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A case study on the social impact of the eco tourism project in Selenki Ranch, Amboseli, Kenya

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A case study analysis on the social impact of the eco tourism project in Selenkei Ranch, Amboseli, Kenya.

BY

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A Thesis submitted to Faculty of Arts, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts in Tourism.

JOHANNESBURG, 2005

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted previously for any other degree or examination in any other University.

…… (Signature of candidate)

……day of …….2005

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DEDICATION

To my family and friends
with sincere thanks
for their love, support and encouragement
during the writing of this thesis
May God bless you all.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to take this opportunity thank a few people whose help and support this project would not have been possible. First and foremost, to my God Almighty for carrying me through it everyday. I am indebted to my supervisor Mr. Kerry Pile for guidance during the entire course of the project. To my friend Sam for the support and encouragement when the going got tough. I would also like to thank Edwin and David Katisho in Amboseli. To David from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife in Kenya for his assistance especially during the research process. Finally, my sincere gratitude to Ms. Liz Delmont and Prof. Rogerson for practical knowledge acquired from their courses, which proved to be very useful in the writing of this thesis.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1995, Castilho and Herrscher estimated that Kenya earned in excess of USD 350 Million from tourism. However, over the past decade, research has revealed that only a margin of this revenue has trickled to poor Kenyans and therefore, tourism has generated little economic benefits for the local communities. Mass tourism has been the main form of tourism since independence. This form of tourism has been associated with a myriad of problems such as leakages of tourism receipts. This situation has been attributed to the nature of mass tourism in Kenya and particularly its interrelationship with overseas agents, whereby payments for food, accommodation and tourist services are made in the north. Akama (1999) succinctly points out that with these forms of tour packages (*in mass tourism*), leakages of tourism receipts to overseas companies may range between 10% and 70%.

One of the key features of mass tourism in Kenya is that the Maasai[1] have not been incorporated into Kenya's tourism industry despite the fact that they live on the outskirts of the National Parks. The creation of National parks on their ancestral land has left many displaced from their traditional grazing lands. Lindsay as cited in Cater (1994) gives an example of how the wildlife, in the Amboseli National Park, has been killed by Maasai warriors to emphasize their resentment of tourism development. Such human-wildlife conflict is made worse by lack of policies that involve communities in the management and benefits from tourism ventures.

Lately Kenya has embraced eco tourism initiatives as a way forward for the country's tourism industry. In this case, eco tourism as applied at Selenkei ranch in Amboseli, is a strategy that has the potential to contribute to local development and alleviate the plight of the poor Maasai community. It is important to evaluate the nature of eco tourism practices as sometimes they do not benefit local communities and tend to replicate the problems associated with mass tourism.

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[1] The Maasai community leads a nomadic lifestyle that is dependent on land for both shelter and livestock grazing.

In view of this, Fennel (1999:103) cautions, "the industry must tread lightly in securing an equitable relationship between how the industry is planned and developed and the needs of the local people". This research is an attempt to delve into the arena of eco tourism practices with the aim of providing a better understanding of issues related to this community's perceptions and attitudes as well as the concomitant social impact that this development has had on this community.

Chapter one seeks to provide a review of the central research themes in the Kenya tourism industry and how the industry has progressed from being predominantly mass tourism to its current form of eco tourism. The chapter concludes with a brief introduction of the case study together with the aims and objectives of the study.

The literature on mass tourism, eco tourism, community based eco tourism and the development of eco tourism in Kenya is reviewed in **chapter two**. The discussion begins with a review of the problems associated with mass tourism, and then considers pertinent issues and debates on eco tourism and concludes with their implications for this study. **Chapter three** presents the research design and methods of collecting data. It describes the stages that the researcher went through during the process of gathering information for this project, as well as provides a brief description of the techniques used to analyze this data.

The results of the project are discussed in **chapter four**. It provides the findings upon which the subsequent chapters are based. Accordingly, **chapter five** provides a summary of the study's main findings, conclusions, recommendations, as well as proposals for future research.

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1.2 Motivation of the study

The concept of eco tourism has been acknowledged internationally as a tool that can be used to alleviate poverty for impoverished rural communities. In addressing the reasons why developing countries such as Kenya should embark on tourism for economic development, Fennel (1999:14) espouses:

"Tourism's international importance as an engine for economic growth as well as its potential for growth makes it particularly relevant for sustainable development".

According to a sessional paper on Kenya's economic recovery strategy, the Government recognizes that arid and semi arid areas have a potential for tourism growth as they host most of the country's game reserves and national parks. According to this paper, tourism is important in igniting the economic growth as:

- "the Government will allocate a large proportion of the revenue generated from game reserves and national parks to community projects,
- strengthen community based wildlife conservation and other approaches through which wildlife can benefit pastrolists directly so as to motivate them to conserve and accommodate wildlife in their productive systems,
- support development of eco tourism activities since the areas have high potential for eco tourism", Government of Kenya (2003:5).

The above principals and ideals on eco tourism, which include both 'conservation' and 'revenue generation' for host communities, are admirable. The implementation of these principals however seems to be a challenge for Government, the private sector and impoverished local communities. It is thus upon this premise that this project seeks to explore some of these challenges by focusing on the social impact of the eco tourism project at Selenkei Ranch in Amboseli, Kenya. One of the key issues that seem to affect local community's involvement is the power relations amongst the different stakeholders within the community. The local community's perception of

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these relations is that these eco tourism developments only seem to benefit a few of its members with little trickling down to the rest of the community.

The purpose of this research report is therefore to demonstrate how the eco tourism project at Selenkei ranch bears similarities to other tourism projects in mass tourism, in terms of approach and the social impact on local communities. It is clear that not much attention has been paid to the successes and failures of eco tourism projects in Kenya, which are aimed at improving the living standards of these host communities. Scheyvens (1999) points out that eco tourism is important as it necessitates an approach, which should include the needs, concerns and welfare of the host communities. Based on this premise, the study aims to find out if the eco tourism project at the ranch was meeting some of the conditions that embody the practices of eco tourism such as the equitable distribution of benefits for the Selenkei community. The project was therefore evaluated in light of the experiences of the community members and how it has contributed to the social development of this community.

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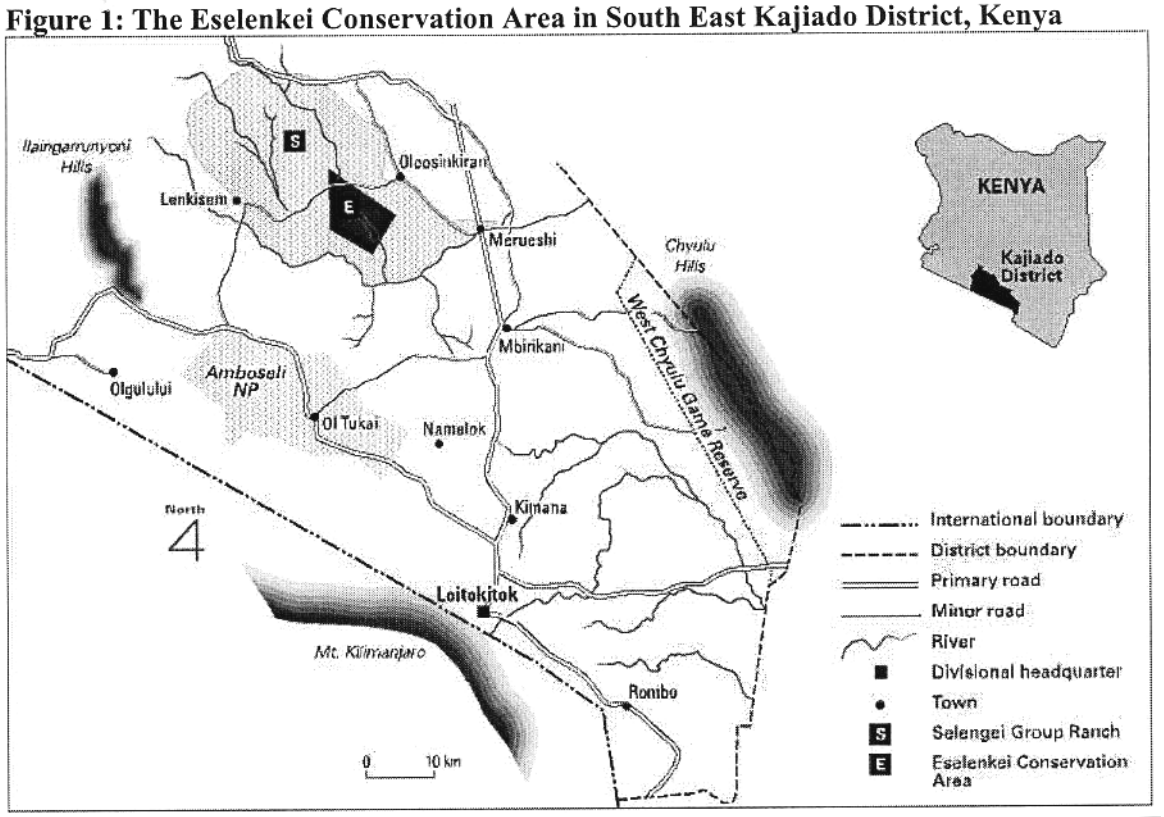
1.3 Background of the Case study

Figure 1: The Eselenkei Conservation Area in South East Kajiado District, Kenya



Eselenkei[2] conservation area: Map provided by Porini Eco Tourism Limited

The ranch is located in South East Kajiado district and lies north of the Amboseli National Park. In May 1997, a British company by the name of Porini Eco Tourism Limited entered into an agreement with the Selenkei Group Ranch. The aim was to establish a conservation area on 7,000 hectares of land, aimed at wildlife conservation as well as generating income and economic benefits for the community. The agreement was that Porini Eco Tourism Limited would pay an annual rental fee for exclusive rights to the land as well as enjoy a sole monopoly to operate all tourism activities on the ranch. This fee would increase at a rate of 10 % per annum for a 15-

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[2] Eselenkei is the maasai name for the area. However, the area is known as Selenkei and this term is used to identify the ranch geographically on the Kenyan map.

year lease term. In addition, Porini Eco Tourism Limited was to also assist this local community by developing social infrastructure at the ranch.

Selenkei group ranch community has a population of approximately 10,000 people. However group ranch membership is restricted to male members of the community and 2000 are registered as members. The women in this community can only be represented by either their husbands or by their sons. The majority of the members mainly graze cattle as a source of livelihood. The majority of the community members are illiterate and live well below the poverty line. Prior to the establishment of the conservancy, the entire ranch was used for cattle grazing by this nomadic community. With the establishment of the conservancy, the local community was denied access to grazing areas in some parts of the ranch, thereby losing ties with ancestral land. The community is made up of different clans, some being more predominant than others. Community members elect community leaders annually to represent them in this business venture with Porini Eco Tourism Limited. This project will focus on the Selenkei community as beneficiaries supposedly affected by the establishment of Porini Eco Tourism Project.

The purpose of this research was to determine the community's perspective on the eco tourism project and the social developments that have occurred since the projects' inception. Most of the research papers written on eco tourism tend to generalize on the country as a whole and thereby fail to provide specific concerns on different communities. This research used Selenkei ranch as a case study to illustrate the development of new forms of tourism and the ways in which they are intimately related to each other in terms of approach, and the overall social effect on the local communities.

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1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to evaluate the social impact of the eco tourism development upon the Maasai community at Selenkei ranch in Amboseli, Kenya. The study will report on the perceptions and 'voices' of the local community, in an endeavor to determine the role that eco tourism has played in improving their social lives.

Research Questions

The central questions that this research attempts to address specifically are:

- What are the perceptions of the local community of the eco tourism development at the ranch?
- What social developments have resulted from the project?

This study also looks at other sub questions linked to community and social development such as the 'concept of ownership' and 'community participation' in eco tourism development.

1.5 Anticipated Value of findings

The study has a significant role to play in eco tourism development especially when it is applied as a development strategy for impoverished communities in Kenya. The findings of this research will lead into three key areas that should be considered in eco tourism development, mainly: evaluation of the needs of local communities before embarkation of tourism developments, serve as a resource base for addressing challenges associated with eco tourism, and examine how eco tourism development is likely to affect local communities.

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It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute towards existing eco tourism debates by providing valuable data around community development. The exploration of literature in this report could assist to develop an understanding of community reactions to new forms of tourism planning. The findings will also serve as a valuable resource base when comparing findings on community perspectives against the existing literature on eco tourism ideals.

The findings are intended to assist policy makers, tourism investors and all those involved in the tourism industry in designing alternatives that take into account the social issues that inhibit the success of tourism in Kenya. As noted earlier, Kenya has in the past been a popular mass tourist destination and this practice has had serious consequences on the economy as a whole.

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CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 An overview of Kenya's Tourism

Tourism is particularly important for third world destinations, as it is a major source of employment, foreign exchange, and a main contributor to these countries' gross domestic product. Akama (1999) states that Kenya is a good example of a developing country, which has embraced tourism as an important strategy for socio-economic development. According to Sindiga (1999) tourism plays a pivotal role in Kenya's economy, since it contributed 11.2% of the GDP in 1996. Similarly, Kenya's former director of Wildlife, David Western, indicates that tourism revenue today exceed both tea and coffee by a factor of two (Gakahu & Goode, 1998).

