

**FACTORS HINDERING KAWIRU COMMUNITY  
PARTICIPATION IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MERU  
NATIONAL PARK, MERU COUNTY, KENYA.**

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# Declaration

This is my original work and has not been submitted for a Degree in any other University.

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# Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my late grandfather M’Muthuri M’kobia, who inspired me to choose learning as a path to wisdom and to my parents who encouraged me to believe in diligence and pursuit of academic excellence.

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In the wisdom of the Ameru people, a person who says 'thank you' makes himself or herself deserving of another favor. In expressing my thanks, my gratitude goes first to all the lecturers in the Hospitality and Tourism Department who imparted in me the knowledge and skills needed to undertake this study. More especially, I wish to thank my supervisors Dr. Geoffrey Manyara and Rayviscic Mutinda whose sage advice, insightful criticisms, and patient encouragement aided the writing of this thesis. To my colleagues at the HTM School goes my deepest gratitude for their help, support and encouragement and more so to my classmates for providing me with a friendly and stimulating intellectual environment for learning. I reserve my deepest acknowledgement to my friends and family whose steadfast support for this study was greatly needed and much appreciated. To my companion Prisca, children; Kevin, Kendy, Sofi and Patricia I say a big thank you for your unwavering love, friendship, moral and spiritual support which enabled me to create the time and the space I needed to undertake this project. In all and above all, I am eternally grateful to the Almighty God through whom all good things come into being.

## **Abbreviations and Acronyms**

**CBT** Community-Based Tourism

**CBTEs** Community-Based Tourism Enterprises

**Ksh** Kenya Shilling

**KWS** Kenya Wildlife Service

**MDGs** Millenium Development Goals

**MNP** Meru National Park

**NGOs** Non-Governmental Organisations

**NTP** National Tourism Policy

**SD** Sustainable Development

**SPSS** Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

**SMTEs** Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises

**UNCED** United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

**UNWTO** United Nations World Tourism Organization

**USAID** United States Agency for International Development

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## Abstract

This thesis examines reasons why Kawiru, a local community living around Meru National Park does not play an active role in tourism development despite being a key stakeholder in the conservation and tourism agenda of MNP. Local community involvement in tourism activity is a pragmatic approach that endeavours to link the development of sustainable tourism to the cause of alleviating poverty and improvement of local community livelihoods. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development in the Local Agenda 21 maintains that if industry and government are to protect and sustain the social, cultural and environmental wealth that attracts tourists, they must build more ambitious and committed partnerships to plan, manage and invest in this wealth. In the National Tourism Policy document, the Kenya Government acknowledges that due to historical inequities in the tourism industry, local people living in tourist host communities have rarely been involved in sharing of benefits or planning of tourism activities taking place within their community. In view of the challenges posed by poverty especially in the rural areas of Kenya, and the fact that tourism can effectively be used as a tool for fighting poverty, the objective of this study was to understand reasons why local communities living around Meru National Park are not able to take part in tourism happening in their locality with a view to generating knowledge that could inform initiatives aimed at enhancing local community participation in tourism development. The area of study, Meru National Park, and the target population of Kawiru Community was purposely chosen for the reason that MNP is a premier park established in 1968 and the residents of Kawiru community are the immediate park neighbours situated along the main tourist route leading to the park. The research was designed as a cross-sectional descriptive study which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. Questionnaires, face to face interviews and photography of features relevant to the study objectives were employed as data collection methods. Since data collected was mainly qualitative, thematic data analysis aligned to the research objectives was the preferred analysis method. The findings were projected to have a far reaching impact in stimulating among other things, formulation of a Community-based tourism policy to provide a framework for encouraging and guiding local communities to access opportunities in tourism development and share in the benefits of tourism activities taking place within their community. Specifically, the study found out that for local people to benefit from tourism development in their neighbourhood there is great need for aggressive awareness campaigns to educate the community on the importance of tourism as a viable economic option at the local level. Therefore, the study recommends sensitization of community members by the relevant stakeholders on the benefits of conservation and tourism and the role they can play as individuals and as a community in tourism development.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

Tourism is an increasingly diverse and complex phenomenon that requires sophisticated management and planning if it is to be pursued in a sustainable and competitive manner.

Whether the primary motivation is to maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts, or to maximise profits, stakeholder's objectives can only be achieved if decisions are informed by a sound knowledge base (Weaver & Lawton, 2006). This is derived through the pursuit of properly conceived and executed research, or the systematic search for knowledge. This chapter provides some background information that helps to focus the research problem and then proceeds to explain the research process by outlining the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, the significance of the study, conceptual framework and definition of central terms as applied in this study.

### 1.1 Background Information

For many countries in the developing world, tourism is a critical source of revenue generation and a major component of economic development (UNWTO, 2009). In most countries with high levels of poverty, tourism is significant in economic growth and therefore a key component to the cause of eliminating poverty and improvement of local community livelihoods (Ashley & Godwin 2001). In Kenya, the government in its Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC) and Vision 2030 plan (Kenya Government, 2003; 2008), have recognized the contribution of the tourism sector to the country's economic growth, environmental sustainability and

creation of job opportunities and therefore, a key means to promote social and economic development at the local level. However, Kenya's prevailing model for tourism development, criticised for being anachronistic, colonial and narrowly based on safari and coastal products (Manyara & Jones, 2005), has been a major obstacle to economic development and poverty reduction. In this model, local communities are hardly involved in tourism development, and the control of tourism resources is vested in the hands of a few Western investors who are mainly profit-driven (Akama, 1999; Khan, 1997). This is in contrast with the United Nations Local Agenda 21 and the principles of sustainable tourism development which emphasise the need to involve local communities in the planning and control of tourism resources (Jackson, 1999; Mbaiwa, 2005).

In the recently enacted Kenya National Tourism Policy, the government acknowledges that due to historical inequities in the tourism industry, local people living in tourist host communities have rarely been involved in the planning of tourism activities in their community. This is despite the fact that these people suffer the cost of human wildlife conflicts, intrusion by tourists, and yet receive little benefit (Kenya Government, 2009). The principle of sustainable utilization of natural resources for the benefit of all, for which the government of Kenya is committed to; includes tourism as one of the key forms. Hence, the principle of increased involvement of local individuals and communities in tourism development is articulated as follows in the National Tourism Policy:

*Community involvement, including benefit-sharing between local communities and tourism projects and wildlife management, shall be placed at the centre of the new National Tourism Policy. It is imperative for communities living within or around wildlife areas to be fully involved in the development and management of these and*

*other local tourist attractions and, in addition, to get a share of the income generated from tourist activities within their areas (Kenya Government 2008:39)*

Bearing in mind the challenges posed by poverty especially in the rural areas of Kenya and the fact that tourism can effectively be used as a tool for fighting poverty, this research sought to understand factors that hinder local community participation in tourism development.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

The first step in any research process is the identification of the broad issues or problems that interest the investigator (Weaver & Lawton, 2006). This research was provoked by a number of studies done which point to the need for sustainable tourism in view of the fact that local communities living around tourist areas e.g. communities living around Meru National Park are not significantly involved in tourism development in those areas. UNWTO, (2008). This is despite the fact that the local communities are inevitably key stakeholder in the tourism and conservation agenda and not just mere spectators who bear the cost of human-wildlife conflict and intrusion by tourists. This study sought to understand factors limiting the local community from participating in tourism by looking specifically at Kawiru community in Ndoileli division, Meru North District who are the immediate neighbours of Meru National Park.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to understand reasons why a local community in Meru County, living around Meru National Park, a premier tourist destination does not play a

significant role in tourism happening in their locality with a view to generating knowledge that could inform initiatives aimed at encouraging Kawiru community participation in tourism development. This knowledge could be useful in informing sustainable tourism planning and helping the government to discover ways of enhancing local community participation in tourism as a means of bringing socio-economic and conservation benefits to local communities.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The specific objectives of this study were to:

- (1). Investigate factors that prevent residents of Kawiru community from participating in tourism development in Meru National Park.
- (2). Determine Kawiru people's attitudes and expectations towards tourism as stakeholders of Meru National Park.
- (3). Establish the contribution of Meru National Park in improving the welfare of the residents of Kawiru community.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

To achieve the research objectives, this study was focused on answering the following questions:

1. What factors hinder the local residents of Kawiru community from getting involved in tourism activity in their area?
2. Of what benefit is conservation and tourism in Meru National Park to the residents of Kawiru community?

3. What do the members of the community think about tourists who visit Meru National Park?
4. What needs to be done to make the residents of Kawiru community derive benefit from tourism development in Meru National park?
5. What role(s) (individual and communal) could members of Kawiru community play in tourism development in their area?
6. Do the members of Kawiru community understand their role as key stakeholders in the conservation and tourism agenda of Meru National Park?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of the study were projected to be useful in generating knowledge that could stimulate among other things, formulation by the government of a Community-based tourism policy to provide a framework for local authorities and tourism stakeholders to encourage and guide local communities to access opportunities in tourism development and share in the benefits of tourism activities taking place within their community. Specifically, the findings of this study were aimed at providing baseline data that could be used for further research and to determine ways of empowering residents of Kawiru community to participate actively tourism development around Meru National Park.

