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Many Peoples, Many Cultures, Many Heritages: Going Beyond Nature-Based Tourism in Uganda

De nombreux peuples, de nombreuses cultures, de nombreux patrimoines: Aller au-delà du tourisme axé sur la nature en Ouganda

Viele Menschen, Viele Kulturen, Viele Erbschaften: Mehr anbieten als natur-orientiertes Tourismus in Uganda



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PROJECT TEAM AT IGONGO CULTURAL CENTRE



PRESENTATION OUTLINE

Introduction / Background

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Introduction

- ❑ The GoU tourism development plan emphasizes nature-based tourism while paying less attention to culture-based tourism.
- ❑ Nature-based tourism in its current form is restricted and confines tourists only to particular areas and regions “gifted by nature”.
- ❑ The project envisages the integration of language, culture and people to enhance the tourism sector beyond the dominant scope of nature-based tourism for instance, the role of languages in boosting cultural tourism.
- ❑ While we appreciate Uganda gifted by nature, we should also acknowledge Uganda gifted by culture.

Cont.

- ❑ Exactly twelve months ago, none of us had any indication of what 2020 would be like.
- ❑ Living day by day with safety precautions and restrictions on how and where to travel is quite strange, especially for the tourism industry, which is built on travel, hospitality and close contact in tourist destinations.
- ❑ The tourism sector is among the sectors which were hardest hit by the corona virus pandemic.
- ❑ As the vaccines start to work their way around the world, we look forward to travelling again safely and freely, without masks and sanitation gels.

Cont.

If we can't do tourism for now, let's at least talk tourism

In my opening address at this year's fifth Pearl of Africa Tourism Expo (POATE) held in February, under the theme-Promoting Intra-African Travel, I told stakeholders that for Uganda to have a sustainable tourism sector, there was a need for us to rethink our tourism market with more focus on Africa and Uganda.

Around March, a month after POATE, COVID-19 spread across the world. Overnight, the tourism sector and economies across the world came to a halt. A number of discussions on how the sector will bounce back have been initiated at policy level through our ministry, at Uganda Tourism Board, private sector and global organisations such as the United Nations World Travel Organisation; with whom we are working closely.

Globally, the tourism industry is among those industries that are being keenly looked at in relation to how it will navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic. How well the sector bounces back means a lot to economies and individual livelihoods. In the case of Uganda, tourism contributed 7.7% to the GDP in FY 2018/2019 and has been the topmost forex earner for the last five years. The sector also contributes over 670,000 jobs to the economy, in addition to collectively protecting and conserving the country's rich and natural resources.

While the discussions around post-COVID-19 recovery continue, there is a need to talk about what we shall be doing once we are back to the 'new normal'. The disruption cannot allow us to go back to the business as usual mode. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni has said that a lot will need to change in the country and that the disruption caused by COVID-19 presents an opportunity for import substitution.

Even for the tourism sector, there is a need to further refocus our business strategies,



with a major focus on revitalising domestic tourism as the global tourism industry recovers. More specifically, we shall need to look at product diversification, identifying new markets, bridging the skill gap and marketing destination Uganda more than ever.

Whatever we choose to do next should benefit a lot from the lessons this crisis has taught us – adaptation.

Tourism as a sector moving forward must look at inclusive growth; for example, in the case of domestic tourism ensure that locals play key roles and benefit a lot from tourism activities in their community.

Let's also not forget that consumer confidence has been greatly impacted by the pandemic which means people will be more aware and cautious as to where they choose to travel. For

the sector, it is time to prepare for a different type of consumer and be ready to meet the challenges they come with – the biggest challenge being regaining their confidence.

We thank the President and Ministry of Health for the national communication on the COVID-19 pandemic and its management as this plays a key role in traveller confidence going forward. No one should expect the growth in numbers to happen instantly. It is going to take concerted and deliberate effort to ensure domestic tourism numbers grow post-COVID-19 lockdown and the subsequent end of the pandemic.

This is of course with the interventions mentioned earlier. Partnerships and collaborations across the public and private sectors will play a big role when it comes to supporting the post-recovery phase. Competition is healthy but if an opportunity for collaboration presents itself, we must grab it.

