Forming a local tour guide association:
reflections from the startup process
Introduction

This document is a result of the initiative to start an association for local tour guides in Kisumu County. The main idea behind the association is to create a forum and platform for local tour guides where they can meet, discuss, and develop ecotourism related functions and activities. The initiative is based on the principles of ecotourism, which means that it aims to minimize tourism’s impact on both the socio-cultural and natural environment (UNWTO and UNEP, 2002). It also aims to improve the wellbeing of residents through the creation of sustainable livelihoods and inclusive decision making (Cape Town Declaration, 2002). Further, it aims to create “mindful” tourists (Christie and Mason, 2003, p 4) and enjoyable experiences through meaningful connections with residents (Cape Town Declaration, 2002).

The report is structured around two main parts. The first part explains the need for and benefits of forming an association for local tour guides in Kisumu County. This is summed up in five core values for the association. The second part has a more educative purpose and contains general aspects to consider for local guide groups as well as for governments, NGO’s and other actors and stakeholders in tourism. Inspiration is taken from the ecotourism development process that has taken place in Dunga beach, including community participation, branding, packaging and infrastructure improvement.

It should be noted that the report is written by two PhD students and a tour guide, who have all been engaged in the start-up process of the association. Summing up a process with many actors involved can never be objective, which means that our opinions may not necessarily coincide with every aspiring member’s. The summaries made should therefore be seen as our perceptions of what was said and done. Likewise, every recommendation is influenced by our own assumptions and values.

The authors encourage readers, especially tour guides in Kisumu and tourism officials from both national and local government, to feel free to use this report and its contents in tourism development, as well as to come back to us with comments and reflections.

Gothenburg and Kisumu, May 2015

Helena Kraff and Eva Maria Jernsand, PhD students at Gothenburg University and members of Kisumu Local Interaction Platform (KLIP).
Samuel Owino Jera, tour guide and secretary of DECTTA, Dunga Beach.

Contact information:
helena.kraff@hdk.gu.se
eva.maria.jernsand@handels.gu.se
owinojera96@gmail.com
Part one

A tour guide association - needs, benefits and values

The process of forming an association for local guides in Kisumu County was initiated in March 2015. Tour guides from Dunga Beach, Dunga Hill Camp, Kiboko Bay, Hippo Point, Impala Park, Tich Kouma, Lwagni Beach, Kisumu Port and Kit Mikayi came together during two occasions to discuss the purpose, opportunities and challenges with forming such a group.

Why a tour guide association?
Local guides in Kisumu face many challenges that a guide or a guide group at a single site cannot deal with on their own. During the meetings it came forth that a major obstacle is the absence of a common platform or forum where guides can openly channel and discuss challenges that they face, as well as share experiences and ideas between each other. This lack of a forum means that guides at different sites may be unaware of each other, and thereby they are unable to advise tourists to each other’s sites. Moreover, some of the information given to tourists today is not correct, package prices vary from one point to another, and some guides may not “represent themselves professionally”. This makes the reputation of guides go down in the long run. Another issue is that today, tour operators can come from other places, such as Nairobi, and take tourists to sites within Kisumu County. They may not know the area and may even give out the wrong information on for example local culture. It can also result in that the local boat owners and guides only get a small share for the service they provide, since the tour operator takes the larger share.

The formation of an association could gather guides and guide groups under one umbrella to get to know and learn from each other. It could also give them a voice in relation to government and tour operators, as well as create more direct contact with the tourists. The collaboration would enable internal and external training, for example on awareness of ecology and ecotourism. This would raise the general level of professionalism of guides in Kisumu. Being a bigger group would make it easier to apply for funding for training as well as it could facilitate a learning culture within the group. Also within the association, codes of conducts could be formulated, which all members would need to follow. In the long run, raised professionalism of the members in the association also means that they could empower other people to engage with ecotourism.

