

**Poverty Reduction Through Tourism:
Residents' Perspectives**

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Abstract

Increase in the number of people living in poverty in the world has led to an increasing search for strategies to address the situation, and tourism has been identified as one of the relevant tools for reducing poverty. The paper assesses the role that tourism can play in addressing the needs of the residents of the Lake Bosomtwe Basin. A study conducted in a traditional area in Ghana placed “the poor” in the centre of the search for appropriate strategies to tackle poverty. A resident’s survey undertaken in January 2006 reveals that the residents are fully aware of the problems of the area, and also, have an adequate knowledge of how tourism tied in to their needs. The paper confirmed the essential role tourism can play in reducing poverty and realizing other developmental goals. Based on the nature of the needs of the residents (hospital, potable water, good roads and security), it was concluded that their needs were compatible with the goals of sustainable tourism development as these are elements required from any good tourist destination. It was also concluded that “the poor” could be valuable partners in the search for solutions to reduce poverty in the world.

Keywords: Poverty reduction, tourism, pathways, residents.

Introduction

Increase in the number of people living in poverty in the world has led to an increasing search for strategies to address the situation. Poverty is described as a state of a person’s life where one cannot provide his/her basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and health (Christian Home Week, 2006). Traditionally, efforts to free people from poverty have long been an international commitment and a human right issue. The UNDP (1997) declared that eradicating poverty everywhere is more than a moral imperative and commitment to human solidarity. Poverty reduction has become an essential condition for peace, environmental conservation and sustainable development (Roe and Goodwin, 2001). As a result poverty reduction features prominently in the Millennium Development Goals adopted in the year 2000. The target one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), aims to halve the number of people living in poverty (defined as living on less than US \$1 per day) by 2015 (United Nations, 2000).

Tourism has been identified as one of the relevant tools for reducing poverty (Ashley et al. 2001; WTO, 2004). The World Tourism Organization (2004) believes that tourism can be harnessed as a significant force for the alleviation of poverty. The organization is of the view that if tourism is developed and managed in a sustainable manner from the economic, environmental, and socio-cultural points of view, it can help to improve living conditions for local populations in different destinations. Amongst the reasons for this are its fast geographical expansion and constant growth, the wide variety of economic activities it involves, the fact that it can be developed in isolated locations where other activities would be impossible, and the fact that it is largely made up of small and micro enterprises.

Despite the tremendous opportunity tourism offers for poverty reduction in developing countries, this is yet to be exploited to its fullest (Ashley et al. 2001). Gerosa (2003) reports that in Africa, tourism has been scarcely included in poverty reduction policies. In most cases it has been viewed as an engine for economic growth rather than a mechanism for poverty reduction. In Ghana, tourism is seen as a means of generating foreign exchange at the national level and revenue at the district level (Government of Ghana, 1996a).

In addition most of the tourism-related strategies designed for poverty reduction continued to be dominated by the perspectives of experts rather than the poor themselves. Despite the numerous pleas to make “the poor” themselves the centre of the search for appropriate strategies to tackle poverty; the opposite has been the case. Informed by their past experiences, organizations such as the World Bank and the World Tourism Organization have recommended that policy documents on poverty should be based on the experiences, the reflections, the aspirations, and the priorities of the poor themselves (Narayan, Chamber and Petech, 2000; WTO, 2004). Unfortunately, this is yet to be fully applied in the field of tourism.

This paper seeks to reverse this imbalance by focusing on the view point of the poor themselves (the residents of Lake Bosomtwe Basin). The paper therefore aims to identify the needs of the residents of the Lake Bosomtwe Basin and the role tourism can play to address these challenges. The analysis is within the context of the Pro-poor tourism framework, and, therefore, adopts the tourism and poverty reduction model of analysis.

Context of poverty and pro-poor tourism

As the UNDP (2002) observed, there is no common agreement regarding the specifics of poverty in a given community/country, how the poor participate in the wider economy, and the degree to which they are able to influence the policies that affect them. Poverty is recognized as multi-dimensional with complex interaction and relationships. The poor are not only those with the lowest incomes but also those who are the most deprived of health, education and other aspects of human well-being. Thus, it is not a single affliction, but represents a range of problems. Narayan and Petesch (2002) describe poverty as a layered and relational phenomenon. The definition of poverty adopted in this paper is the lack of basic needs. This encompasses a wide range of issues including the lack of access to income, employment opportunities, education, and basic amenities (clean water and sanitation).

