

CASE STUDY 75 bis

Tourism, the key to development in the Dogon area of Mali

In 2009, SNV carried out a survey among tourism stakeholders in the Dogon area, Mali (Fig. 1), with the main objective to perform an analysis of the tourism value chain (VCA). This paper presents the summary results of the VCA³¹ (Dr. F. Thomas, tourism consultant).

Figure 1. Location of the Dogon area in Mali

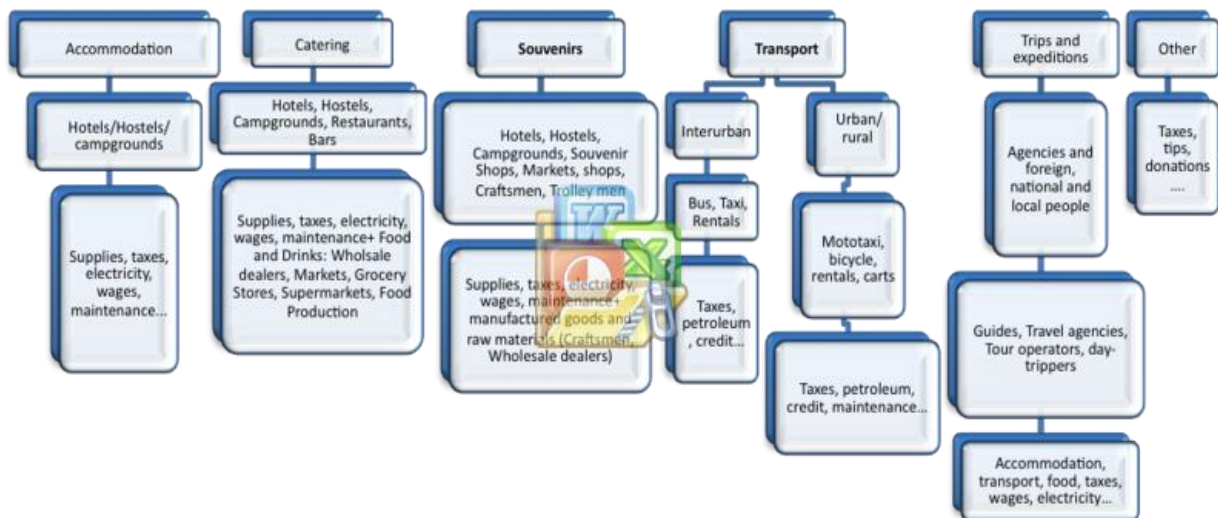


The tourism value chain of the Dogon area

The VCA provides an in-depth understanding of the interactions between the tourism sector and the local economy, but above all, the contribution of tourism expenditure to poverty alleviation. Moreover, the VCA results can be used to identify appropriate interventions that will increase income generation for the poor. The VCA is based on a sample of 100 questionnaires administered to relevant stakeholders in tourism, over a 10-day period in 2009. During this period, five different teams covered five different survey areas within the Dogon (Fig. 2).

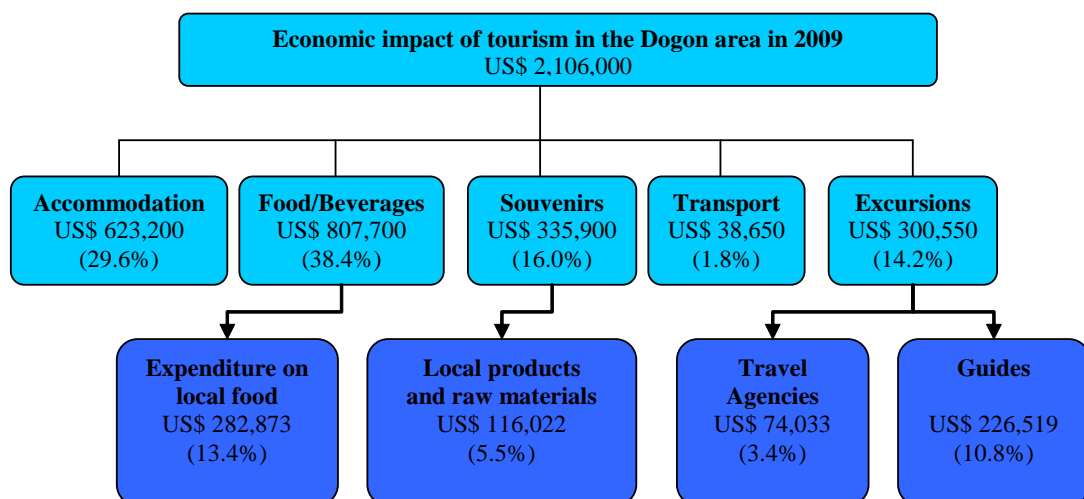
³¹ The full report is available upon request
SNV Netherlands Development Organisation

Figure 3. Simplified tourism value chain for the Dogon area, Mali



Although we may safely state that in 2009 tourists spent more than 2 million US\$, the data need to be corrected for some inaccuracies. Examples are low expenditure for transportation and excursions, which is usually paid outside the destination, overestimation of expenditure by tourists interviewed and underestimation of income by stakeholders in the sector.