The results were also intended to help in offering suggestions on how tourism could be used to improve local people's livelihoods as a means for poverty alleviation in line with the Kenya Governments aspirations in Vision 2030 blue print. Specifically, the knowledge generated would be used in the following ways:

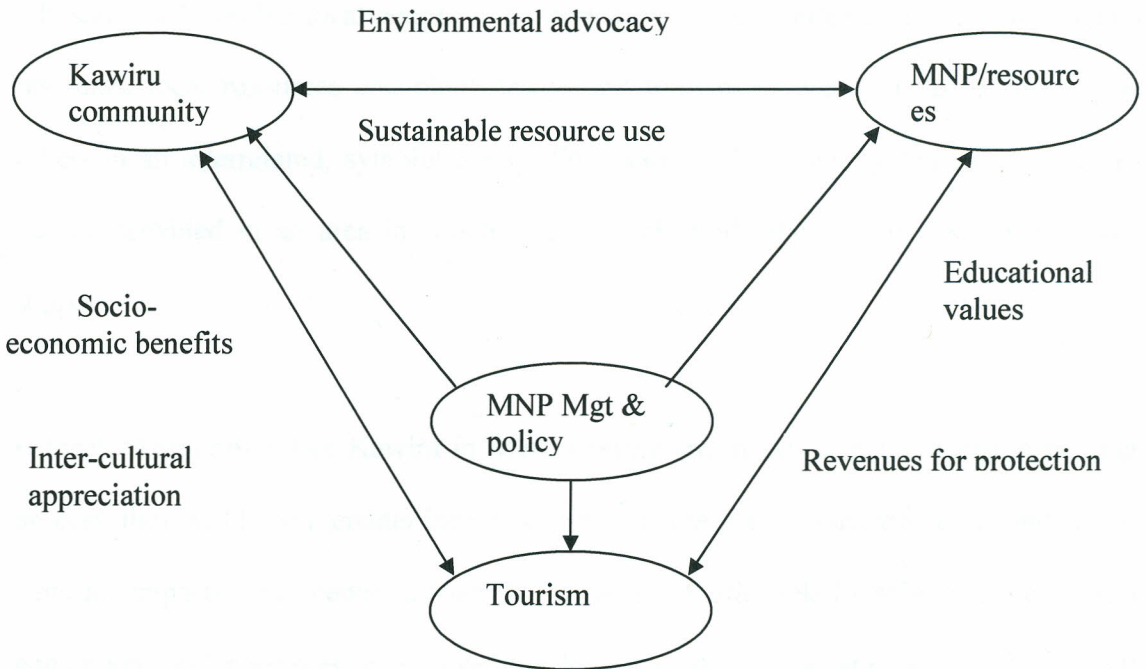
- Contribute to the pool of knowledge about local community participation in tourism development in Kenya.
- Support the involvement of local communities in tourism enterprises.
- The study would also form a basis through which other researchers could develop their studies.
- The local residents of Kawiru Community could also benefit from the findings of the study if their livelihood is taken into consideration by tourism planners and investors in Meru National Park.

### **1.7 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

The researcher could not possibly access the entire population that was relevant to this study or rather all the communities that border Meru National Park from different directions owing to logistical and financial challenges. It was therefore expedient in the circumstances for this study to focus only on the residents of Kawiru community living around the main gate of Meru National Park. Kawiru being an economically marginalised area had a lot of challenges such as poor accessibility low literacy and security concerns which the study had to contend with. These were mitigated by hiring of two research assistants well versed with the area. However, since no previous similar research had been carried out in this area, the researcher had to rely on secondary data on the subject matter from relevant material and research from various sources that had been compiled previously by other researchers from within and outside the country. The findings though cannot be generalized to all tourist destinations where tourism takes place without local community participation since each situation has its own context and impediments.

### 1.8 Conceptual Framework

This study employed a framework from Ross and Wall (1999) adapted with contextual modification to show the independent and dependent variables in sustainable tourism.



**Fig 1.** A Sustainable Tourism Framework Adapted from Ross and Wall (1999)

This framework emphasizes the significance of fostering positive links between Kawiru community, Meru National Park resources or biodiversity, and tourism. The local community and the natural resources are the independent variables while nature of tourism, park management and policy are dependent variables. The park management and tourism policy in place, seen in light of the nature of tourism practised in Meru National Park, to a large extent determines participation of Kawiru community in tourism development and appreciation of Meru National Park as a natural resource. The strength

or weakness of any one link has implications for other links. Ross and Wall (1999) suggests that the success of a destination reflects the extent to which it provides high quality tourist experiences and is able to protect natural resources and biodiversity, generate money to finance conservation and contribute to the local economy, educate visitors and members of local communities and thereby, encourage environmental advocacy and involve local people in conservation and development issues. Destination residents, local resources and biodiversity, and tourism may each help to sustain the others in an interrelated, symbiotic way. For example, high quality tourist experiences can be provided in an area in which there is rich biodiversity if the local people are supportive.

If local communities like Kawiru in Meru County are involved in the decision-making process, they will have a greater incentive to make sure that the environmental and socio-cultural impacts are better managed. In a symbiotic relationship between local populations and resources or biodiversity, local residents act as stewards of the natural resources and, in return, they benefit through sustainable harvesting and protection of important resources (Ross and Wall, 1999). This relationship helps tourism to be sustainable. The UNWTO encourages all countries to ensure that their policies and actions for development and management of tourism fully embrace the principles of sustainability (UNWTO, 2008).

## 1.9 Operational definition of Key Terms

The following was the operational definition of terms as used in the study:

- **Community-Based:** This refers to activity that occurs within the community.
- **Community Based Tourism Enterprises** – Used to refer to businesses targeting tourists that are initiated at the community level.
- **Community/Local Participation:** Refers to the notion of involving members of a community collectively in a process of activity taking place within the community.
- **Host Community:** This refers to the local residents in a given tourist destination.
- **Tourism:** This will mean the business of catering for the needs of people who travel for pleasure.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** This refers to tourism that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Tourism Development:** This term is used to refer to tourism activities in various forms taking place in a given area.
- **Tourist Destination:** This refers to a place which is visited by tourists.
- **Tourist Attractions:** This refers to specific and generic features of a destination that attract tourists.
- **Stakeholder** – This term is used to refer to a party or parties who have a key interest in a development project. In this study, it is used to refer to all parties who have a key interest in Meru National Park.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This section basically gives a critical and evaluative account of what has been studied, argued, and established about the chosen research topic. The purpose is to describe and analyze the knowledge that exists and reveal gaps, similarities and differences, consistencies and inconsistencies and controversies in previous research.

#### **2.1 The Concept of Community Participation in Tourism Development.**

Community participation in tourism which takes different approaches the more common being community based tourism (CBT) is an evolving concept which is popularly attracting the interest of tourism researchers. In a study done by Wishitemi, (2008) it was observed that numerous questions have been raised in attempts to define community under the auspices of tourism. In a study carried out by Mitchell & Muckosy (2008), it is noted that there is insufficient rigor in the use of the concept of community-based tourism. These authors observe that the concept is used very broadly to describe a variety of activities that encourage and support a wide range of objectives in socio-economic development and conservation.

According to Lindberg *et al*, (1997), a community can simply be understood as a group of people often originating from the same geographical area, who identify themselves as belonging to the same group. Mann (2000) defined community-based tourism so broadly that it appeared to include almost all forms of tourism which involves and brings benefit

to community members, thus: anything that involves genuine community participation and benefits.

In a study done by Jackson (1999) it was noted that grassroots involvement of local communities in conventional tourism has been minimal in the developing world and has been mainly confined to the supply of goods and services, sale of handicrafts and traditional dance entertainment. Well conceived tourism allows for a greater focus on improving the overall welfare and standards of living, which are often very low in the very marginal tourist destinations to be found in developing countries. Leach, Mearns and Scoones (1999) noted that the consensus in the wake of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) opines that the implementation of what has come to be known as “Sustainable Development” should be based on local-level solutions derived from community initiatives.

Nelson (2004) observed that local communities are core to the development of tourism while Manyara & Jones (2007) observed that Community Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs) have along with other integrated conservation and development schemes gained popularity over the last three decades. In a study done by Mogelgaard (2003) it was noted that, CBTEs work on the premise that in order for conservation and development projects to succeed, local communities must be active participants and direct beneficiaries. Hence the reason for the quest to find out why the local community around MNP are neither active participant nor direct beneficiaries of tourism in that area.

The fundamental aspects of local communities' rights and capacities to handle tourism development remain a big challenge for the developing world. Wishitemi, (2008) suggested that local leaders should be informed about the potential for community involvement in enterprises and the various approaches to community involvement in tourism, so that they can use their signing power to good effect, planning of same development and regional tourism should involve community representatives. In addition, local communities should have legal entitlement to benefits from ventures operating in their areas. Revenue from operators and concessions in communal areas should accrue to local communities.

## **2.2 Meru National Park Destination Area and Kawiru People's Attitude Towards Tourists.**

The local consequences of tourism vary from place to place. According to a study done by Kiss (2004), it was observed that not all residents of destination areas are true or willing hosts and, for some, tourists may be unwelcome intruders rather than invited guests. In addition, destination communities are not homogeneous: rather, there are male and female, young and old, newcomers and long-time residents, those employed in tourism and those who are not, and the powerful and the powerless. Thus, tourism does not impact all members of a community equally and there are some who are in a better position to take advantage of the opportunities than others.

A study done by Alister, Mathieson & Wall, (2006) indicated that the capacity of a destination to absorb the demands imposed upon it by tourists and the tourism industry depends upon the interrelationships of numerous complex factors particularly the

characteristics of tourists and of the destination area and its people. In large cosmopolitan urban areas, they observed that tourists may simply blend in and it may not be immediately obvious who is a tourist and who is a permanent resident. In contrast, in small communities, particularly those that cater to international tourists of a different race, ethnicity and language from the residents; tourists may be more immediately recognized. Similarly, the same increment of tourism may have more far-reaching consequences in a small, rural community that is new to tourism than in a large, urban area or resort with a long history of tourism involvement.

George Doxey (1975) proposed an index of resident irritation, or irridex, to describe evolution of local attitudes. The model he proposed describes a local community's responses to the cumulative effect of tourism development on social interrelations in the host community.

According to Doxey, local tolerance thresholds and the hosts' resistance to increasing tourism development are based on a fear of losing community identity, and that these host communities go through a series of stages as the impacts of an evolving tourism industry in their area become more pronounced and their perceptions change with experience. Thus, an initial euphoria is succeeded by apathy, irritation and, eventually, antagonism. The table below displays Doxey's model.