After Kenya's independence in 1964, the Government established the Kenya Tourist Development Corporation (KTDC) in 1966. KTDC was given the mandate to finance aspirant Kenyans in the tourism industry, in an attempt to establish local ownership of the tourism industry and reduce control and ownership by previous colonial forces. In the past Kenyans had been marginalized by the colonial Government and only participated in the tourism industry as menial workers. In this regard, Dieke (1991: 274) demonstrates that "the indication is that wildlife and beach life in Kenya were highlighted primarily to serve the recreational needs of white settlers and occasional adventures from Europe".

KTDC embarked on a program of buying shares in foreign owned firms with the aim of selling them to promising Kenyan entrepreneurs on special terms. The reality is that many Kenyans could not afford to buy into the tourism industry due to the fact that they lacked both economic resources and technical know how. In the long term, foreign owned firms together with a few Kenyan elites (as directors) took advantage of these and jointly bought into these tourism developments. Olindo (1996) rightly points out that this innovative approach to localizing the tourism industry has failed as it is

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virtually impossible to distinguish between foreign firms and locally owned tourism firms.

While there is truth in his assertion, it would seem that liberalization of the economy in the recent years by the state has allowed more foreign owned firms to buy into the country's tourism industry. In this case, scholars such as Schuurman (1993) have argued that, when national assets are sold on a large scale to international private capital, the situation could lead to re-colonization and dependency of the developing countries on industrialized countries in the north. A vicious cycle of poverty is then created. The Kenyan director of tourism echoed this fact by saying, "liberalization is leading to more foreign owned hotels and tour operators so that little economic benefit is retained within the country" (as cited in Castilho and Herrscher 1995:23).

To date, the Kenya Government continues to offer incentives to foreign investors. These incentives could be in the form of tax exemptions so as to encourage their involvement in the tourism industry (personal communication with an economist from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, 2004).

Kenya is predominantly a mass tourist destination where most tourists will spend a few days in the city sight-seeing, and will later seek a diversion to visit nearby terrestrial areas like the Amboseli National Park for two to three days for wildlife game viewing (Weaver, 2002). On a cautionary note, Gakahu and Goode (1992) suggests that "the big five preoccupation has blinded potential visitors to the diversity of other options that Kenya can offer to the eco tourists outside of the parks". Consequently, it seems the big five mentality is doing more harm than good as even though tourists might visit eco friendly areas, there is a high possibility that they will be visiting other destinations as part of their itinerary.

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Today, specialist tour operators such as green and eco friendly operators are growing in the tourism industry, all offering a range of eco-products. Castilho and Herrscher (1995:6) state that, "at one end of the market is a multitude of medium and small independent operators who are predominantly foreign owned and expatriate staffed". They demonstrate that businesses are keen to open up in the eco tourism market once faced by fierce competition. This has driven some independent tour operators to develop private conservation areas in developing countries.

After independence in 1964, Kenya opened up as a mass tourist destination, through the marketing of inclusive tour packages from overseas. Tourists took advantage of the cheap charter flights to Mombasa and nearby National Parks. As the tourist numbers increased, hotels rapidly mushroomed along the Kenyan coast. In response, the Government put up supporting infrastructure to accommodate the then booming tourist industry.

Mowforth & Munt (1998) indicate that the phenomenonal growth of mass tourism has led to a range of problems that are mostly borne by the "destination country" and more directly by its local inhabitants who interact in various ways with the local tourism industry through activities such as employment. Some of the negative impact of mass tourism could be classified as ecological in nature. This would include amongst others, environmental degradation such as soil erosion. However this study is more concerned with the negative social impact tourism generates for the local inhabitants. This concern would entail critically studying the skewed economic benefits and partnerships, the tourism forms (foreign owned) and the monetary gains local communities receive. In doing so, a key question to address is: To what extent do local communities appropriate the social gains and economic gains associated with eco tourism development? Given the aforesaid, critics of mass tourism such as Fennel (1999:7), have described conventional mass tourism as "a beast; a monstrosity which has few redeeming qualities for destination region, their people and their natural resource base". The following section looks at these leakages in mass tourism in detail.

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In the 1990s, it became evident that the tourism industry needed a major revamp in order to keep up with the competition from other countries like South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe. The eco tourist market had been steadily growing in these countries and Kenya needed to aggressively promote its' tourism product internationally to keep up. Given the aforesaid**,** a need therefore arose to search for an equitable relationship by providing links between the tourism industry and the domestic economy, in a bid to increasing the local multiplier. As a result the Kenya Government embraced eco tourism in an attempt to address some of these problems.

2.2 INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL, PARTNERSHIPS, OWNERSHIP STRUCTURES AND ITS IMPACT ON ECO TOURISM

2.2.1 Tourism Leakages

The concept of leakages in tourism helps one to identify the 'nodes' through which local communities affected by eco tourism are unable to positively participate in its growth development and in the inequitable distribution of its profits. This concept is therefore used in the study to enumerate the systematized way through which local communities are alienated from becoming integral stakeholders with equal claims of appropriating the gains of tourism. Five nodes of leakages have been identified as follows; foreign exchange leakages, unequal partnerships, foreign ownership and control, types of indigenous jobs created and global security environment. Through the concept of leakages in tourism, one is able to establish the extent of community alienation and its impact thereof in the wake of a foreign dominated tourism sector.

Foreign Based Ownership

Harrison (1992:23) notes "the structure inherited from the colonial period may prevent individuals or groups from developing entrepreneurial talents or restrict them to specific market sectors. Britton (1983:7) points that due to a lack of capital and expertise, tourist plants in peripheral countries will most likely be constructed and supplied by overseas companies". According to Sindiga (1999) the high rate of foreign

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ownership has led to external control in almost all components of Kenya's tourism enterprises. A study by Brachmann (cited in Rajotte, 1987) reinforces this view by demonstrating that "out of 17 hotels in Malindi, Watamu and Lamu, only 6 were controlled by Kenyan citizens and all of them, non-Africans[3]". This trend seems to have also manifested itself in eco tourism development as local communities continue to battle with lack of capital and expertise in tourism.

Foreign Exchange leakages

Foreign exchange leakages have been associated with mass tourism in Kenya. These leakages have been attributed to the interrelationships between foreign firms and those based in the country. In these arrangements, tourists pay for their hotels/tours/air fares overseas, causing substantial leakages of tourism earnings (Harrison 1992). The result therefore is foreign exchange leakages occur and limited resources trickle to the local community at the destination, thus limiting the benefits to local communities.

Although specific information is not available on the extent of these leakages in Kenya, many critics have argued that most of it ends up leaking to external factors outside the country. It is argued that these leakages occur in the form of payment of foreign staff salaries, and profit repatriation by the foreign tourism companies overseas.

Local Linkages

Importation of foreign foodstuffs and amenities has also been identified as a high leakage point. The reason given by most of these establishments is that locally produced foodstuffs and amenities do not conform to international standards, which is what their clients prefer. According to Mogot-Adholla (cited in Rajotte 1988:84) "given the high demand for food and other goods by large hotels and the expectations of quality and reliable delivery, small scale producers are progressively excluded from supplying the tourist sector". The result therefore is that local communities end up not

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[3] The author recognises that this information is dated and the situation may or may not have changed since 1987

benefiting from tourism developments as they are denied an opportunity to participate in business.

Job Creation

Harrison (1992:25) notes "numerous studies draw attention to the "inferior" nature of employment in tourism and the tendency for administrative and other senior positions to be held by outsiders". It has also been argued that the jobs created for locals in the tourism industry both are menial and demeaning. Research (e.g. Sindiga, 1999:145) has indicated that the majority of Kenyans in the tourism industry are employed as menial workers, continually 'eating the crumbs' off the table of the tourism industry. This can be attributed to a lack of skills and limited access to resources that can enable them to participate as key players in the industry. The concomitant effect is a system whereby local communities end up being passive participants and not benefiting fully from the industry. In addition Harrison (1992:249) points out that, "profits made from the labor of the poor in less developed countries are repatriated to the west. According to this view, tourism has not contributed to a sustainable livelihood for Kenyans employed in the tourism industry.

Unequal Partnerships

Unequal networks of power relations between partnerships created by foreigners with local communities, usually means that locals tend to be marginalized in these arrangements. Wildlife conservation in Kenya is dominated by stories of the Government, conservationists, tour operators and local dealers creating an elaborate network in the tourism industry that ends up depriving the local communities their pasturelands. In these arrangements, the locals are cajoled into giving more of their pasturelands to the parks, in exchange for tourism as a new form of income. The local Maasai community has lost access to their land and other natural resources without any of the promises or 'deals' bearing fruit. Lenaola *et al,* (1996: 251) give an example of the Kajiado Maasai who "have been lured with ready cash in exchange for a thumb-print on a transfer form they may not understand. They believe that leaving their title deed behind does not disentitle them to the land and are surprised to discover that they

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have actually lost all rights to the land or portions of it". Local partnerships with foreign investors are skewed and leave local communities in worse off conditions than they were before tourism was introduced. Conflicts are particularly evident when the local population is denied any direct benefits or excluded from the very resource on which it depends for basic needs.

World Market Vulnerability- Global Security Threats

Richter (1992) points out that tourism, as a discretionary activity is incredibly vulnerable to political instability. The international dimension of tourism is also expressed in the ways in which marketing programmes awareness and travel restrictions impact on the volume of tourist inflow into the destination regions. A good case in point is the recent upsurge of terror insecurity and consequent "zoning" of certain regions as unsafe tourist destination points as was recently experienced in Kenya following the bombing of the U.S embassy in 1998. These global situations have resulted in a steep decline in revenues for the local community as tourists choose to visit destinations in other parts of the world. Tourism in developing countries is fickle as global situations can dramatically influence tourism flows from one destination to another destination. This means that capital investments and a loss of local resources occur when tourists are advised against traveling to particular destinations in developing countries. In this regard Britton (1983:3) concludes, "the links between peripheral tourism destinations and their metropolitan tourist markets with respect to the creation and maintenance of tourist flows can be of serious vulnerability for the destination country".

2.3 DEFINING ECO TOURISM : CONCEPTUAL DEBATES

Ceballos-Lascurain (1996) as cited by Scheyvens (1999) defines eco tourism as "environmentally responsible, enlightening travel and visitation to relatively natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local population". Active eco tourism is associated with primary purpose trips of a relatively

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long duration with tourists staying at specialised eco lodges, based on local homes which channel revenue directly to local families (Fennel 1999). In addition, it is generally assumed that eco tourists use minimal provisions or facilities and there is a high degree of commitment and involvement among the local community.

Sindiga (1999) notes that one of the problems characterizing eco tourism is the structural dependency of third-world destination countries on western multinational corporations. Britton (1983) attributes this to foreign companies' direct marketing or corporate linkages with the metro poles as giving them an advantage. Sindiga reckons that multinational corporations control the ownership, organisation and management of international tourism that is so much sought after by most developing countries because of perceived foreign currency generation. According to Mowforth and Munt, (1998:3) "dependency theory argues that western capitalist countries have grown as a result of the expropriation of surpluses from the third world, especially because of reliance of third world countries on export oriented industries". It is for this reason that the co-existence of sustainable development and eco tourism must be adhered to in eco tourism planning.

It is important to examine the perceived notions of eco tourism as being a superior form of tourism. Debates on eco tourism have raised the question whether eco tourism is genuinely making a difference to the local communities (see Weaver, 1999 and Munt, 1994). It has been argued that this new form of tourism is penetrating deeper into Africa's undiscovered areas, and the result is no different from that of its predecessor, mass tourism. Fennel (1999:103) also suggests "as eco tourism continues to diversify and exploit relatively untouched regions and cultures, there is the danger that a cycle of events similar to that identified by Doxeys' irridex[4] index will occur". This is especially so when the benefits of tourism are neither tangible nor shared equally amongst community members. As Tosun (1999: 616) contends, "people who

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[4] This index of 'tourist irritation' illustrates how the interaction of tourists and residents may be converted into different degrees of irritation that could develop into antagonism over time

enjoy or suffer the impacts of tourism are those who live in the communities in tourist destinations".

The definition offered by Ceballos-Lascurain is not clear on the issue of local ownership and empowerment. In view of the relationship between these two concepts, it is clear that local ownership and participation are some of the key imperatives that determine the success of community based tourism initiatives. In support of this view, Telfer (2003:162) points out that, "within the development paradigms, the importance of community has come to the fore, placing local people at the centre of development with tourism becoming the preferred agent of development". In this regard, it is important to understand the nature of community development and who ultimately benefits from the processes of tourism, as negative impacts associated with mass tourism are likely to replicate themselves.

Another problem with eco tourism is that it is not always what it is ascribed to be. Ross & Wall (1999) agree that the ideal success of an eco tourist site reflects the extent to which eco tourism is able to protect natural resources, generate money and finance conservation, as well as contribute to the local economy. Previous research (Cater, 1994:72 and Lawton & Weaver, 2000:41) has shown that eco tourism bears many similarities to mass tourism and there is not always a clear line between eco tourists and mass tourists. As Ayala (cited in Weaver 1999) rightly indicates there is already evidence of a gradual convergence between eco tourism and mass tourism. He points to the higher demand for comfort levels and the patronage of destinations, which can offer a diversity of tourism experiences.