It was expressed that the association needs to be developed by the local guides themselves, in a participatory manner. It means that all sites should have a say in terms of what the association should be about. A bottom up type of development creates a sense of ownership as well as it spurs you to drive it forward, if you have been allowed to be a part of its creation. Further, initiating something from the bottom is more sustainable. Of course, in the long run, it is crucial
to partner with other stakeholders, such as the county government, ministry of tourism and tourism related businesses.

**What should the association be about?**

During the first two meetings, the discussions focused a lot on what the association should be about; what values it should rest on. Such aspects are important to put down early in the process when starting any type of organisation. It provides all members with a joint understanding and guidelines for future development. To take the discussion forward, the two exercises *brandfinder* and *brandspider* were used. In a brandfinder, you fill in a table that includes your backgrounds, goals, values and how all this makes your customer feel. Through the brandfinder, it is possible to find lifelines and thereby value words that can be used in the brandspider.

![Image 1: Photo showing the table of the brandfinder](image1.jpg)

![Image 2: Brandspider from workshop exercise](image2.jpg)
The two exercises resulted in the suggestion of five core values. However, it should be noted that core values run the risk of being useless if they are not thought through and if there is no thorough explanation on what they mean for the particular organisation. They should capture the essence or “soul” of the brand and they are meant to remain unchanged for a longer period of time. It is an advantage if there are values that are so distinct that they can be further used for marketing purposes. For example, Volvo cars’ core values are security, quality and environmental care, and they are often well represented in ads and campaigns. They function as guidelines but also as measuring instruments. Another example is Kenya’s police department whose core values are service and integrity. An example from tourism is the Catering and Tourism Development Levy Trustees (CTDLT) in Kenya. Their core values are integrity, equity and fairness, professionalism, collaboration and team spirit, and creativity and innovativeness. However, the risk with having too many core values is that no one will remember them. This non-awareness may result in that they have no function in a wider sense.

The suggested core values and their meanings for the tour guide association emerged during the two workshops and are described and explained as follows:

*Humanity*

The association, and all actions taken in it, should rest on humanistic values. It means that the utmost respect needs to be given to all humans, including all members of the association, tourists (the customer), and the local communities. Further, in the term humanity we also recognise the importance of conducting business with the utmost honesty and integrity. This means that visitors need to be approached and guided by guides who give fair prices and the correct information about the place and what they are seeing.

Respect also needs to be paid towards the association itself, in terms of conducting practice in accordance with the constitution and codes of conducts. It includes being honest with each other and treating every individual with respect. Another important point is equality within the group, for example in terms of equal distribution of resources and training, fair representation of members from the different sites, as well as that all information should be disseminated openly.
The association should rest on democratic principles, meaning that democratic elections and one vote per person is the norm.

Further, it is important to respect each other’s areas. If a guide from one site takes visitors to other sites, agreements on who should guide the tourist should be made in beforehand. The customer’s and the local communities’ interests should guide such agreements. Further, the boundaries of the association need to be respected; guides should cooperate honestly with other local guides if they have visitors that want to travel outside the county borders.

Guides are the link between tourists and local community and respect needs to be paid in both directions. The link to communities can be strengthened in many ways through the association. For example, a goal should be for the members of the association to function as good role models, and to help community members to identify opportunities in ecotourism, especially in terms of youths. Young people should be able to see that being a guide could be a possible future for them and that it is a respectable livelihood. Further, the association could engage in community projects and support certain groups. This also means that the association should be accessible for community members that are interested in becoming guides, as well as it needs to be accessible to all guides in the county. There should be no discrimination of members in terms of colour, gender, religious belief, political beliefs or tribal affiliation. Further, in terms of accessibility the association needs to also put focus on gender inclusion.

In conclusion, humanity includes fair representation, revenue sharing, respect to culture and environment, gender inclusion and any other means favouring humanity and its environment.

**Cooperation**

One of the major aims of the association is to create a platform where local guides can interact with each other in various ways. In order to achieve its objectives, cooperation and collaboration is key. This is closely linked to humanity, one of the other core values, since it is about respect and democracy. An association that is built on the notion of cooperation could be described as a learning network, where members take pride in training each other and of learning from each other, and where sharing knowledge is encouraged. For this specific association it could also mean that focus is put on collaborating through cross-selling, where you recommend your tourists to other sites that you feel they might be interested in.

