Foundation and ACT identified tourism as a tool to revitalise cultural sites and to reduce poverty amongst marginalised communities who are the traditional custodians of the heritage.
3. In connection with the first two points, the project focused on creating community institutions, not just supporting individual entrepreneurs. Community associations were seen as the guardians of culture, the developers of the tourism resource, and the agents for community benefit. This is more in line with a development approach in rural areas than a typical small business approach. (*Holland, Burian and Dixey 2003*)

While it is important that local communities are the key participants in developing an integrated tourism management plan, at the same time, coordination among various groups and communities is important. For example, problems may arise when several villages in one region have competing ideas. Further, it is essential to identify potential positive impacts, such as economic benefits, as well as negative impacts, such as cultural exploitation. The example below (box 16) shows an approach that focuses strongly on the involvement of the local population and most importantly capacity building and public education, necessary for making informed decisions.

Box 16: Ecotourism Plan of the Huascarán National Park, Peru

The Huascarán National Park in the Cordillera Blanca of Peru has seen the strong increase in tourist arrivals, which lead to development of a Tourism Plan. The problem areas identified in this plan were:

- overcrowding of visitors into few sites of tourist operations,
- irregular or lack of coordination among stakeholders and
- small economic benefits from tourism.

The main challenge was to maintain a collaborative approach and inter-institutional tourism cooperation through a common vision, identification of team members' roles, definition of strategies, and renewal of commitments. The team adopted a horizontal framework of opinions, analyses and learning opportunities, which allowed for the strengthening of decision-making capacities of the park personnel and in turn their relationship with other tourism enterprises. Important in the plan was the fostering of local involvement and the development of relationships and fluid communication between internal and external groups.

Actions taken as a result of the plan include: training programs on alternative local land use, training programs for park personnel, implementation of park regulations, reduction of social impacts, institutional capacity building, public education, and infrastructure development.

Community participation in the planning and development of tourism products emphasises, often in a highly idealistic way, the community's participation in decision-making and taking control over product development. It is frequently assumed that community participation will be feasible, attainable and just and ultimately have

at its heart the development of a 'green', 'sustainable', 'pro-poor' product or industry that the 'community' agrees on to sell and develop. The notion of going to the 'grass-route' level, however, often ignores that power struggles and conflict are prevalent at all levels of decision making. It is often unlikely to discover a 'unified community', one that has set power struggles and conflicts aside to benefit 'all' stakeholders. Community participation in tourism planning is extremely problematic.

Tourism is an industry that is highly reliant on the goodwill and hospitality of the 'hosts', and as such the community's participation in product development and decision making is essential. Participation, however, is wide-ranging, i.e. from the provision of information, over consultation to decision making power. For many poor communities, traditionally excluded from all spheres of participation, initial steps such as information and consultation are major breakthroughs. These are necessary in order to empower communities to take on the next steps. In practise, this would mean establishing a dialogue with marginalised communities, informing about the pros and cons of tourism development, and seeking their views.

The commitment to micro-enterprise development is at the heart of PPT; it is also, however, one of the most difficult undertakings. Obstacles to micro-enterprise development are numerous and include:

- lack of capacity and understanding of tourism,
- lack of financial assets, lack of infrastructure,
- lack of access to the market in terms of infrastructure as well as marketing power,
- barriers of entry due to established structures,
- lack of collaboration, and most of all
- lack of strong leadership to develop collaborative arrangements and a strong vision as to what kind of product is feasible to be developed.

The initiative to create linkages often comes from external agencies, which could be the public as well as the private sector. The crucial issue is, however, how to achieve financial sustainability as on one hand substantially more basic infrastructure and facility investment needs to be made in marginal rural areas compared to established tourism areas. But on the other hand the provision of long-term subsidies can undermine the ability of local people to manage tourism projects on a proper business footing. The case of the Dadia Women's Cooperative in Greece (box 17) highlights the difficulties, but also opportunities, in setting up micro-enterprises in tourism. Similarly, the case study of the circuit trekking route in Nepal (box 18) highlights the need to focus on collaboration community management and product development with a unique selling proposition that is trying to stay out of competing with existing business structures. Market knowledge is an essential requirement for setting this up, market knowledge is also the ingredient that is frequently lacking at the local level.