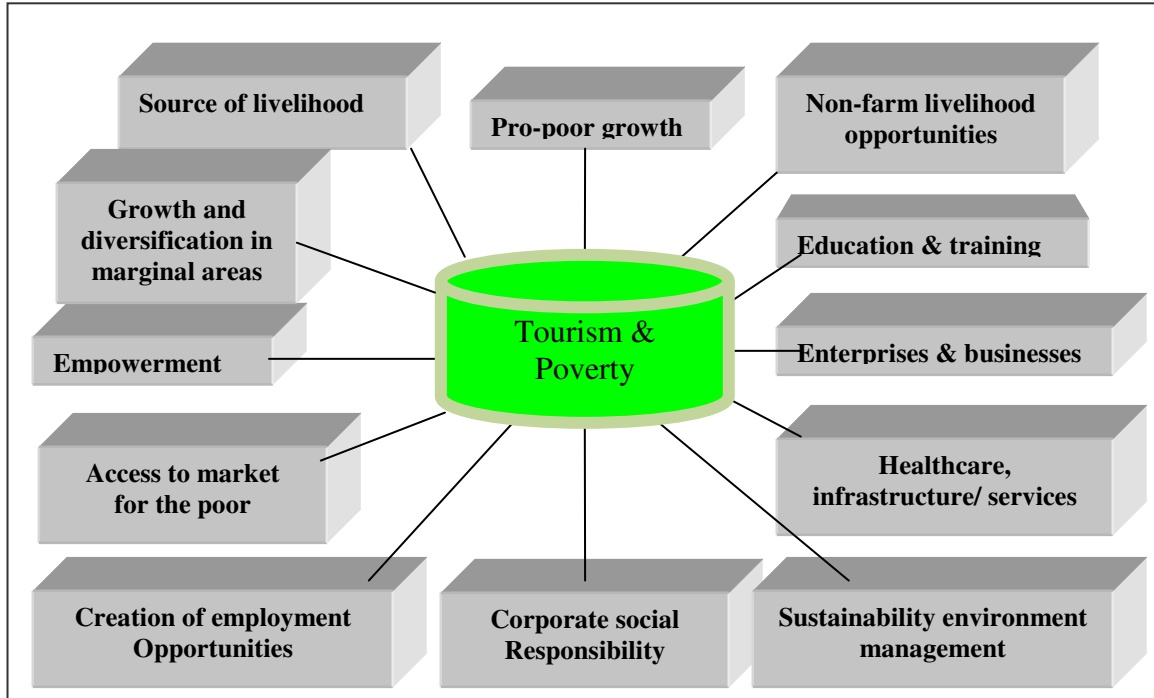
Differences can be discerned in the manner in which people experience poverty, depending on whether one is concerned with individuals, households or communities. At the household level, perceptions tend to differ according to gender. Men generally define poverty as the lack of assets, while women see it in terms of consumption and the ability to provide for the family. Community-level poverty is associated with the absence or low levels of facilities and services such as education, health, power, water and sanitation (UNDP 2000).

Pro-poor tourism is defined by its proponents as tourism approach that generates net benefits for the poor and seeks to ensure that tourism growth contributes to poverty reduction (Deloitte and Touche, International Institute for Environment and Development and Overseas development Institute, 1999; Ashley et al. 2001). Similarly, Carney (1998) defines it as development that seeks to build upon the capacities, assets and activities of the poor. Advocates also recognize that general support such as provision of roads and potable water are essential components of pro-poor tourism and that interventions do not always need to be poverty-focused to benefit the poor (Deloitte and Toehue et al. 1999). At the heart of the efforts to harness tourism for poverty alleviation is the concept of needs assessment. Forstner (2004) contends that to realize potential gains from tourism for local communities, its development has to be reoriented to the interest of local stakeholders- in particular, the poor.

Closely related to the needs of the poor are the perceived mechanisms through which tourism can help to fight poverty. The World Tourism Organization has identified seven main channels for maximizing benefits from tourism for the poor (WTO, 2004). These are employing the poor in tourism enterprises, supplying of products and services to tourism enterprises by the poor, the poor engaging in direct sales of products and services to visitors, establishing and running of tourism enterprises by the poor, ensuring that proceeds or profits from tourism benefit the poor, through voluntary giving/support by tourism enterprises, and tourists and investment in tourism infrastructure benefiting the poor in the locality.

The paper adopts the tourism and poverty reduction model developed by the Pro-poor Tourism Partnership (2004) for the study (Figure 1). With the Pro-poor agenda, attention is focused on addressing missed opportunities to enhance net benefits and opportunities for the poor (Pro-Poor Partnership, 2004). Figure 1 illustrates the numerous ways in which tourism can contribute to the developmental challenges involved in poverty reduction.

Figure 1 Tourism and poverty reduction



Source: Pro-poor tourism partnership (2004).

At least five advantages inherent in tourism make it an attractive sector with considerable potential for promoting pro-poor growth (Roe and Urquhart, 2001). First, it is a diverse industry offering a wide scope for participation, including, very importantly, the participation of the informal sector (Bah and Goodwin, 2003). Second, the customer comes to the product, providing considerable opportunities for linkages with other sectors. Third, tourism is highly dependent upon natural capital such as wildlife and scenery, and culture which are assets that some of the poor have (Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership, 2004). Fourth, tourism can be more labour intensive than manufacturing. Roe and Urquhart (2001) argue that it is often much cheaper to create jobs in tourism than in other industries such as manufacturing and new technology. Finally, compared with many other economic sectors, a high proportion of the benefits from tourism, in terms of jobs or entrepreneurship opportunities, accrue to women (Ashley et al. 2001).

