PROJECT PROPOSAL: TOURISM APPROACH TO POVERTY REDUCTION IN SENEGAL

ADDING VALUE WHERE IT COUNTS

PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Launched towards the end of 2006, ITC’s Inclusive Tourism project sought to improve rural livelihoods by linking poor communities from the district of Rao to the influx of tourism in the adjacent metropolitan area of Saint-Louis, in the north of Senegal. Additional income and jobs are planned to be generated for the rural poor through the sale of products and services to visitors and to tour operators, hotels and restaurants.

THE CONTEXT

The Saint-Louis region covers 19,000 Km² and has about 700,000 inhabitants, 59% of whom are under 20 years old. There is a wealth of cultural and natural diversity in this region, granting it prime positioning in terms of cultural tourism in Senegal. Women, youth and ethnic minorities, all of whom have a low level of purchasing power, will be targeted among the beneficiaries.
With tourism having been identified in the Diagnostic Trade Integration Study of the Integrated Framework (IF), the project is also in line with the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Accelerated Growth Strategy.

ACTIVITIES

ITC conducted an opportunity study to identify pro-poor income potential and challenges in three main sectors: agriculture, cultural activities, and excursions. Specific capacity building activities are planned to enable the selected community members to offer quality products and services to hotels, restaurants, tour operators and tourists. In addition, hotels will be trained in specific fields such as eco-tourism and quality management. A tourism fair organized in collaboration with the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) on the European market of tour operators is planned to provide a unique opportunity to sell the destination.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE INTERVENTION

Further refinement of the envisaged value chains needs to be processed through a cost benefit analysis to identify the best match between demand and local supply. Complementarities with other development agencies and additional funding opportunities need to be identified to encompass waste recycling options, sanitation management and the rejuvenation of the tourist infrastructure and buildings that draw holidaymakers to Saint-Louis.

Moreover, synergies will be sought between this project and one soon to be implemented in Dakar with the two ACCOR Group hotels in terms of linking respective value chain productions. Lessons learned from the pilot project will be instrumental in helping the Senegalese Government engage in similar tourism activities throughout the country. The standard of living of several hundred rural poor in Saint-Louis is expected to rise through additional employment opportunities and higher incomes. The promotion of more sustainable forms of tourism will also contribute to the protection of the natural and cultural heritage of the targeted communities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Aissatou Diallo
Senior Officer, Trade in Services
International Trade Centre
Palais des Nations,
CH-1211 Geneva 10,
Switzerland
+41 22 730 0295
diallo@intracen.org