The aspect of cooperation also needs to stretch beyond the immediate association. For example, for the association to work it needs to be linked to other tourism stakeholders both within the local county government, the national government as well as to private associations. Since the association consists of local guides and many of the touristic services will affect local communities, members of these local communities are also seen as important stakeholders that need to always be included. By being open-minded to new and old acquaintances, the formation of partnerships and linkages can develop.

**Sustainability**

Awareness and knowledge are key aspects of sustainability which can be considered on different levels. First and foremost, it is about building consciousness and knowledge among the tour
guide association. Internal and external training, as well as self-studies on ecology, conservation, ecotourism, community development and the like are crucial in order to build knowledge of subject matter. However, as a tour guide you also need knowledge about the tourists, for example their culture, background, interests and needs, as well as knowledge on how to interact with them.

Tour guides can also build awareness among the communities in which they work. One example of interaction and sharing knowledge of knowledge came up in one of the workshops: when a tour guide sees people harvesting green papyrus instead of the dry ones, he or she can tell them what happens if the green ones are cut; they will not come back and the wetlands will diminish in the long run. Also, if people go too deep into the swampy areas or burn the wetlands they disturb the wildlife. Because of lack of knowledge, people will continue to do what they have always done if no one informs them of better ways.

To create responsible and conscious tourists is one of the main goals of ecotourism. It is about transforming their attitudes and behaviours. An example is when a bus with schoolchildren arrives to Dunga beach. A guide could then enter the bus and tell the children and their teachers that when you have had your lunch, you should put the garbage in the bins and sort them according to the signs. Then, your garbage will turn into new products, for example ropes or jewellery. A sign that littering will be fined reinforces the message.

A responsible tourist may want to contribute to environmental or cultural conservation. An example from Hippo point is when the tour guides decided to plant mangrove trees by the lakeshore to make the birds and otters come back when the papyrus weeds had been improperly cut down. An organization that visited Hippo point thought this was a good initiative which they wanted to encourage, and donated a new boat to the guides. Encouraging mindful tourists to donate money for wildlife, wetland or community development could be a way to conserve and develop in a sustainable way. It could also be possible to sell small locally and sustainably produced products to the tourists, where the profit goes to projects with the aim of environmental or cultural preservation. The products could be made of water hyacinths, whereby the story of the plant’s propagation could be told.

Awareness and knowledge is also relevant to discuss in relation to lobbying and partnerships. A strong association is able to influence environmentally and socio-culturally friendly decisions that can result in improved infrastructure, funding for guide training and similar. The association can become members of other organisations and associations such as Ecotourism Society of Kenya (ESOK) to influence and get influenced by.

A continued discussion on the third pillar of sustainability, economy, is taken up in the following section.

**Professionalism**

All the tour guides at the different sites who participated in the workshops see professionalism as crucial for development of both themselves and the association. One of the greatest challenges is the current lack of training and capacity building. Tour guiding should not be done purely to make an income and the work should not be executed “hakuna matata”. Rather, a tour guide
needs to be disciplined, have a passion, commitment and a willingness to learn new things. Guides also need to have common truthful and verifiable information about culture and ecology, which includes knowledge on local flora and fauna and on local ecology challenges.

In professionalism we also find the issue of how to approach tourists, and in the workshops it was claimed that this must be done in a fair manner. The guides that visitors meet should be presentable, identifiable as guides, sober and act professionally. If there are several guides present at the same site when tourists arrive, only one or two of the guides should approach them, so as to not discourage the visitor. The tourists need to feel that the guide is reliable and trustworthy. Guides should also have uniforms and name tags for easy identification and conformity (see also under Security). They should be well groomed, be able to communicate effectively, have information at finger tips, be honest (e.g. not overcharge), be able to develop itinerary, manage time, educate and entertain the guests. It is about social knowledge, such as empathy, sympathy, ethics and body language, as much as it is about organizing and having knowledge about the site. A way to keep a high professional standard is to develop well-articulated codes of conduct and manuals so that all guides know how to act in different situations. The creation of codes of conduct can be seen as one step towards reaching certification standards. An important task for the association is to decide on what happens if a guide does not act according to the codes. Another task is to strive for regular trainings for all members, as well as to find a possibility to award good guides through for example scholarships and certificates.