Box 17: Micro-enterprise of the Dadia Women's Cooperative, Greece

In Dadia (Greece), a women's cooperative was formed in 1994 when the forestry service of the Dadia-Kefkimi-Soufli Forest Reserve allowed the women to use the canteen in a recreation area. The village of Dadia then gave them a piece of land to build their own food kitchen, while store-owners in the nearby town of Soufli gave them credit for purchasing raw materials which was repaid once money started flowing in. The women now rent a small building to prepare traditional dishes, but also sell traditional products such as pasta, filo dough village style, tomato paste, knitted socks for adults and babies, cloth and lace table coverings and wall hangings made from silkworm pupae, through the visitor centre. The women were given an opportunity to receive US \$114,000 as grant funding but were hesitant to take it because their cooperative was already self-funding and working well.

Box 18: Circuit Trekking Route and Ecotourism Development Project in the Ghale Kharka-Siklis Region, Nepal

The Circuit Trekking Route and Ecotourism Development Project in the Ghale Kharka-Siklis area in Southern Annapurna was designed to create a quality trekking experience and to maximize tourism revenue for the protection of the natural and cultural

heritage. The three main objectives were: (1) to create new demand; (2) to organize local communities in the management of tourism; and (3) to strive for ultimate ownership of tourism facilities by the community.

The Ghale Kharka-Siklis Ecotourism Development Project operated with the aim of eventually handing the tourism infrastructure over to the local community. The project was based on decentralization, coordination and control, rather than as consensus and independent action. Due to social friction brought on by unhealthy competition among lodge owners in other parts of Annapurna Conservation Area, the project focused on small scale, community-owned lodges and campsites.

Studies have shown that local tourism planning needs to be set within a collaborative framework that includes local community groups. At the same time, the difficulties and obstacles are frequently highlighted, in particular in the developing world.

The South African Environmental and Development Agency Trust (EDA), for example, found that even with the best facilitation practices, long standing mistrust, fear, antagonism and the disinterest entrenched by years of neglect and deprivation can create substantial barriers for achieving meaningful participation in local communities (The Environmental and Development Agency Trust 1999:2). Richards and Hall (2000) argue that mistrust between the various fractions is endemic since any potential economic activity is seen to represent a potential benefit to one sector of the community simultaneously marginalising another. As a consequence, proactive entrepreneurs are frequently the catalyst for friction, culminating in inter tribal disputes, power struggles, jealousy or perceived challenge to traditional leadership (Butler and Hinch 1996). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that in economically deprived areas, government delivery is frequently alleged to have been a failure, further accentuating problems of neglect and abandonment.

While in KwaZulu-Natal, for example, the tribal authorities have a strong legal role, they lack capacity and capability. At the same time there is limited community development experience within the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority and lack of tourism experience in DEDT, and as a consequence work with the community has often only been done by private investors mainly related to land right issues.

One major problem is that there is limited understanding of tourism as people have had neither access to markets and entrepreneurship nor to travel themselves. As a result many communities do not see the potential that tourism could provide. At the same time encouragement and support to build up add-ons to existing routes and new opportunities for SMMEs is often lacking. Innovative forms of community participation coupled with a unique selling proposition that goes beyond marketing and selling 'the obvious' could prove to be a marker in creating a sustainable products that can bring benefits to previously marginalised communities.

5.4. Information and promotion

Information and promotion of the route is a crucial requirement for attracting visitors. A study of route networks in Dunedin, New Zealand, found for example that while there were around 100 different hiking and biking routes around the town, residents were hardly aware of them. Information on routes was neither publicised nor were the routes linked in any coherent manner. Tracks failed simply because the public was not being made aware of them. This was exacerbated by the fact that planning for walking and cycling trails was neglected, i.e. visitors would need motorised transport to reach the start of the track, thus often defying their purpose of using 'alternative' transport and mobility – and leaving the car at home for at least a day.

