

CHALLENGES FACING SMALL AND MEDIUM TOURISM ENTERPRISES AROUND
BWINDI IMPENETRABLE NATIONAL PARK: A CASE STUDY OF NKURINGO AREA.

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the challenges encountered by small and medium tourism enterprises around Bwindi Impenetrable National park. The purpose of the study was to establish the type and range of goods and services offered by SMEs. Evaluate the available market for the product offered and to identify the challenges encountered by SMEs. The study was conducted in Nkuringo and Rubuguri parishes around BINP. The problem was investigated through three themes namely; range of goods and services offered Market availability and the challenges being faced by these enterprises. The study applied self-administered questionnaires, interview guide, observation guide, and review of secondary documents. Qualitative and Quantitative approaches were employed and data analyzed using tables and percentage analysis.

The study respondents included tourists, hosts; lodge owners and managers, roadside entrepreneurs and handicraft enterprises. The findings revealed that indeed there are arrange of goods and services that are offered to tourists by different lodges. The market of goods and services is available but seasonal. Entrepreneurs revealed that they are looking at diversifying into other services like conferences, picnics and exhibitions. The study further revealed that entrepreneurs face challenges ranging from lack of capital, Insecurity because of the DRC conflict, poor linkages, poor infrastructure as well as lack of connectivity and technology.

Although some efforts have been made to resolve some of the challenges a lot remains to be done to improve the business environment in the area.it was however proposed by some of the respondents that entrepreneurs rise up the challenges by collaborating to enjoy the benefits of linkages and networking. It was also recommended that entrepreneurs look for innovative ways of opening up new business opportunities.