

**ABSTRACT**  
**PARALLEL WORKING SESSION**

**THE REDUCTION OF POVERTY**

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**Pro-Poor Tourism Research Capacity Building and Knowledge  
Exchange for East Africa**

Tourism with an annual growth rate of 7 – 12% in most developing countries has emerged as an important sector for national and regional development. It is conceived as a route to broader development and shared growth and is included in development plans of more than 80% of low income countries. However, there is lack of empirical evidence of its impact on poverty reduction.

This project aims at developing a common research agenda to investigate the potential of Pro-Poor Tourism as a tool for poverty reduction in East Africa. The project is also developing the research capacity of staff and PhD students at the partner universities, undertaking joint research and publications.

The results will be used to guide policy making and form a basis for capacity building and training in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Research on how governments can integrate strategies to expand the sector with those that increase the benefits to the “poor” through equity will also be conducted. Research activities involve multi-disciplinary academicians; practitioners and communities in order to understand linkages between tourism and “poor” people.

Tailor made and needs specific Pro-Poor Tourism training modules to solve the specific tourism industry needs of East Africa are being developed. Research results will be disseminated through workshops and seminars attended among others by NGOs, CBOs and tourism professionals/practitioners. The project encourages female participation at all levels.