

Promoting tourism in Malawi



MIERA: A holistic approach to tourism development

Context

The tourism sector in Malawi plays a significant role in the country's efforts to achieve inclusive growth. In 2017, the Malawian Government identified tourism as one of nine priority areas for sustainable development in its Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III. Tourism, which already makes up 7% of Malawi's GDP, has the potential to further diversify the country's economy, which is currently primarily agriculture based.

With Sub-Saharan Africa outpacing the global average in international tourism arrivals and receipts growth, the World Travel and Tourism Council forecasts African economies to have the second highest rate of growth in tourism and travel in the ten years from 2019–2029 (in terms of GDP). As African destinations grow more and more popular, Malawi's government, the private sector and communities are eager to strengthen the country's tourism industry.

The GIZ programme More Income and Employment in Rural Areas (MIERA), implemented on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), supports key stakeholders in Malawi in an effort to promote Malawi as a tourism destination.

Approach

The programme follows a holistic approach to tourism development and addresses challenges of the sector in Malawi on three levels:

1) National level

On national level, MIERA supports the positioning of Malawi as a tourist destination on the international market. Working hand in hand with the Department of Tourism, the programme aims to improve the framework conditions for national destination marketing by reviewing the National Tourism Policy and developing a market strategy

for Malawi. Both processes are based on extensive research, including the results of a source market analysis, which looks into travellers' country of origin, and a competitor analysis, which compares the tourism industries of neighbouring destinations. MIERA further supports Malawi's representation at international tourism fairs such as the ITB in Germany, the world's largest tourism trade convention. By supporting public-private dialogue to collaboratively improve the stand designs and supporting small Malawian tourism businesses to showcase their products effectively, the programme works towards increasing Malawi's international visibility.



Training on improving creativity and business management in Cape Maclear.

2) Institutional level

To tackle challenges of the tourism value chain on institutional level, MIERA works closely with the Malawi Tourism Council (MTC) and the Malawi Institute of Tourism (MIT). Interventions in this regard address issues related to organisation and communication within the industry, With MTC being Malawi's only official active business association in the sector, the objective is to engage key stakeholders, strengthen collaboration between government and the private sector and create a common

vision for the future. MIERA's support to Malawi Institute of Tourism includes the review of curricula, the development of a tourism entrepreneurship handbook, a local tour guide training and certification programmes well as study tours for the lecturers.

3) Community level

To complete its holistic approach, MIERA provides assistance to different actors on community/sub-destination level. The programme facilitates the development of digital marketing concepts for accommodation providers and artisans to help them build their businesses through online marketing. Local Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) receive training and support with the aim of formalising their relationships with anchor tourism businesses.



Sunset market in Senga Bay.

Improving Livelihoods Around Liwonde National Park

As part of a public private partnership (PPP) with Central African Wilderness Safari (CAWS), MIERA provides livelihoods capacity development support to communities around Liwonde National Park. In an effort to reduce pressure on the park (e.g. through illegal logging, poaching or depletion of natural resources), the programme provides additional avenues for income generation such as training for Village Savings and loan groups, irrigated farming and ecotourism development.

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Achievements

To date, MIERA has achieved a number of results, including the following:

- Development of a national marketing strategy for Malawi, which identifies five main international markets (Germany, United Kingdom, Netherlands, China and the US) as well as additional regional markets
- Review of the National Tourism Policy 2019
- Translation and printing of the Malawi Tourism brochure into German
- Content development for Malawi Tourism's first website in German
- Development and publishing of the "Entrepreneurship in Tourism in Malawi" handbook
- Two study trips to Germany for 10 Malawian tourism professionals – one studying lake and water-based tourism development and the other focused on international tourism marketing fairs
- Malawi Tourism Promotional video in response to the COVID-19 crisis
- Support of the strengthening of stakeholder collaboration and destination management in sub-destinations such as Cape Maclear and Zomba
- Strengthening MTC as a body that represents all private sector operators in the tourism industry through support to the Board of Trustees and the Secretariat.
- 26 formalised agreements between local MSMEs and anchor tourism businesses
- Strengthening the external communication between key stakeholders in the industry; training for both the Department of Tourism and the Malawi Tourism Council to launch their own monthly newsletters which are now being managed independently

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