**Table 1.** Doxey's Irridex Model of Host Irritation

	Social Relationships	Power Relationships
<b>Euphoria</b>	Visitors and Investors welcome	Little Planning or formalised Control Greater potential for influence to be exerted by the locals (not often taken)
<b>Apathy</b>	Visitors taken for granted  More formal relationships between hosts and guests	Marketing is the prime focus of plans  Tourism industry lobby grows in power
<b>Annoyance</b>	Resident misgivings about tourism  Range of saturation points approached	Planners attempt to control by increasing infrastructure rather than limiting growth  Local protest groups develop to challenge institutionalised tourism power
<b>Antagonism</b>	Irritations openly expressed  Residents perceive tourists as the cause of the problems	Remedial planning fighting against pressures of increased promotion to offset declining reputation of destination  Power struggle between interest groups

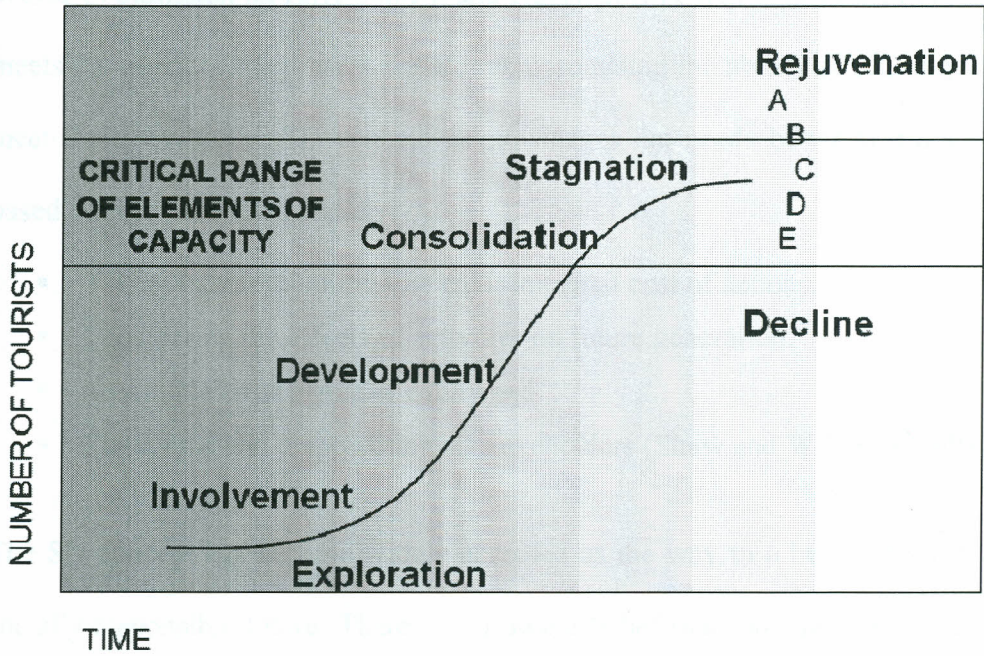
Source: *Doxey 1975.*

In the early stages of tourism, the community is euphoric, welcoming the potential economic and social benefits tourism may bring. This then moves to a state of apathy as the early promises are not realised by all members, moving on to annoyance with the inconveniences of the increased numbers of visitors, such as limited parking spaces and crowding. According to Doxey's model, if the crowding increases, residents begin to

show antagonism towards the visitors, which may ultimately be expressed through violence.

The final stage that Doxey describes is that of resignation, with many residents becoming resigned to the effects of tourism, possibly altering their behaviour or simply avoiding visitors. However, as Doxey acknowledges, not all relations between tourists and the host community are as simple or inevitable.

Doxey's theory and Butler's (1980) tourist area life-cycle model (TALC) as shown in figure 2 below which identifies a number of phases in the evolution of tourism at a destination (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and decline or rejuvenation) implicitly suggest that associated reciprocal reactions of the community influence the progression of stages by undermining the appeal of the area to tourists and thus reducing its viability as a tourist destination.



**Figure 2** Butler's TALC Model showing Hypothetical Evolution of a Tourist area Butler, (1980).

The purpose of this model was to draw attention to the dynamic nature of destinations and propose a generalised process of development and potential decline which could be avoided by appropriate interventions such as planning, management and development, or the management of resources.

### 2.3 Sustainable Tourism Practice

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) encourages all countries to ensure that their policies and actions for development and management of tourism fully embrace the principles of sustainability (UNWTO, 2008). The concept of Sustainable Development (SD), first mentioned in 1987 in the Brundtland report published by the

World Commission on Environment and Development, was defined as, development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The SD concept acknowledges the needs of the world's poor and is based on four principles namely:

- Taking into account the true environmental cost of actions.
- Considering the effects of activities on future generation.
- Seeking to ensure greater equity and
- Consulting and empowering all stakeholders (Shaw and Williams, 1998).

The SD concept has become widely accepted as the way to a better, more humane and socially responsible future. There is a growing belief that tourism can play a significant role in sustainable development (Yunis, 2006). By participating in tourism, communities can receive tangible economic, infrastructural and social benefits. In turn, experiences of tourists may be enhanced by opportunities to interact with local people. If positive attitudes to tourism are to be fostered, residents living in or adjacent to the destination should be receiving economic and social benefits or compensations which will support or compliment their livelihoods. The UNWTO (2008) noted that sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building.

The UNWTO defines sustainable tourism as tourism which leads to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (McKercher, 2003). Kiss (2004) observed that several international organisations, for instance, the World Bank and the United States Agency for

International Development (USAID), are turning to tourism and specifically community-based tourism as a way of involving local communities in economic development.

The Kenya Government in the National Tourism Policy (NTP) recognises the potential of CBTEs as an avenue through which the involvement of local communities in tourism development can be enhanced (Kenya Government, 2004). The government envisages that CBTEs can improve indigenous ownership of tourism resources and consequently the sustainability of the industry (Kenya Government, 2004). According to Wishitemi (2008), sustainable tourism is really an issue of how best to encourage tourism while minimizing its costs.

#### **2.4 Encouraging Kawiru Community Involvement in Tourism Development**

The World Tourism Organization (1999) noted that some national governments around the world encourage increased community involvement in the tourism sector. In a study carried out by Nelson (2004) it was observed that the traditional wildlife-based tourism encouraged the establishment of state-protected areas, mainly national parks and reserves in many parts of the developing world. This led to the eviction of respective local people from their traditional lands and hence made such rural communities poorer than they originally were. In a wildlife utilisation study report, the Kenya Wildlife Service, (1996) acknowledged that local communities should be allowed to benefit from local wildlife resources rather than just bearing the cost of damage by wildlife to crops, pastures, water resources, fences and threats to human life.

Ndiaye (1990), in his study noted that, when tourism involves the participation of local communities and provides financial rewards, they support and protect the natural environment. Similarly, Drake (1991) argued that the participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation promotes their ability to influence tourism projects aimed at protecting the natural resource base, which may have a direct impact on them. Considering the current conservation trends, Reid, (2001) and Barrow and Murphree (2001) acknowledged the importance of local communities in natural resource management.

Although Thorsell, (1984) noted that it is evident that local communities living adjacent to parks and reserves can realize socio-economic benefits from tourism, a study by Lindberg, (1991) showed that in reality, the wilderness models of protected areas exclude the local communities from direct participation. They view them as an impediment to effective conservation of wildlife, which has often resulted in resource-use conflicts. Occasionally, local people have been forcibly removed from protected areas giving them the impression that wildlife is more important than them. The result has been deliberate destruction of wildlife (Western, 1992).

Integration of resource conservation with the requirements of the local communities and a shift from the strict 'protectionists' approach to integrated development is more desirable (Boo, 1990). This view was emphasized by Okello and Wishitemi. (2003) who argued that no conservation initiative can succeed without community support and involvement. Migot-Adholla (1989) reported that the involvement of local population is a tool of

progressive sustainable development as it solicits support for environmental conservation and minimizes local conflicts. Scheyvens (2002) argued that the ultimate goal of community-based tourism is to empower the host community at four levels – economic, psychological, social and political while Brohman (1996) explained that Community-based tourism development should seek to strengthen institutions designed to enhance local participation and promote the economic, social and cultural well-being of the popular majority.

## **2.5 Summary**

According to the World Tourism Organization, sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building (UNWTO, 2008). Many policy documents as well as studies which have been done emphasize the need to involve local communities for tourism to be sustainable. However, no known research has been conducted to find out why local residents living around tourist host areas e.g. Kawiru community around the boundary of Meru National Park are not involved in tourism development. When tourism involves the participation of local communities and provides financial rewards, the locals support and protect the natural environment. The participation of local communities in biodiversity conservation promotes the local people's ability to influence tourism projects aimed at protecting the natural resource base, which may have a direct impact on them.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents specific research methods that were used to conduct this study. The chapter focuses on the research design, locale, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection and data analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Design

This research was designed as a cross-sectional descriptive study which employed both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative method was selectively used e.g. in gathering demographic information about the respondents. Richard & Gouri (2001) states that the descriptive method of research seeks to gather information about the present existing condition. The descriptive method is advantageous for the study due to its flexibility. It is a method that can use either qualitative or quantitative data or both, giving the researcher greater options in selecting the instrument for data-gathering. This method is used to describe the nature of a situation, as it exists at the time of the study and to explore the cause/s of a particular phenomenon. This study employed this kind of research method to obtain first hand data from the respondents so as to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study.

#### 3.2 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Kawiru community in Ndoleli Division, Meru North District of the Eastern Province of Kenya. Kawiru location is in Igembe North Constituency, one

of the four constituencies of Meru North District. This study primarily targeted households in Kawiru community located along the main tourist route leading to the park and within a radius of five kilometres from the main gate of Meru National Park. Being the immediate neighbours of Meru National Park, Kawiru was considered as an ideal choice because, owing to its proximity to the park, it is the community which suffers most the costs of human-wildlife conflict and impacts of tourism developments in the park. Kawiru community was also chosen because of logistical considerations which included security, accessibility, limited time and funds.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population was the local residents of Kawiru community. The table below shows the local administrative units and population distribution in Igembe North Constituency where Kawiru location is found.

**Table 2. ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS IN IGEMBE NORTH CONSTITUENCY**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Population</b>
Akirang'ondu	30,915
Antubetwe Kiongo	8,992
Antuambui	32,287
Athiru Ruujine	18,175
Kabachi	41,149
<b>Kawiru</b>	<b>19,679</b>
Luciati	20,374
Naathu	28,863
Ntunene	17,516

Source: *Kenya Government, 1999 Census.*

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

A total sample size of 126 respondents was used for the study. The following formula by Cochran G. Williams (1963) was adopted to determine the sample size:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 Pq}{d^2}$$

Where:

n= the desired sample size

Z= the standard normal deviation at the required confidence level

P= the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured

q= 1-P

d= the level of statistical confidence.