Ross & Wall (1999) observe that there is limited information available concerning means of assessing whether a site is meeting the multiple goals associated with eco tourism. Experts in the field generally agree there are complex dynamics at play and the results are not always conclusive**.** Weaver (1999:806) gives an example of eco tourism in Costa Rica's Tortuguero village; he found that "studies revealed a high level of satisfaction with eco tourism associated revenues and job creation. However they

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showed little actual improvement in the material standard of living and dissatisfaction with the constriction of economic opportunities resulting from the establishment of the adjacent National Park". This and other examples show that menial involvement in eco tourism has not been a sustainable option for this local community, as it did not deliver tangible results in the long run.

According to Sindiga (1999:116) "the concept of eco tourism gained momentum in the 1980s following the failing standards of the management of National Parks and reserves". In Kenya, the situation was exacerbated by the fact that the local communities living around these National parks were not benefiting from tourism. According to Leballo (2000) in order for local communities to be socially empowered, care should be taken to ensure that they are involved at the very inception of community based tourism projects so as to build a sense of ownership of the projects. Measures should be taken to educate and train local residents for positions in tourism so that eventually they are in a position to run them successfully. For this reason Freitag (1994) cautions that resorts that are controlled by outside developers and whose only linkage at the local level is by hiring a few workers, tend to promote a type of local dependency rather than development.

However, a tourism initiative that bestows ownership rights on local community has been developed conceptually under the banner of community based (eco) tourism. Scholars such as Timothy (2002:149) have pointed out that community approach to tourism has been heralded as a way forward for empowering communities and affording them opportunities to break free from destructive influences of mass tourism". Other scholars such as Scheyvens (1999) have argued that community based tourism for third world countries is the only way forward as it promotes both the quality of life within the local communities as well as ensuring conservation of local resources. In community based tourism, the local community has a high degree of control in terms of ownership and tourism benefits accrue to the local community directly. Likewise, Timothy (2002) contends that local control is vital because residents have greater tendency to do it in a way that is in harmony with cultural

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traditions, which might assist in building of ethnic pride. It has been suggested that community based tourism goes beyond minimizing the negative impacts of tourist activities but recognizes that tourism can be used as a developmental tool especially for third world countries.

Most of the literature review seems to conflate the meanings of Community based tourism/eco tourism and eco tourism. According to Hatton (1999) the definition of community based tourism should include the element of ownership and provide for sustainable use of the environment. As reviewed earlier in the literature by Scheveyens (1999) and the definition by Ceballos-Lascurain, eco tourism advocates active socio-economic involvement of the local communities and no mention is made of ownership of tourism initiatives.

A distinction is drawn between eco tourism and community based eco tourism. The emphasis and primary concern in community based tourism is upon improving the living standards of the local community. In addition, Leballo (2000) indicates that community based tourism should offer some form of benefits to local people who are not directly involved in tourism for example through improved education and infrastructure. What is particularly important in these arguments is that community based tourism places control the industry in the hands of local people and the fact that other members of the community not directly involved in tourism activities, get to benefit from it.

Given the above definitional contestations, it seems that the element of "ownership" is the difference between these two concepts as community based tourism/eco tourism, places control in the hands of the local people. For the purposes of the research, community ownership and participation will play a pivotal role in the definition of this concept. According to this definition, community based eco tourism is a framework that embraces local community empowerment and ownership as an alternative for local communities in third world countries. Coetzee (1989) notes that this approach also

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calls for Government transparency, accountability and self help community organizations.

This view to community based eco tourism is upheld by Weaver (1998), who advocates the notion of sustainable development as a peoples' ability to meet their present needs without compromising the ability of the future generations. Community based eco tourism has been identified as a way of addressing the conflicts between the goals of conserving the environment, and providing sustainable tourism development for impoverished third world destinations. Thus as Timothy (2002:150) suggests "community based tourism is a more sustainable form of development (…) as it allows host communities to break away from the hegemonic grasp of tour operators and the oligopoly of wealthy elites at the national level".

Mowforth & Munt (1998:291) aptly note that, "structural adjustment programs (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on third world Governments effectively force them to pursue specific policies not of their own design". The result is that tourism developments end up being controlled by foreign firms and a vicious dependency paradigm is created. The implication of these skewed resource flows between the first and the third world tourism economies is that local communities residing in or around conservation areas receive marginal or naught benefits from tourism initiatives.

For instance, in Kenya there has been phenomenal growth in 'green tourist' operators in the recent years. O'Brien, (1998:173) observes that "green tourism can disrupt the lives and livelihood of the local population living near the 'green tourist' area as much as conventional mass tourism". Sindiga (1999:118) reveals "local inhabitants are forced out of their traditional lands to give way to eco tourism projects such as parks". It has been argued that most of these operators have only wildlife and profit making as their primary concern. This has significant implications for the sustainable use and protection of wildlife for developing countries in that a local community can develop resentment towards the conservancy and the wildlife that it seeks to protect. For most

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of these operators, selling their products as 'community based' generally means leasing of land from the local community for a small fee and employing them in the front area of their establishments.

Lew describes eco pirates as "people who copy existing responsible tourism products, but in a non-responsible manner. They are said to offer lower prices, inferior experiences and detrimental environmental and social impacts" (cited in Scheyvens (1999:247). This has significant implications for developing countries especially for destinations like Kenya that are trying to change their tourism image internationally. The Government needs to devise vigorous strategies to combat this and provide support for the development and growth of genuine community based eco tourism. This can be done by way of policy frameworks that include empowerment of local communities and impact analysis of eco tourism activities.

2.4 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ECO TOURISM

Tosun (1999) exhorts that problems associated with community participation in the development process may in part be attributed to definitional difficulties or the evolution of the concept itself.

Local communities lack structural and economic forums which act as limitations in community participation. Tosun (1999) identifies the lack of capacity of poor people to handle development effectively, apathy and low level of awareness as other factors that affect local communities. Rajotte (1988:72) points out "environmental conservation in very poor countries tends to be given a lower order or priority than raising the living standards unless it coincides with income earning possibilities". There needs to be processes in place to help local people conceptualize community participation so that they become aware of potential benefits and pitfalls before they engage in tourism.

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On the other hand, Pearce *et al.,* (1996:183) demonstrate that "for many individual citizens, the sole purpose of participation (*in the tourism industry*) is to exercise power, or at least some influence over the outcomes of tourism development". This is evident in many local communities where local elites instigate tourism projects and end up taking the lions' share of benefits, thus leaving community members disenchanted with the tourism development. Telfer (2002:113) agrees with Pearce *et al.,* and maintains, "the resulting inequality which may occur (…) between local communities and those who control the tourism industry such as local elites or multinational tourism organizations, can be considered within the dependency paradigms". In this set up, those who control capital and resources continue to restrict impoverished community members' participation in the tourism development. In the grand scheme of things, the locals are left in a worse off situation as a result of unequal power relations between community members and local elites. While this research does not explore these power relations in detail, it is clear that further research is warranted.

To other scholars, such as Rutten (2001), elitism within community structures is a huge barrier to community participation in eco tourism projects. Eco tourism should not be used to misguide interested donors for the benefit of a small group of powerful individuals, tour operators or conservationists. Instead, eco tourism should guarantee full participation of the local community and ensure that it delivers tangible benefits for all stakeholders namely, the local community, the economy as a whole, and the project developers. Local leaders should be selected from the community but this is not always the case, especially in Kenya where parks and conservation areas have been politicized. De Kadt in Cater (1994: 84) succinctly observes, "the distributional aspects of tourism development have all too frequently been ignored. It is naïve to advocate local ownership versus foreign ownership without recognizing that the interests of local elite are often more intimately bound up with those of foreign elites than their co-residents". In this regard, community members are disenfranchised when only local elites seem to benefit from tourism, at the expense of the other members of community.

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On the other-hand, Sindiga (1999) makes the distinction that local people tend to be excluded from the planning and implementation of eco tourism projects and governing the local community are normally made elsewhere according to the interests of those that control the tourism industry. Timothy (2002) agrees with Whelan (1999) and maintains that participation in decision-making entails community members determining their own goals for development and having a meaningful voice in the organization of tourism. Scheyvens (2003) provides a case study of tourism in Samoa whereby "tourists are serviced by basic accommodation facilities and food provided by local families". In this case, ownership and participation are key elements that characterize this successful tourism development. Timothy's (2002) contention on participation in decision making, means that residents have opportunities to voice their own hopes, desires and fears for development as well as contribute to the planning process. This would result in local communities viewing eco tourism as accessible developments that can enable them improve their livelihood.

It has also been noted that local leaders have often failed to represent the views of the community and instead pursue their own interests in tourism projects. This alienates the local community from the decision making process. Active participation involves granting the local community power sharing in decision-making and self-mobilization of community resources. In these arrangements where projects are locally driven, the local communities can define their own development goals and work towards achieving them using their own abilities and resources. Tosun (1999) points out that community participation in the tourism development process can be viewed from at least two perspectives namely, in the decision-making process and in the benefits of tourism.

In addition, Tosun (1999:613) contends that a lack of information has been identified as a major factor that hinders local participation. He notes "most residents are not well informed regarding tourism development: therefore, low public involvement is expected. The local community needs information for them to participate fully in the tourism development process if sustainable eco tourism goals are to be realized.

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Tosun also demonstrates that local communities lack institutional power structures, and economic systems to enable them participate fully in tourism projects. This has been identified as a major hindrance to local community participation in tourism. In most cases, local communities lack forums in which to 'air their views' as regards tourism at the destinations, especially the women and the youth. Timothy (2002) demonstrates that the political rights of women and their entitlement to participate in tourism planning and decision-making are ill defined in tourism policy and practice. The Kenyan Government recognizes and lays this out, that disparities in access to income, resources and influence over decisions between poor women affect their access to basic social services (Ministry of Planning and National Development 2003).

It has often been argued that for local communities to benefit from tourism development, tourism projects should be Government driven and controlled. In this case, Government's major role is to provide linkages between developers and the local communities that would result in sustainable development. Akama (1999) gives an example of colonial Kenya where the local people did not have the expertise or capital needed to initiate tourism and hospitality facilities.

Today, it would appear that local communities living around national parks still battle with a lack of these two factors, which therefore debilitates their participation in the industry. In these circumstances, Tosun (1999) contends that tourism planning ends up being 'donor-assistance' driven and based on foreign expertise. In this sense, notions of local community participation become unrealistic for the local community as foreigners continue to facilitate these developments from above.

A cogent example of how the concept of community participation is misappropriated was vividly illustrated in Kenya in 1996 when the Kenya Wildlife Service started the **"park beyond parks"** program. The aim of the program was to enable the local communities living in the areas bordering the parks to set up tented camps and other tourist activities so as to enable them derive some benefits from tourism. In this model, the development of services and facilities was approached on the basis of equity

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sharing partnerships between the private sector and the local Kenyans (Elliffe *et al*., 1997). In this case, the governing corporate has the responsibility of ensuring that benefits such as gate fees and lease fees are distributed to the local community.

Rutten (2001) posits that the park beyond park approach is a rather top-down approach 'invented' at the Kenya Wildlife Services" headquarters, and as such has no potential to assist the local communities in poverty alienation. Development strategies as is often argued, have been imposed from above and have consequently failed to improve the quality of life for many of the poor living in the developing world. This translates into top down implementation policies by these institutions that may not be suitable for a particular community. Brohman (1996) contends that local people commonly find themselves enmeshed in a globally integrated system of resource use over which they exercise no control. The resources upon which they depend become targets of top down decision making by elitist bodies exogenous to the community.

The ownership structure, as evidenced in the partnership agreements that ensue in most of the eco tourism projects is also a determinative factor that thwarts effective community participation in these projects. For instance in Kenya, Transnational Corporations (TNC) plays a crucial role in the investment of tourism infrastructures. (Britton 1982:331) suggests "the superior entrepreneurial skills, resources and commercial power of metropolitan companies enable them to dominate the third world tourist destinations". In many cases the local community cannot compete with them and they are forced out of business. This brings about unemployment and social imbalances in society, leading to further widening of the gap between the rich and the poor. Coetzee (1989) describes TNCs as being powerful agents in the international capital system and that their presence contributes to the problems associated with accelerating degrees of cultural and structural dependency. In this sense, Government should monitor and regulate so as to reduce the gap between the TNC and the local community at the grass root level.

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Tosun (1999) notes that the structure of international tourism plays a significant role in setting barriers to effective community participation. Some of these obstacles include; the centralization of public administration of tourism development, lack of co-ordination between involved parties and lack of information made available to local people at the destination. Consequently, making it difficult for the host community to participate in tourism development processes.

Community participation has been identified as a cornerstone of community based tourism, as the local community is involved in decision-making process as it also leads to a sense of responsibility when people take part in a project they consider to be their own. In addition, ccommunity based eco tourism is believed to offer local communities the possibility to take control of tourism and income distribution on their own terms and in accordance with their culture and way of life, (Timothy and Tosun, 2003). Unlike eco tourism where questions arise over local versus western involvement, community based eco tourism aims to provide all food, accommodation and use of local guides hence the net profits are retained within the community.

Ghimire (2001:25) endorses this idea by providing an example of two traditional communities in Brazil, "where with the support of NGOs and the church, *the community* organised the establishment of lodges and small traditional restaurants. The impacts on their livelihoods have been especially positive, allowing them to maintain to a certain extent their former lifestyles. It has also allowed the artisans and fishermen to sell their produce to local tourist lodges and restaurants". It would therefore appear that small scale, locally owned projects reflect better community values in the long run as economic benefits go towards meeting the community's basic needs and devise a source of sustainable livelihood.