Security
It was discussed during the first workshop if security should be a fifth core value. Therefore, it is taken up as such in this document, for continued discussion. Keeping visitors, community members and guides safe is crucial, both in terms of aspects that can be taken care of by the guides themselves by having good skills and knowledge about the area, for example how to deal with possibly dangerous animals, and in terms of safe boats, provision of life jackets etcetera. It is also about that the tourists feel safe with their guide. During the workshops, examples came up on how to deal with security. One way is certification of guides and safety controls of boats so that the tourists know that they meet a certain standard. Another way is the use of guide uniforms. They could be similar to the ones that are used by the guides in Dunga, so that the tourists recognize the t-shirts and refer them to the good service, reliable guides and the safe tour they had at another site. The uniform could also be replaced or complemented by a badge or a pin.

However, there are also things that are out of the direct control of the guides, but which does affect tourism in Kisumu and need to be addressed and discussed by all tourism stakeholders in Kisumu and Kenya. The country faces both internal and external security threats. These are for example issues of terrorism attacks in Kenya, lingering memories of the post-election violence, and Ebola breakouts in other parts of Africa. Negative media reports have made Kenya be seen as a ‘no go zone’ whereas there are some parts of the country which are peaceful and have never experienced a larger security scare. This shows that tourism is sensitive, and even if the guide association cannot control such course of events, it can be discussed within the group, for example on how to talk about it with tourists and other stakeholders. Security can be bolstered by well-informed guides about risky areas hence advice tourists on safe areas to visit.
Part two

What’s next?

This part of the document starts with how the core values can be used for implementation, concerning the startup of the association, strategic planning, capacity-building, pricing, packaging and marketing, a sound gender perspective and codes of conduct. After that, the tourism development process in Dunga is referred to for inspiration and guidance. It includes community participation, branding, infrastructure, packaging, learnings from other sites, and challenges and lessons learned.

Implementation

The core values described in part one now needs to be taken further into the formulation of vision, mission, strategy and codes of conduct, as well as activities such as training and marketing. Core values are to be used as general guidelines for the organisation and the people in it, but they could also shape the direction for setting specific goals such as number of trained guides and trainings per year or number of returning customers. In the following, some of the aspects of implementation that have come forth in the initiating phase are outlined.

Starting the association

A crucial aspect is to get the association up and running. It includes for example association and member registration, and the planning of internal meetings and events. A task force was formed at one of the meetings that brought together all the tour guide groups. Members present agreed to form an association to address the challenges and foster tour guides welfare. Each tour guide group was represented by one member and they were mandated to spearhead the registration, naming and forming the management board. They were also tasked to deliver the objectives of the association. The task force was to elect its officials with gender representation in mind. The association is now registered under Societies act of Kenya.

Strategic planning

Strategy describes how the ends will be achieved by the means. It includes formulation and implementation and it is based on the vision and mission of the organization. When starting an association that has many ideas on what it should be about and propositions on activities, it is easy to go for the easiest ones or the ones that many have interest in. However, to make a plan that specifies only a few specific projects that you want to work on is worth a lot and saves time and energy. A rough plan for approximately three to five years, combined with a more detailed one for the first year could be appropriate. If each expense is linked to an income, it will be easier
to fulfil the plans. Member fees or sponsorships, external funding, or activities that render income are possible ways.