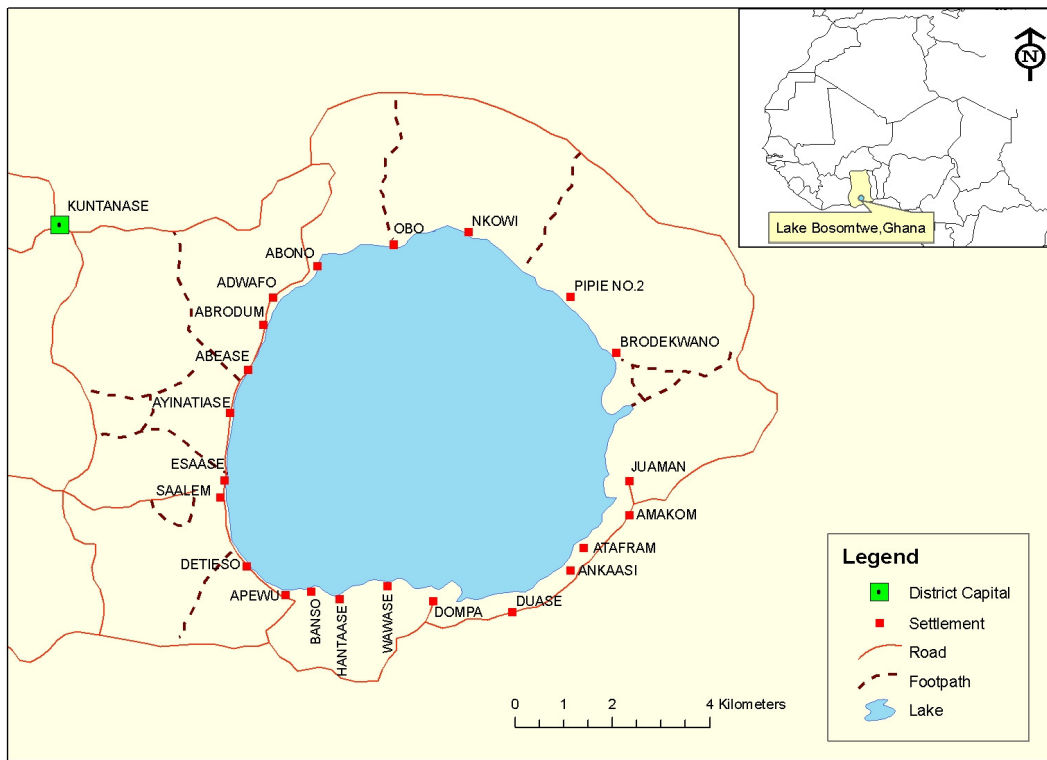
The Study Area

The study was conducted in the Lake Bosomtwe Basin, a popular tourist destination in Ghana, in 2006. Ghana is located in the West Africa sub-region bounded to the north by

Burkina Faso, to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, to the west by the Cote d' Ivoire, and to the east by the Republic of Togo. Since independence, the economy of Ghana has gone through various phases, with the worse being the decline in the 1970s and 1980s, which recorded negative growth, hyper-inflation and shortages of basic items. Between 1977 and 1983, the economy registered -1.5% growth rate in GDP (gross domestic product) and inflation was over 100% (Government of Ghana, 2005).

In an attempt to regenerate the economy, various programmes were launched in the 1980s, beginning with the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of 1985, the Economic Recovery Programmes (ERP I & II), and Programmes to Mitigate the Social Cost of Adjustment (PAMSCAD). While the programmes succeeded in halting the decline of the economy, living conditions stagnated with poverty deepening in some areas, including the Lake Bosomtwe Basin (Government of Ghana, 2000). The basin is one of the most deprived parts of the Ashanti Region, with unemployment being the major problem. The majority of jobs are found in the agricultural and fishing sectors, which are experiencing decreases due to increasing population pressures. Faced with dwindling livelihood resources there is a search for alternative development strategy and tourism promises to be the best alternative. Like most water bodies in the world, Lake Bosomtwe constitutes a source of attraction to the Ashanti Region. Currently, Lake Bosomtwe is one of the core attractions that draw tourists to the region. The meteorite depression is 32km south-east of Kumasi, the regional capital. It is roughly circular in outline and approximately 8 km (5 miles) in diameter (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Map showing the Lake Bosomtwe Basin, Ashanti Region, Ghana



Source: Author

The basin is occupied by 22 small villages, most of them with populations of less than a thousand people. Administratively, the basin falls under the jurisdiction of two districts in the Ashanti Region. These are the *Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma* District to the north (12 settlements) and the *Amansie-East* District to the south (10 settlements). Traditionally, each community has a chief through whom the people are mobilized for development. Generally, the chief is the custodian of the community lands, and the custodian of the customary practices of the people. Although the two systems of governance (the traditional system as represented by the chief and his elders, and the modern system as represented by an elected or appointed public officer) exist side by side, they all work towards a common goal- the development of the communities.

The Lake Bosomtwe Basin has both natural and cultural resources for tourism promotion. The potential includes water sports, adventure, village stay, rich culture, ecotourism, farm tourism, and educational tours. These tremendous opportunities are yet to be fully explored. Interest in developing the Bosomtwe Basin into an attraction dates back to the colonial era: in 1918 a rest house was built near *Abonu* by Captain Blantyre (the then British Commissioner for the Ashanti Protectorate) for the exclusive use of British officials during their duty tour of that area. This interest has been rekindled in the last two decades culminating in the establishment of tourism-related facilities and services in the basin.

Although a growing industry, tourism is still in its infancy in the basin. At present, the basin is characterized by low levels of tourism development with most of the tourism-related facilities concentrated in *Abonu* (probably due to its easy access). Facilities in the basin include a car park, two telephone booths, a public toilet, two 2-star hotels and one eco-lodge, and a pleasure boat on the lake. Generally, the basin is poorly serviced by public transport routes with the main access route being the first class road from *Kuntunasi* to *Abonu*. The majority of visitors arrive by car.

Though the number of arrivals is not particularly high (c. 60 overnight visitors per week averaged across the year), the basin is overcrowded during public holidays particularly during Easter and Christmas (Government of Ghana 1996b). Many visitors, particularly domestic visitors, are day-trippers whilst their international counterparts, mostly researchers and expatriates, often stay overnight and patronize the existing hotel facilities. With controversy over the origin of the lake, the basin has attracted the attention of researchers for many years. Thus, as a field laboratory, the basin continues to attract researchers of different backgrounds and interests.

