

PROGRAMME AREA 6: TOURISM AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Strategic Direction: This program area aims to position Toro Kingdom as a premier tourism destination in Uganda, leveraging its rich natural endowments, vibrant cultural heritage, and strategic location. The focus is on developing sustainable tourism initiatives that generate economic opportunities for communities, preserve natural resources, and promote cultural exchange. By enhancing infrastructure, marketing unique attractions, and fostering community participation, Toro Kingdom seeks to create a thriving tourism sector that benefits both its people and the environment.

Strategic Intervention 6.1: Developing and Promoting Sustainable Tourism

This intervention focuses on enhancing Toro Kingdom's appeal as a tourism destination through the development of diverse, culturally sensitive, and environmentally responsible tourism products and experiences.

Action 6.1.1: Investing in and Developing Tourism Infrastructure and Services

This action focuses on improving the physical and service-oriented aspects of tourism to provide a high-quality experience for visitors, including the development of modern architectural elements that complement the natural beauty.

Implementation Measures:

Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing tourism infrastructure (e.g., roads, accommodation, signage, waste management facilities) and identify critical gaps for improvement.

Partner with central government agencies (e.g., Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Antiquities, Uganda Tourism Board), district local governments, and private sector investors to upgrade key access roads to tourist sites, improve accommodation standards, and develop modern visitor information centers.

Supporting the development of eco-tourism lodges, cultural centers, and scenic trails around the potential tourist sites, prioritizing sustainable design and local materials.

Promote modern architectural development across the Kingdom that is aesthetically pleasing and blends with the environment, while also being functional for tourism needs (e.g., visitor centers, boutique hotels).

Promote investment in diverse accommodation options, including eco-lodges, homestays, and guesthouses, to cater to various tourist preferences and budgets, ensuring they adhere to sustainable building practices.

Support the development of quality tourism services, including tour guiding, transport, and hospitality, through training and capacity-building programs for local communities and tourism operators. Accredited hospitality service providers and conduct training through Private Public Partnerships.

Implement clear, standardized signage in key tourist areas, providing directions, historical context, and information on local attractions in multiple languages.

Success Indicators: (i) Completion of an infrastructure needs assessment report by FY2027. (ii) At least 50 km of key tourist access roads upgraded by FY2029. (iii) A 20% increase in the number of quality-certified accommodation facilities by FY2029. (iv) Launch of at least three new visitor information centers by FY2029.

Example (Inspiration): The establishment of comprehensive tourism circuits and improved facilities in Rwanda's Volcanoes National Park for gorilla trekking, which includes well-maintained roads, high-quality lodges, and trained guides, offers a model for enhancing visitor experience and maximizing tourism revenue.

Action 6.1.2: Develop and Market Unique Tourism Products

This action focuses on identifying, curating, and promoting the distinctive natural and cultural attractions of Toro Kingdom to diverse markets, employing a comprehensive marketing and communication strategy.

Implementation Measures:-

Conduct a detailed inventory and profile of Toro Kingdom's natural and cultural tourism assets, including national parks, crater lakes, cultural sites, traditional ceremonies, and unique local crafts.

Develop bespoke tourism packages that integrate natural attractions (e.g., safaris, hiking, bird watching) with cultural experiences (e.g., palace tours, traditional performances, community visits, participation in ceremonies like Empango).

Conduct a Toro Kingdom Brand Audit to and create a "Toro Kingdom Tourism Brand" that encapsulates its unique offerings and promotes sustainable practices.

Develop a costed Integrated Marketing and Communication strategy with a clear channel plan.

Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy with an implementation and monitoring plan.

Curate key messages and develop a content calendar for the Kingdom Tourism promotion.

Identify and hire social media influencers and Toro Kingdom Brand Ambassadors (Local and International) to promote the Kingdom.

Guide the Ntare League and the Fort Portal City Marathon Branding, Marketing, and Communication.