**Capacity-building**

Capacity-building is about strengthening skills, competencies and abilities. Training has come up as a main reason for starting a tour guide association. There are low-cost, instrumental and easy-managed ways to conduct internal training. An example is today used by the guides in Dunga who go bird-watching together on Fridays, as a way to develop their knowledge of birds and wetlands. Similar arrangements could be organized by inviting guides from other sites to your own. This is especially interesting if there are guides or people close to them with particular knowledge of for example crafts, food, history or traditions. It is also a way to get to know each other. Further, reading groups could be arranged around a specific subject.

Another option is external training: either to send apprentices on courses, or to have knowledgeable people coming to do on-site trainings. It is also interesting to discuss how scholarships could be used for training purposes. Another alternative to promote good behaviour and knowledgeable guides is to appoint a guide of the year or awarding remarkably good efforts. Finally, the certification of guides is of course crucial in the long run, however it can be both time-consuming and expensive. A way to start is to conduct practice in accordance with guidelines from certification authorities.

**Pricing**

The issue of standard prices was discussed during the workshops. Some of the guides proposed a fixed price on boat tours, so that the tour operators know what to expect when they arrive to a beach. However, it could be hard to implement since there may always be guides that are not part of the association. Also, specific tours, guides or boats could be valued higher by the customers. Thereby, they may be willing to pay more for better service or experience. Then a fixed price might take away the incentives to aim to give customers an extraordinary experience and excellent service, provide with a better boat, or arranging tours that include other things than boat touring. The members of the association have agreed to set a margin range cost for each activity. From the prices the tour guiding groups or tour guide will be able to adjust depending on the need of the visitor. Special needs by the visitor/tourist will be handled by the tour guide.

**Packaging and marketing**

An alternative or complement to standard prices is diversification through packaging, as well as experience innovation and marketing initiatives. Today, most tours are about boat riding. They could be complemented with for example bird-watching walks, village walks, craft activities, sunrise breakfasts, city tours, or packages that include other sites. Creative tools for developing tours have been used with the Dunga tour guides and could be further developed (for examples, see further in the section about the Dunga process). It should be acknowledged that packaging can be different depending on site.

A suggestion taken up during the workshops was a common website with an event calendar for tourists. A start could be a more internal website for the guides, so that everyone gets an overview of what the objectives with the association are and what is going on. Everyone could
then list events so that the other guides can further the information to the tourists they meet. When the association is up and running, the codes of conduct are followed, and some packaging is done, then the website can be up-scaled, and launched publicly. Another way to take advantage of technology, which is easier to achieve than a website, is the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, blogs etc.).

Marketing can be an expensive activity. In the short perspective, cross-selling is a start, as well as starting partnerships with Ministry of Tourism, County government and other tourism stakeholders. Relationship marketing is a cheap and effective tool, and it is a way to lobby for governmental initiatives such as improved infrastructure. Further, flyers and brochures can be printed and distributed to hotels, restaurants and other tourist sites in Kisumu. Another idea is to invite people from these places for test tours, which they then can advise their guests to go on.

A sound gender perspective
If we see to the current state of the tour-guide occupation in Kenya it is predominantly male. There are many reasons as to why it is important to incorporate a sound gender perspective in the association from the start. For example it could affect tourist perceptions positively. What the tourists experience during a tour reflects how they will perceive the place. This means that if the tourists mainly interact with men during their stay in Kisumu they will miss out on a lot of cultural aspects. To take an example, professor Lena Mossberg highlighted that tourists, especially female tourists, find it interesting to get insight into how women live their lives in Kenya, and that it is rewarding to share experiences woman to woman.

Further, working actively with gender issues in the association should be seen as a step towards creating a sustainable association, as well as it would be part of keeping with the core value of humanity. In order to keep with Kenya’s constitution, and to get access to funding, the association should aim at reaching the quota of one third women in the board. Important to note is that focus needs to be put on making it possible for the women that will be included in the association to be active members, which is a responsibility that rests on each and every member of the association.