Methodology

This paper is one of the outcomes of data collected for a PhD thesis on residents' perception and concerns of tourism development in the Lake Bosomtwe Basin. Based on the purpose and the conceptual framework (social exchange theory) employed for the original study, the deductive research approach was followed. This explains the omission of in-depth interviews and group sessions in the study. However, this approach enabled the researcher to measure the needs and perceptions of a great number of people to a limited set of questions which facilitated comparison and statistical aggregation of the data

The data for the study was obtained through a questionnaire survey of 628 household heads or their representatives (any house member, over 18 years, who resided around Lake Bosomtwe in January, 2006). The questionnaire consisted of three sections: individual and community needs, the pathways in which tourism would assist in addressing the needs, and residents' socio-demographic characteristics. In an open-ended format, respondents were asked to state six pressing individual needs and those of their communities, and how tourism would assist in addressing these needs. With reference to the identified needs, respondents were asked to indicate the specific pathways in which Tourism could help to address each need. Thus the concept of matching was employed to determine respondents' knowledge on how Tourism could be a conduit in addressing their needs. Given the open-ended nature of this particular question, the post coding method (compilation of responses, development of coding scheme) was followed to assign codes to responses for analysis. The section dealing with socio-demographic characteristics of residents elicited information about age, sex, educational attainment, marital status, religion, occupation, and income.

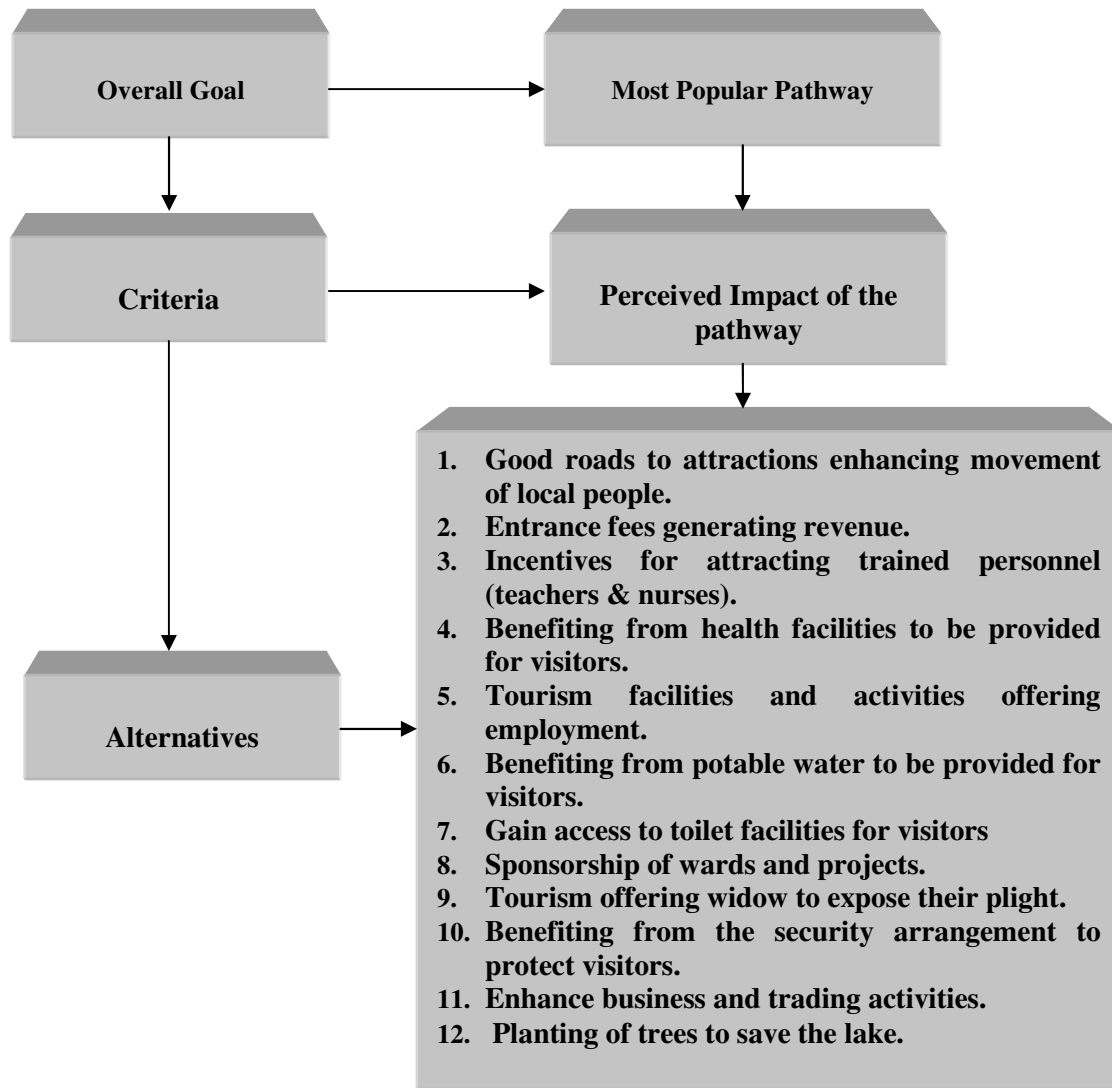
A multi-stage sampling procedure was used for the selection of the subjects. The first stage involved the use of simple random technique to select twelve out of the twenty-two communities. The second stage consisted of the proportional allocation of the 660 respondents (sample size) among the twelve selected communities. In the third stage, the random sampling technique was used to select the required stratified sample size for each

community. The methods generated a total 628 respondents in the following representations: 93 for *Abonu*, 30 for *Ajuman*, 81 for *Amakom*, 35 for *Obo*, 42 for *Pipie*, 83 for *Ankasi*, 34 for *Apewu*, 51 for *Banso*, 37 for *Detieso*, 96 for *Duase*, and 40 for *Esaase*. A list of households compiled by the Ghana Statistical Service was used as the sample frame for selection of households in the communities.