From ground visits and initial inquiries conducted in this study, a total of 1,800 people were identified as being a suitable population for the study. According to available statistics, the target population was estimated at 19,679. Working at a level of statistical significance of 0.05 or 95% confidence level and a critical value of 1.96, the sample size for this study was calculated as follows:

Target population = 19,679

Sample Frame = 1,800

Thus, p = 1800

19,679

q = 1 - 0.09

= 0.91

d = 0.05

z = 1.96

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size} &= \frac{(1.96)^2(0.91)(0.09)}{(0.05)^2} \\ &= 0.314627 \\ &\quad 0.0025 \\ &= \mathbf{125.85} \end{aligned}$$

Thus, the sample size for this study was pegged at **126** cases.

The sample was selected using non-probability method from among the proportion in the target population that was estimated to be suitable for the study. Purposive sampling based on observation and personal judgment was used to select key informants for interviews. The sampling frame included a list of informants drawn from various interest groups within the community from which the respondents were selected as shown in the table below:

**Table 3.** Subsets of Respondents identified from Kawiru Community.

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Interview Code</b>	<b>Total No. of Interviewees</b>
Community Leaders	Leaders 1-16	16
Government Officials	Government 1-3	3
Business People	Traders 1-9	9
Teachers	Teachers 1-10	10
Students	Students 1-24	24
Unemployed youth	Jobless 1-34	34
Household heads	Heads 1-26	26
MNP officials	MNP officials 1-4	4
	<i>Total</i>	<b>126</b>

### 3.5 Research Instruments & Administration

In this study, three main instruments were used for data collection:

- (i) Questionnaires administered to local residents – self administered by the respondent and researcher assisted. This method was used to generate information and data, which subsequently was used for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The questionnaire focused on such areas as demographic data, attitudes and expectations and tourist product awareness.
- (ii) Face to face interviews - for government officials and MNP officials.
- (iii) Photography was used on features relevant to the study objectives.

Supplementary methods used to enrich the research instruments were:

*Observation:* This tool had many applications in this study such as: observing the tourism activity around Meru National Park, recording the reaction of residents towards tourists who visit the park, counting the number of tourist facilities around MNP among other uses.

*Secondary Sources:* This study relied on relevant material and research from various sources such as academic journals, academic books, statistical compilations, the internet and topographical maps and remotely sensed images (e.g. aerial photographs, satellite images).

### **3.6 Pre- Testing of Instruments**

Before setting out to the field, pre-testing was carried out to ensure that the instruments chosen were valid and reliable i.e. to establish that they were the right instruments for gathering the intended data and that the results gathered met the requirements for the study. This exercise was done among ten randomly selected members of Kawiru Community. Procedures similar to those that were to be used during the actual data collection were applied. Pre-testing was done with the aim of revealing shortcomings such as unclear directions, relevance of the instrument used in gathering the data intended, insufficient space to write on and wrong phrasing of questions so as to give the researcher an opportunity to fine tune the instruments before the actual study.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

General information on tourism activity in Meru National Park and the factors hindering community participation in tourism development was mainly collected from the sample through face to face interviews, observation, photography and use of questionnaires. The filled-in questionnaires were collected within a reasonable time for analysis. Information on sustainability and community-based approaches in tourism development was obtained from secondary data comprising internet sources, case studies, the UNWTO reports and the Annals of Tourism Research.

### **3.8 Logistical and Ethical Considerations**

Research authorization permit from the University was procured before embarking on data collection. The researcher sought permission where necessary to distribute

questionnaires and interview people and also tried to establish a rapport with the respondents by explaining his intentions and the importance of the study. Confidentiality was assured to respondents.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

This being a descriptive study, both qualitative and quantitative data was generated. The guiding principle in analysis of data was the research questions in relation to the study objectives. Examination involved the filtering and organisation of the database to eliminate invalid responses. Responses from the questionnaires and face-to-face interviews were then analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 14.0 and Microsoft Excel package. This exercise sought to analyse data in measurable and common categories e.g. respondents characteristics, sex, age, distribution etc. for ease of categorisation and interpretation.

Since data collected was mainly qualitative, varying perspectives and experiences of people were fitted into a limited number of predetermined response categories. This was done through sorting, comparisons, and synthesis of the collected information in line with the research objectives. Though this analysis usually carries a much higher level of subjectivity or personal judgement than in quantitative analysis, Weaver & Lawton (2006), triangulation as demonstrated by use of various methods above was employed to check on any deficiency.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study was conducted with the objective of understanding reasons why the local residents of Kawiru community who border Meru National Park do not participate in tourism development taking place within their community. The purpose for the study was to generate knowledge that could inform initiatives aimed at enhancing local community participation in tourism development. A survey questionnaire was used as the main data-gathering instrument for this study (See Appendix II).

In order to achieve the research purpose, the researcher went out to Kawiru community to gather views from the area residents in line with this study. Specifically, a total of 126 respondents from the community were purposively selected from different interest groups within the target population to make the sample. Of the total sample, 96 out of the intended 126 questionnaires were successfully filled. This represents a 76% response rate considered sufficient enough, Cochran G. Williams (1963) to authoritatively provide a basis for making conclusions with regard to the subject of this inquiry. Sampled respondents answered a structured survey questionnaire which was complimented with face to face interviews. Data gathered from this research instrument were then computed for interpretation. Along with primary data, the study also made use of secondary sources in the form of published articles and literature to support the survey results. The results presented here are discussed under various sub-headings relating to the topic.

In an effort to make a more informed and objective finding, the researcher sought the view of the management of Meru National Park as a key stakeholder to hear their side of the story. Hence the face-to-face interviews with the senior warden, financial manager and the education officer of MNP. The results from that interview are discussed in the research findings in line with the study objectives.

#### **4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The local resident's demographic information including sex, age, level of education, and occupation were sought. This information was gathered by use of questionnaires and face to face interviews within the sample area. This was done to inform the study about the various demographic variables of the respondents. Table 4 below provides a summary of the results.

Out of the 96 total respondents, the majority 55% were female while 45% were male. Most of the respondents, 96% were between 18 and 48 years. This indicates that a large number of residents in this community are in the productive age bracket. Most of the respondents, 71% had lived in Kawiru location for 16 to 30 years, a period that was considered in this study to be long enough for residents to have had well grounded experience about their interaction with Meru National Park as individuals and as a community. Study evidence and the experience the researcher had from his interaction with Kawiru community members indicates that a small number of respondents had no formal education while 49% at least had basic education as shown in the table 4.1.1 below.

**Table 4.** Demographic characteristics of the respondents

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The sex distribution of the respondents n=92</b>	Male	41	44.6
	Female	51	55.4
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Respondent age category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The number of years one has lived in Kawiru n=80</b>	1-5 years	2	2.5
	6-10 years	2	2.5
	11-15 years	5	6.3
	16-20 years	26	32.5
	21-25 years	19	23.8
	26-30 years	12	15.0
	Over 31 Years	14	17.5
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The major occupation of the respondent n=91</b>	Farmer/ peasant	38	41.7
	Casual labourer	8	8.8
	Employed	9	9.8
	Trading	12	13.1
	Student	16	17.5
	House Wife	6	6.6
	Pastoral work	2	2.2
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Age category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The age distribution of the respondents n=79</b>	18-28 Years	13	16.5
	29-38 Years	50	63.3
	39-48 Years	13	16.5
	Over 59 Years old	3	3.8
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Education level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>The highest education level of the respondent n=83</b>	None	19	19.6
	Primary	47	48.5
	Secondary	26	26.8
	Tertiary College	4	4.1
	University	1	1.0

The findings indicate that the literacy level in Kawiru community is quite low. A good number of residents have basic education and as observed in this study, there are a significant number of young people who do not go to school.

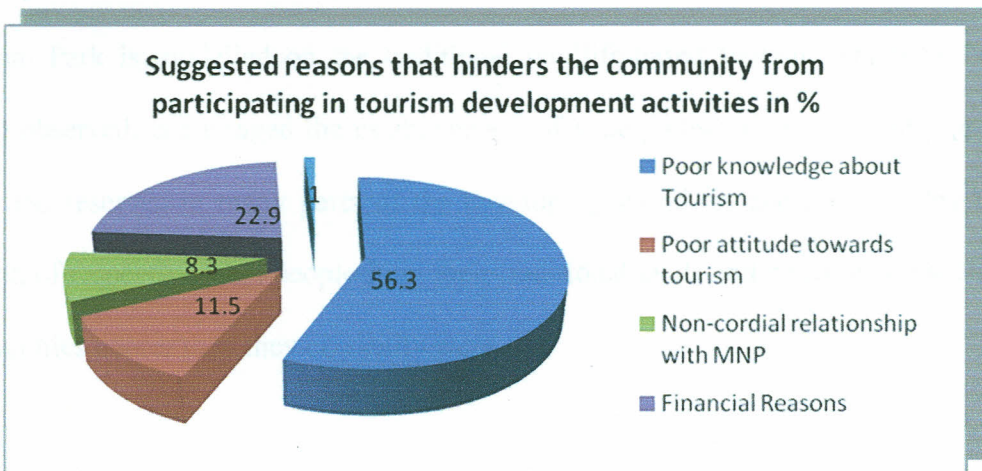
From the demographic data, the study further observed that a small number of residents aged fifty and above had no formal education. Among the original inhabitants who own land, though legally allocated the piece of land which they occupy, the study noted that people were never given title deeds to prove land ownership. As pointed out by the park officials, before the establishment of Meru National Park through a gazette notice in 1968, wild animals used to roam in the area freely without any form of control and the locals too used to graze and move about freely in the resource rich area which is now designated and protected as Meru National Park.

According to Ashley and Godwin, (2001) tenure over land is an important factor which can give people control over their land and power to negotiate and secure benefits from tourism. Without a proper tenure, people may be limited in the extent to which they can put their land to good use. Tenure may be over land, wildlife or other tourism assets but with tenure goes rights of exclusion so that access can be charged for.

#### **4.2 Impediments to Local community Participation in Tourism Development in the MNP.**

The study sought to investigate the reasons the residents of Kawiru do not play an active part in tourism development in Meru National Park despite the fact that they are key stakeholders. From the results of the study, the researcher noted various challenges ranging from ignorance to attitudinal issues as the major impediments. Figure 3 gives a summary of the responses.