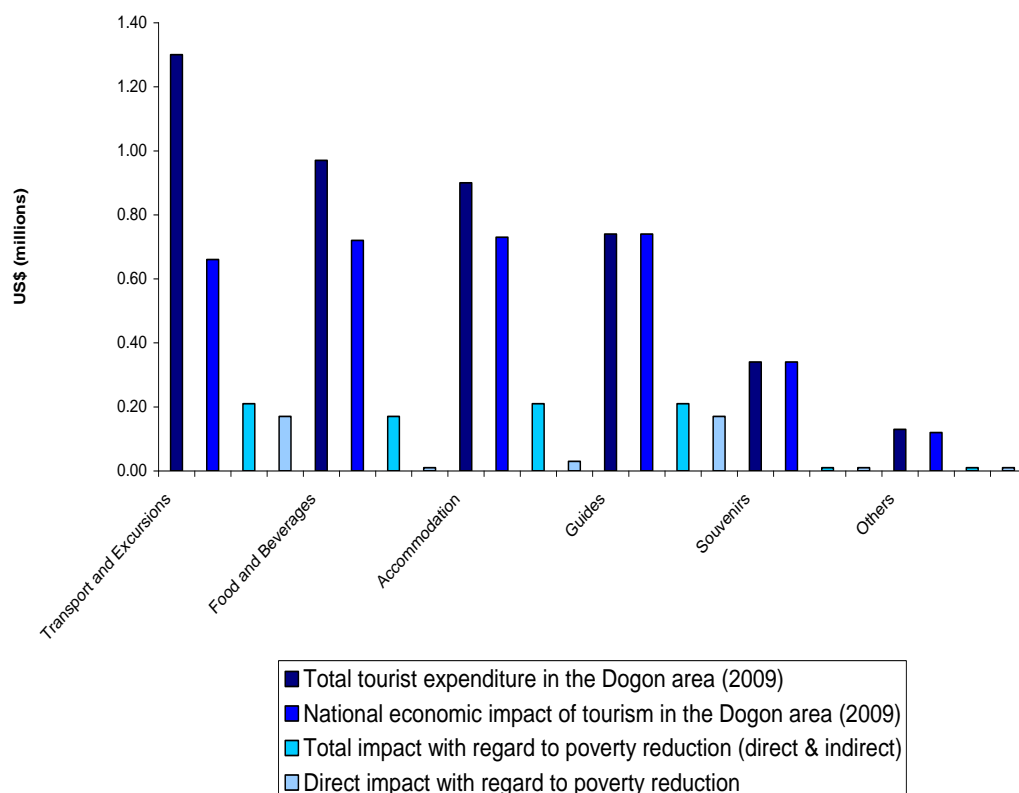
Figure 4. Simplified results of the tourism value chain for the Dogon area, Mali



Inaccuracies in the preliminary VCA results (Fig. 4) were corrected by using the national statistics on numbers of tourists by geographical location, by comparing tourist expenditure with the turn over of businesses surveyed, and by lumping all

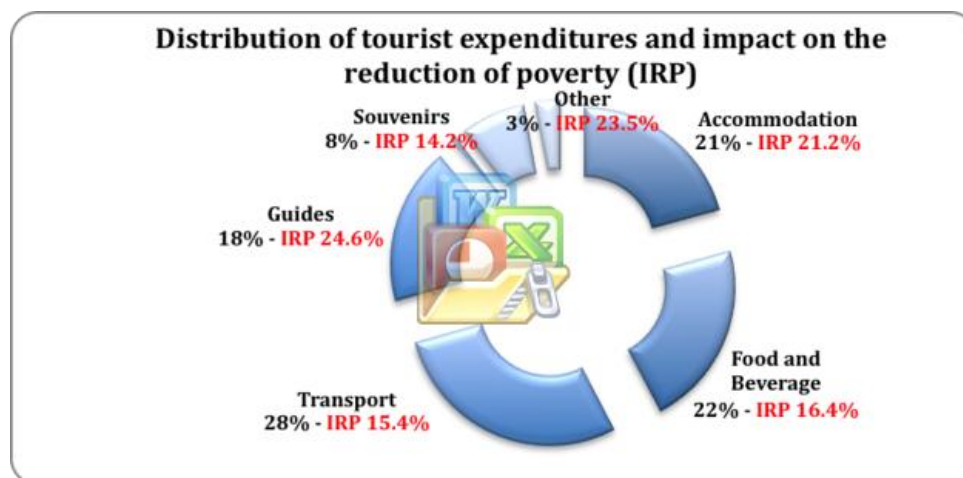
food and beverage, including that from hotels. The final results are shown in Figs. 5 and 6, with highest expenditures for transport and excursions, followed by food and beverages and accommodation respectively.