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Community based eco tourism could serve as a guide that could be adopted by destinations that are currently using eco tourism as this has proven to offer more to the locals. Brohman (1996) contends that the success of a strategy of tourism development

ought not to be measured just in terms of increasing tourist numbers or revenue, but on how tourism has been integrated in the development goals of the local community.

2.4.1 Government Role in Eco tourism

A 1997 working paper report on Industrial Strategy Initiatives for South Africa suggests that local communities should be able to use their flora, fauna and heritage as a means to mobilise the private sector that has capital and expertise. The paper also points out to a potential partnership that should be overseen by Government, by means of providing a regulatory framework that seeks to protect the interests of the local community. A community's limited awareness of employment and investment opportunities reduces their potential to benefit from eco tourism development. In the absence of formalised planning and intervention from Government, eco tourism ventures with the private sector may not be a sustainable option for local community development.

One of the ways Government can get involved in eco tourism is by setting in place an enabling policy environment for small-scale enterprises controlled at the local level. Government can also provide support for local community members by establishing a regulatory environment to ensure that private sector interest do not impinge on the social well being of the host community and the environment. Kenya has embraced eco tourism as a way forward for the country's tourism development especially for the rural communities. According to a session paper on National Poverty Eradication (1999) the Government notes that there is a policy gap between very broad national plans and frameworks and routine sector actions and projects, which further contributes to low levels of policy implementation. Having said that, it appears there is a need for regular evaluation and assessment of eco tourism projects in order to establish whether they are meeting their goals. It is important to establish the claims made on its sustainability as a socio-economic tool for local communities.

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CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

The study investigated the Selengei group ranch, located in South East Kajiado district and lies north of the Amboseli National Park in Kenya. The area is referred to as the 'nyiri desert' and hosts a population of approximately 10,000 people. The group ranch membership is restricted to Maasai men, and 2000 of them are registered as members. The ranch was selected due to the fact that this eco tourism development is generally regarded by Kenyan conservationists as one of the most successful projects in Kenya. Most of the research papers written on eco tourism tend to generalize on the country as a whole and thereby fail to provide specific concerns on different communities. The Maasai community has been involved in the tourism industry for a long time, and this case study was an opportunity to evaluate this community under an eco tourism umbrella.

According to Ratz (2000:39) "the main objective of conducting socio-cultural impact analysis is to provide developers, local authorities and other parties concerned with information on the host communities' perception of and attitudes to tourism development in their destination so that perceived positive impacts could be reinforced and negative impacts minimized". This Maasai community is also a major stakeholder in this development and it was important for the researcher to evaluate the project, activities taking place and their concomitant impact on the local community.

The Selenkei community was chosen for the case study because its residents inhabit the outskirts of the eco tourism initiative and it was important for the researcher to ascertain the community's perspective on this development. To effectively determine this, the study employed a qualitative method of social research as discussed later in this chapter.

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The researcher was able to make two trips to the ranch, the first one in April and later an extended trip in August 2004 with officers from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife. Before the second trip, the researcher had made a trip to their offices in Nairobi for a scheduled interview with one of the Tourism officers. During the course of the interview, the researcher was able to determine that the department had arranged to make a fact-finding mission to Selenkei group ranch at the Ministers' request. The Minister was to present a paper on sustainable tourism development at a conference in Arusha, Tanzania and his paper was citing the Porini Eco Tourism project as one of the successful eco tourism case studies in Kenya.

The managing director Mr. Jake Grieves-Cook met the officers on arrival, and a familiarization tour of the premises was carried out. This experience meant that the researcher was able to take advantage of first hand information from the point of view of Government. It was also an opportunity to examine how Government interacts with the private sector in these arrangements.

3.1 Research design

The research targeted community residents, conservancy leaders, Government officials, and Porini Eco Tourism Limited management. The conservancy leadership is made up of a Chairman, Secretary General and a Treasurer, all elected by the community members. Government officials included the area chief who is a resident in the area, and officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, based in Nairobi. The researcher was able to interview Mr. Jake Grieves-Cook, Managing Director of Porini Eco Tourism Limited, who provided an insight on the organizational structure of his business and its relationship with the community.

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The study investigated Selenkei group ranch, an area that has not been researched before. The purpose was to collect in-depth data and allow the researcher to get a deeper insight of the people involved. The empirical data collected was an attempt to identify patterns that exist within the community as well as provide the researcher with

a deeper understanding of the problems associated with eco tourism development. This was especially designed to target the grass-roots level, and to give the local community a 'voice' in which to present their opinion on the eco tourism development.

The sample group consisted of twenty-two respondents from the local community and this included six women. The Maasai community is polygamous and they build their homesteads, called *Manyatas* in enclave kraals. Each kraal can have between 5 to 20 families or more, depending on how many wives and children the patriarch male has. All the respondents came from different *manyatas* living around the conservancy. A total of 10 enclave kraals participated in this research. Purposive sampling was applied in this study as the sample consisted of community members who were able to provide necessary information. The aim of this was to understand some of the social processes and not to obtain a representative sample. The researcher used schedule interviews to conduct research over a period of 12 days. The interviews were conducted by the researcher and lasted between forty-five to sixty minutes. The researcher also used the services of a translator.

In addition to the interviews, one focus group discussion was held at Lenkisem market with a group of five women. The focus group lasted approximately two hours and turned out to be a key resource for the study as very useful debates came up in the course of the discussions. The participants felt that the discussions had helped them to voice their opinions, something that did not happen in Selenkei. The discussions were audio taped and transcribed at a later date.

Creswell (1994) discusses triangulation as a process of gathering information using different techniques to determine its accuracy among different sources. This reduces the risks of such bias and inaccuracies associated with getting information from only one source. Secondly, triangulation was chosen because of the nature of this research. The topic was quite sensitive as the study aimed at addressing two important tasks. The first task was to determine the perception of the local community on the eco tourism

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development at the ranch. The second task was to examine the social developments that have resulted from the project.

The research focused only on a portion of the Selenkei group ranch, mainly the community living on the outskirts of the conservancy who were willing and available to participate in the study. In terms of the conservancy management, the researcher was able to interview the top three, the chairman, secretary general, and treasurer. In depth interviews were conducted with the identified informants and community members in order to obtain information. Three key informants were identified in the course of conducting the interviews. These informants seemed to be more informed about the development process of the conservancy and spoke out against some of the issues that seem to affect the local community. One of informants was at one time an elected treasurer to the committee and had valuable information to share regarding the leasing fee agreement with Porini Eco Tourism Limited. The researcher lived in a small lodge near the conservancy and was able to travel to the conservancy everyday for interviews with informants and other community members.

3.2 Qualitative method

According to Creswell, (1994) for the qualitative researcher, the only reality is that constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation. As such, it was important that the researcher interacts with the local community so to investigate the community perceptions, beliefs, opinions and attitudes about the eco tourism project. This interaction assumed the form of observing the community over a period of time.

This method was also chosen specifically because of its ability to enable the researcher gain an in-depth understanding of the local community. It enabled the researcher to find out how the local community engages with management at the conservancy and what their experiences have been regarding the eco tourism project in Selenkei.

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In this case, the field research interview was chosen because it facilitated a direct interaction between the respondents and the researcher. This is important because the researcher had to establish a close relationship with the respondents so as to build trust and obtain more sensitive information from them. This type of interview also allowed for unstructured, open-ended questions whereby the researcher was able to probe further for more details and enable elaboration and illustration from the respondents. In this study, interviews were conducted face to face and involved asking questions, listening, and recording of the information that was passed on.

The choice of venue was entirely up to the respondents. This created an environment of privacy and also ensured that the respondents were comfortable, relaxed and could feel free to openly discuss the issues at hand. In most cases, this resulted in an engaging and mutual discussion. Most of the respondents requested anonymity, as they feared being victimized by the community leaders or the conservancy management. This was especially the case with members who are currently employed at the ranch. This prompted the researcher to treat all cases with complete confidentiality.

3.3 Description of the fieldwork

The research tools utilized in this study were a tape recorder and scheduled interviews. The researcher had three sets of interview questions (see appendix for copies of the same). The first one was for local community members, second set was scheduled for the community leaders, and the third was for the lodge/conservancy management. The questions used in the interviews were duplicated and the researcher adhered to the same line of questioning in each interview. At the end of the interviews, the respondents were asked if they had any further comments or views they wanted to share with the researcher. The results of these discussions are found in chapter four.

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In addition to the interviews, one focus group discussion was held at Lenkisem market with a group of five women. The focus group lasted approximately two hours and turned out to be a key resource for the study as very useful debates came up in the course of the discussions. The participants felt that the discussions had helped them to voice their opinions, something that did not happen in Selenkei. The discussions were audio taped and transcribed at a later date.

3.4 Methods of Data Analysis

Coding and thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data collected. According to Maxwell (1998) qualitative data analysis does not aim at centering frequencies but rather at splitting data and re-arranging it into categories that allows comparison between components of the same category and between categories. These categories were drawn from the experiences of the respondents studied. Kitchen and Tate (2000) argue that under this method, the researcher starts to identify factors that are important or more salient, and that way is able to draw out commonalities and divergences.

From this study, two main themes emerged during the data analysis, namely; community perceptions as regards the establishment of the conservancy and social developments that have resulted from it. Each of these broad themes had various sub-titles. For example, under community perceptions, some of the sub-titles were, how the community was encouraged to participate in the eco tourism project, how the local community participates in the decision making process, local community knowledge of the revenues generated from the conservancy to name a few. Under social developments, some of the themes that arose included; linkages between the community and the eco-lodge, concept of ownership and community participation.

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3.5 Limitations of the study

This study was limited by the lack of an accessible sampling frame due to limited time and financial constraints. The researcher thus had to rely on purposive or judgmental sampling, which implied the possibility of researcher bias. According to Neuman (1997) non-probability methods allow little room for the generalizability of the findings and prediction of future trends.

The researcher would have preferred to get opinions from a broader spectrum of the community but only considered a few as data collection proved to be a costly exercise. The findings therefore may not claim to reflect the views of the entire population of Selenkei ranch.

Another limitation relates to the sensitivity of the research being carried out. As stated earlier, some of the respondents were reluctant to divulge information, as they feared being victimized by the community leaders. Some of the respondents were cautious and it took some time before they could relax and confidently give their opinions on the subject. The committee members initially demanded some 'gratuity' before they could cooperate with the researcher, but with the help of the translator, the issue was laid to rest.

The fact that the researcher did not have access to the initial contract agreement or proof of actual funds transmitted between Porini Eco Tourism Limited and the community meant that the researcher could only rely on the information given by the respondents. This information was checked through a process of triangulation.

The men in this community do not believe that women should be allowed to become members as they are considered to be inferior to men. This was a limiting factor especially when interviewing the committee members/community leaders.

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CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter is a synthesis of all the data obtained from the fieldwork. The findings of this research are from data gathered through the use of scheduled interviews and information recorded through an audio-recorder. They are presented in a form of a table (1.1) as shown in the appendix on page 74.

4.1 Background Information

Table 1.1 on page 74 shows that twenty-two respondents from the community were involved in the study. The study also involved interviews with community leaders (Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer), a local priest, Government Officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, and with the lodge owner, Jake Grieves-Cook. The conservancy has a total of forty staff members, of these, thirty-six are local staff from the community, employed as casuals and involved in menial jobs as follows; 10 game rangers, 1 game warden, 2 cooks, 2 house keepers, 2 watchmen, 3 waiters, 4 road workers, 2 waterhole workers and 10 morans (who perform dances and take tourists for casual walks). The majority of the respondents from the local community were unemployed. Out of all the respondents interviewed from the local community, sixteen were male (73%) and six were female (27%). Seven (32%) of the respondents were completely illiterate and the remaining nineteen (86%) had some basic education ranging from basic primary school education to a technikon diploma. Fr. Filberto's[5] level of education is unknown.

In light of the fact that the sample was relatively small and that the sampling was non-probable, no attempt was made to generalize the findings but to provide insights on the issues discussed based on the perspectives of the research subjects.

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[5] Fr. Filberto is the head of the local catholic mission in the area. He sometimes sits in on the meetings with Porini and provides support to the community.

The first part of the interview dealt with biographical information of the respondents including age, occupation, level of education, and present occupation. The age of the respondents ranged between 18 and 58. This range was important because some of the respondents elicited a diversity of opinion, which allowed the researcher to analyze their perceptions across the board.

This analysis aimed at providing insights into the issues discussed based on the perspectives of the research subjects. For ease of analysis, the discussions carried out have been split into two broad themes namely; community perception of the eco tourism development and social developments that have occurred as a result of the eco tourism development.

4.2 COMMUNITY PERCEPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSERVANCY

The community attitude towards the eco tourism development was assessed through several questions, which helped determine how the locals were involved with the conservancy establishment. This was also aimed at determining their general awareness of the current issues and concerns.

4.2.1 Community support of the conservancy on Selenkei Ranch

When the respondents were asked how the establishment of the conservancy affected them, twenty-two (100%) indicated that the establishment of the conservancy had resulted in the loss of ownership of their land. Some of the respondents emphasized that the establishment of the conservancy had been an inconvenience as they are a nomadic people and relied on the land especially during the drought season. Ten respondents (45%) pointed out that the area where the conservancy is located has a seasonal river passing through and that the area had better pastures compared to the rest of the ranch. Five (23%) of the respondents were happy with the development as they had obtained employment from the conservancy but pointed out that the community as a whole had lost out on land and pasture grounds for their livestock.