The questionnaire was administered verbally by research assistants from the University of Cape Coast who speak English and several other Ghanaian languages including *Twi*. Questions were directed to the household heads or their representatives who constituted the objects of the research. This approach was favoured over that of self administering due to the relatively high illiteracy rate in the Ashanti region. The Government of Ghana (2002), reports that the illiteracy rate for the region is 40% and the situation is often worst in the rural areas. A total of 660 household heads constituted the sample, out of which 628 (95%) provided usable data for the study. The difference of 5 percent was due to either respondents refusing to participate or ending the interview process half way.

The Analytical hierarchy Process model (AHP) developed by Saaty (1977) was employed to prioritize the pathways through which Tourism could help fight poverty in the Lake Bosomtwe basin. The AHP model is designed to help users make informed decisions in which subjective judgement of individuals constitute an important part of the decision process (Saaty, 1977). The structure of the AHP model minimally consists of a goal, criteria and alternatives (Figure 3).The model is underpinned by three fundamental calculations namely: scaling of elements, building a comparism matrix and calculation of Eigen values.

Figure 3 Decomposition of the problem into a hierarchy



In figure 3, the overall goal refers to the aim to be achieved at the end of the decision making; this involves identifying the most popular pathway through which Tourism could help to reduce poverty in the Bosomtwe basin. The criteria refer to the factors which are used for selecting the most popular pathway. The criterion used for this particular study is the perceived impact of the pathways amongst the residents. The alternatives refer to the various ways by which Tourism can help to reduce poverty in the Bosomtwe basin. Thus the AHP evaluation was performed based on respondent judgement about the relative importance of the pathways with respect to their perceived impacts.

Results of the study

Respondent profile

A detailed description of the profile of the respondents was crucial for the interpretation and the understanding of residents’ perceived impacts of tourism in the basin’s environment. On the whole 87% of the respondents were native born whilst 13% were born outside the study area. Residents’ length of stay ranged from one to 70 years, and an average length of stay of 29.5years. Two-thirds of the respondents were over 35 years of age, and married. Most of the respondents were male (67.4%) indicating gender bias. This was expected as the unit of analysis was the head of household; in Ghana, males rather than females are mostly heads of households. A female becomes a head of a household in the event of the death of her spouse or when she is not married (Ghana Government, 2000). The skew in the gender distribution of the respondents will be a limitation of the study. With regards to educational attainment, there was a high number of Junior High School (JHS) leavers (62.9%), followed by those with primary or no formal education (27.5%). Only 9.6% of the respondents were in the possession of a higher or tertiary education. Farming (87%), fishing (41%), and trading (20%) remain the common occupations however some tourism related jobs, including security (3.4%), tour guiding (1.1%), and boat operating (1.1%), had emerged in the basin. Approximately half of the households that participated in the study indicated that their household income was less than \$400 per annum.

Needs of Residents

Understanding the needs of the host population is essential in delivering practical benefits to the poor. Table 1 presents the critical needs of the residents of Lake Bosomtwe Basin. Ten areas emerged as the critical needs of the individuals in the basin (Table 1).

Table 1 Needs of residents around Lake of Bosomtwe Basin

Needs	Abbreviations	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)	Rank	(P-value)
Credit for Business	CB	37.1	38.0	37.3	1	
Job Placement	JP	27.5	26.6	27.2	2	
Education for Children	EC	14.3	16.9	15.5	3	
Good Housing	GH	10.7	10.6	10.5	4	
Access to Health	AH	4.7	4.0	4.5	5	10.132
Availability of Transport	AT	3.0	1.4	2.5	6	(0.340)
Availability of Potable Water	APW	0.9	1.4	1.1	7	
Market Place	MP	0.5	1.1	0.7	8	
More Recreational Facilities	MRF	0.8	0.0	0.5	9	
Electricity	EL	0.5	0.0	0.3	10	
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0		
N		657	350	1007		

The frequency count exceeds 628 because of multiple responses offered by respondents.

The results suggest that poverty in the basin is characterized by lack of credit, jobs, education for children, good housing, health services, transport services, safe drinking water, market centres, recreational facilities, and electricity. The set of needs identified with the residents of the Bosomtwe Basin supports the notion that human beings generally have diversity of needs (Arnould, Price, and Zinkhan, 2002). It is also evident from Table 1 that both males and females in the basin have similar needs.

Closely related to the needs of individuals are the needs of the entire community which may be different from the specific needs of individuals. Table 2 provides the specific details of the community needs. Seven areas of needs emerged from the twelve selected communities, namely social amenities (51.5%), health (15.6%), education (14.6%), economic (11.5%), recreational (3.6%), security (2.2%) and environmental protection (0.9%).

Table 2 Pressing needs of communities around Lake Bosomtwe

Main Needs	Some of the Specific Needs	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Social Amenities	Provision of potable water, electricity, toilets, bus services, telecommunication facilities, post office and road rehabilitation	52.4	50.3	51.6
Health	Health post and trained medical staff	16.3	13.7	15.6
Education	Building of secondary and technical school, posting of trained teachers, retention of teachers, and construction of new buildings.	14.6	14.7	14.6
Economic	Provision of market, cold store, job openings, additional income and availability of credit facilities	9.2	16.4	11.5
Recreation	Provision of receptive facility, football pitch, community centre, and more recreation facilities	4.0	2.8	3.6
Security	Police station	2.3	1.8	2.2
Environmental	Beautification of the community, protection of the lake and planting of wawa trees	1.2	0.3	0.9
Total		100	100	100
Number		1331	604	1935

The frequency count exceeds 628 because of multiple responses offered by the respondents.