Figure 5. Tourism expenditure by sector and its impact on poverty reduction



The impact of tourism in the Dogon area on the reduction of poverty was 18.6%, with a direct impact of 10.2%, and more than 10,000 people lifted out of extreme poverty through income from tourism. Considering the low level of expenditure on souvenirs (8%) compared to total expenditure (Fig. 6), this sub-sector has a high potential for up scaling. Although tour guiding is the sub-sector with the highest impact with regard to poverty reduction, the rapid growth of tourism, combined with poor local management, require a complete reorganizing of the tour guiding sub-sector. Because more than half of the food that is consumed by tourists in the Dogon area is imported, there exists ample potential for the food and beverage sub-sector to become more pro-poor, by stimulating local food production. We should note, however, due to detrimental publicity on Mali, in 2010 there may be a potential loss of tourism revenue in the order of one million US\$.

Figure 6. Tourism expenditure and its impact on poverty reduction



Intervention strategies

The results of the VCA provide us with several intervention strategies with the potential to substantially increase benefits for the poor:

1. Strengthen ties between the tourism stakeholders and local producers,
2. Improving the range of tourist products and services as well as marketing to increase profit,
3. Strengthen the capacities of the local authorities (towns and ring-areas) to incorporate activities and actors of the tourist sector into the process of local business management.

On the basis of these three strategies prioritized by the results of the value chain analysis, the 52 participants of the restitution workshop of September 28th and 29th 2010 proposed the following projects by and for each ring-area (i.e. Bandiagara, Bankass, Douentza and Koro).

- Strengthen ties and coordinate a production calendar between local vegetable growers, caterers and hotels,
- Improve the range and visibility of crafts,
- Professionalize the tour guides,
- Improve service quality of hotels and campgrounds,
- Maintenance and cleaning of gutters,
- Manage solid and liquid waste,
- Promote non-visited tourist sites,
- Set up a consulting committee on a local scale.

The following list of on-going or finalized initiatives shows that local actors as well as their technical and financial partners, merely based on common sense, closely follow(ed) the results of the value chain analysis.

- Supporting truck farming (ST-EP project of Sangha),
- DED, GSTA workshops with local NGOs (i.e. Gaas-Mali, Yagtu, and Pdco) to support food producers and manufacturers,
- Tour guide training (e.g. GSTA, OMATHO...),
- Identification of sites that are not used to their full potential (e.g. GSTA, Cultural Mission...),
- Tourism Information Office in Bandiagara (with support of DED),
- Marketing through a website of the Dogon area (GSTA),
- Collective planning under the guidance of the Mopti Region of Tourism (Regional Assembly of Mopti in conjunction with Ille-et-Vilaine).

Additional interventions

In addition to the interventions proposed by the participants of the restitution workshop, the results of the VCA pointed to the following potentially important interventions:

- The creation and enhancement of local products for the tourism market (i.e. jams, vegetables, Shea soap, etc...),
- Improving tourist services (i.e. welcome, hygiene),
- Strengthen management and financial skills of operators,
- Destination management training for local authorities,
- Management and preservation of sites.

Conclusions

The results of the tourism value chain analysis, and those of the restitution workshop of Bandiagara, not only show that tourism had a significant impact on the reduction of poverty in the Dogon area, but that numerous opportunities exist to perpetuate and to improve the flow of benefits to the poorest segments of society. Moreover, the workshop also showed strong awareness and dedication of all tourism actors in their common aim to further develop the tourism sector. Strengthened by the results of the VCA, and as requested by the local actors, SNV-Mali has decided to commit itself to the three intervention strategies identified, in close cooperation with other technical and financial partners in the Dogon area.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those who contributed to the success of this survey and the resulting value chain analysis for the Dogon area. We are grateful to the Ministry of Tourism and Crafts, the Regional Governmental Administration of Mopti, the OMATHO, the local authorities and the participants of the 4 ring-areas of the Dogon country, the GSTA/USAID project of Bandiagara, the DED of Bandiagara, Peace Corps, the coordinator of the tourism Network SNV WCA, SNV Bénin, Ghana and Guinée Bissau, the APEJ trainee and Charles Hauser, ex-SNV Mali advisor.