Cultural aspects can sometimes be a hindrance to women’s participation in tour guiding, and it is important to keep an open discussion in regards to this. Working with gender equality in the association therefore needs to be linked to empowerment of women. A way to empower could be to organise for awareness and capacity building among women groups, including information on how ecotourism development may affect their lives. It could also include career talks for young women to show them that tour guiding, or working in the tourism industry in other ways, is a possibility. Or there could be practical training in tour guiding. It is also important to showcase examples where there are female guides since they, their story and experience can work as a motivator for other women.

When working with gender inclusion in tourism, the aspect of security needs to be considered. It is important that women do not run the risk of being abused, for example when they enter sites, which they might not be familiar to. Also, female guides need to be educated in security. To make them feel secure in the role of tour guiding, a support system needs to be put in place, such as a
critical mass of other female guides to turn to. However, reaching such a critical mass will not happen overnight, which means that the first steps need to be taken today. In addition to capacity building, the inclusion of women in activities related to tourism (e.g. craft and cooking), and lower member fees for women are examples. Another idea is to have women in consultative/reference groups, providing the association with a female perspective. In Dunga, a group of women has started an association with the aim of becoming tour guides. It is also a reference group for the association. The tour guide group in Dunga encourages this work by offering training of female tour guides.

**Codes of conduct**

Drawing up well formulated codes of conduct is an important step for the association. Aspects to consider in such a document were discussed during the first two workshops, and the authors of this document have in addition to those discussions also taken inspiration from other organisations. Codes of conduct can be seen as a set of standard and rules of behaviour and responsibilities that apply to all members and it should guide all procedures and decisions taken in the association. Aspects that could be considered in the codes of conduct for the association are:

- **Non-discriminating** in regards to colour, gender, and religious or political views. This includes the recognition of rights and spiritual beliefs of indigenous people in the community as well as working in partnership with them to create empowerment. It also includes working actively with gender inclusion in the organisation, such as women taking on active roles.

- **Respect and responsibility towards local culture and communities.** This includes for example generating financial and other benefits for local residents and industry, empowerment programmes and support for trade linkages. One example is to help community members to identify opportunities within ecotourism. Another example is respect for other guide group’s areas and sites. Tourism activities should be conducted in harmony with features and traditions on site and in respect for local practices and customs.

- **Respect and responsibility towards the environment.** This includes responsible use of resources such as land, water and energy. It includes the protection of the natural heritage and the preservation of endangered species of wildlife. Members of the association should exclude or limit activities when these are conducted in particularly sensitive areas. Responsibility also includes working actively to source investment for conservation and improvement of the local environment (through for example lobbying). An important part for Kisumu County is preventing pollution, including waste management; reducing, reusing and recycling waste.

- **Act professionally**, respectfully and with responsibility towards tourists. It includes providing tourists with objective and honest information. Agreements that are proposed to visitors should be easy to understand regarding the nature, price and quality of the service. Incidents of corrupt behaviour can expose the association to reputational and
financial damage and should therefore have consequences. The same goes for improper use of information or the use of positions to obtain benefits for oneself or anyone else. When on duty it is important to be representable, and being intoxicated is not accepted.

- **Change tourists’ attitudes and behaviour** towards an increased environmental and cultural awareness and respect. This includes the creation and delivery of memorable interpretative experiences to visitors that raises the sensitivity to host communities’ political, environmental, and social climates.

- **Respect for the constitution**, laws and regulations including the Global codes of ethics for tourism.

- **Penalties if one breaches the codes.**

In tourism, especially ecotourism, there are several specific examples of codes of conduct for the tourists; how they are supposed to behave and act when visiting a site. This could be something that the association can work with in the future, as a way to strengthen Kisumu as a destination that works actively with responsible tourism.

**Learnings from the Dunga process**

In this section, an overview is given of the two years of collaboration between the PhD students, Dectta, Ecofinder, the BMU and the residents of Dunga. The aim is to inspire other sites to start similar or other processes, using some of the methods and tools proposed if appropriate, and developing their site in a sustainable way.

**Community participation**

Community participation is important when dealing with ecotourism development, and there are several methods and tools that can be used in order to involve people in the process.