As evident from Table 2 social amenities are the most pressing needs in the basin. Social amenities refer to public facilities or services which are essential to the individual well being and to the development of a particular society. Most of the communities in the study area lack access to safe drinking water, and this has serious implications for their health. Safe water is required to prevent the frequent outbreaks of water-borne diseases, including diarrhoea and cholera, which are common in the basin. As at December 2006,

communities such as *Obo* and *Esaase* did not have bore holes, and were depending on the lake for their drinking water.

Educational needs of the basin range from availability of trained personnel, structures and materials for all levels of education including primary, junior secondary, senior secondary and post secondary education (Table 2). Like most rural communities in Ghana, the provision of such educational facilities is woefully inadequate. Apart from personnel and educational infrastructure issues relating to exercise books and uniform still constitute a problem to many parents.

The economic needs of most of the communities in the basin range from job openings, additional sources of income, market centres and the availability of credit facilities (Table 2). With specific reference to tourism, most residents find the setting up of tourism related ventures as being too costly for an individual; such investment required joint efforts.

Pathways through which Tourism can help to Reduce Poverty

In order to gain insight into residents understanding of how tourism could help address the needs of residents in the lake Bosomtwe basin, they were asked to describe ways through which through which Tourism could help to address each need. These pathways are presented in Table 3.

Twenty-three percent of residents believe that the growing interest of tourists in the basin would be enough incentive for the District Assemblies and the national government to rehabilitate the roads in the basin (Table 3). Commonly, roads and telecommunication are among the pressing infrastructure that is needed to set up tourism projects. According to the respondents, improved road network would directly enhance the movement of the local population. Tourism projects often allow the population living at, or close to tourist sites to benefit from roads and utilities such as electricity and drinking water. Presently, the majority of the communities have difficulty in transporting their farm produce to the market centers due to the poor road network in the basin.

This notion overlooked some of the limitations that are brought about as a consequence of improved transportation network. Improved access has been associated with over speeding, traffic congestion, increased in road accidents, noise and air pollution, and depletion of resource base in some tourist destinations (Kousis, 2000; Page, Brunt, Busby and Connell, 2001).

Another view is that the entrance fees collected by the District Assemblies have the potential of generating enough revenue to finance some of the development projects in the basin. Some residents (19.0%) were of the view that if the tourism revenue from tourism is to be well managed, it could finance most of the developmental projects needed in the basin (Table 3). Thus, as visitors pay an entrance fee, they facilitate the opportunities for the District Assemblies to put in place the infrastructure opportunities and the services that make the community lifestyle so attractive to the local people.

Table 3 Pathways through which residents think tourism can help address needs

Code	Medium	Frequency	Percent	Rank
M1	Good roads to attractions enhancing movements of locals.	512	22.6	1
M2	Entrance fees generating revenue for the local government.	427	18.9	2
M3	Incentive for attracting trained teachers and hospital staffs.	267	11.8	3
M4	Catering visitors health needs will improve access for the locals.	246	10.9	4
M5	Tourism facilities and activities offering employment.	174	7.7	5
M6	Benefit from potable water to be provided for visitors.	153	6.8	6
M7	Access to toilet facilities developed for visitors.	144	6.4	7
M8	Sponsorship of wards and projects.	138	6.1	8
M9	Recreation facilities offering diverse entertainment for residents.	57	2.5	9
M10	Establishment of police station to safeguard visitor.	54	2.4	10
M11	Enhance business and trading activities.	35	1.5	11
M12	Planting of trees to save the lake.	31	1.4	12
Total		2264	100.0	

The frequency count exceeds 628 because of multiple responses offered by the respondents.

With specific reference to education, it was the view of the residents that tourism could generate enough money for the rehabilitation of most of the old schools and the construction of new ones. Twelve percent of residents think that the social amenities to be developed for tourists could also serve as an incentive for attracting trained teachers (Table 3). Thus, the provision of good drinking water, efficient communication facilities, good housing, stable power supply and diverse sources of entertainment for visitors could also help attract and retain trained teachers to rural areas. Traditionally, the supply of potable drinking water is an essential condition for securing tourists. Banizi (2008) reports that in many rural areas, water resources are very limited making it necessary to sink wells in most rural communities.

However evidence suggests that the water needs of tourists can conflict with residents' needs if not fairly managed. Tourist high demand for freshwater is associated with water shortages, degradation of water supplies, and the generation of increased volumes of wastewater requiring proper handling and treatment (Oki and Brasher 2003). To these researchers the high demand of water by tourists could lead to excess pumping from delicate natural aquifers that can cause saltwater or chemicals to intrude the groundwater source, rendering it useless.

Apart from this, six percent of the residents mentioned that tourism could serve as an avenue of gaining sponsorship from “well to do visitors” and philanthropists for their wards and school projects. Residents mentioned instances where visitors have offered

financial support towards the renovation of school buildings. This finding reinforced the observation made by WTO (2004) and Bazini (2008) that voluntary actions by tourist and tourism enterprises is one way tourism is imparting on the lives of the poor.