Despite the challenges the industry faces now, it's upon the players and stakeholders in the sector to keep reminding themselves of what the tourism sector is and has been for many years. This is the time to rise and be at the forefront of any efforts that will be put in place to ensure the sector recovers. Tourism needs us and we must show up. If we can't do tourism for now, then let's at least talk about tourism.

The writer is the chief executive officer of Uganda Tourism Board

The Problem

- ❑ Although the tourism sector in Uganda is considered to be one of the fastest growing service sectors of the economy and a major foreign exchange earner (1.6 billion USD, NDP III 2020/2021 -2024/2025) the government has not strategically invested and streamlined cultural tourism.
- ❑ The GoU tourism development plan emphasizes nature-based tourist attractions like; mountain gorillas, tree climbing lions, white rhinos, bird species, mountain ranges and water bodies (NDP III 2020/2021 -2024/2025) paying less attention to culture-based tourism. Culture-based tourism not only offers variety but is also vital in boosting the entire tourism sector.
- ❑ The need to equally give priority to culture-based tourism is paramount. In addition, nature-based tourism cannot stand in isolation because nature interacts with culture and culture coexists with nature.
- ❑ We argue that by appreciating, interrogating and documenting the history, culture and heritage of Ugandan peoples, the tourism sector has potential to be enhanced beyond the dominant scope of nature-based tourism.

Relevance of the Project

- ❑ To broaden the tourist industry beyond nature-based tourism through documentation of specific historic/cultural sites/heritages including neglected ones
- ❑ Uganda is visited by various categories of tourists from different parts of the world who come to enjoy its spectacular flora and fauna as well as the diverse cultural wealth, including those who speak French and German.
- ❑ It is important to translate this information to accommodate all of the other non-English speaking visitors.
- ❑ Because of the great contribution made by the sector to the national revenue and the livelihood of many Ugandans, there is no doubt that Foreign Languages specifically French and German are crucial in facilitating successful communication with international tourists to promote intercultural communication.

Objectives of the Project

- ❑ To promote tourism in Uganda beyond what nature has gifted the country with
- ❑ To blend cultural tourism with nature-based tourism
- ❑ To repackage the cultural gift people have cultivated over time in brochures, stories and electronic materials.
- ❑ To translate the socio-cultural information into selected languages.

Literature Review - Reflections on Cultural Tourism

- ❑ Cultural tourism was also one of the types of tourism that received a new operational definition from the UNWTO at the 22nd Session of the General Assembly held in Chengdu, China (UNWTO, 2017: 18)
- ❑ Cultural tourism is a type of tourism activity in which the visitor's essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination.
- ❑ These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions.

Literature Review contd.

- ▶ This new definition confirms the much broader nature of contemporary cultural tourism, which relates not just to sites and monuments, but to ways of life, creativity and 'everyday culture'.
- ▶ As the UNWTO (2018) report emphasizes, the field of cultural tourism has moved away from the previous emphasis on classic western tangible heritage towards a much broader and inclusive field of diverse cultural practices in all corners of the world.
- ▶ In this sense the new definition mirrors the development of the production and consumption of cultural tourism, as well as the development of academic research on cultural tourism.

Literature Review (contd.)

- ▶ The cultural object of tourism has also shifted as cultural tourism has grown. The search for the exceptional has been joined by a quest for the everyday (Richards, 2011).
- ▶ Tourists increasingly want to 'live like a local', whether it is to avoid being labelled as a tourist, or if it is because the 'local' has become the new touchstone of authenticity (Richards & Russo, 2016).
- ▶ What is the meaning of the 'local' for the 'locals' themselves, as well as the other groups who pass through the community?
- ▶ This is a question that tourists struggle with, as do many destinations, who create a new range of labels for visitors as 'temporary citizens' or 'global citizens' or 'global nomads' (Kannisto, 2017).

Methodology

- ❑ From November 2019 to the beginning of March 2020 we had activities which were set to train research assistants and develop research tools in preparation for the pre-field visit in selected sites in central and western Uganda i.e. Kampala, Mpigi, Masaka, Mbarara, Kabale, Ibanda, Fort Portal, Mubende and Mityana
- ❑ The pre-field visit took place in March 2020 and it was a fact-finding mission for the project.
- ❑ On 18th March 2020, the research activities were interrupted because of the COVID 19 outbreak.
- ❑ Upon the easing of the lockdown, the first phase of field work was undertaken in June 2020 followed by repeated visits in selected areas of Central and Eastern regions, i.e., Entebbe, Kampala, Mukono and Jinja.
- ❑ The second phase of field work was carried out in August 2020 to document and visit selected cultural sites in Entebbe, Mukono, Jinja and Kampala.

cont.