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Seven (32%) of the respondents stated that they would like to do away with the tourism project and have their land back as it has not benefited them in any way. In expressing his resentment on the issue, one of the elders from the community pointed out;

"The long drought has caused our cattle to die in large numbers this year. In addition, this project does not benefit us in any way and it would be a good idea for us as a community to find an alternative source of livelihood" (sic).

It would appear that the community's response is in contrast to Fennell, (1999) where he argues that eco tourism is generally assumed to involve a high degree of commitment and involvement among the local community. The responses also conflict with the idea that indicates that the new concept of eco tourism is different from that of mass tourism in terms of local commitment. It can be agreed that the practicality of the situation at Selenkei ranch reflects otherwise as it is evident that the majority of the people feel excluded from the project and local community involvement has not been realized.

4.2.2 Participation of local community in the eco tourism project

Eight (36%) of the respondents stated that they were not officially informed about the conservancy and the eco lodge project and only got word from their neighbors and friends. The remaining fourteen (64%) informed the researcher that community leaders only informed them of the project during the annual general meeting (AGM). According to both the committee members and local community, the conservancy was established on the understanding that it would generate both economic and social benefits for the local community. When the committee members were asked to explain on how the community members participated in the eco tourism development, they stated, "we held numerous meetings with clan leaders and pointed out the benefits that this project would deliver for their respective households".

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According to the game warden at the conservancy, there were protests from some of the members at the beginning of the negotiations in 1996 due to a quarrel over the issue

of dry season grazing land and conservation area. Some local Maasai burnt down the sign boards that had been put up and threatened to set fire on the managers' camp if the grazing area for their cattle was not increased. They were unwilling to lease 7,000 ha for exclusive wildlife use and insisted that the area was much needed pasture for the dry season. In a bid to win support for the conservancy idea, the tour operator contacted The Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS) for assistance. KWS in turn organized trips for the local leaders to visit neighboring wildlife sanctuaries, so they could see how tourism had been a successful venture for the locals. Majority of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with this arrangement, as they felt alienated from the process. One of the key informants had this to say,

"Jake and his lawyer bought off our leaders into signing the deal (sic). We were not even informed of the trip until it had already taken place and thereafter there was no further discussion on the matter".

This resonates O'Brien's (1998:173) assertion when he states "too often locals feel alienated and hostile towards tourist development, particularly as they are not often consulted about the development nor any attempt made to explain the purpose behind the developments". It would appear that these community members feel alienated by their leaders, as they were not fully involved at the inception of the development.

According to minutes from a meeting held on 15April, 1996 consisting of Selenkei leaders and committee members, an ex chief of the area spoke positively on leasing of the land when he stated, *"a lodge needs an outsider who leases and develops the tourist facility".* The leaders encouraged the members to agree on leasing of the land for the conservancy, as it would mean that the revenue they would receive would help members to establish their own wildlife sanctuary later. When the Chairman was asked to comment on the issue of 'running a wildlife sanctuary' from the revenues received, he had this to say;

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"*Apart from the capital limitations, we as a community are not able to run such a venture profitably as many of us have not been to school and lack the skills. Our children are going to school and maybe one day they will start the project*".

The above sentiments are also shared by Ghimire (2001) when she postulates that local communities not only lack financial resources to begin tourism schemes but they also have difficulties in meeting high level managerial capacity that is required in tourism projects. Inasmuch as local communities require capacity building to manage these projects, it would appear that economic realities of these local communities hinder their participation in community development.

Another important issue that developed was that of gender discrimination amongst the women in this community. The researcher was informed that ranch membership did not include women and none had been employed at the conservancy. It was established that they were totally excluded from the discussions regarding the development of the eco tourism project. The community members regarded this non-inclusion of women as an important one, quoting one male respondent, "women cannot be leaders in this community as we refer to both women and children as being in the same category" (sic). When the committee members were questioned about this, they claimed, "our women are not allowed to take up employment at the conservancy as they should be at home taking care of the children".

The attitudes of male community members towards women is an important one because it reveals the extent to which female community participation is restricted for this local community. This finding relates to the argument by Timothy and Tosun (2003) when they contend that true community participation cannot be achieved if the range of community participants is not adequately representative of the entire population.

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In view of the above responses, it is apparent that this Maasai community is a passive participant of the eco tourism project on the ranch. France (1998) discusses manipulative and passive participation as being characteristics when there is pretence of participation and secondly when local workers are only informed of what is decided.

4.2.3 Local community involvement in the decision-making process

Twenty-two respondents indicated that they did not have a say in the running of the conservancy. The respondents made it clear that all decisions were made by the steering committee made up of the chairman, treasurer and secretary. Eighteen respondents informed the researcher that new committee leaders were elected after a three-year term and each time they had been disappointed with the new leaders. In a follow up interview the respondents indicated that community leaders make all decisions with Porini Eco Tourism Limited as regards the conservancy and the community members are merely informed of those decisions.

In describing how the local community was involved in the decision-making process, Mr. Z[6] stated that community involvement was through the different heads of clans within the community. He also added that the bigger a particular clan was, the more powerful it was and a candidate from such a clan had better chances of being elected to the committee. This community has continued to select its leaders based on traditional principles; basically it's the same people from the same nucleus of families who get elected. In this case, the researcher was informed that Jake Grieves-Cook only deals with the committee leaders (men) and the sentiments of the other members do not seem to matter, as he looks the other way when they complain to him about their leaders. On the basis of the above response, it could be argued that there have been no proper forums to represent the entire community's views in this tourism development.

The argument by Tosun (1999) that tourism in developing countries has been organized by agreements between transnational companies and local elites without the involvement of local communities may hold true in this regard. This is evidenced

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[6] A key informant and a former committee member.

when the majority of the respondents claimed that they were not content with the running of the conservancy as they feel only a few people were actually benefiting. All the women interviewed expressed the desire to being a part of the decision making process and also wanted to benefit from the project. When the committee was questioned about it, they said that they held an annual general meeting (AGM) and in that meeting they advised the members of any decisions that have been made as well as discussed other matters concerning the conservancy with the members. It is clear from the responses that there is no transparency with regards to the management of the conservancy by their elected leaders.

In view of the above responses, the argument by Zeppel (2003:55) holds true when she states, "eco tourism policies (…) have limited means for indigenous participation in the control and management of eco tourism". In this case when local leaders fail to represent the views of the local community and pursue their own interests, the community feels alienated in the decision making process. In this regard 100% of the community members say they do not have a say in the running of the conservancy. The situation has resulted in mistrust between the committee and community members, as there is no accountability.

4.2.4 Government role in enhancing community participation

In an interview with Mr. Y. from the Ministry of Tourism & Wildlife, he discussed some of the problems facing many local communities. He said that the Government does not have the capacity to train them so they can run/manage these tourism projects. Even worse is the fact that the Government does not have the machinery to be a 'watch dog' so as to ensure that the locals are not taken advantage of. Mr. Y admitted the Ministry had not conducted any research to determine whether the locals were actually benefiting from tourism but said that he was sure that most of the benefits occurred to the local elites and the foreign-based investors.

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In an interview with Mr. X. an economist at the Ministry, we discussed the relationship between tourism and local infrastructure in Kenya's Maasai land. He explained that local politicians have huge stakes in some tourism destinations like the Maasai Mara and Amboseli. He went further to explain why some important roads like the one leading from the capital Nairobi, to the Maasai Mara (Kenya's leading National Reserve) have been neglected for decades;

"These people have huge stakes in the local charter companies and so tourists have to buy tickets to travel to these destinations". He then added *"Tourism in Kenya has been politicized for a long time and its only now in 2004 that we get the 'wildlife' department to this ministry. It has in the past 10 ten years been in the office of the President and of course we can all imagine the reason for this is because of the huge income it generates and receives from international communities".*

In view of the above responses, it would seem that the aspirations of the community are disregarded in these developments as local elites work in partnership with foreign elites in the tourism sector. On the basis of this, it can be concluded that this claims resonates De Kadt's views when he stipulates, "the distributional aspects of tourism development have all too frequently been ignored. It is naïve to advocate local ownership versus foreign ownership without recognizing that the interests of the local elites are often more intimately bound with those of foreign elite than their co-residents" (cited in Cater 1994:84).

4.2.5 Foreign influence and the impact on eco tourism

Mr. X. from the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife raised some concerns; he indicated that at the moment the department is severely short staffed, as there have been numerous retrenchments in the past 8 years. He suspected this has been a result of World Bank directives to the Kenyan Government to cut on the civil service so as to increase its chances of getting aid from these organizations. Mr. X. was also quick to add that this was just one example in which structural adjustments from these

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international organizations have affected them and the ripple effect it has had on local communities in the tourism sector as a whole.

The same point is echoed in Munt (1994) when he demonstrates how the political economies of tourism in third world countries are subordinated to the tourism currents that flow, from the advanced capitalist economies in the north to third world countries. Mowforth & Munt (1998:291) also aptly note that, "structural adjustments programs (SAPs) imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on third world Governments effectively force them to pursue specific policies not of their own design". The implication of these skewed resource flows between the first and the third world tourism economies is that local communities residing in or around conservation areas receive marginal or naught benefits from tourism initiatives. In this approach, only the elite and foreign investors benefit from tourism.

In a follow up interview, the researcher asked Mr. X about the role that the community played in the decision making process within the conservancy. Mr. X admitted that this is a crucial element that was lacking.

"The interference by fat cats has made it difficult to involve others in the development. The Maasai's tend to mind their own business, which is mainly finding pastures for their cattle. Their lack of education and awareness has limited them in these matters and others have taken advantage of this".

In this case the Selenkei group ranch is one such partnerships that was created with Porini Eco Tourism Limited. The consequences of this venture are that the locals have signed a contract to lease off their land in exchange for jobs and economic development. It appears that these deliverables have not come forth and the impact on the community has instead been reduced grazing rights and conflict amongst community members.

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In addition, France (1998) gives an example of such tourism development stating that in this regard:

- "neocolonial attitudes prevail through the use of expatriate labor, capital and technology.
- those employed in tourism in non menial jobs are likely to be expatriates or non indigenous residents" (cited in Timothy (2002:151).

4.2.6 Usage of revenues generated from the conservancy

Five of the respondents stated that they had no knowledge of monetary benefits coming from the conservancy as to date they had not been informed nor seen any developments that have resulted from the tourism development. Seventeen of the members replied positively that they were aware of money that was paid by Porini Eco Tourism Limited to the community but they were quick to add that they were never given details on the revenue such as how much has been collected nor participate in discussions on how it should be utilized.

In responding on the same issue, the committee members stated, "We have an AGM where we inform the members on what we have done with the money. During the course of the year, if anyone has any important issues they wish to discuss, we hold a meeting as the committee and deliberate on the matter at hand". The treasurer of the group ranch was not keen on revealing how much money the community had received to date, or share records/statements of it. When the researcher interviewed Mr. Grieves-Cook[7] on the issue, he said,

"I am a mere tenant here and what the committee does with the monies remitted to them is not my business".

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[7] The Managing Director of Porini Eco Tourism Limited, and recently appointed as the Chairman of Kenya Tourism Board in Kenya.

However, he was willing to show proof of monies he has remitted to the committee thus far. The researcher was unable to schedule a later meeting for this documentary evidence.

The findings show that this community lacks adequate forums through which they can raise their concerns about revenue generated from the conservancy. The relationship between the committee members and the local community supports Tosun's (1999) view, that a lack of information has been identified as a major factor that hinders local participation and notes that low public involvement is therefore expected. The revenue generated from the eco tourism project can be seen to benefit only a segment of the community, these being the committee members. Timothy and Tosun (2003:200) demonstrate that "tourism planning will be better equipped to meet the demands of sustainable development when community members have a voice and when they profit from tourism".

In view of the responses from the committee members as regard to revenue generated from the conservancy and the lack of accountability for it, there seem to suggest that there exists a bad relationship between the local community members who seem to think that their local leaders are corrupt and mismanaging the funds.

An important issue that came up was that of leasing fees and corruption amongst community leaders. Key informants gave details of how corruption has manifested itself in Selenkei to a point where only a few individuals seem to be benefiting from the project. Mr. F[8] stated:

"In early 2002, group ranch members froze the group ranch account after accusing the three committee members (chairman, secretary and treasurer) of embezzling huge sums of conservation money. It appears that the new leaders we elected have been busy at it again and most community members seem to have given up on this project".

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[8] Currently employed as the game warden at the ranch.

Viewed against Fennel's (1999:214) contention that "tourism is seen as a key to community development with the recognition of its economic contribution (...) and in its ability to unify community members", the eco tourism initiative at Selenkei ranch appears to have failed. It also seems to have created a corrupt culture that now seems to exist amongst community leaders.

4.2.7 Other Associated benefits from the conservancy

Five (23%) of the respondents indicated that the eco tourism project contributed to school bursaries for some students in the area. They also pointed out that monies paid out were minimal. The majority (77%) of the respondents did not seem to know of any other benefits from the project. On further investigation, the researcher was able to establish that monies for bursaries that were paid out to the community actually came from Kenya Wildlife Conservation (KWS) and not from Porini Eco Tourism Limited Ltd. KWS pays out bursaries to all the group ranches in Amboseli as part of their "Park within Park" programmes.