Notably, poor knowledge on how tourism works ranked highest accounting for 56% of the respondents. Financial constraints which impede locals from investing in tourism enterprises had 22% while negative attitude towards tourism and non-cordial relationship with the park accounted for 12% and 8% respectively. Those who do not participate because they have never experienced any benefit from the park accounted for 1% of the respondents. Respondents who reported that they had visited the national park (5.52\_+ 3.30) were more likely to believe that tourism is beneficial to the community than those who have never (4.24\_+ 2.54) hence; ignorance was noted as a contributory factor.



**Fig 3.** A Pie chart display of reasons that hinder Kawiru community participation in tourism.

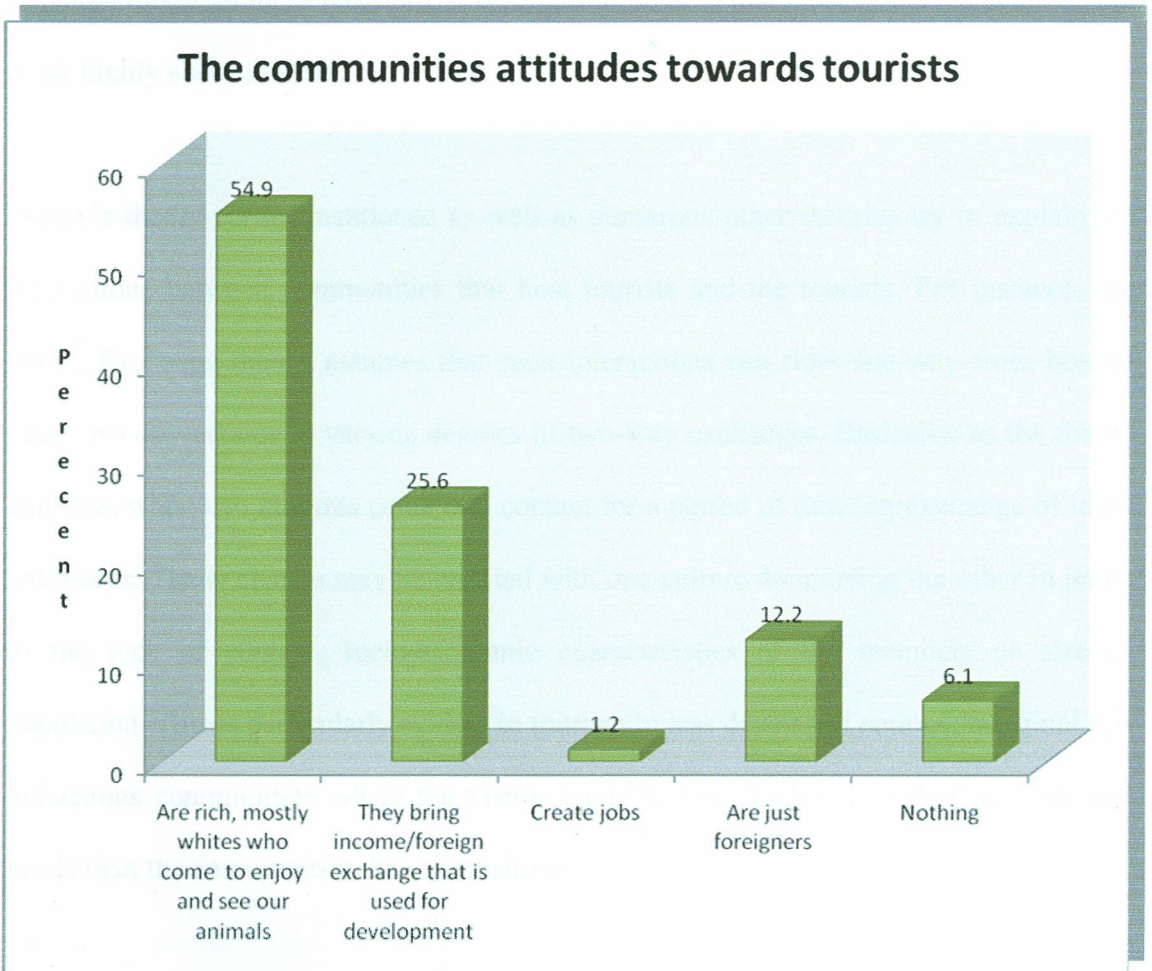
Apparent from the responses captured is that whereas some members of the community have a feeling that tourism is a government activity not meant for locals, most of the residents 53.8% perceive tourism to be a sophisticated venture way beyond their comprehension. After controlling for gender, the Kappa coefficients ranged from 0.70 to 0.754 ( $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that the two items were closely correlated in this study.

Hence, one of the ways through which the locals can be empowered to take an active role in tourism development is to demystify tourism and equip them with the necessary knowledge on how tourism works while creating awareness on the available opportunities which they can seize for individual and communal benefit.

The MNP officials interviewed concur that the local residents have not effectively been involved in the planning, running or management of the park besides the fact that they are key stakeholders. This in their view has been occasioned by lack of clear policies aimed at engaging the local community on the part of the government and the challenges of illiteracy and lack of community organisation on the part of the local residents. Meru National Park is modelled on the traditional wildlife-based tourism which as Nelson (2004) observed, encouraged the establishment of state-protected areas, mainly national parks and reserves in many parts of the developing world an exercise that led to the eviction of respective local people from their traditional lands and hence made such rural communities poorer than they originally were.

### 4.3 Kawiru people's attitudes and expectations as stakeholders in Meru National Park.

It is argued that without the support of all stakeholders, tourism would not be successful in the long term. In order to gauge the residents attitudes, a question was posed to find out what members of the community think about tourists who visit Meru National Park and why. The results are shown in figure 4.



**Figure 4** A graph representing what Kawiru residents think about tourists to MNP.

On this, there were mixed reactions. Just over 55% of the residents interviewed thought that tourists are moneyed individuals, mostly whites who come to the country to see wild animals and enjoy themselves. Another 26%, mostly young people think positively about tourist and regard them as people who bring income/foreign exchange that is used for development, while 12% think tourists are from abroad. Also, 1% of the residents think that tourists help in creating jobs. Varied as these reactions may be, they are important in that they help us to know what the locals think about tourists who pass through their neighbourhood. In these reactions, it is important to note that most of the residents do not think highly about tourists.

Doxey's theory earlier mentioned as well as numerous other theories try to explain the interactions between communities that host tourists and the tourists. For instance, the Social Exchange theory assumes that such interactions can flow one-way from host to guest or vice versa or in varying degrees of two-way exchanges. Basically, as the theory explains, when two cultures come into contact for a period of time, an exchange of ideas will occur. The exchange may be unequal with one culture dominating the other in terms of the type of contact, socio-economic characteristics of the members or size of population. This is particularly evident in tourism to less developed nations, marginal and indigenous communities where the visitor tends to have higher education and income levels than the communities they are visiting.

Such inequalities can be used in a constructive way to develop a community. However, without sufficient understanding or planning it is unlikely as the group with the greater

power tends to dominate be that consciously or unconsciously. This may result in acculturation, which refers to the process of acquiring or modifying a certain culture for the benefit of the tourist demand.

Acculturation occurs where one culture (the less dominant) starts to take on elements of the other culture as a result of their exchange. Examples of such which may easily affect the residents of Kawiru community include:

- Changing components of traditional dance to meet the tourists schedule, budget, and photography needs,
- Allowing people and cameras into sacred shrines or
- Wearing formal traditional dress on regular basis to please tourists.

Related to acculturation is what is known as the 'demonstration effect' where indigenous and rural communities and cultures imitate or desire to imbibe the habits, mannerisms and other aspects of the behaviour that they have observed in visiting tourists through demonstration and interaction Hall (2000). In Kawiru community, though not very pronounced, there is some traces of the demonstration effect found among the young people who as the researcher in this study noticed desire to dress, live and talk like the tourists they see.

The local consequences of tourism however, vary from place to place. In small communities, particularly those that cater to international tourists of a different race, ethnicity and language from the residents e.g. Kawiru community, tourists may be more

immediately recognized. Similarly, the same increment of tourism may have more far-reaching consequences in such a community that is new to tourism than in a large, urban area or resort with a long history of tourism involvement. The fact that the residents of Kawiru community are not able to understand how tourism works and how they can get involved, and the fact that the locals do not derive any direct benefit from tourism could help to explain the negative attitude that the community has about tourists in general.

The fact that not all residents of destination areas are true or willing hosts and that tourism does not impact all members of a community equally as noted in a study done by Kiss (2004) could explain the different views residents of Kawiru have about tourism.

The experience of Kawiru community further supports the findings of a study done by Gakahu (2008) where it was observed that grassroots involvement of local communities in conventional tourism has been minimal in the developing world and has been mainly confined to peripheral activities like the supply of goods and services, sale of handicrafts and traditional dance entertainment. However, not even the minimum involvement he mentions is evident in Kawiru community.

Interestingly, while conducting this research, unlike in other places that border tourist routes e.g. Namanga border or Maasai Mara National Reserve, the researcher did not witness any active interaction between tourists and the locals nor notice any evidence of entrepreneurship targeting tourists who pass through Kawiru. As one drives down the road from Maili Saba all the way to the Murera gate of Meru National Park, a main tourist road which cuts through Miraa plantations and right in the middle of Kawiru

community, one easily notices small groups of men both young and old seated on the roadside chewing or trading in 'Miraa' (a local stimulant grown in the area) with little attention paid to tourists who pass through that road. On such a road and especially around the park entrance, in a tourism oriented community one would expect to find at least some form of tourist targeted entrepreneurship e.g. curio shops, cultural bomas or guided tours to Miraa farms showcased as a local tourism product.



**Plate 1.** A Miraa plant growing in Kawiru Area. Source: *(Researcher)*



**Plate 2.** A youngster preparing Miraa for sale. Source: *(Researcher)*



**Plate 3.** A truck transporting Miraa for sale from Kawiru to Nairobi. Source: *(Researcher)*

The Park has a resident education officer who tries to educate the community on various aspects of wildlife and conservation issues. This he does through seminars, school visits

and other outreach programs. However, the education officer feels that other than the students, local area residents have certain attitudes which impede MNPs initiatives to engage the masses. Such attitudes include expectations that;

- The locals should be allowed free access to the park.
- Some area residents still regard animals as food and as a menace to their crops while others feel it would have been much better to let humans occupy the land – (so endowed with 14 rivers), than hive off that good part of their ancestral land for conservation of ‘mere’ wild animals.
- There are those who struggle to understand why the government wastes funds on wild animals while the community is deprived of some basic amenities which could help them to live a more decent life.