In addition, 11% of the residents considered tourism as having the potential of addressing some of their health needs (Table 3). According to them, issues relating to road accidents and drowning of visitors during the peak holiday periods would necessitate the establishment of well-equipped hospitals in the basin. Similarly, the provision of social amenities for visitors could serve as an incentive for attracting and retaining qualified health staff to the two hospitals at *Amakom* and *Apewu*. The creation of basic medical and emergency facilities is one of the basic conditions for tourism projects, especially in rural areas (Bazini, 2008).

Residents also acknowledge that tourism has the potential of providing job opportunities for the youth. Eight percent of the residents were of the view that some of the tourism development and activities to be introduced would provide jobs for the youth (Table 3). As a net out-migration area, job avenues are needed to prevent the youth from migrating to the urban centres, and, therefore, believe that tourism development is the answer to this problem. To them, tourism creates opportunities existing and new businesses which generate new employment.

Furthermore, residents view tourism as a “window” through which foreign and local philanthropists, as well as government officials, would see their (residents) plight and deprivation. Over 6% of the residents see tourism as an avenue for exposing their plight to the outside world for help. As pointed out by WTO (2004), most rural communities especially those in developing countries, lack basic necessities of life such as potable water, electricity, health care, and education. In addition, most of the residents believe that tourism would make the area popular, and, thereby enhance their image. To them, a community that does not attract visitors is not a good community. Thus, tourism has the potential of placing them on the world map.

Analytical Approach

To establish the priority the residents of the Lake Bosomtwe Basin associate with the 12 pathways they think tourism could help fight poverty in the basin, the Analytic Hierarchy Process model (AHP) was used.

Given the ranking of the pathways (Table 3), a mathematical process was used to calculate priorities for the pathways. First, a full comparison matrix was built. This produced a 12 by 12 matrix, which is presented in Table 4. The matrix had a diagonal dividing it into two halves, and values above the diagonal were the main ratings while those below were the reciprocals. After dealing with the comparison matrix, a normalized matrix was built. To do this, the values in each column of the pairwise comparison matrix were summed up and divided by the column total to obtain the normalized matrix (Table 5). Finally, the average for each row of the normalized matrix was obtained. The averages were considered as estimates of the priorities associated with the tourism-related pathways.

Table 4 Full pairwise matrix based on residents rating of the pathways

Code	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12
M1	-	1.19	1.91	2.06	2.92	3.31	3.52	3.69	9.00	9.38	15.00	16.07
M2	0.84	-	1.60	1.73	2.45	2.78	2.95	3.10	7.56	7.88	12.60	13.50
M3	0.52	0.62	-	1.08	1.53	1.74	1.84	1.93	4.72	4.92	7.87	8.43
M4	0.48	0.58	0.92	-	1.42	1.60	1.70	1.79	4.36	4.54	7.27	7.79
M5	0.34	0.41	0.65	0.71	-	1.13	1.20	1.26	3.08	3.21	5.13	5.50
M6	0.30	0.36	0.58	0.62	0.88	-	1.06	1.11	2.72	2.83	4.53	4.86
M7	0.28	0.34	0.54	0.59	0.83	0.94	-	1.05	2.56	2.67	4.27	4.57
M8	0.27	0.32	0.52	0.56	0.79	0.90	0.95	-	2.44	2.54	4.07	4.36
M9	0.11	0.13	0.21	0.23	0.32	0.37	0.39	0.41	-	1.04	1.67	1.79
M10	0.11	0.13	0.20	0.22	0.31	0.35	0.37	0.39	0.96	-	1.60	1.71
M11	0.07	0.08	0.13	0.14	0.19	0.22	0.23	0.25	0.60	0.63	-	1.07
M12	0.06	0.07	0.12	0.13	0.18	0.21	0.22	0.23	0.56	0.58	0.93	-

Refer to Table 3 for the meaning of the codes.

Table 5 Normalized matrix based on residents ranking of the pathways

Code	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	Average
M1	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22
M2	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19
M3	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
M4	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
M5	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
M6	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07
M7	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
M8	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06
M9	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03
M10	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
M11	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
M12	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Total	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Refer to Table 3 for the meaning of the codes.

The pairwise comparison matrix revealed that the probability of a resident associating tourism development with improved road network in the basin is 16.07 times over that of planting trees to save the lake. Further, Table 5 suggests that the likelihood of a resident in the Bosomtwe Basin associating tourism development with good roads is (0.22) while that of generating revenue for the local government is 0.19. It is evident that the residents expect tourism to first provide the needed access before the other pathways can be effective in contributing to the reduction of poverty in the basin. Thus, tourists have to arrive at the destination before the poor can start reaping some of the expected benefits.

Discussion

It is evident from the list of needs (credit, jobs, education, good housing, access to health, potable water, market, fast and reliable transport, recreational facilities, and electricity) of the residents of Lake Bosomtwe Basin that poverty is not a single affliction,

but a representation of a number of problems. This supports the notion put forward by the UNDP (1997) and Narayan et al. (2000) that poverty has many dimensions and can be looked at through a variety of indicators.

Given that most of the needs of the residents are basic (fundamental for human survival, they can be said to suffer from absolute poverty. At the close of the 20th century, Fields (2000) noted that nearly a half of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa (some 320 million people) lived in absolute poverty. Sachs (2005) describes absolute poverty as the situation where households can not meet basic needs for their survival. Evidence from WTO (2004) suggests that many rural families in less developed countries lack access to adequate sanitation, safe drinking water, good roads, health services, and school places. Aside this, most of the needs of the residents were found to occur in the list of items considered as essential in the pro-poor agenda.