The project employed an ethnographic study design, and a discourse analysis

Ethnography was used to understand people's cultures heritage and customs.

It was important to represent the social realities of the people under study.

Discourse analysis was used to interrogate the text forms available such as the documented and undocumented cultural texts, e.g. pamphlets brochures as well as signs and symbols found at the cultural sites that were visited.

Data Collection

- ▶ This involved participant observations and key informant interviews with stakeholders in the selected regions. These included community-based organizations, government officials, tour guides at the cultural sites, among others.
- ▶ This was a descriptive study which involved engagement with the community.
- ▶ We divided ourselves into three teams and each team was following a three pronged approach that is to say peoples, cultures and heritages.

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▶ **Review of documents**

Review of important documents that informed the study including archival records. This process was done continuously throughout fieldwork and the reviewed information was verified alongside primary data being gathered.

▶ **Ethnographic key informants (EKI)**

Special interviews were conducted in selected districts (Kampala, Mpigi, Masaka, Entebbe and Jinja) with those considered knowledgeable about specific aspects of culture. Selection of participants for EKI was based on the experience of participant observation in which the consultants identified those considered knowledgeable about aspects of culture.

▶ **Ethnographic group discussion (EGD)**

A total of 20 EGD was conducted per district chosen. It comprised of resourceful persons who were identified during participant observation.

Data analysis

- ❑ Transcription of the oral interviews,
- ❑ Coding of data in terms of people culture and heritage and weaving the interrelated parts.
- ❑ Discourse analysis to analyze the meaning of the vocal sign and written information at the sites visited.

Findings

Names of places and associated stories

- ▶ **Uganda Martyrs Museum, Namugongo**
- ▶ Namugongo was a place of execution where the king's subjects were killed for serious acts of disobedience. The king was not supposed to see dead bodies so this place was located far from his palace. This place was designated in 1760 during the reign of the 25th King of Buganda called Kyabaggu. People used to be dragged on their backs to this place. Hence the saying '*Azze atya? Azze na mugongo*' (How has he come? He has come on his back). Reference was also made here to a skinless back because the skin had peeled off during the long journey.

BWAYISE

- ▶ Amongst the Christian martyrs who were killed was one woman, the only female martyr, named Nalumansi Catherine Kalaala. She was a princess married to a Catholic convert. When Kabaka Mwanga ordered for the killing of his subjects who had disrespected him by owing allegiance to Christianity, the princess along with her husband and other converts were arrested and she was dragged along to Namugongo for execution. Later, when the king heard about it, he sent messengers to save her life but it was too late. The messengers reported back to the king that '*obulamu bwe bwayise dda*'. (Her life has already been poured out and can't be restored). The princess had died at this spot due to the torture she had been subjected to during the journey. The site to commemorate this only female martyr exists in Bwayise.

BULANGE

- ▶ Bulange is the building which houses the Buganda parliament known as the Lukiiko. The name '*Bulange*' refers to '*obusubi obulange*' (woven grass). 900 years ago, the first King of Buganda, Kabaka Kintu convened a meeting at Nnono hill in Magonga, Busujju to discuss kingdom affairs with his chiefs. The king sat on his throne while his subjects sat on the ground. These meetings would last for days and in the process to pass time as they reflected, the chiefs would 'play' with the grass by weaving blades of grass together (woven grass). The meeting venue was therefore characterized by an area of woven blades of grass and hence the name "Bulange" (the woven ones).

Kabakanjagala road (Royal Mile)

- ▶ The royal mile connects the King's palace (*Lubiri*) to the Buganda parliament (*Bulange*). The road is straight signifying that the King is supposed to move from his palace to the Parliament without negotiating corners and without obstruction. Several clan totems are displayed along the road. Each clan has a duty to perform in the kingdom and this arrangement signifies a guard of honour or paying homage to the king.
- ▶ There is a roundabout (*entawetwa*) in the middle of this road and it is only the Kabaka that does not go round it. Small gates are opened to let him through.
- ▶ The road is also lined up on each side with trees called '*kabaka anjagala*' (the king likes me). These trees were got from the Seychelles by the Kabaka during a visit. On his return, the Kabaka gave each Ssaza chief a tree seedling to plant. However, the chiefs in appreciation decided to plant them along the road to thank the king.