Success Indicators: (i) Launch of at least five new unique tourism products/packages by FY2027. (ii) A 25% increase in online engagement and inquiries related to Toro Kingdom tourism by FY2029. (iii) Participation in at least two international tourism expos annually from FY2026. (iv) A 10% increase in average tourist length of stay in Toro Kingdom by FY2029. (vi) Successful execution of digital and traditional media campaigns, measured by reach and engagement. (vii) Increased accreditation of hospitality service providers and trained personnel. Local Example: The success of the "Amakara Ga Omukama" (King's Fire) cultural festival and the promotion of the Empaako naming system demonstrate the potential for developing unique cultural tourism products that attract both local and international visitors. Expanding these efforts to other traditional practices and natural sites can further diversify the Kingdom's tourism portfolio.

Strategic Intervention 6.2: Promoting Community Participation and Benefit-Sharing

in Tourism

This intervention aims to ensure that local communities are actively involved in and directly benefit from tourism development, fostering a sense of ownership and promoting sustainable practices.

Action 6.2.1: Enhance Community Engagement in Tourism Ventures

This action focuses on empowering local communities to participate directly in and benefit from the tourism sector.

Implementation Measures:

Encourage the development of community-based tourism initiatives that directly involve local people in tourism activities and ensure they benefit from tourism revenue.

Establish community tourism committees or cooperatives in areas adjacent to key tourist attractions to facilitate organized participation in tourism activities (e.g., managing homestays, providing guiding services, producing handicrafts).

Provide training and mentorship programs for community members on hospitality skills, cultural interpretation, tour guiding, and small business management tailored for tourism enterprises.

Facilitate partnerships between local communities and established tour operators, hotels, and tourism agencies to create market linkages for community-produced goods and services.

Support the development of community-owned and managed tourism enterprises, such as cultural villages, traditional performance groups, and handicraft production centers.

Conduct regular consultations with communities to integrate their perspectives and traditional knowledge into tourism planning and product development.

Success Indicators: (i) Establishment of at least 10 new community tourism committees/cooperatives by FY2028. (ii) 500 community members trained in tourism-related skills by FY2029. (iii) A 15% increase in direct income generated by communities from tourism activities by FY2029. (iv) At least three successful community-owned tourism enterprises established by FY2029.

Example (Inspiration): The Maasai cultural villages in Kenya and Tanzania, where local communities directly manage and benefit from tourist visits, offer a compelling example of successful community-based tourism models.

Action 6.2.2: Establish Sustainable Benefit-Sharing Mechanisms

This action focuses on developing and implementing transparent systems that ensure a portion of tourism revenues flows back to communities and conservation efforts.

Implementation Measures:-

Advocate for and work with the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) and other relevant bodies to ensure effective implementation and increase the percentage of revenue sharing

from national parks and protected areas within Toro Kingdom that directly benefits adjacent communities.

Explore and implement innovative financing mechanisms, such as a "tourism levy" or

"conservation fee," where a small portion of tourist expenditure contributes directly to local

community development projects and conservation initiatives.

Establish transparent mechanisms for the allocation and utilization of shared tourism revenues, ensuring community oversight and accountability. This could involve community-managed funds for specific development projects (e.g., schools, health centers, water points).

Promote responsible tourism practices among visitors and operators, encouraging them to support local businesses, respect cultural norms, and minimize their environmental footprint.

Develop impact assessment frameworks to monitor the social, economic, and environmental benefits and impacts of tourism on local communities.

Success Indicators: (i) A 10% increase in tourism revenue allocated to community development projects by FY2029. (ii) Establishment of at least two community-managed tourism benefit funds by FY2028. (iii) Documented evidence of at least five community development projects funded through tourism revenue sharing by FY2029. (v) Implementation of a tourism impact monitoring system by FY2027.

Local Example: The existing revenue-sharing model around Queen Elizabeth National Park, though sometimes challenging in its implementation, provides a precedent for how a portion of park entrance fees can be channeled back to communities. The Kingdom can work to strengthen and expand such models to ensure greater and more consistent benefits for its people.