The high levels of ignorance and illiteracy in the community remains a big challenge that the administrators of Meru National Park face in engaging the locals. Apparently education is not highly esteemed and most of the elder members of the community have never received any formal education.

The number of school children who run away from school to be employed in farms to pluck Miraa for sale on a daily basis is alarming. Hence, for the locals to understand what MNP is about and to understand that the park is not the property of ‘Wazungus’ is an uphill task. They see no need of protecting animals and trees which they regard as their sources of income. As the Park’s Finance Administrator says, “it is very difficult to explain to the locals that they need to participate to get the returns. The area is arid and vast and greatly marginalised in the distribution of national resources. Evidently, many

people in the local community have lived in the village their entire lives and never been to school.

The challenge of illiteracy and language barrier is a big obstacle to initiation of meaningful programmes that could help the locals. The Park's education officer further explains that some community members are hostile and feel enraged by exclusion from the wildlife protected area. The poverty level as he notes is very high in the area. Additionally, there is also a cultural threat where members of the community e.g. the Njuri Nceke warriors hunt the Colobus monkeys for their skin which they adorn as a robe or head gear during communal ceremonies.

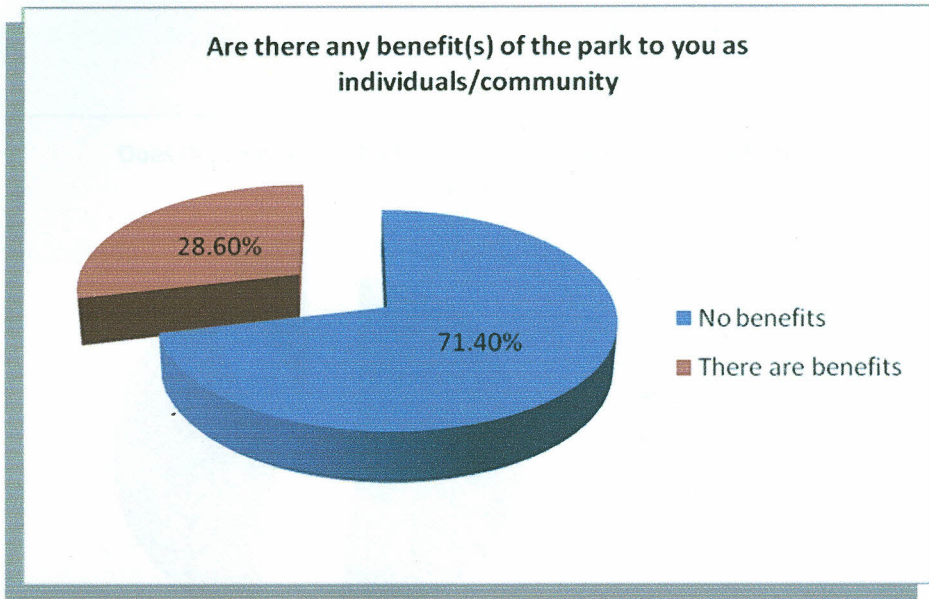


**Plate 4.** A Colobus Monkey in Meru National Park. *The monkey is hunted for its skin which is used to make dance costumes, hats and capes.*

#### **4.4 Contribution Made by Meru National Park Towards Improvement of the Welfare of the Residents of Kawiru community.**

In order to get the view of the residents on the above subject, the researcher posed some lead questions. Asked whether they see any benefit that MNP brings to them as individuals or as a community, the responses were greatly dispersed with majority of respondents 71% indicating that they do not see any benefit. However, of the young respondents, it was noted that some talked of hypothetical benefits e.g. tourism brings in foreign exchange while 11% of the respondents revealed that the presence of Meru National Park has caused the government to tarmac Kinna road which flows from Maili Saba all the way to Kinna gate of MNP.

Noted also was the response from a number of residents who seemed to appreciate that the electric fence erected around the park has greatly helped to contain the wild animals and reduce the human-wildlife conflicts which previously were quite prevalent. There was 1% of the respondents who acknowledged that MNP had initiated a borehole in the community and 29% who thought that the impact of the benefits MNP had extended to the community in all the years of its existence (if any) were yet to be felt.



**Figure 5** A Pie Chart displaying a general picture of the community response.

On the question posed to establish whether members of the community had any complaints towards Meru National Park, a number of the respondents seemed quite indifferent to this question. For them, they understood the park to be the government and as with the government, it did not matter to them whether they had complaints or not because the government as put by one of the respondents, “always dictates what needs to be done.” However, there are those who had complaints about the MNP’s disregard for them in relation to the animals arguing that wild animals threaten human life and property and whenever human-wildlife conflicts occur, there is either no compensation given for the loss suffered or when given it is given too little often times too late. While some were of that opinion, there are others who thought that MNP had taken away their grazing land hence pushing them to the marginal areas while others complained that the Park does not give a special consideration to the locals in job opportunities.

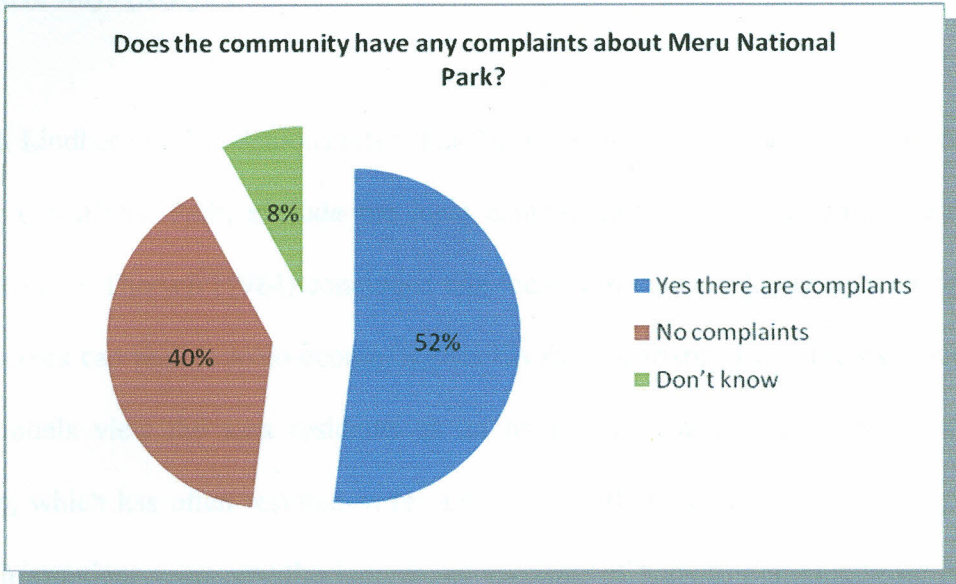


Figure 6 A Chart Showing the Number of Kawiru Resident's with complaints about MNP.

Table 5. Reasons why Kawiru Residents Complain about MNP

Suggest reasons why the community around Meru National park complain about it n=92	Suggested reasons	Frequency	%
	Wildlife destroys property and kills people and compensation is not given or too little	28	30.4
	Locals are not employed in the park	12	13.0
	It has taken away their land, and they don't benefit from it	23	25.0
	Park entrance fee too high	11	11.9
	The park has not done any project for the community.	14	15.2
	Don't know	4	4.3

These responses though varied are significant in that the kind of tourism envisaged in the new Kenya National Tourism Policy document and amplified in the Kenya Vision 2030 document emphasizes tourism which brings benefit to the local communities and part of those benefits are to be seen in job opportunities offered to the area residents as well as

pulling back part of the returns generated to develop the local community through innovative ways (Kenya Government, 2004).

Though Lindberg (1991) demonstrated that the wilderness models of protected areas e.g. the Meru National Park, exclude the local communities from direct participation, the study done by Thorsell (1984) concluded that local communities living adjacent to parks and reserves can realize socio-economic benefits from tourism. Lindberg explained that such models view the area residents as an impediment to effective conservation of wildlife, which has often resulted in resource-use conflicts. It is that school of thought which in previous years saw the indigenous residents of Kawiru community be forcibly removed from the protected area of Meru National Park which was originally part of their ancestral land – an experience which triggers bitter memories among the senior residents of Kawiru.

The result of such action as was noted by Western (1992) has been deliberate destruction of wildlife. And as the management of MNP admits, though today the park enjoys an improved relationship with the local residents; that has previously not been the case. As the education officer explained, in the years past, the relationship was non-cordial and was characterised by instances of villagers trapping and killing wild animals for food and cutting down trees in the park for charcoal burning. Before the park got fenced, there were many instances of residents grazing their livestock inside the park. The rangers in those days used to force villagers out of the park and drive their animals away by force. Migot-Adholla (1989) argued that the involvement of local population is a tool of

progressive sustainable development as it solicits support for environmental conservation and minimizes local conflicts.

In an effort to help the local communities appreciate and take part in tourism development in MNP, the park management is trying to sensitize the local administrators, religious leaders, school heads and the other interest groups within the neighbouring communities on what the park has and does. As a gesture of goodwill, the park in the last ten years has extended some benefits to the local community such as stocking of dispensaries with drugs and employing a nurse e.g. at Kinna health centre, equipping existing schools in the neighbourhood with desks and books as has happened at Kathithine and Ura primary schools, drilled boreholes and sponsored some students. Though this looks more like tokenism or giving of handouts, the park wishes to engage and collaborate with the community in a more participatory approach.

A key benefit brought about by the park to the community is the upgrading of Maili Saba - Murera gate road to an all weather road which links the park to Maua and Meru towns. Through this road, the area residents are now able to ferry their farm produce (especially Miraa) to the market without any problem. The presence of the park in Kawiru community has also boosted telecommunication in that the major phone companies have put up communication equipments which have given the area good network coverage.

The management feels that today MNP has a better relationship with the local community than before which they attribute to enlightenment and the Park's efforts to reach out to

the community. However, most of the community is still ignorant in matters concerning wildlife conservation and tourism.