Both males and females in the basin were noted to have similar needs. This confirms the findings of most psychologists and consumer behaviourists that, basically, most people experience the same kind of needs motives particularly in the same environment. Schiffman and Kanuk (1987) contend that there are constants that tend to operate across many types of people, cultures and areas. Arnould et al. (2002), in particular, believes that everyone has the same basic set of needs, but individuals differ in the priority ranking of these needs.

The result suggests that credit is the crucial need of the majority of the people in the basin. Thus, the availability of credit facilities becomes the need whose satisfaction will propel the higher needs. Generally, small loans and microcredit have been found to be crucial in the pro-poor agenda (Ashley et al. 2001; Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership, 2004; Rogerson, 2006; WTO 2005). WTO (2005) describes microcredit as one of the best methods for fighting poverty. It is likely that credit was stressed because of its ability to fulfil several needs. Among the people of the basin, soft loans were needed to help maintain their farms, buy fishing gear, enter into business including tourism-related ventures. In this wise, a credit facility is seen as a means to an end. However, the provision of credit or small loans to individuals to alleviate poverty in the Lake Bosomtwe Basin may mean the non-availability of funds for road construction. Thus, the opportunity cost for satisfying the credit need in the basin would be forgoing road construction.

Residents were optimistic that tourism development would be an appropriate strategy in addressing most of their needs in the basin. This thinking can be linked to the diverse nature of the tourism industry. As Mieczkowski (1995) indicates, tourism constitutes a complex of diverse and fragmented components and phenomena that relate, in some way, to every visible and invisible aspect of life. Thus, tourism is seen as an industry with enormous growth potential and one that is able to address a number of community needs such as promoting the development of the economy, and the advancement of the socio-economic welfare of the people.

The conviction among the residents that tourism could generate enough revenue to support some projects in the basin is in consonance with literature. Evidence from Gambia supports the viewpoint that tourism has the potential of generating enough revenue to support educational projects (Potter, Binns, Elliot, and Smith, 2004). These researchers report on how the Tumani Tenda Ecotourism camp in Gambia was able to accumulate over £14,500 within two years to finance the establishment of a kindergarten and a school for the

community. Thus, confirming the essential role tourism can play in reducing poverty and realizing other development goals.

Residents' perceptions about how tourism would impact on their lives suggest that they would have unlimited access to most of the tourism-related infrastructure. However, Judd (1999) and Dieke (2005) argue that it is not always true that all facilities developed for tourists at the destination would be accessible to the host population. In situations where enclave tourism is promoted, most of the tourism infrastructure and facilities are confined in the tourism "bubble" with little interest in the community, the residents, the countryside and the local culture. According to Judd (1999: 53) the "tourist bubble" creates an island of affluence that sharply differentiates the surrounding urban landscape from that of tourist area.

Consistently, education emerged as an important need both at the individual and community level. The importance attached to education in the basin may be linked to the recognition that progress in all development, including poverty alleviation, requires progress in education. Emerging evidence shows that progress in all poverty reduction efforts requires improvement in education (UNDP, 1997). Education creates opportunities for people, reduces the twin burdens of poverty and disease, and provides a stronger voice to society. Colclough and Lewin (1993) argue that education has a critical bearing on people's ability to impart on many of the skills needed to work precisely and cooperatively, to allocate inputs more efficiently, and to select new inputs to respond to market signals.

Conclusions

The paper assessed the needs of the residents of the Lake Bosomtwe Basin and how they perceived tourism would help address their needs. Data was obtained through a questionnaire survey from 628 residents residing around Lake Bosomtwe in 2006. Based on the findings, six main conclusions were drawn. First, it could be said the needs of the residents of the Lake Bosomtwe Basin are basic (health, education, toilet, and potable water) and comparable to the needs of most families in the rural areas in developing countries. In addition, most of the needs and aspirations of the residents around Lake Bosomtwe are consistent with the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs), a UN declaration that seeks to rid the world of poverty by 2015 or earlier. The declaration binds countries to do more to deal with the issues of inadequate income, widespread hunger, gender inequality, environmental deterioration and lack of education, health care and clean water.

Second, people residing around Lake Bosomtwe consider tourism as an appropriate strategy for addressing most of their needs. The main assumption underlying this thinking is that attracting visitors to the area could serve as a conduit for meeting most of their needs. Based on the nature of the needs of the residents (hospital, potable water, good roads and security), it was concluded that their needs were compatible to tourism development as these are elements required from any good tourist destination. This supports the view that effective tourism planning provides an avenue for multiple use of expensive infrastructure to serve the general community as well as tourism.

The residents of the basin can be described as having adequate knowledge of how tourism developments tie in to their problems. Most of the action areas through which

residents think tourism can assist in addressing poverty in the basin are consistent to those identified by WTO (2004) and Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership (2004). Residents' display of knowledge on how tourism relate to their needs is enough to suggest "the poor" can be a valuable partner in the search for solutions to reduce poverty in the world. However at the euphoria stage of tourism development residents have been found to exaggerate what tourism can do for them and their communities and to downplay the medium to long term negative impacts of tourism (Amuquandoh & Dei, 2007)

Finally, the study supported the common view that the diverse nature of the tourism industry makes it a more desirable strategy for addressing poverty than other economic sectors. The residents were of the opinion that tourism can help fight poverty in the basin from many fronts. These include areas such as education, health and the environment. For example, they were of the view that the provision of good drinking water, efficient communication facilities, good housing, stable power supply, and diverse sources of entertainment for visitors could also help attract and retain both trained teachers and nurses to work in the basin.

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