Buganda Royal Palace (Twekobe) in Mengo

- ▶ The Buganda Royal Palace (Lubiri) was first built by Kabaka Mwanga in Mengo around 1885. Mengo was considered as the capital of Buganda. The word 'Mengo' is derived from '*olubengo*' (grinding stone). Members of the *envubu* (hippopotamus) clan used to produce traditional herbal medicines using these stones in this area, hence the name 'Mengo'. Kabaka Mwanga took over this spot (Mengo) and instead in compensation gave the *nvubu* clansmen some land in Mukono.
- ▶ Kabaka Mwanga's successor, Kabaka Chwa built the current place – a great improvement of his father's. He made it more modern. It was called the '*Twekobe*' from '*Twekobane*' loosely meaning 'unity'.

Entebbe

- This sacred site is where Chief Mugula Bukkulubwaavadda sat on a stone seat , hence the name, Mugula's seat, Entebe za Mugula to preside over judicial cases and village meetings in the 19th century.
- A story is told that 'Entebe za Mugula' was a court where Mugula would sit to resolve conflicts among the people he led. He would consult the spirits – and his 'ntebe' was a stone that he would sit on in the middle of the water.

Entebbe (continued)

- ▶ Mugula used to access the stone with the help of an animal hide '*eddiba*' which would carry him on the water to the stone where he would sit to invoke spirits.
- ▶ The spirits used to solve the conflicts and restore peace.
- ▶ The whites(bazungu), however, kept on wondering what this man's source of power was and so they decided to visit that stone in the middle of the water.

Entebbe (continued)

- When the whites came, the spirits were greatly angered and struck the stone into half leaving only one piece behind.
- It is believed that the spirits were angered because they said the whites came naked (without any sacrifice).
- Today people still visit the place and take (sacrifices) and perform rituals to those 'gods'.

The Independence tree

- ▶ This is believed to be the place where Milton Obote, Julius Nyerere and Jomo Kenyatta sat to think about the formation of the East African Community.
- ▶ It is currently not fenced off nor marked with a clear sign post to signify its historical significance. The locals sit under this tree just like any other ordinary tree.
- ▶ There is only a small placard with a few words under the title 'The independence Tree'

