

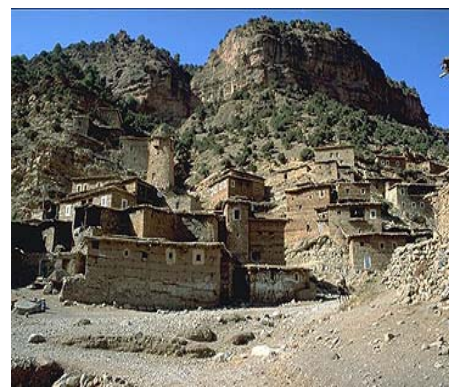


World Tourism Organization Tourism Policy Forum

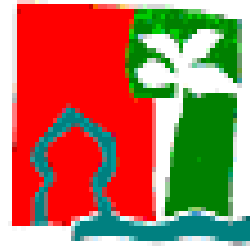
Moroccan Rural Tourism Strategy

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Project Context



- ❖ A land of contrasts combining
 - 2 sea fronts, snowy Atlas mountains, desert...
 - ❖ A civilization at the crossroads of three worlds
 - 3 000 years of visible History
 - A succession of great royal dynasties (12 centuries to this day)
 - Link between Africa, Europe and the Arab World
 - ❖ An exceptional cultural patrimony
 - Imperial Cities, Palaces, souks, Kasbahs, Medieval medinas, a famous cuisine, handicrafts and traditional arts ...
 - A very open, hospitable and tolerant society / friendly population
 - ❖ Proximity to European market
 - ❖ Great potential but small share of the market (4.5 million in 2003)
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- ❖ National strategy for tourism development (2010 vision) to reach 10 million tourists



➔ Within the global strategy, Rural Tourism development has become an important goal to achieve



Project Objectives

To increase national and foreign investments in rural areas

To assist in the alleviation of poverty and to improve the quality of life for the rural population

To boost regional economic growth



Stakeholders and Implementation Approaches

Stakeholders: ministries, agencies, local authorities, NGOs and private operators

1st Action : To identify priority rural touristic destinations at national level

2nd Action : To carry out the feasibility studies to evaluate rural tourism opportunities and constraints in collaboration with local associations and partners (local & international)

3rd Action : To develop over 25 rural touristic destinations with support of local associations within the rural development strategy approach

4th Action : To market and promote the package trips in conjunction with Tour Operators and Moroccan National Tourist Office



Major Challenges

- **To implicate local associations in the implementation of these projects (from their launching) and to ensure local management of these projects**
- **To ensure the required conditions for the concretization of these projects (financing, support, infrastructure...)**
- **To promote sustainable management of the natural resources**

Project Achievements and Lessons Learned



Project achievements

- **Pilot Projects :**
 - **3 new rural touristic destination created in 2004 (Chefchaouen, Ifrane, Agadir)**
 - **3 rural touristic destinations consolidated (El Haouz, Azilal, Ouarzazate)**
 - **To be followed by 20 new rural destinations to be developed in the coming years**
- **The Rural Tourism Development Programme is sustained by a USAID fund (3 years / 2003-2005) in collaboration with the consulting firm Chemonics International**
- **Survey led by Georges Washington University with International Institute of Tourism (Tangier) on rural tourism potential in pilot communities (Al Hoceima and Chefchaouen / summer 2004)**

Lessons learned

- **Importance of global development approach with strong involvement of local actors**
- **Slow and patient process**
- **See to it that the outcome of tourism is concretely profitable to the local community**
- **Good training of local actors and contribute to connecting them to their market (national and international)**



Conclusion

Necessity of a rural tourism development respecting the environment resources, in order to guarantee sustainable development to the local communities and add to the branding of the Moroccan touristic product to become a major touristic destination (2010 vision)