Mapping is a method that makes it possible to see what stakeholders are present and how relationships between these can be created or strengthened. In Dunga, representatives were invited from all groups of people in the village to a stakeholder-mapping workshop. The first step for the participants was to draw a map of Dunga and identify the location of stakeholders, by writing them up on notes and placing them on the map. Thereafter, the participants connected stakeholders that had a relation to each other, or if they saw the opportunity for a new relationship to be built. An interesting result was that a group of local boat builders found that they were situated too far away from each other. This spurred them to gather together to one place on the beach where they can work together, a move that also gave them an opportunity to meet new customers. For the guides it is now easy to go to this spot with visitors to talk about the boat building culture.

An identity workshop was held using several techniques and tools: SWOT analysis, drawing symbols for Dunga, past/present/future Dunga and making a song that is representative of Dunga. Some of the results were a fish as a symbol, the colours of blue, green and yellow
(representing the lake, the green scenery and the yellow flowers in the trees) and the song “Dunga be”. This means that Dunga now can use the symbol and the colours in the design of features on the beach. Further, in the workshop poor infrastructure was identified as a weakness and threat. This later resulted in work on infrastructure features such as waste collection and signage systems.

Images 4 and 5: Mapping stakeholders in Dunga, and drawing symbols for Dunga in the identity workshop.

An available project space was set up early on in the process in the pedagogical centre in Dunga. The purpose was to make it possible for the community to see what is going on in the project, the plans for tourism development as well as giving them an opportunity to share their views.

Image 6: One of the presentations about the project displayed on the walls in the pedagogical centre in Dunga.

On a beach workshop, the residents got the opportunity to share their hopes and fears on ecotourism development. The workshop was set up so that people could come by in their own time, and the workshop in itself would not take up too much of the participant’s time. The workshop resulted in hopes for the future, such as community enlightenment and empowerment, business opportunities, and improved infrastructure. The fears were for example environmental disruption, bad influence on society, private investments that would not create local jobs, and poor governance.
It is important to consider if the participatory activities that you set up are accessible by all groups in the community. For example women may find it hard to participate in longer workshops that stretch for several hours. In Dunga we therefore organised with a specific workshop for women. This was considered important since women can provide a different perspective, knowledge and sound advice on ecotourism development.

One of the activities, a cultural day, was designed for both tourists and residents. This was a way to highlight the local culture as well as to involve residents in the creation of an event. During the day the guides in Dunga also took the opportunity to test a prototype of a cultural museum, and asked residents and visitors to share their views on it.
**Branding**

The brand is the identity, image and culture of the place and can be expressed through for example colours, symbols and materials. In Dunga, the fish symbol is used for signs and logotypes, and the colours are used when painting the fish banda and the waste collection points. Both the fish and the colours are used for the t-shirts that promote Dunga as the fishing village and identify the guides. Local material is used to identify Dunga as an ecotourism site. Moreover, brochures with the Dunga colours and logotype have been printed which give information of what types of ecotourism experiences visitors can be part of. The local culture is expressed for example through the museum, the cultural day and the friendly residents that are actively involved in tourism activities.

![Image 9 and 10: Fish sign in Dunga and the Banda painted in the three Dunga colours.](image)

**Infrastructure**

Infrastructure is central for tourism development. During earlier workshops and discussions, it had come up that it is hard for visitors to find their way to Dunga if they don’t know about it. A sign at Impala Park could be a way to lead them. There was also an issue that people who arrive to Dunga had a hard time finding places such as the BMU, restaurants or toilets. Further, if Dunga is to be an ecotourism site, the beach must be clean from litter. A workshop was therefore held with the tour guides and some invited residents who sketched on solutions for signage and waste collection, with inspiration from other sites. The sketches were developed and turned into prototypes for people to try out and react on. The first wooden waste collection point was later complemented with smaller ones in a more robust material.