Independence Tree



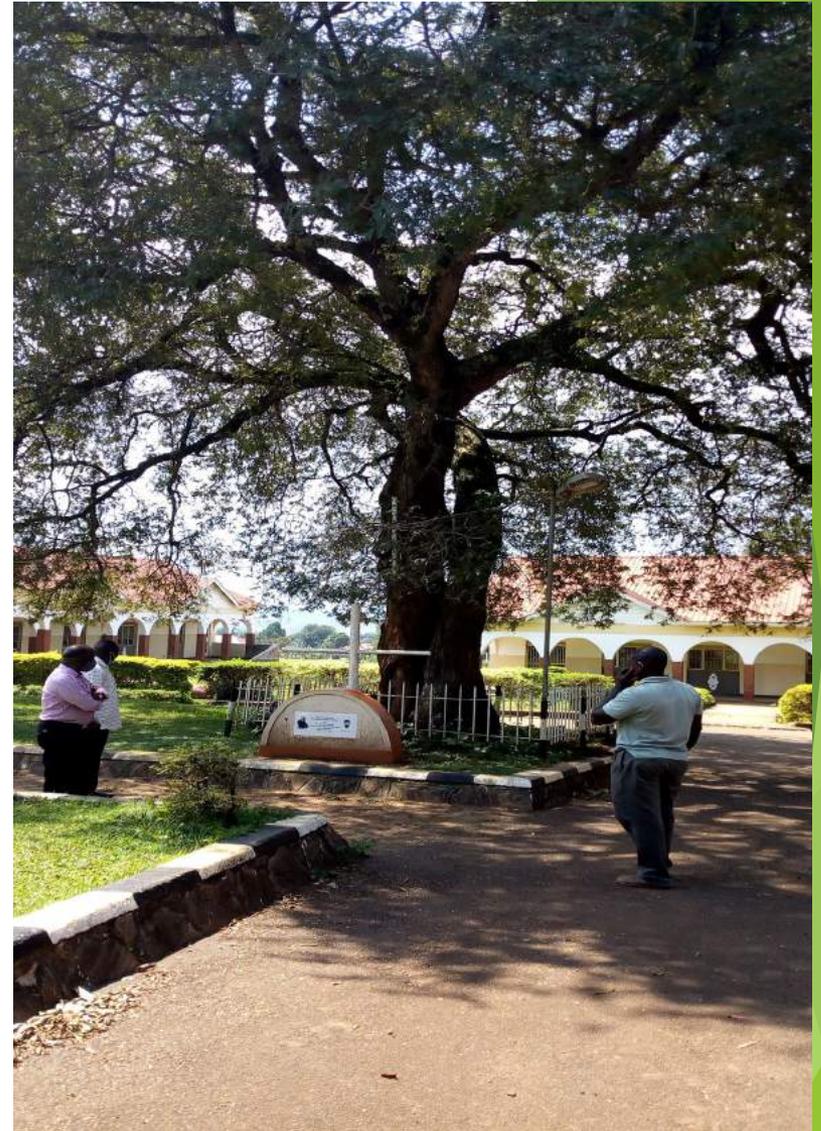
Mapeera Tree

- ▶ This is believed to be the place where Fr. Loudrel and Br. Amos Delmas first settled after their boat broke down at Kiggungu landing site.
- ▶ It is believed that as they were leaving the site to continue with their trip to see the Kabaka, they left behind a peg on their tent from which this tree grew, now known as 'Mapeera tree'.

Mapeera Tree continued

- It is believed that Fr Loudrel, a man of French descent introduced himself to the locals in the French language.
 - = “ *Je m’appelle*” is what he said which the locals misinterpreted as 'Mapeera'. By coincidence ‘*mapeera*’ is also a Luganda word for guavas.
- The Mapeera Tree is located inside a school compound that was named Kisubi Mapeera, symbolic of the Mapeera Tree.

Mapeera Tree



The Uganda Buddhist Temple in Bulega, Garuga

- ▶ The Uganda Buddhist Centre is a non-governmental organisation founded by Venerable Bhante Buddharakkhita in 2005
- ▶ Established to preserve and teach the Buddha's teachings within the context of African culture.
- ▶ UBC is located in Bulega, Garuga 5 Kilometres off Kampala-Entebbe main, a short distance from Kampala and Entebbe International Airport.
- ▶ UBC is the first Buddhist Centre in Uganda and in the East African region
- ▶ UBC is an ideal cultural site to add to the list of recommendable Faith Based Tourism sites in Uganda.

Buddhist Temple



THE NILE

▶ People go to the Nile to do different kinds of things.

Those who are looking for luck come to the Nile to get:

- ▶ Money
- ▶ Good luck for their businesses
- ▶ Children for those who are seemingly barren
- ▶ They throw money especially coins to get blessings
- ▶ Bathe to cleanse off bad luck
- ▶ Slaughter animals at the river bank, drain the blood into the Nile and give the meat those around e.g fishermen.
- ▶ Foreigners come 22-31 Dec, to consult the spirits for good luck (at Bujagali)
- ▶ Indians worship at the river bank especially at the point where Mahatma Ghandi's ashes were thrown. He was known for preaching peace.

River Nile as a cultural entity

- ▶ 'God' 'resides' at the source of the Nile. It never dries up yet the mouth in Egypt never fills!

So, those who are looking for luck go to the Nile to get:

- ▶ Money
- ▶ Good luck for their businesses
- ▶ Children for those who are seemingly barren
- ▶ They throw money especially coins to get blessings
- ▶ Bathe to cleanse off bad luck
- ▶ Slaughter animals at the river bank, drain the blood into the Nile and give the meat to those around e.g fishermen.
- ▶ Indians worship at the river bank especially at the point where Mahatma Gandhi's ashes were thrown. He was known for preaching peace.

Nabamba - Bujagali (Bachwezi)

- ▶ God 'resides' in water falls, the spirit Nabamba takes possession of a human being and brings him to a place called Bujagali. Like the other Bacwezi (traditional healers) his name is then the name of the place where his shrine is.
- ▶ People go there to ask for blessings, or to be treated of their ailments. They take money or animals like sheep, goats or cows. He doesn't sacrifice human beings.
- ▶ Whites visit Bujagali 22-31 Dec, to consult the spirits for good luck.
- ▶ The consultation and treatment is done in caves along the river several kilometres from Bujagali.
- ▶ After the death of the old Bujagali, the spirit chose a new one who was crowned early last year after a rigorous process of proving that indeed he was the chosen one.
- ▶ The story makes this place a worthy tourism destination.