All the respondents stated that the only benefit that the conservancy had provided thus far has been menial jobs for some of the community members (36 local Maasai have been employed from the 10,000 resident population). The committee members informed the researcher that according to the initial contract with Grieve-Cook, Porini Eco Tourism Limited had promised to put up a 60-bed lodge and to date there has been no expansion. The committee members explained that this could be the reason why more employment opportunities had not been realized. The committee members informed the researcher that they feared to confront Grieves-Cook regarding the issue as every time they brought up money matters with him; he would get upset and always threatened to pull out of the conservancy. Some of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the current employment opportunities as follows:

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"A lot of Maasai have found employment in the lodges at the nearby Amboseli Park. It would be great if the same were to happen here at Selenkei. We have given away our land and our children continue to sit at home without jobs".

"Maasai people here are not well educated. All our lives we have had to rely on cattle and wildlife for our sustenance. Times are tough and we have to diversify by looking for alternative sources of income. We have been told that tourism is a good idea, but as a community has not seen any benefits thus far (sic).

Sindiga's (1999) argument that the majority of the Kenyans employed in the tourism industry continually "eat the crumbs" off the table of the tourism industry seems to hold true in this regard. The respondents also raised their concerns about employment within the lodge. They submitted that Porini Eco Tourism Limited only employed people from certain clans, and only relatives of the committee members' seemed to get employment. Nepotism seems to be rampant and this can only be a cause of further conflict amongst community members who feel that the little benefits that have accrued are not being shared equally.

4.3 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

4.3.1 Social developments that have resulted from the eco tourism project

The respondents indicated that the conservancy had resulted in the construction of one primary school classroom, one nursery school classroom, and one community bore hole. When the same question was asked to the committee members, they were happy to point out that in addition to the above-mentioned benefits, Porini had promised to help the local community construct a road which would link the ranch and the market. To date, this project is still unrealised. The researcher went out to find these social developments and found that the borehole was no longer functioning.

Some of the respondents were adamant that the above-mentioned developments did not occur as a result of the eco tourism project but were provided by the Catholic mission in the area. They insisted that the eco tourism project had delivered naught social benefits for the local community. When the priest from the mission was interviewed regarding the social developments, he said, "The class rooms were built by well

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wishers (tourists) who had stayed at the lodge and decided to help this local community by donating the funds for the construction. He insisted, "The money did not come from Porini Eco Tourism Limited Ltd". The researcher was informed that these classrooms were constructed in 1997. When this question was posed to Mr Grieves-Cook, he agreed with Fr. Filbertos' statement and added that he nevertheless provides free transport to the local Maasai into the nearby trading centres and to the capital whenever he travelled there, as the lodge gets fresh food supplies from the city on a daily basis. That way, the locals get to benefit from the transport services he provides.

The Porini website portrays a picture of a company set up with the main purpose of enabling the local community derive benefits for wildlife conservation.

"*The company enters into a lease agreement with land owners in order to establish a 'conservation area' on their land and then develop the infrastructure (...) the community is thus assisted in utilising the land and wildlife as a resource and receives economic benefits such as income and employment as a result of conserving wildlife and the natural habitat*". www.porini.com

In view of the above information from Porini Eco Tourism Limited, Scheyvens (1999:248) argument that "social empowerment is perhaps most clearly a result of eco tourism when profits from the tourism activity are used to fund social development projects", can be noted to be in contrast to what is actually happening on the ground. It is evident that the majority of the people feel the project has not delivered tangible results in terms of social developments for their community and promises that were made at the beginning of the contract have not been realised.

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4.3.2 Linkages between the conservancy and local community

Mr Grieves-Cook indicated to the researcher that all food and amenities were bought from Nairobi daily, as the locals do not grow any food in the area[9]. This question was meant to give a picture on the linkages between the local community and the lodge. The lodge management also indicated that they do not allow locals to sell their beadwork or custom made jewellery to clients as they do not like "haggling on the premises" (according to the lodge manager). To assess perception of linkages between the local community and the lodge, the researcher asked the locals how the establishment of the conservancy had affected them and to give an indication of their economic situation before and after its establishment in 1997. It was interesting to note that apart from those directly employed at the conservancy, all the other respondents stated that they had not been affected in any positive way by the conservancy. One of the respondents had this to say;

"Since the inception of this development by Porini, we as a community cannot say that there have been any economic benefits. The owner of the lodge does not want to see us near the conservancy and we fear that we could be mistaken for poachers and shot on sigh by his game scouts".

The notion of tourism as being an important social economic tool for the local community living near tourism establishments does not seem to apply to the Selenkei community. Weaver (1999:808) echoes these same sentiments when he states, "little money is spent by visitors on eco tourism attractions or in areas adjacent to such venues". In this regard limited resources seem to trickle to this local community, as there appears to be leakages of tourism revenues when local communities are excluded from participating in business opportunities within the conservancy.

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[9] The Maasais lead a nomadic lifestyle and are pastrolist by nature. In addition, the area is semi-arid and receives minimal rainfall that cannot support agricultural activities.

4.3.3 Local ownership

In responding to this question, the lodge owner confessed to the researcher that he was not "obsessed" with the idea of local ownership. He continued to add "the idea sounds good on paper but in the real sense, a community such as this cannot be owners of such a tourism development as they cannot run it". Fifteen (68%) respondents agreed with this view and informed the researcher that the community lacked the technical know-how to successfully operate such a tourism project. These respondents instead wanted more linkages with the lodge for business opportunities and better employment conditions. Seven of the respondents (32%) did not want the tourism project in the area, as they believe it had not delivered anything for the community. This group expressed the desire for capacity building amongst the community so they would be better involved in the project and one would be able to run it. The committee members' response to this question was unclear. They expressed the desire to own the project, but wondered if it would still generate as much income whilst in their hands. This shows a lack of confidence, capital and empowerment amongst the local community.

In view of these responses it is clear that when local communities lack institutional power structures and economic systems, they are unable to participate fully in tourism projects (Tosun 1999). This situation has a ripple effect on the community as they do not reap economic benefits from the projects and therefore end up not participating and being resentful. According to this view, it would appear that this has been a major hindrance, and perhaps a good idea for Government to look at alternative ways that would enable local communities such as this to participate in tourism.

Regardless of expressed views regarding the impact of tourism on this local community, and in spite of the fact that few households benefited significantly from the eco tourism project, a clear majority of the respondents supported an increase in levels of tourism. Only some 9% of the respondents stipulated that growth should occur only with proper planning and control from Government. While 91% justified their support for increased tourism, they emphasized that they would desire more

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opportunities in terms of jobs and monetary benefits. This support for increased tourism reflects the community's desire for additional economic activity. The respondents said that they had experienced a lack of economic opportunities in general. The respondents did not necessarily think of tourism as being the best social economic tool to sustainable development but they expressed that they would be happy to see it evolve so that the benefits were more tangible.

4.3.4 Partnership Framework

The study revealed that Porini Eco Tourism Limited has a sister company called Tropical Places in the U.K where Jake Grieves-Cook also sits as a director. When the researcher probed further, it came to light that Tropical Places was the name of the initial company that got into the agreement with Selenkei ranch to establish the conservancy. The name was later changed to Porini Eco Tourism Limited and registered as a Kenyan company. Porini Eco Tourism Limited stressed exclusive rights to manage all tourism activities on the whole of the group ranch territory and offered to draw up the legal agreement. Mr. Grieves-Cook explained to the researcher, "the offer we were making to the group ranch was very attractive in comparison to similar arrangements with other group ranches".

The researcher was able to determine that during the signing of the initial agreement in 1997, both Jake Grieves-Cook and the local community representatives agreed on using the services of one lawyer. According to Jake Grieves-Cook, the locals did not have the money to hire their own lawyer and he offered them the services of his lawyer free of charge. With regards to consultation with the committee members on this, they claimed that the group ranch did not have the funds to hire their own attorney at the time. Fr. Filberto, the head of the local catholic mission church in the area, encouraged the local representatives to get their own lawyer, as he did not feel they would be fairly represented under this arrangement.

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This supports Tosun (1999) argument in the context of community participation when he concedes that local communities lack institutional power structures, and economic systems to enable them participate fully in tourism projects. Thus it would appear that this local community's participation in this tourism development is hindered by economic limitations that limit their full participation.

Mr. Grieves-Cook also demonstrated that most of his clients come from Europe and mainly from the U.K. Tropical Places does the marketing for Porini Eco Tourism Limited in Kenya and also act as its representative abroad. It came to light that tourists pay for their food and accommodation to Tropical Places in the U.K. In this case, where payment for accommodation and food is made to overseas companies, foreign exchange leakages seem prevalent and little seem trickle to the local community at Selenkei ranch.

When he was questioned about the lodge operations, he explained that most of the clients spend 2-3 days at the lodge where a typical stay would include two game drives at the neighboring Amboseli National Park. This scenario holds true of most eco tourists who visit the country, as consequently, it would appear that even though tourists might visit this eco friendly resort, they do visit other destinations as part of their itinerary.

4.3.5 Organizational set-up

Mr. Grieves-Cook was asked to explain the organizational arrangement between his company and Selenkei group ranch. "Basically Porini pays an annual leasing fee which increases by 10% per annum. The community also gets a percentage of the bed night rates for each tourist that stays here". The researcher was able to determine that the current lodge capacity can accommodate a maximum of 12 guests. According to the community leaders, the initial agreement was that the lodge capacity was to expand over the 15year lease period to a 60-bed facility. This development has remained a fallacy and still unrealized. When Grieves-Cook was confronted on the issue, he explained to the researcher that he did not plan on expanding the lodge as he did not

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want to “dilute the intimate tourist experience” that was already quite popular with his clients.

The following is part of a speech that was delivered by Jake Grieves-Cook at a Skal International Conference, held in Puerto Rico October 2002. He was sharing his views on local community empowerment as regards to eco tourism ventures.

“*Many NGO’s which are involved in “poverty reduction” programmes or in conservation are now engaged in providing consultancy services or funding for local community groups to set up eco tourism ventures. Projects organised by such groups are often totally lacking in marketing experience or knowledge of the tourism industry. From my own experience and observations in East Africa, such ventures invariably fail unless there is the involvement of the private sector in the form of travel professionals handling the management and marketing”.*

According to the above views shared by Jake Grieves-Cook, when NGOs are involved in tourism development initiatives as watchdogs, their lack of experience in tourism management becomes a barrier for them to successfully play their part in tourism development.

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CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the study

This study aimed to evaluate the social impact of eco tourism development on the Maasai community through a case study of the Selenkei ranch in Amboseli. The main objective of the study was to examine the social developments that have resulted from the project thus far and determine the perceptions of the local community. In particular the study investigated the conservancy management's (Porini Eco Tourism Limited Ltd) approach to eco tourism in light of the community's perceptions and 'voices'. The study was able to determine the community's perception as regards to the establishment of the conservancy, how the community was encouraged to participate in the eco tourism project, and knowledge of revenues and benefits. The research also unveiled social developments that have resulted from the tourism initiative by looking at linkages between the lodge and the community, and the concept of participation and local ownership.

Summary of the main findings

The main findings will be discussed in relation to the objectives set out in chapter one and from the data analysed in chapter four.

5.2 Community support of the conservancy on Selenkei Ranch

It was established that the local community had both positive and negative impressions of the eco tourism development at the ranch. There was a great awareness of existing negative impacts of the eco tourism development by the majority of the respondents mainly as a result of loss of land but this did not dampen the desire to see eco tourism levels increase. The findings resonates Cater (1994:78) when he states "wide spread resentments exists among the Maasai nomadic pastoralists over their inadequately compensated displacement from traditional grazing lands through the creation of

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National Parks in Kenya". 100% of the respondents expressed their dissatisfaction about the lack of access to parts of the ranch. For them, this has meant that they have to travel to other areas in search of pastures for their livestock.

A general lack of awareness and information can be identified as a key factor that hinders community support for this development in Selenkei ranch. It can be seen that community members were not adequately informed about the project and when it came about, they realised that they had lost out on their land. At the same time, the project did not seem to deliver what it had promised despite the fact that community members continue to suffer by travelling long distances in search of pastures for their cattle. According to Murphy (1985:153) "tourism development has frequently failed to live up to its promised expectations and many communities have begun to develop jaundiced attitudes to this panacea growth industry". Whether this community progresses towards greater resentment (already expressed in some people) will depend in part on the ability of the community as a whole to benefit from this tourism development.

5.2.1 Participation of local community in the eco tourism project

The majority of the respondents revealed that they were merely informed of the eco tourism project as opposed to having been involved in its development. It was revealed that the majority of the respondents felt alienated by their leaders, as they did not incorporate them in the project. This may be attributed to lack of community forums to ensure regular community communication between community leaders and the conservancy. Traditional structures of power stand out as a key issue in this development, as some of the community members are excluded. The fact that women are totally excluded from the process would appear to be a limiting factor as it means that they cannot participate in voting for their leaders. It can therefore be argued that community participation in the development is almost non-existent.

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Scheyvens (2003:233) notes "empowerment is a precursor of community involvement in tourism, as it is a means to determining and achieving socio-economic objectives". The fact that only the community leaders were taken to visit neighbouring ranches, is an indicator that not much was done to educate the local members of the community. We can therefore argue that broader community empowerment did not happen. It would also appear that KWS failed to support the local community at a crucial stage i.e. the negotiating of the contract with regards to the establishment of the conservancy. In this regard, the locals started from a disadvantaged position, as they were not fully aware of potential pitfalls of the eco tourism project as well as how the development would impact on their livelihood.