As illustrated in the conceptual framework of this study, the significance of fostering positive links between the local community, natural resources or biodiversity, and tourism cannot be ignored in any sustainable approach to tourism. The strength or weakness of any one link has implications for other links. And as the author asserts, if local communities are involved in the decision-making process, they will have a greater incentive to make sure that the environmental and socio-cultural impacts are better managed. In a symbiotic relationship between local populations and resources or biodiversity, local residents act as stewards of the natural resources and, in return, they benefit through sustainable harvesting and protection of important resources (Ross and Wall, 1999).

#### **4.5 What the Residents of Kawiru Community Think Should be Done to Help them Derive Benefit from Tourism Development in Meru National Park.**

The study tried to find out from the residents of Kawiru community what they think needs to be done to make them derive benefit from the Park. From the findings, community members expressed that the park management should consider the locals in employment opportunities that arise in the park and that the Kenya Wildlife Service should initiate education campaigns to sensitize the community on the benefits of tourism and conservation.

Some among the residents were of the view that the government and non-governmental organizations in collaboration with the KWS should work together and help the locals to form self-help groups with a view to initiating projects that will empower them to benefit from tourism. Projects envisaged include; fish ponds, curio stalls, lodges among others. Added to this were suggestions that the local leadership should think of building cultural centres around the park to showcase the Ameru culture in return for tourism earnings as well as build community owned shopping malls at centres like Murera and Kiutine for supplies to tourists and tourist centres inside the park as there is no such facility nearby.

To encourage the locals to visit the park, the responses given suggest that MNP should consider giving special rates to the locals and also organize free trips for schools and other organized groups in the community. Table 6 below displays a summary of the responses.

**Table 6.** Action needed to make MNP to be of benefit to Kawiru Community.

What can be done and by who so that residents benefit	Frequency	%
N=69 GoK/KWS to employ locals in the park	16	23.2
KWS to sensitize the community on the benefits of park and tourism	23	33.3
GoK/KWS to improve infrastructure	4	5.8
Help the locals to form self-help groups to do projects that can tap money from tourism e.g. lodges, fish ponds	7	10.1
GoK to Construct cultural centres for the Meru culture	9	13.0
KWS to Reduce park entrance fee	2	2.9
Government to build supermarkets & hotels at Murera & Kiutine	3	4.3
Don't know	5	7.2

The Kenya National Tourism Policy, 2008 acknowledges that the local people need to take a pro-active role in tourism development and advocates for a different approach to conservation and tourism. Similarly, the Kenya Wildlife Service in a wildlife utilisation study report, (1996) notes that local communities should be allowed to benefit from local wildlife resources rather than just bearing the cost of damage by wildlife to crops, pastures, water resources, fences and threats to human life.

The fundamental aspects of local communities' rights and capacities to handle tourism development remain a big challenge for the developing world. Wishitemi, (2008) argues that local leaders should be informed about the potential for community involvement in

enterprises and the various approaches to community involvement in tourism so that they can use their collective bargaining power to good effect. In addition, local communities should have legal entitlement to benefits from ventures operating in their areas. Revenue from operators and concessions in communal areas should accrue to local communities.

The notion that tourism is a complex venture best suited to foreigners and the belief that the only role the locals can play is to watch from the sidelines is indeed a widespread, misconception which needs to be corrected through aggressive tourism education campaigns targeting the local community. This education could be carried out by the government and non-governmental agencies as well as other stakeholders interested in uplifting the welfare of the local community. Such an undertaking is well in line with the aspirations of the Kenya Government's Vision 2030 which mentions tourism as one of the six economic pillars for a globally competitive and prosperous Kenya.

As earlier noted in a study that was done by Mogelgaard (2003), Community Based Tourism Enterprises are the way to go in empowering local communities and a sure way of helping Kawiru community residents derive benefit from tourism is to organise and empower them to begin various CBTEs. CBTEs work on the premise that in order for conservation and tourism development projects to succeed, local communities must be active participants and direct beneficiaries. Local communities as observed by Nelson (2004) are core to the development of tourism.

Though not being offered here as an ideal success story, local residents bordering MNP can draw from the Northern Rangelands Trust in Northern Kenya, a practical example of how community organisation can help a community derive benefit from tourism activity. MNP on its part and in its efforts to reach out to the local communities can take initiative by organising activities and events which could foster interaction between the Park and the local communities. Such events could create avenues and forums where appropriate education to empower the locals and challenge them to play an active role in tourism development could be disseminated. Well conceived tourism adopts a participatory approach and allows for a greater focus on extending the benefits to the area residents.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the research findings. Based on the data generated from the study, appropriate conclusions and recommendations were made.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Findings

Meru National Park is vast. Its acreage spurns a large geographical area which borders a number of communities on different sides of the Park. Owing to the vastness of the Park, logistical challenges and the amount of resources that would have been required to sample all the communities, the researcher chose to focus this study on Kawiru community, for the reason that the main route that leads to MNP cuts through Kawiru. However, the experience of Kawiru people as outlined in this study may help to shed light on the experience of other communities living around Meru National Park in different directions.

In conducting this study, the researcher focussed on local people's households as the sampling units and applied key informant interviews, observation and use of questionnaires as the research instruments. Results gathered establish a number of factors that hinder residents of Kawiru community from taking an active role in tourism development in Meru National Park.

### **5.2.1 Current Tourism Practice is not Sustainable.**

For Meru National Park to be sustainable, involvement of local communities as key stakeholders in its conservation and tourism agenda is no longer an option but a pre-requisite. Study evidence has demonstrated that pursuing wildlife conservation in protected areas without the involvement of the local community is an exercise that is doomed to fail and that no conservation initiative can succeed without community support and involvement Okello *et al.* (2003). It is in this background that the World Tourism Organization (1999) reported that some national governments around the world are encouraging increased community involvement in the tourism sector.

For tourism to succeed today it must be sustainable economically, socially and environmentally and to be sustainable, it must be carefully planned and managed, taking account of different factors. Therefore, as this researcher humbly submits, the involvement of the local communities in tourism development is a giant step towards sustainable tourism development in Kenya.

### **5.2.2 Local Community Needs to Be Mobilized to Take Part in Tourism**

The evident need for a more aggressive approach to engage the local communities in tourism through Community Based Tourism Enterprises is acknowledged by the Kenya Government in the National Tourism Policy (Kenya Government, 2004) NTP recognises the potential of CBTEs as an avenue through which the involvement of local communities in tourism development can be enhanced. Hence, the government encourages formation of CBTEs to improve indigenous ownership of tourism resources

that will consequently lead to the sustainability of the industry. Similarly, as reported in this study, several international organisations, e.g. the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), are turning to tourism and specifically community-based tourism as a way of involving local communities in economic development. The study postulates that collaborative efforts from the government and non-government actors are needed to help Kawiru community residents play an active role and derive benefit from tourism activity around Meru National Park.

It is refreshing to note that there is an emerging local group aided by some NGOs going by the name Kiamwerano Ameru Cultural group which is building a traditional village to package and sell certain aspects of the Ameru culture. Such initiatives need to be encouraged and boosted and more initiated to help the locals take an active part in tourism development.

### **5.2.3 Need For Tourism Awareness Campaigns, Community Organization and Mobilization.**

The researcher in this study noted that there is willingness on the part of MNP managers to involve the local community in tourism development. This is in consideration of the need for bringing on board all key stakeholders. However, much as this fact is appreciated, there are monumental challenges to be overcome in order to achieve this goal especially when dealing with amorphous interest groups hence a need for a proper stakeholder analysis and a collaborative effort from government and non-governmental agencies to bring all on board in a sustainable tourism approach.

For local people to benefit from tourism development in their neighbourhood there is great need for aggressive awareness campaigns to educate the community on the importance of tourism as a viable economic option at the local level. There is also need to mobilise and organise the community into groups through which various CTEs can be formed. Such groups can serve as vehicles for mobilising members and channelling tourism benefits to the community. Communities that today receive benefits from tourism have organised themselves into group organisations, conservancies or trust lands. e.g. communities comprising the group conservancies in the Northern Rangelands Trust in Northern Kenya; examples being the Il Ngwesi and Namunyak groups or community tourism groups around Maasai Mara and Transmara areas.

#### **5.2.4 Lack of Legislation to Safeguard and Protect Community Land from Exploiters**

A key challenge noted in this study which could make it difficult to organise the locals in Kawiru at the community level is the fact that land around the park is individual and not community owned as is the case in the two examples given above. The land has been divided into small portions which are allocated to individuals with individual rights to use their land as they please. Consequently, a number of residents in some prime areas around the Park, and totally ignorant about the tourism potential of their land, have subdivided and sold their parcels of land to investors. Being a marginal and economically marginalised area, land in Kawiru is disposed off at unbelievably low market prices. Investors and prospectors with a keen tourism eye have bought off the land and put up some impressive tourist facilities like tourist lodges, Bandas and camps to catch in on the

expected boom following the recent re-branding and aggressive marketing of MNP by the Kenya Wildlife Service.

In view of this situation, the study recommends that the government of Kenya in collaboration with key stakeholders should come up appropriate legislation aimed at protecting the interests of the local community from foreign entrepreneurs who take advantage of the ignorance and lack of knowledge of the local community about tourism to coerce individual members to dispose their land at throw away prices. Through the local administrators and area representatives, the government has the capacity to safeguard the interests of the local community. In collaboration with the non-governmental organisations, the government should advice, support and encourage members of Kawiru community at the individual and community level to initiate appropriate CBTEs that will help them participate and derive benefit from tourism activity around Meru National Park. In so doing, the Kenya Government as envisaged in the National Tourism Policy will have helped the local residents of Kawiru to improve indigenous ownership of tourism resources and consequently the sustainability of tourism to MNP.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The overall objective of this study was to establish factors hindering the residents of Kawiru community from playing an active role in tourism development in Meru National Park with the aim of generating knowledge that could encourage local community participation in tourism development. From the findings of this study, it can be concluded

that the main reason why Kawiru community residents are not actively engaged in tourism is because they have little understanding of the industry and that the government as well as the other key stakeholders have taken little or no initiative to empower the local people to understand, participate and derive benefit from tourism. The study opines that much as there are big challenges like ignorance and illiteracy, the locals could gain much more if they were enlightened through appropriate knowledge on the benefits of tourism and the role that they could play in reaping these benefits. As the study found out, the locals in Kawiru community are ignorant of the potential of tourism activity in uplifting local community livelihood and seem to regard Miraa farming which is the predominant agricultural activity in the area as the only worthwhile venture. Hence the conclusion that local people do not participate in tourism development because they are not aware of its economic potential or are not trained to make use of opportunities that tourism development presents.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice.**

Based on the findings, this study recommends the following:

- i. Through a collaborative effort by the government and non-governmental actors the local community member's first need to be sensitized on the inherent benefits of conservation and tourism, then organised and facilitated accordingly to take an active role in tourism development. Some possible projects suggested based on the findings of this study can be initiated at the community level to extend tourism benefit to the area residents include;

⇒ Building of Ameru cultural centres and packaging them creatively as tourist products for sale to tourists visiting MNP. This can greatly add value to the Meru tourism experience and generate employment and revenue for the community.