Successful promotional practices, like the more general marketing practices, are those tools that effectively ensure or create a stable tourist demand while meeting, and not overburdening, current resource supply. Who takes responsibility for promotion may vary from region to region. International holiday itineraries organised from the United Kingdom, for example, are generally handled by large tour operators and travel agents, who rely on standardisation and are generally not equipped to organize independent itineraries. A small number of specialists are able to handle smaller-scale products through newspaper ads or specialist magazines. This kind of niche marketing can offer greater control over the tourist market in drawing desirable

tourist numbers. Responsible promotion refers to accurate and true representation of the tourism product as it exists in reality. Promotion that is not responsible can be harmful to both the tourist and the local community, as suggested in the case of Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park Cultural Centre (box 5). Tourist expectations are largely shaped by market promotions and images, which, when not met, can lead to disappointment on part of the tourist and the host community.

Perhaps the newest means of advertising routes, as in the case of Open Africa, is through the Internet, however, also with side effects as the example of Huichol Art (box 19) shows. Internet promotions have the advantage of wide international exposure at low cost. At the same time, however, not everyone has access to the Internet and as such, promotions can be limited. Furthermore, for communities without technical access and support, promoting a community-based web site may require outside assistance.

Box 19: Huichol Art and Internet Promotion, Mexico

The communities of Huichol have developed their traditional arts into an enterprise geared toward tourists and the general public. While small-scale tourism to the communities has provided some revenues, benefits have come principally by way of art sales. The Huichol people have expressed a need for help in marketing their artwork to a wider audience, and the Mexican government has responded by sponsoring art displays. More recently, the Huichol people have taken an enterprising approach to marketing their artwork through a web site called "The Center of the Rose." While art sales are at an all-time high, there is concern that the growing popularity of this culture might attract unsustainable numbers of tourists, for which the Huichol are not yet prepared.

5.5. An explicit pro-poor focus.

In order for the poor to benefit from route developments, it is essential that an explicit pro-poor focus is taken. Such an approach goes well beyond new product development and niche marketing to recognising that the prime aim of any route development is to use it to increase the net benefits to poor stakeholders. The ways in which this can be achieved varies considerably depending on community, company and tourism product characteristics. Strategies vary according to needs and assets but can range from direct employment opportunities; enterprise opportunities; communal income, and livelihood benefits. Through the involvement of the 'poor' in product development, capacity can be built up and business support can be provided, while the linking with established private sector businesses can create product marketing and information channels that were previously unavailable. An important objective of the *PPT-Pilots in Southern Africa* project is to create new linkages between established private sector companies and neighbouring poor stakeholders by focusing on increased benefits to the poor and at the same time the development of linkages that 'make sense' for the private sector so that the chances to sustain them in the long-term will be considerably increased. Route developments can offer opportunities when they are based on an explicit pro-poor approach.

6. route/gateway ideas applied to Spier

This concluding section highlights how some of these ideas could be applied to the PPT partner site Spier.

Spier is a founding member of the Stellenbosch wine route in South Africa. Spier has invested heavily in accommodation facilities in recent years and plans to increase the bed spaces offered to more than double its current capacity, i.e. to about 20% of Stellenbosch' bed-stock or approximately 300 rooms. At present Spier relies heavily on day-trippers from nearby Cape Town (approximately 90% of its visitors) and is eager to create attractions that will entice visitors to stay longer. The product Spier offers is very diverse, from the traditional wine product over conferences, arts and sporting facilities.

As described above, the tourism industry in Stellenbosch is said to be a very traditional, 'white'-led affair with so far little emphasis on creating linkages to HDI's. Spier is eager to add a cultural dimension to its product portfolio by creating linkages with local communities. It is hoped that this will entice visitors to select the Spier estate as their holiday resort rather than Cape Town and thus increase occupancy levels at Spier's accommodation facilities.