Apart from community leaders who failed this community, Government structures and community based NGOs failed to assist them at a crucial time. It would appear that Jake Grieves-Cook used this gap to his advantage and consolidated his efforts to only dealing with the community leaders who could easily be manipulated. Secondly, the fact that there are no Government structures in place in the area meant there were no watchdogs that could come and assist this community. As a result, we find that there are fundamental basics that are missing in this deal and there is evidence of passive participatory structures that hinder progressive development at the ranch.

5.2.2 Community involvement in the conservancy (decision making)

The majority of the community members revealed that they were seldom informed about activities on the ranch and more so those that involve the conservancy. There appears to be a lack of functional forums to represent the local community's concerns. This situation is reflected in Cater (1994:75) "The degree of truly local participation is often limited not only in ownership and control, but also in terms of enjoyment of the natural attraction".

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Traditional power structures seem to hinder community involvement in the decision making process. The fact that community leaders are elected from a closely-knit group of clans means that the leaders are not representative of the entire community. Based

on the patriarchal nature of this traditional society, women are again excluded from the process. It is difficult to involve them, as they are not allowed to be members and appear to have no voice with regards to this development. These are all problems that stem from traditional power structures and are extremely difficult to change. A key area that Government needs to probe further and seek ways to democratise these traditional structures. If this fails, community development processes will continue to be of a top down structure.

It would also appear that this community's lack of involvement stems from the fact that elections carried out are undemocratic and community leaders appear to be compromised by Porini Eco Tourism Limited. The fact that both the leaders and Porini management are not accountable to the members, could only mean that disgruntled community members have no where to turn to, leaving them to speculate on the reasons to their being shut out of the decision making process. Scheyvens (2003:249) demonstrates that "tourism ventures can be a source of division within communities, causing fractures in their complex yet delicate arrangements of individuals and social groups".

This has led to loss of trust and harmony among members within the local community. With thriving corruption between the committee leaders, and clanism activities as regards to employment at the conservancy, this community will never be the same again. The community was divided from the onset over whether or not it was a good idea to develop the conservancy on their land. This according to Scheyvens (1999) may consequently lead to social disempowerment of the local community by the tourism industry. In this case, local community involvement should entail building awareness and providing opportunities for residents to benefit economically and socially from the project. At Selenkei ranch, this is difficult as leaders seem to be politically motivated and the benefits of this development only seem to be benefiting a few.

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According to Murphy (1985) as cited by Timothy and Tosun (2003) tourism relies on the goodwill and cooperation of local people, and where tourism development and planning do not fit in with local aspirations and capacity, resistance and hostility can destroy the industry potential all together. In this case, the methods used to incorporate the local community in this development are unsound and undemocratic. Community involvement in the decision making process is also lacking in this development. Community leaders seem to pay greater allegiance to Porini Eco Tourism Limited than to the community members who elected them to be their representatives in this project.

5.2.3 Usage of revenues (and other benefits) generated from the conservancy

In practice, given that only 36 members of the local community have gainful employment at the conservancy, goes to show that only a small margin of the community is directly benefiting from this project. It would appear there have been few other benefits for the local community as a result of this tourism development; meanwhile their access to the conservancy has been impeded. According to a majority of the respondents, this tourism development has impinged on the well being of this community, and few benefits have occurred thus far.

The claims by Porini that the project would bring financial and social benefits to the local community are highly questionable, as the local community does not have tangible results to show. The majority of the locals are illiterate and do not have a way of auditing the actual revenue that Porini makes in a given year. Basically it would appear that what Porini Eco Tourism Limited presents to the community on the balance sheet is non negotiable and final. The fact that Porini Eco Tourism Limited only seems to be accountable to the three community leaders concerning the leasing fee creates a problem, as there is a clear lack of transparency on funds and their usage. In addition, Jake Grieve-Cook claims to be a "mere tenant" at the ranch and turns a blind eye to how the community leaders use the revenue generated. It would appear that he hides behind this story but clearly, with sole rights to the land, he controls everything and this community that actually owns the land as been reduced to being 'landless'.

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The argument according to Wilkinson & Pratiwi in Scheyvens (1999:248) holds true in this regard when they state, "in determining the success and sustainability of eco tourism ventures, the distribution of economic benefits from eco tourism is just as important as the actual amount of benefits a community may receive". Scheyvens (2003) & Telfer (2002) stress the importance of spreading out economic benefits from tourism, as one of the factors indicating the success of using tourism for development purposes is the extent to which these benefits of tourism are spread throughout the surrounding regions. Britton (1982) on the other hand criticizes tourism from an economic standpoint, arguing that only a few locals and major stakeholders benefit from tourism. It would therefore appear on the basis of these responses that the development has not delivered tangible benefits but only to certain individuals within the community.

There is already growing conflict between local members of the community and the private developer as a result of "unfulfilled promises". The non-expansion of the lodge and failure to develop infrastructure at the ranch by Porini Eco Tourism Limited could further complicate matters whereby the community's optimistic feelings about the tourism project could change if conflict erupts. Dowling (2003:213) contends, "the attitudes of a host community's residents are a key component in identifying, measuring and analysing the impact of tourism". In this case where economic benefits appear to be limited and the communitys' involvement/knowledge of revenues is questionable; the relationship between Porini Eco Tourism Limited and the local community could be in jeopardy if the situation is not contained.

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5.3 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Social development activities at Selenkei ranch

Lea (1988:13) contends, "there is little evidence as to whether social services like public health, sanitation and roads are positively stimulated by tourism". With regard to this, 45% of the respondents were adamant that the classrooms did not occur as a result of the eco tourism development. The community's lack of awareness and information has been a source of confusion with regards to what social developments have occurred as a direct result of the development. According to the community, the only borehole that was provided had long stopped functioning. For the people of Selenkei, the benefits of this eco tourism initiative seem to be questionable in social terms. This may be indicative of the fact that the community is dissatisfied with the progress of the social developments at the ranch. It would appear that Porini lacks commitment in deliverance of these social developments.

Secondly, the committee has not put up any infrastructure from any of the leasing fees they have received thus far from Porini Limited. It would appear that the leasing fees submitted by Jake Grieve-Cook ends up in the pockets of only a few individuals. It is clear that the resultant gap in social developments also stems from Porinis' policy of non-interference with the committee members and the local community. This can be traced back to traditional structures that enable Porini to hide behind elected leaders every time he is questioned about deliverance of social infrastructure. This paradigm exacerbates community alienation in the development process.

The fact that this community lacks a 'watch dog' may explain why Porini has not honoured their part of the agreement towards social development deliverance. Community empowerment could be one way of curbing this problem. When community members know their rights and what it is they are entitled to, it is possible to have them act as watchdogs. In addition, there needs to be Government machinery in place that can successfully follow up on these developments. In that way, private developers are held accountable to the communities.

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Leballo (2000) resonates that the social dimension is critical for the sustainability of a community based tourism initiative as the local communities form part of the tourist experience. It is crucial that social developments occur for the local community when tourism is offered as an alternative source of livelihood. Many of the developments that communities have recently adopted under the guise of sustainable development as discussed above have been flawed and local communities' objectives and goals remain unattainable.

5.3.1 Linkages between the conservancy and the local community

With regards to this aspect of development, the majority of the respondents claimed hey wanted business opportunities with the lodge and to have access to tourists so they could trade their handicrafts. A study conducted by Lundgrens (1973) as cited by Ioannides (2003) contends that tourism evolution in an area eventually stimulates the production of local agricultural commodities and use of other local resources. It would appear that this eco tourism development has not stimulated the production of local commodities and therefore the locals cannot claim to gain business linkages from it. This research therefore contradicts this notion, as there appears to be no linkages between the conservancy and the local community.

The fact that Porini management prefers to get their daily supplies from Nairobi demonstrates that tourists who visit the eco lodge prefer to have western food and amenities as opposed to local products produced in the area. Also, tourists who visit the lodge are 'protected' from the locals and the management prefers that they live inside this 'bubble' away from the locals. These characteristics are similar to those found in mass tourism whereby tourists at a destination have no linkages with the locals as all food and amenities are provided in an enclave environment. Previous research (according to Cater, 1994:72 and Lawson and Weaver, 2000:41) has demonstrated that eco tourism bears many similarities to mass tourism and there is not always a clear line between eco tourists and mass tourists.

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The impact of this process is that local communities do not benefit directly from tourists at the ranch by way of business linkages. Sindiga (1999:144) also recognises this fact when he states, "this may minimise tourisms' trickle down effect to the many peasant producers in the country". The picture is bleak for small local firms and the majority of the local population as they are denied the opportunity to economically participate in this development. Therefore, the concept of sustainable development by providing linkages within this community seems difficult to implement as Jake Grieves-Cook has conflicting ideas on local community involvement in tourism development.

Timothy & Tosun (2003) demonstrate that small scale, locally owned businesses are an example of empowerment for local communities, as they result in more direct benefits to residents and allow little to leak to outside interests. The residents of Selenkei ranch seem to have been denied this opportunity. Even though they do not practice farming, the residents can participate by way of supplying dairy products to the lodge and selling of handicrafts to the tourists who visit the conservancy. However, research on linkages in eco tourism development remains a research lacuna that warrants further research.

5.3.2 Local ownership

In depth interviews revealed a range of local attitudes regarding the concept of local ownership. Notwithstanding that majority of the respondents (68%) felt that the community was not empowered to operate such a tourism project, they wanted more linkages with the lodge so that eco tourism could provide sustainable livelihoods and offer diverse benefits for the locals. The most commonly cited advantage of eco tourism was the potential for monetary gain for community members. 32% demonstrated some level of conceptual understanding to both the terms "ownership" and "participation". This group demonstrated that the benefits of tourism development might lie in the fact that local people need to be well equipped with tourism education to ensure full participation in the tourism development. If that happens, this group expressed that there would be better financial rewards. The community expressed

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reservations about the current project as they felt the benefits were restricted to a small group of individuals.

Scholars such as Ioannides (2003) have argued that tourism related enterprises are primarily concerned with maximizing profits. According to Jake Grieves-Cook's views on local ownership, it would appear that community empowerment is not a key priority for Porini, a key factor that is vital for community development. Leballo (2000:4) demonstrates, "There is clearly a link between ownership and active involvement, i.e. participation". Some of the important elements he gives include;

- *"the concept of empowerment of local communities*
- *local skills development*
- *the emergence of appropriate community decision-making and management structures for tourism, which can also take the lead in general development management aspects*
- *a local sense of ownership by community members".*

Leballo (2000:4)

In view of the above responses, local ownership and participation are key elements that are lacking within the Selenkei community in relation to the eco tourism project at the ranch. For goals of sustainability to occur, residents must be given a voice in which to present their views as far as planning and policies of eco tourism are concerned.

5.3.3 Partnership Framework and Organisational set up

Interviews with Government officials, Porini management and Fr. Filberto revealed that local communities lack institutional powers and economic systems that limit their full participation in tourism development. The fact that Selenkei group ranch leaders had to use the services of Porini's lawyer to draw up the contract, clearly demonstrates the lack of support structures that face this community. This can be attributed to two

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key factors; mainly a lack of community empowerment and a lack of Government watchdog to provide financial support to the community. This situation has been exacerbated by the fact that traditional structures are not transparent and democratic. In this case, community leaders seem to protect Porini management despite the fact that the community members are unhappy with the running of the conservancy. In this case, it is also clear that basic fundamental principals were missing in this partnership deal between Porini Eco Tourism Limited and the Selenkei community.

It was also demonstrated that when NGOs are involved as watchdogs in tourism developments, their lack of tourism knowledge and experience becomes a handicap for local communities. Government machinery then needs to come into play fully to ensure that local communities are represented and protected when they form partnerships with private investors.

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5.4 CONCLUSION

This research report has critically examined the social impact of eco tourism and in particular in light of the perceptions and 'voices' of the local Maasai community at Selenkei ranch, Amboseli. It also explored in depth the concept of ownership and community participation and how these have played a role in this eco tourism development. This research contradicts the notion that eco tourism is a panacea for all the ills associated with mass tourism. It has highlighted a number of issues that need to be addressed if local communities are to be the main beneficiaries of eco tourism in Kenya. Some of the key themes are discussed below.

Institutional structures

The Selenkei members failed to get support at a crucial time when they were negotiating the contract with Porini Eco Tourism Limited. It would appear the local community started from a disadvantaged position whereby they were not fully aware of all the potential benefits that the project could offer. The process of putting in place effective mechanisms and systems should be a priority for the Kenya Government so that local communities can be protected from exploitative investors. It is evident that for local communities to participate in tourism, they need Government protection by way of policy and implementation structures that favour them so as to reap full benefits from tourism.

This community has lost access to dry season grazing area, which is a valuable resource for their livelihood. The on going debate on land seems to have affected the local community negatively, and yet there seems to be no one engaging the community members on this issue. In addition community members have accused their leaders of misappropriating the revenue generated from the eco tourism project. In this case, the lack of accountability has resulted in mistrust and the project has become a divisive factor within the local community. It would also appear that this local community lacks a forum in which to present their concerns and aspirations as regards the eco

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tourism project. This can be attributed to a lack of structural and economic systems that support local communities.

According to Telfer (2000:243) "critics of indigenous development paradigms cite problems of a lack of accountability, weak institutions and lack of integration with international funding sources". These are some of the limiting factors that affect local community development in Kenya. As such the success of eco tourism ideals being implemented depend on the interest and support of Government in tourism activities. Richard and Hall (2000) argue that local production systems in the developing world can be supported through direct links with consumer markets in the developed world, whereby networks can be developed by consumer organisations and producer networks in the generating markets. In addition, "the sale of community based tourism products could be supported by appropriate branding and consumer information" (Richard and Hall 2000:300). With these in place, local communities can move away from relying on foreign investors and take control of tourism projects in their areas. These are just some of the ways in which Government can get involved and assist local communities in eco tourism development.