Bujagali Caves



Sezibwa Falls

- ▶ It is believed that god resides in extraordinary places e.g huge rocks or trees, water falls.
- ▶ River Sezibwa flows from Ngogwe hill. The name Sezibwa means *Sizibirwa kubo* (You can't block my way.) The river flows over a huge rock (falls)
- ▶ It is believed to be a twin (Wasswa). The other twin Kato flows in another direction. Sezibwa doesn't harm or kill. There are no snakes in the trees. It is a place of blessings. Twins open blessings so people go the falls for blessings.
- ▶ Sezibwa has its bank, people only throw in money to make their prayer requests, not animals. These are slaughtered and eaten.
- ▶ Taboos: Like other places of worship The place must be respected.
- ▶ Don't go to Sezibwa to request him to hurt others. Whoever does so is instead harmed, a man who wanted to kill his wife died instead.
- ▶ Sezibwa can't stand a foul smell. (*Sezibwa tawunyirirwa.*) A boy tried to commit suicide by drowning but just walked out.
- ▶ Like in other places, offerings here are also made under a huge tree.
- ▶ The many trees here offer studies in herbal medicine

Sezibwa birth story

- When Sezibwa's mother (Tebateesa) was about to deliver, her husband (Nsubuga Sebwato) sent her to her parents but later her father sent her back to her husband.
- She was escorted by her mother who left her shortly before she reached her home. She didn't want to go to the son in law (culturally unacceptable). As Tebateesa walked on, she went into labour. A neighbour saw her but just walked on and only told the husband the following day where he had seen Tebateesa in labour. The husband was angry with this neighbour and he gave birth to the proverb '*Turiraanya mayumba si myoyo*'. (Our houses might be close but our souls aren't.)
- When Nsubuga got to her, she told him she had given birth to water.
- The culture around this place makes it a worthy tourism destination.

Nyakahondokoro cultural tombs – Ibanda

Located in Ibanda municipality, the Nyakahondokoro cave is a place worthy visiting for both religious tourism, exercise, parties or mountain climbing. It's a unique cave with the belief that the Bachwezi were the original inhabitants and it has got old architectural network that's similar to the Egyptian pyramids. Lots of activities take place inside the seemingly well maintained neat cave with grass on the floor that provides good atmosphere for one to have a good rest. We were told the cave cuts across to the next village something that we can recommend to be a *Nyakahondokoro challenge* each year for tourists. Legend also has it that strange things happen around the cave such as wild fires at night, as well as someone grazing cattle but you can only see the horns.

Nyakahondogoro caves



Gault tombs – Ibanda

This is a giant tomb purely made of slate stones gathered to form a hill. This in memory of a former British chief who was murdered by his subjects while on a journey to meet his girlfriend who was in the nearby place. His story is quite interesting in that it brings out the character of colonial administrators and how they treated their subjects. His story is a good catch for the cultural tourist and academicians alike and could be of interest to his subjects in Britain to trace their own.

Kibubura tombs – Ibanda

This story has relations to that of Gault. She was the Ssaza chief whom Gault was visiting when he got killed on the way. Her story seems to show that the colonial officer may have been in love with the local Ssaza Chief in the area.

Nakayima tree – Mubende

Located about 7 km off Mubende town Nakayima is a spirit that's believed to have healing powers. The tree was planted by the Bachwezi who were also the original inhabitants of the area. It is a place where the Africans used to conduct their prayers before the arrival of colonial religion. The place has lots of activities that's spiritual. There are lots of events from cooking, slaughtering chicken, roasting, people praying, singing, chatting and a priestess being consulted. It's one such place that I would recommend for someone interested in understanding the African ways of worship before the colonial religion gained ground in Uganda. Nakayima is connected to several sites such as Nyabingi, amabere ganyina Mwiru, Nyakahondokoro, Ttanda and they all trace their origin from the Bachwezi.