The primary gateway to the Stellenbosch area is currently Cape Town. The town of Stellenbosch, the location of the tourist information centre for the region, attracts a high number of visitors, is however faced with a number of problems that impact on creating PPT linkages, which include:

- narrow streets with limited parking (esp. coach parking facilities)
- limited information centre (although it receives approx 100,000 visitors annually)
- limited accommodation stock, predominantly in small B&Bs
- urban rather than rural wineland feel
- traditional, 'white' marketing and product development approach with a strong product (i.e. wine) focus
- accommodation facilities are highly concentrated at Spier and as a consequence the remaining estates do not focus on staying visitors

The Stellenbosch Municipality: Integrated Development Plan 2002 – 2006 identified a number of business opportunities for the tourism sector, which include:

- Improvement and development of the local arts and crafts sector, including opening opportunities for developing entrepreneurs
- Packaging and offering unique tailor-made tours run by excellent tour guides to small, so far un-marketed groups (e.g. culture, arts, heritage, historical, architectural)
- Developing, marketing and packaging adventure tourism and nature related assets
- Spin-offs for marketing, tour-operators and related companies.

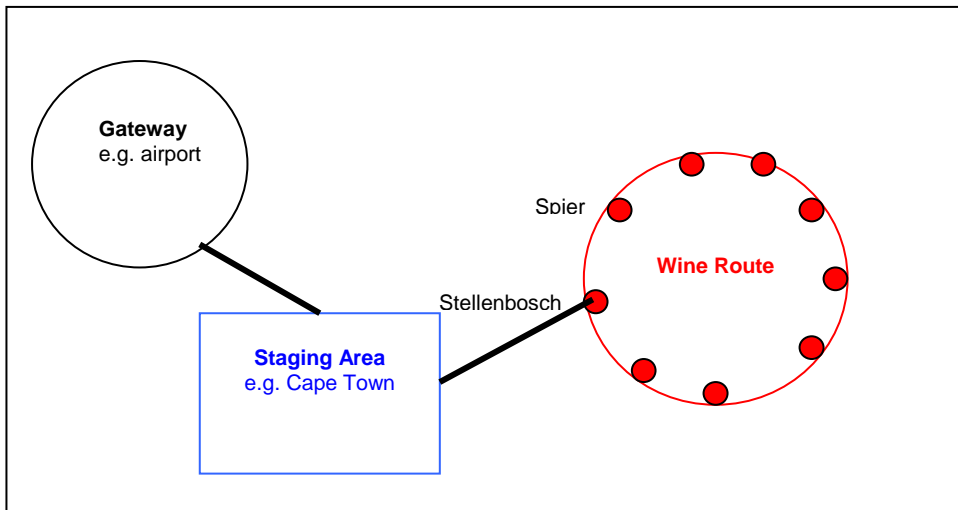
The following needs and shortcomings for tourism development in the Stellenbosch area were also identified:

- ineffective marketing of Stellenbosch;
- a need for the development of agri-tourism;
- a need to beautify the entrance of the valley to attract more visitors;
- lack of visitor attractions and diversification;
- lack of access to tourism building and other opportunities;
- lack of integration of the different products;
- lack of accommodation facilities that cater for bus-tourists.

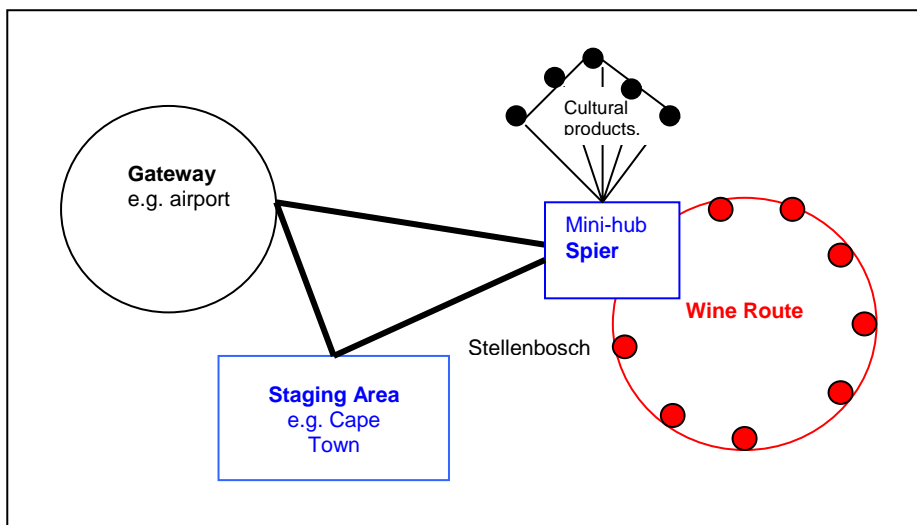
Spier could establish itself as the mini-hub to the area by providing:

- accommodation facilities;
- attractions;
- information centre – marketing for HDI products/facilities/services;
- decanting point for large bus groups to change to smaller more tailor made tours which include heritage based tours to HDIs – actively involved in organising excursions;
- sales outlet for traditional wine-goods but to include among others arts and crafts products;
- integration of a variety of products;
- linkages to SMMEs and a clear focus on tourism as a catalyst for growth and employment creation rather than just a way in which wine sales could be increased.

The current structure is characterised as follows:



A possible new structure that would link in with local SMMEs could be as follows:



The new structure essentially means moving away from using Stellenbosch as an entry to the wine route to locating it at Spier. The advantages of such a move for the destination and PPT are:

- available infrastructure in terms of beds and decanting point;
- marketing of cultural products as an add-on to the traditional wine goods;
- potentially increasing length of stay and spending;
- offering new opportunities for linkages;
- potentially stronger marketing power of Spier;
- staging of attractions offers the opportunity to create excursions more efficiently;
- move away from a wine purchasing to a tourism destination, thus increasing the appeal to international visitors who are not interested in purchasing wine.

The benefits for visitors could be:

- more diverse products;
- central hub concentrating all facilities;
- thorough information availability;
- easy access.

The benefits for Spier could be:

- increase of visitor numbers;
- increase of length of stay and thus higher occupancy rates;
- sales opportunities;
- greater control over product development and marketing;
- product diversification and niche marketing opportunities.

The table below illustrates Spier’s current position.

Spier: SWOT analysis:

<p>Strength</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A highly diversified product • Multiple operations and thus opportunities for linkages • Leader in the area in terms of staying visitor numbers • Leader in terms of diversification and desire to diversify further (i.e. arts and crafts, community tours etc) • Access to currently 600,000 visitors annually • Land ownership, access to infrastructure • Marketing muscle • Facilities to build up a mini-hub (gateway) • Interest in development of innovative products and creation of linkages 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High dependency on day-trippers from Cape Town • Need to increase staying visitors • The marketing of the Stellenbosch area (i.e. the overwhelming focus on marketing the wine product) does not benefit Spier’s drive to diversify • wine tourism not attractive enough for over-night tourism • high seasonality • currently limited linkages to area-specific cultural attractions to create a long-stay incentive (e.g. township tours, shebeens)
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of cultural tours in the area, at the same time great emphasis on cultural tourism development by the Stellenbosch municipality • Overseas customers, the numbers of which are increasing, demand African Heritage and cultural products • Increasing tourist numbers to Cape Town thus the opportunity to take some over to Stellenbosch • Linkages between the many Spier operations can be set-up quite easily (i.e. combination of wine and food, or wine and art) 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very traditional old fashioned structure of Stellenbosch tourism industry with little emphasis on linkages • danger that existing allies could be alienated • South African wine tourists are white and so far not interested in anything else than wine • Spier losing its identity by going ‘all over the place’ • Continuous day-trippers rather than sleep-overs • Stellenbosch tourism and product remains product (wine) orientated

7. Conclusion

Tourism routes and gateways to routes promise to provide ample opportunities for non-traditional tourism product and service suppliers. Routes can disperse income from tourism to more marginalised communities if well planned and executed. There are plenty of examples in this short report that verify the importance of dispersal strategies. This report was written to inform the *PPT-Pilots in Southern Africa* partners about potentially alternative strategies for developing a PPT approach. The example of Spier highlighted the potential that such a strategy could have. It will need to be seen in the course of this project what strategies will be adopted by pilot-partners. Apart from focusing solely on the pilot-project we hope that this short excursion into the potential of route and hub developments might be of interest to others.

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