Traditional structures

By the same token, it should be noted that community leaders also play a role in hindering active community participation in the decision making process and how the revenues derived from the Porini project should be utilised. Further evidence revealed that the system of electing leaders seems to be undemocratic and decision-making is entirely on some individuals within the community with total exclusion of the women. This is supportive of the argument by Tosun (1999) when he states that tourism in developing countries has been set up by agreements between investors and local elites. Richard and Hall (2000:298) recognise that "there is a problem of power relationships within the community and (…) bottom up planning strategies are not matched by empowerment philosophies," *for the rest of the community members*.

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In this case, traditional power structures seem to be obstacles this community battles with. Traditional systems of governance seem to manifest itself as a major obstacle to community participation, whereby only some clans seem to be directly involved with the project. On the other hand, Goodall and Stabler (2000) argue that there is little evidence that community participation has become effective in influencing the nature and scale of development in tourism destinations. While the authors may not be in favour of community participation in the decision making process, other scholars like Tosun and Scheyvens (2003) support consideration for an alternative approach that can ensure active participation of communities hence community based eco tourism. It would appear that few case studies have been conducted in this area and a research lacuna therefore exists.

Nature of the project

The investor (Porini Eco Tourism Limited) appears to lack a genuine motivation to develop the conservancy for the benefit of the local community. This can be viewed against Jake Grieve-Cook sentiments on "local ownership" and his lack of interest in the leasing fee that he submits to the community. "Changes in the host community quality of life are influenced by two major factors: The tourist-host relationship and the development of the industry itself" Ratz (2000:36). In this case, as it has been noted by Sindiga, (1999:148) "when communities share control and management of wildlife and derive economic benefits from sustainable use and management of wildlife, do conflicts and competition for resources which threaten parks become minimised".

The Selenkei eco tourism project appears to be dominated by one individual, Jake Grieves-Cook and his business has strong links with the U.K. It would appear that even though the project is marketed as an eco tourism project, the local community seem to play a minimal role in the development. In addition, the methods used to incorporate the local community are unsound and no attempt has been made to promote community based development. It seems that the only reason the community

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was involved in the project is because they are the landowners of the ranch, a key factor that was required for the establishment of the conservancy by Porini Eco Tourism Limited. The community engagement with Porini Eco Tourism Limited was a top-down development approach bears characteristics of previous forms of tourism in Kenya.

The eco tourism project in Selenkei conservation area as it currently exists is not an honest and sustainable social economic enterprise for the local community. The main financial benefit for the Selenkei community depends on whether or not Porini is going to meet the obligation of expanding the lodge to a 60-bed facility. Only then can the community members benefit in terms of more employment opportunities, as more tourists will translate into more bed night rates and higher revenue for the local community.

Increased conflict

Evidence gathered from the respondents clearly indicates that conflict may be looming as a result of 'non deliverance' of economic and social benefits on the part of Porini Eco Tourism Limited. For the people of Selenkei, the benefits of this eco tourism facility seem to be questionable as Richards and Hall (2000) demonstrate that unequal distribution of power and uneven distribution of benefits can disenfranchise members of the community. This point was made very clearly in the analysis on the community's perception on revenues generated as a result of the conservancy at Selenkei.

It was established that this community feels alienated in the eco tourism project at the ranch. This can be attributed to the fact that all the community members were not involved right from the beginning and the problem of communication continues to exist. The results of this study indicate that only some individuals are involved, as only some clans from the community seem to be involved in leadership positions within the conservancy. In view of this, Hall (2002:49) suggests, "local involvement in

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the development processes is likely to assist the formulation of more appropriate decisions and generate an increase in local motivation" (Hall 2000:49).

With these observations in mind, it is recommended that the Kenya Government look for an alternative to past tourism planning methods, as they have not worked. Consequently, it is advocated that future planning be undertaken from the perspective of a community based approach. To achieve this, emphasis should be in the hands of local communities in both empowerment and ownership. Murphy (1985:154) advocates for this when he demonstrates, "this approach enables the integration and development of the industry to a scale that is more in harmony with a destination areas physical and human capacities". In this situation, "bottom up development presupposes that all sections of the community are adequately informed about the nature of tourism and consequences of tourism development" (Richard and Hall 2000:299). As such, it may ultimately have the advantage of empowerment of the local community and local support for conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Despite of this, the local community is optimistic about the tourism development, as it has provided some job opportunities for some of the members. The community members advocate for linkages such as business opportunities and more employment opportunities with the lodge so they can be able to benefit directly. A lack of linkages between the local communities and the tourism development are characteristics that bear a similarity with those of mass tourism, a key characteristic of this eco tourism development. Ryan, Hughes & Chirgwin (1999:149) on eco tourism, states, "it opened new locations to the tourism gaze, and the resultant destination life cycle could only replicate the very problems that it was supposed to solve". The study concurs with other findings (Fennel 1999) that show that eco tourism bears many similarities with mass tourism and some of these problems seem to replicate themselves in this development at Selenkei group ranch.

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This study serves as a lesson for other Kenyan communities that endeavour to seek eco tourism as a strategy for socio-economic development. As such, it may be concluded that this research report has succeeded in demonstrating that eco tourism without the support of Government and involvement of all stakeholders; it is not a viable option. Support from Government can be in the form of watchdogs so as to ensure that the projects are operating in accordance with good ethical business practices. Also, Government can get involved by providing financial support to local communities; in this case for example, there should have been legal advocacy from Government who could have assisted the local community with the initial contract, thereby ensuring that they got a good deal from Porini Eco Tourism Limited. In addition, Government should ensure that local communities are empowered with skills and capacity building. This will set in place democratic structures that can result in transparent election processes that way, leadership can be representative of the entire community.

Community based eco tourism could be a way forward as the needs and aspirations of the local community are in the forefront of the tourism agenda. Timothy (2002:15) states, "community based tourism is a more sustainable form of development than conventional mass tourism because it allows host communities to break away from the hegemonic grasp of tour operators and the oligopoly of wealthy elites at the national level". In this situation, this is likely to result in sustainable livelihood and skill development by empowering local people.

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5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has demonstrated that eco tourism, as a socio-economic strategy for impoverished communities may not be the most suitable vehicle for community development and poverty alleviation. Based on the findings of this paper, it has been established that community based eco tourism could be a way forward for such communities as it is based on analytical themes of community empowerment and ownership as key imperatives.

It is hoped that this research will be a catalyst both for further discussion in understanding community-based approaches to tourism, and for generating some new approaches to a variety of tourism research areas.

Based on the findings of this paper, it is clear that Government involvement is crucial as it acts as a 'watchdog' and ensures that the locals are fully represented. It has been demonstrated that Government should get involved right from the start of the negotiations so as to guarantee a fair deal for both parties. These findings have also demonstrated that Government is not doing enough to help local communities and there is a clear lack of policies to guide and protect such communities. In addition, Government involvement would also ensure that revenues received are used according to plan and not for the benefits of a few individuals. Scheyvens (2003:229) recognises that stake holders need to play an important role so as to facilitate the involvement of host communities in tourism management when she states "Government can set in place an enabling policy environment for small scale tourism enterprises controlled at the local level (…) establish a regulatory environment to ensure that private sector interests do not impinge on social well being or the integrity of the natural environment, *and the local community as a whole*".

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It has been established that community involvement and participation in eco tourism projects is paramount for the success of tourism initiatives. This needs to be done by establishing forums and institutions that provide available structures to the local community. Scholars such Scheyvens (2003) and Timothy and Tosun (2003) advocate for eco tourism initiatives that should originate from the local communities rather than from outside foreign-based organisations as they result in more direct benefits to residents. A shift from being passive recipients to active recipients of tourism benefits must be effected at the local level. Irandu (2003:9) describes local participation as "giving people more opportunities to mobilise their own capacities, be social actors rather than passive subjects, manage resources, make decisions and control activities that affect their lives". This can be done by Government involvement by way of providing funds and capacity building for the locals, so they can run and manage their own eco tourism projects. In this case, leasing of land to an outsider has its disadvantages as the tour operator ends up being the owner of the conservation area and in most cases with sole rights to develop tourism projects.

Furthermore, Walter as cited in Telfer (2003:163) argues "there needs to be a shift in looking at community as a social/demographic entity or unit to a community as being a multi dimensional/dynamic whole. This definition draws in multiple stakeholders with diverse interests crossing both horizontal and vertical dimensions, therefore including those who formerly would have been considered to be outside the community". Therefore keeping in mind that communities are not homogenous and actually recognising diverse elements may help the relevant stakeholders and Government devise appropriate policy interventions to ensure community participation that will result in equitable distribution of benefits for the Selenkei community.

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Against this background, a community such as Selenkei would be better off starting a small inexpensive camping site and growing from there as opposed to bringing in an outsider to 'own' their land in return for a small leasing fee. Smith (1998) and Hatton (1999) as cited by Timothy and Tosun (2003) indicate that small scale, locally owned businesses are an example of empowerment for local communities, as they result on more direct benefits to residents and allow little to leak to outside interests.

5.6 Proposals for further research

This study recommends further research in order to furnish a better understanding on community participation and social factors such as power relations' between men and women. One important issue that came up in this study is that of traditional structures that limited women's participation in development processes. Further research is warranted in this area, as we need to look at ways of democratizing traditional structures without necessarily disrupting a community's values and culture.

Further research is also required on local elites, and how these influence eco tourism practices in the context of community development. There is a general misconception that these relations between local elites and other members of the community play a pivotal role in hindering local developments. It is important to investigate how this happens in a bid to cover loopholes in community development.

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APPENDICES

Table1.1 Demographic data of interviewed community members

Respondents	Gender	Education	Occupation
01	Male	Technikon	Agriculture Student
02	Male	Standard 8	Farmer/Businessman
03	Male	Unknown	Priest
04	Female	Matric	Businesswoman
05	Female	no education	House wife
06	Female	no education	House wife
07	Female	Primary school educ	craft traders
08	Male	no education	Unemployed
09	Male	Matric	Game Ranger
10	Male	Matric	Cook
11	Male	Matric	Game warden
12	Male	Matric	Cattle trader
13	Male	no education	Unemployed
14	Male	Primary School educ	Unemployed
15	Male	Technikon	Cattle trader
16	Female	no education	House wife
17	Male	Primary School educ	Unemployed
18	Male	Primary school Cert	Unemployed
19	Female	no education	Craft Trader
20	Male	no education	Game Ranger
21	Male	Primary School educ	Maasai dancer
22	Male	Matric	Area Chief

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Appendix A

Interviews for Community Members

Personal Profile Gender:

Education Level:

Occupation:

Age:

1. What economic activity were you involved in before you engaged in this tourism project?

2. How were you affected by the establishment of the Conservation area?

3. How can you compare these two epochs ie. Pre and post eco tourism Project. Is life better in terms of more money?

4. Do you have any access to the Conservation area? Access meaning to the land for agriculture, grazing sites or wildlife game viewing.

5. How were you encouraged to participate in the eco tourism project at the conservation?

6. Do you have any say in the running of the park?

7. Are there any community organizations from the community that are looking after the interests of the community within the ranch?

8. What is the role of the community organization and what kind of benefits do you get?

9. Do you know of any income or revenue from the conservancy that has been distributed to the local community? If monetary, how was it

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distributed? If non-monetary, what social developments e.g. schools, roads, telecommunications, clinics, and water?

10. If yes, do you know how it is distributed?

11. How does the community get to know about such revenues?
If you have not been made aware (of the revenue), why do you think That is the case?

12. Do you have a say in how the income should be utilized?

13. How else do you benefit from the eco tourism initiative

14. What social developments have been provided for the locals thus far?

15. What kind of development do you desire to see in this area?

16. Are you aware of any Local Government/NGOs involvement in this regard?

17. Do you feel you or your community has been actively involved in the eco tourism project and if not are there differences or squabbles that beleaguer in the process?

18. Are women key leaders in the eco tourism development process? How many of them do you know who are in key positions in this development?

19. How do you perceive the private foreign developers you have partnered with? Are you content of do you see them as outsiders?

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Additional comments

Appendix B

Interviews for the Committee members

1. How did the conservancy come about?

2. Was the local community involved and how?

3. How are the local communities encouraged to participate in the eco tourism project?

4. What benefits are available for the local community?

5. If yes, how are these benefits distributed?

6. How is the local community made aware of these benefits?

7. How does the conservancy management ensure that the money/benefits reaches the intended beneficiaries?

8. What social developments have been provided for the Community?

9. What role does the conservancy management play to ensure that the locals living in the area are empowered in tourism initiatives?

Additional comments

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Appendix C

Interviews for Lodge Management

1 Who are the owners of lodge?

2 Why did you decide on developing this lodge?

3 How many local Maasai are employed in the lodge?

4 Are there training programes for the local Maasai people, especially those employed in menial jobs here?

5 Where do you get the lodge food/ammenities for the lodge?

6 Apart from salaries, what other benefits are available for the local Maasai?

7 How do you market yourselves (the lodge) overseas and what sort of contractual agreements do you have with local tour Operators?

8 What is your understanding of the term eco tourism?

Additional Comments

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