![Image 11 and 12: Sketching on waste collection points and a directional sign.](image)
Packaging touristic experiences

Another focus in Dunga has been the development of guided tours. For example, the guides have worked on how they can develop tours so that they consist of something more than a boat ride. Also, focus has been on developing tours that are highly interactive, between the tourist and the guide, between the tourists and between the tourists and the community. During two test tours, groups of tourists went out for fishing, cooked their own food and made crafts out of local materials. In one of the tours including two parents and their children, the father mentioned about the craft activity:

"This is the most enjoyable, because it is an activity. Kids always concentrate better when they get to actively do it."

In Dunga, a simple tool to develop tours was used, which could easily be applied to other circumstances. In a workshop where the tool was used the participants drew a map of the beach on a large piece of paper. They then defined places where people could interact. Figures representing guides, residents and tourists, and speech bubbles made out of cut cardboard were used to propose what the interaction could be about. Then activities were planned according to time, people and the physical space. Finally, the activities were connected on the map with lines to represent how the tour could go from one place to the other. The tour was then tested in the test tours. After the first tour, a meeting was held to reflect on what was good and what went wrong, and the tourists wrote reports about their experience. The next tour could thereby be improved.
Further, a crucial aspect of ecotourism is to change people’s attitudes and behaviour for a sustainable future. Currently there are several school buses coming every day to visit the port, the museum, Impala Park and Dunga. These groups are important for ecotourism, and there are great potentials in working with education for the students through further development of specially adapted ecotourism services.

Learning from other sites
To be able to come up with new ideas and develop tourism, you need an open mind. Reading books, visiting museums, using the internet and experiencing other places are ways to broaden horizons. A simple method is to experience your own or nearby places through the tourists’ eyes. Also, doing comparative studies to sites in the region or country that are similar to yours is an inspiring way to gain new knowledge and come up with ideas. For example, if you want to develop waste collection for your sites you could look at how waste is handled in the nearby Impala Park. Or if you are interested in working with local culture, then Bomas of Kenya in Nairobi could be a place to visit, not the least for the high quality maintenance of the site.

Challenges and lessons learned
Of course, as any other project, the process in Dunga has also involved challenges. These challenges are a part of learning and it is important to take them into consideration, to deal with them and to see how they can inform future processes.

Some of the challenges that have come up include:

- The available project, which has been placed in the pedagogical centre, has mainly been used by tourists, which means that we missed on making it available for residents. The reason could be that the centre is mainly used by tourists and organisations that deal with
tourism or that the information about it did not reach residents. It shows that it may be required to have one available project space for tourists (if you see that as necessary) and one specific for residents.

- The waste bins are not yet properly used and the government do not take the responsibility to handle the waste in Dunga. This shows the need for maintenance of infrastructure fixtures as well as a need for awareness building. However, waste management is a challenge also at a larger scale in Kisumu.

- It is a challenge to have a museum where interaction with the artefacts is possible. By letting people touch and test objects in the museum they can get a richer experience. However, it also means that the objects will wear and tear faster.

- Women are under-represented in the tourism business.

These challenges show the importance to consider that everything that is implemented needs to be maintained and even improved. They also show that development takes time, and it is important to develop in a moderate pace and scale. Finally, for all occupations including tour guiding, it is crucial that you are open-minded and allow yourself to learn from mistakes and reflect on your work. This could for example be done by the use of personal journals where you write down your own reflections on for example a particular tour, what went well and what could be improved. Another way is through group reflections, where you learn from and support each other.

**Final words**

This document was written with the aim to be of use mainly for the tour guide association that is formed in Kisumu County. It summarizes ideas and comments that came up in two workshops and continues a discussion on how the association can work in the future with implementation of the organization as well as with idea generation and planning of activities. We hope that the report will also be of use to other stakeholders within tourism, on different levels, as inspiration, motivation and guidance.

Forming an association that is of importance for all its members is not easy. It takes time and engagement from a lot of people. We want to encourage all members to keep up the spirit from the workshops.
References and recommended reading

References in the text


References for examples of condes of conduct
The international ecotourism society: https://www.ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism
