Tourism Impact Assessment South Africa 2025

CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL "HIGH-IMPACT" MEASURES

BITE-SIZED ACTIONS FOR TOUR OPERATORS

ROUNDTABLE Human Rights in Tourism

This document is an integral part of the
Online Report on the Tourism Impact Assessment South Africa.
It is most effective when considered alongside the supplementary information available in the full report.

The following key measures for each of the defined key issue areas were elaborated in close consultation with the core project team and the local facilitator based on the results of the assessment.

These are concrete and practical measures with a high impact that relate to the daily work and options for action of tour operators. They align with the approach of inviting dialogue and further understanding, which will establish a constructive foundation for any future activities in South Africa.

➢ UPSKILLING OF (YOUNG) LOCAL PEOPLE:

A high unemployment rate, especially among young people, and limited opportunities for vocational training in tourism make on-the-job training and upskilling for local people by tourism businesses an important issue, especially in rural areas.

During the consultations, we found out that there is a lot of excellent info developed at the local level regarding the assessment topics. The development of a repository of free, industry-relevant training resources, guidelines and offers for (young) people who are interested in working in tourism or already work in tourism and would like to get trained further was defined as a very concrete and feasible measure. The resource should refer to relevant existing local legislation (workers' rights and expectations reg. holidays, overtime handling etc.) and include resources related to health and well-being, gender-based violence, child rights, etc. As a follow-up, a local organisation will be contracted to research, compile and host this repository and make it publicly available.

How you can get active :

- ❖ As soon as the repository is online, network this with all your industry stakeholders (to maximise reach).

➢ CERTIFICATION :

Certification that is locally anchored is an effective, credible, and relevant instrument to manage risk in the local context. South Africa-focused certification schemes for sustainability, like Fair Trade Tourism and its partner Travelife for Tour Operators who, are locally anchored and include not only all relevant local regulations, context and cultural sensitivities in the scheme but also the different risk topics regarding sustainability. Working with certified businesses ensures that you are already in line with many aspects of human rights due diligence.

At the same time, we recognise that multi-layered and non-dogmatic approaches and sensitisation are needed to create added value, as it is not manageable for all sizes and kinds of tourism companies to get certified. Mandatory certification could exclude or cause difficulties for smaller companies - including long-term business partners, which is also a sustainability criterion.

How you can get active:

- ❖ Increase share of certified partners by 1-3

➢ CHILD RIGHTS:

There is a fine line between cultural preservation and child labour through performances of dances and choir activities that involve children. They are a possibility for communities to participate in a touristic product and this participation can empower them, but also bear risks for children. The Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) covers in its Determination 10 (SD 10) specific rules about the participation of children under the age of 15 in the performance of advertising, artistic and cultural activities. It includes particulars regarding 'contracts', remuneration, hours of work, and protections.

How you can get active :

- ❖ Engage with suppliers who offer (directly or indirectly) cultural performances involving children and make them aware of the regulations and existing permits that businesses can apply for.

- ❖ Invite them to a webinar where the main safeguards reflected in SD10 are discussed.

Background Information:
Simply using the permit SD10 to be signed by all local partners for activities that involve children to ensure compliance with SA law won't be feasible, as getting the permit is a time-consuming, bureaucratic undertaking. It is possible for larger, formalised partners but not for small businesses/ organisations.

- ❖ Develop a child rights policy if you do not have one yet. Engage with local partners to include the local context, sensitivity and perspectives to your child rights policy. With regard to South Africa, e.g., jointly commit to
  - not use photos of children in any promotional materials,
  - discourage guests from taking pictures or videos of children during visits,
  - find other ways to show success stories (through films, etc.) than visits and performances of projects and activities with children.
- ❖ only market activities with children included where this is part of the Community Social Investment (CSI) of the supplier.

Background Information:
CSI activities related to child rights mean sustainable, meaningful support that addresses real needs identified by the community, includes children as beneficiaries (not attractions), and contributes to education, health, safety, and overall development. They are created with input from communities, NGOs, and child protection experts, and are monitored and evaluated with community feedback.

- rather empower the parents (through, e.g., buying from their businesses or through donations to registered school programmes that lighten the financial burden on parents) to care for their children. Paid performances don't necessarily empower parents and can sometimes even result in greater exploitation.

➢ WORKING CONDITIONS AND WORKERS' RIGHTS:

Despite strong regulation on workers' rights and working hours, and so-called "averaging hours agreements" under the BCEA as a workable solution, there are still several operational challenges to applying it in practice. During the assessment, we realised that especially overtime issues with rangers, drivers and guides – in FIT tours – are a challenge in South African tourism (see report).

How you can get active:

- ❖ Reasonably mitigate the risk of non-compliance and support and respect local systems and regulations for workers' rights by
  - requesting the « tax clearance letter » from the South African revenue authority SARS, which manages the obligatory contributions under the Unemployment Insurance Fund.
  - requesting the « Letter of Good Standing » from the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases (COIDA), managed by the Department of Employment and Labour's Compensation Fund.
- ❖ discussing with local partners and set up a system for submission and verification.

Background Information:
These documents are made annually available at a company level as part of legal requirements. They show the commitment of local companies regarding official workers registration, payment of taxes and social security. To ask for them places only a little extra reporting burden on suppliers but gives good insight into workers' rights compliance.

- ❖ Engage with your suppliers that employ rangers (private concessions), guides and / or drivers and exchange with them on their main elements and possibilities regarding working hours management to comply with BCEA;
  - Share best practices with other suppliers along with a request to communicate about how they ensure compliant managing of working hours for these positions.
  - Communicate up front and raise awareness
    - to your customers and in-house staff on shifting client expectations and options reg. working hours and communicating clear policies to clients and employees: e.g., no guarantee of success for Big 5, no entitlement to dinner/ evening support from drivers/guides, and communicating safety as an important aspect.
    - with your local stakeholders and partners on "worker welfare first": your commitment to collaborating with suppliers who protect the welfare of their staff as a principle that you should prioritise and gives them the mandate to decide not only on customers' demands but on workers' welfare with the same priority.