Initiate bee-keeping projects to supply honey to numerous lodges and camp sites found within the park. The area is rich and endowed with natural habitats that can support this venture and generate income for the locals.

⇒ Crocodile farming is another venture than can bring much benefit and good returns. The 14 rivers including river Tana which traverses the Park could be good breeding grounds.

⇒ Through collaboration with the government e.g. through the CDF kitty and other funding agencies, the area residents can build community accommodation facilities around the park to complement the limited accommodation especially for tour drivers within the park. With proper funding, they could also make necessary arrangements to build a proper lodge inside the park and use it as a revenue base as is the case in Il Ngwesi within the Samburu area.

Sustainable tourism necessarily involves a challenge to develop quality tourism products without adversely affecting the natural and cultural environment that maintains and nurtures them.

ii. To change the attitude of the community towards tourism, there is a need for awareness campaigns from the government and non government actors to help the community understand and appreciate tourism as an important economic activity. This campaign should also help the community understand the tourism potential of their land and be advised on how to protect and make better use of their land than sell to land prospectors who are currently buying from them at rock bottom prices and selling to tourism entrepreneurs at exorbitant prices taking advantage of the ignorance of the local people.

- iii. The need for MNP management to come up with a clear policy for active engagement of the local community as stakeholders in the conservation and tourism agenda of the Park cannot be over-emphasized. Such policy needs to particularly target the young people, community groups and enterprising professionals.

For further research it is recommended that:

- A comparative study could be conducted around other protected tourist areas in Kenya to determine the extent to which other tourist destinations have incorporated the local communities in their tourism agenda. Knowledge obtained could be used to develop some guidelines or a national policy for sustainable tourism which can help communities living around tourism protected areas to take a pro-active role and derive benefit from tourism development as custodians of tourism resources.

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**APPENDIX I**

**Introduction Letter**

September, 2010

Kenyatta University,  
Department of Hospitality & Tourism Management  
P.O. Box 43844  
Nairobi.

Hello Sir/Madam,

I am, a Postgraduate student at Kenyatta University, registered for an Msc degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. As part of the requirements for this course, I have been authorised to conduct research for my thesis whose title is, "*Factors Hindering Kawiru Community Participation in Tourism Development in Meru National Park.*" I kindly request your consent and cooperation in answering this questionnaire. All the questionnaires have been designed for the purpose of collecting information related to the above mentioned research topic. Please give your honest answer to all the questions. All information provided will be treated confidentially and for educational purposes only.

Thank you for your Cooperation.

Yours Sincerely,

Paul M. Muthuri.

**Researcher.**

**APPENDIX II**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

No .....

You are kindly requested to complete the questionnaire indicating your honest response by placing a tick (✓) against your option or by filling in the blanks ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

**Personal Information**

1. District \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_  
Location \_\_\_\_\_ Village \_\_\_\_\_

2. How many years have you lived in this community? **A** 1-5 **B**. 6-10 **C**. 11-15  
**D**. 16-20 **E** Over 20 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Gender male [  ] Female [  ]

4. Age: **A**. 18 – 28 **B**. 29 - 38 **C**. 39 – 49 **D**. 50 – 60 **E**. Over 60 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Occupation.....

6. Level of education: **A**. Polytechnic **B**. University/College **C** Secondary **D**. Primary  
**E**.other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview Questions**

a. What reasons prevent members of this community from participating in tourism development in this area?

*Poor knowledge about Tourism* [  ] *Negative attitude towards tourists* [  ]

*Bad relationship with the Park* [  ] *Financial Reasons* [  ]

Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Do you see any benefit as an individual or as a community that Meru National Park brings as a protected area for conservation and tourism? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_ [if yes explain]

c. What do members of your community think about tourists who visit Meru National Park and why?

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d. What do you think should be done and by who to make residents of this area derive benefit from tourists who visit the park?

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e. What role do you think you could play given the chance to participate in tourism in your area?

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f. Do members of this community have any complaints about Meru National Park?  
Yes/No [if yes explain]

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g. Have you ever visited Meru National Park? Yes/No \_\_\_\_\_ If Yes, When? / If No, Why?

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*Thank you very much.*

**APPENDIX III**

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR KWS, MERU N. PARK OFFICERS**

1. When and how did this Park come into existence?
2. What role do you play in helping the neighbouring communities participate in tourism development?
3. Are there any tourism benefits that have been extended to Kawiru community in the last ten years?
4. What is the attitude of local communities towards wildlife conservation and tourism?
5. How does your park relate with the local community?
6. What are the problems/challenges faced when dealing with the local people in this area?
7. Do you feel that tourism is benefitting locals in this area? If yes, in what way/If no, why and what should be done?
8. In what way do you think the local community could participate in tourism development?
9. What arrangements/plans/issues need to be addressed to make this Park benefit the local people?
10. Do you have any policy that guides MNP's relationship with the local communities?  
(If yes, explain)

*Thank you very much.*

APPENDIX IV

Research Authorization Letter



**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [kubps@yahoo.com](mailto:kubps@yahoo.com)  
[dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)  
Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 8710901 Ext 57510

Our Ref: T129/12151/2009

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2010

The Permanent Secretary,  
Ministry of Higher Education, Science & Technology,  
P.O. Box 30010,  
**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR PAUL MWENDA MUTHURI  
REG.NO.T129/12151/2009**

I write to introduce Paul Mwenda Muthuri who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for a M.Sc degree programme in the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management in the School of Hospitality and Tourism. Mrs. Muthuri intends to conduct research for a Thesis proposal entitled "Factors Hindering Kawiru Community Participation in Tourism Development in Meru National Park".

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN M. ODONGI  
FOR DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

JMC/rm

APPENDIX V

## UNWTO Community Actions for a Local Agenda 21

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The need for greater participation of the local community in the preparation of a 'local' Agenda 21 cannot be emphasized enough. A key inducer to this greater participation is the formation of community organizations (variously also called citizens groups, people's organizations, etc.) so that the collective opinion of the community can be voiced. This participation of the community organization is critical for various reasons:

▪ **Representation**

*Urge, on the behalf of local communities, for the right to greater participation in planning and decision-making processes*

▪ **Participation**

*Emphasize to local people that expressing their views on developments, ideas and changes that affect quality of life is an important part of active citizen's participation.*

▪ **Awareness-building**

*Encourage local people to brainstorm about problem definitions, alternatives and possible changes and how they will affect their communities*

▪ **Assistance**

*Help local people to identify the real issues which are likely to cause most concern and may have a negative impact.*

▪ **Advocacy**

*Highlight local concerns and insist on the right of participation when decisions affecting the future of communities are being taken*

▪ **Networking**

Build links, partnerships, associations and exchanges with other local groups so that they have a more effective say and control over local and global issues.

APPENDIX VI

A Map of Kenya's National Parks & Reserves



## APPENDIX VII

### KWS Meru National Park Fact Sheet

# FACT SHEET



## MERU NATIONAL PARK

*'Complete Wilderness'*

#### MERU NATIONAL PARK

P.O. Box P.O. Box 11, Maua - Kenya.  
Tel: Tel: (254-164) 20613 or 0733-662439  
[merupark@kws.go.ke](mailto:merupark@kws.go.ke)

#### KWS RESERVATIONS:

P.O. Box 40241-00100, Nairobi, Kenya.  
Tel: + 254 (20) 600800, 602345  
Fax: + 254 (20) 607024  
E-mail: [reservations@kws.go.ke](mailto:reservations@kws.go.ke)  
[www.kws.go.ke](http://www.kws.go.ke)

#### ACCESS:

#### Roads:

Access from Nairobi (348 kms) is via Nyeri-Nanyuki-Meru or via Embu all weather roads. Access into the park from Maua to Murera Gate (35 km) and 348 km from Nairobi. The other access is via Embu to Ura Gate (120 km), 290 km from Nairobi- inaccessible at the moment

#### Airstrips:

Main airstrip at Kina, Mulika next to Meru Mulika Lodge and Elsa's Kopje airstrip

#### SIZE / LOCATION:

- 870 km<sup>2</sup>
- East-north-east of Mount Kenya in Meru District of Eastern Province,

#### CLIMATE:

- Parks are part of Semi-arid zone and have irregular rainfalls. Wet seasons are April- June and November- December. Rainfall is 635-762mm in the west and 305-356mm in the east

#### SAFARI CARD REQUIRED?

At present the park does not operate the Safari Card system. Entry is by cash only.

#### MAJOR ATTRACTIONS:

- Former home of Joy and George Adamson and Elsa the lioness.
- Views of Mt Kenya,
- Rivers and riverine habitats,
- Tana river
- Adamson's falls.

#### WILDLIFE:

- Grevy Zebra, African Elephants, Eland, Bush Pig, Common Waterbuck, Cheetah, Leopard, Reticulated Giraffe, Hippopotamus, Bohor Reedbuck, Hartbeest, Python, Puff Udder, Cobra, Buffalo, more than 300 recorded species of birds

#### BIRDS:

- More than 300 recorded species.

#### VEGETATION:

- Mainly thorny bush land in the North, wooded grasslands in the West and open grassland elsewhere. The park also offer dense riverine forests of Doum and Raffia palm

#### WHERE TO STAY:

##### In - Park Accommodation

- Elsa's Kopje Tented Camp
- Leopard Rock Lodge

##### KWS Self - Catering Accommodation:

- Murera Bandas
- Kina Bandas
- Meru Luxury House

##### Camping Facilities

- Kampi Baridi; Kitanga; Makutano; Rojoweru; Mugunga; Ken Mare and Kanjoo which are special campsites. Bwatherong; which a public campsites.