Ttanda archeological site – Mubende

This is a unique site bringing the rich cultural history of Buganda kingdom and connecting it to the Bachwezi and other cultural sites that the Chwezi had influence. For someone interested in learning about the natural Buganda kingdom it's a place worthy visit. From the history of Kintu and Nambi- Walumbe stories are all well portrayed in this site. The different artifacts used to fight Buganda wars, talk of the shields, spears, arrows and bows, the holes dug for defense purposes and stories behind them are well portrayed in this place.

Routes to Roots

- ▶ Complex routes – nationwide tours (UG in a Nutshell) i.e. the Chwezi Dynasty Complex Route DCR or (Kitara Route). Mapped Chwezi sites – Nyakahondogoro (Ibanda)- Mabeere ga Nyinamwiru (Fort Portal) – Nakayima (Mubende) – Ttanda Hills (Mityana), Nabamba Shrine Bujagali (Jinja). All connected to the Bachwezi civilization
- UG Kingdom route – mapped cultural institutions in Uganda. Historical connection of Bunyoro, Buganda and Busoga
- ▶ City/towns/district routes i.e. in **Kampala**
 - Bulange-Kabaka anjagala-Twekobe-Kabaka's Lake (Buganda Kingdom Route)
 - Munyonyo-Busega-Bwaise-Namugongo (Martyrs'route)
 - Kabaka Mwanga – Namugongo Shrine Route.
 - Mapeera route
 - Independence route
 - Museum route
 - Local Market routes

Cont.

- ▶ Village Life Tourism (VLT) routes– tourism away from hotels and resorts. Tourism to understand how the people live. Mapped model villages/ homesteads for tourism in the community
- ▶ Food Routes
 - ✓ Festivals
 - Kampala city carnival
 - Nyege nyege festival
 - Rolex festival
 - Tilapia festival at the Source of the Nile
 - Wines and Blankets

Jinja Fish Festivals



Tourism beyond Nature

- ▶ Digital storytelling in marketing of cultural tourism destinations
- ▶ Destinations/routes being marketed, and not just locations
- ▶ Tourism is not only about reduced prices in posh hotels but the unique experience in a destination
- ▶ create memories for people who visit the places
- ▶ Every culture in the Ugandan context has rich cultural heritage to offer to tourists and visitors – which needs to be documented and packaged in form of stories.

Limitations

We were unable to reach all the areas which had originally been planned for the project due to the lockdown as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.

This a multi-faceted project that requires more time and resources.

Recommendations

- ▶ Digital storytelling should be integrated in the marketing of cultural tourism destinations
- ▶ Emphasis should be on events in the destinations being marketed, and not the location
- ▶ Focus should be on experiences which create memories for people who visit the places
- ▶ Every culture in the Ugandan context has rich cultural heritage to offer to tourists and visitors – which needs to be documented and packaged in form of stories.
- ▶ Tourism is not only about reduced prices to sleep in posh hotels but the unique experience in a destination
- ▶ Good customer service is a key component of promoting tourism. We are not doing well in this area. Our customer care appears to be selective. If one looks rich, one is more likely to get immediate good customer care. Customer care is about the language we choose to use.
- ▶ Communities must be able to offer cultural experiences that appeal to the growing demand from European adventure travellers to gain a greater understanding of local lifestyles.

Conclusion

The solution is to integrate knowledge-based tourism into main core tourism packages, and go beyond nature-based tourism.

This integration involves considering aspects of culture that have been neglected. Uganda has many peoples, several cultures, heritages and languages.

Visitors would want to know something about Ugandan heritage, culture, communal values and what connects Ugandans as Africans and specifically as Ugandans.

These values and cultural stories can be repackaged into both written and digital forms such as brochures, stories and narratives translated into international languages so that tourists and visitors can inform themselves.

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- ▶ Uganda Tourism Board
- ▶ Buganda Heritage and Tourism Board
- ▶ Cultural Research Centre, Diocese of Jinja
- ▶ Uganda National Cultural Center UNCC
- ▶ Cities, Municipalities and town councils especially (Kampala, Entebbe, Jinja, Ibanda)
- ▶ Religious institutions (Namirembe Cathedral, Rubaga Cathedral, Kako Cathedral, Kitovu, Buddhist Temple Entebbe)
- ▶ Museums (Uganda Museum, Kwanzi museum, Igongo Cultural Centre, Jinja Cultural Research Centre, Uganda Martyrs Museum)
- ▶ Kabale University