

Saxion
University of
Applied Sciences

**“The pearl that shines the brightest”
Ruwenzori, Uganda**



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Mountains of the Moon University
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Thesis Report T.HBS.37179 IP–TH

This report consists of the retake of the Thesis Report of Anna Maiju Paasikoski. Several sections have been modified, the sections which have been altered are written in red text. The Advice section has the majority of the modifications.

Ruwenzori region, Uganda: Brand identification and development

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Preface

Hereby comprises the bachelor thesis for the completion of the Tourism Management Program at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences. This thesis report has been completed on behalf of the Mountains of the Moon University in Fort Portal, Uganda. The preparation, research and completion of the thesis report took place from February 2017 to June 2017. The entire report has been written by Anna Paasikoski.

The project was undertaken and provided through contacts from the Saxion University. The most challenging phase included the interpretation of objectives and goals into research methods in order to obtain beneficial results. The research was enjoyable due to the obscure environment and emphasized the importance of the management problem.

Firstly, I would like to thank my client for providing me with this project and for assisting me throughout the process in order to gain the necessary information.

I would like to thank my first examiner for their guidance and support during the process of arranging the set-up of the thesis project, further I appreciate the personal insights and opinions provided.

To the respondents of the field research, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude as without their cooperation I would not have been able to conduct the research and provide suitable outcomes and results. This refers to all of the questionnaire respondents whom gave me a few minutes of their vacation time as well as the interviews with stakeholders who eagerly answered all of my questions without hesitation.

Finally, I would like to thank my friends and family for all of the mental support I have been given during these months of analyzing and motivations to keep me on the right track. I would like to specifically thank my father for taking his time to travel to Uganda alongside me in order to complete the research, without this I would not have been able to experience things in the same way and I am delighted that he was able to take this journey with me.

Anna Paasikoski

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Management Summary

This thesis assignment has been written on behalf of the Mountains of the Moon University, Fort Portal, Uganda. The topic discusses the development of the tourism profile of the Ruwenzori region and the current consumer markets. The lack of statistical data within the Ruwenzori region creates challenges in further developing the tourism product and communication to relevant markets. By focusing on the current consumer profiles and their image of the region in alliance with the identity of the stakeholders, an advice in the form of a branding strategy can be determined. The following management question has been provided and will be answered within this research:

How can the Mountains of the Moon University determine destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a regional profile?

The report has been divided into three core chapters which comprises the introduction, theoretical framework, field research and results and finalized with an advice to the management problem for the client.

The introduction and theoretical framework form as the basis of the research and advice. The introduction discusses the reasoning behind the research as well as the objectives, research questions and strategy. The theoretical framework provides knowledge on the core concepts within the research which are necessary in conduction of the field research. The core concepts have been acknowledged as "Destination Branding", 'Destination Image' and 'Destination Identity'.

The following chapter of the report consists of the field research and results. The research methods within this research include quantitative questionnaires for statistical data from consumer perspectives and qualitative research in the form of interviews for in depth information from stakeholders. The research chapter provides the framework of planning of the research itself as well as methods and tools utilized in order to obtain and analyze the data. An analysis of the results follows with visualization of core numerical data and conclusions based on relations between differing values. The results indicate that the key target market is defined as 'adventure tourists' ranging between the ages of 20 – 35 years. Furthermore, the region itself profiles as a diverse, natural and culturally rich in amenities. The unique selling point of the Ruwenzori region includes the variation of activities within the interest of an adventure tourist. The snow-capped equatorial Ruwenzori Mountains form as the back drop of the beautiful landscapes, the Crater lakes, multitude of wildlife enriched national parks in combination with the welcoming local culture makeup an ideal destination for peace of mind as well as capturing unique and memorable moments.

The final chapter of the research includes the advice, the advice is a preliminary marketing campaign including a branding strategy focused on the adventure tourist niche market. Within this chapter alternate branding advices are evaluated and analyzed in order to distinguish the most important profiling method for the region. The adventure tourist was deemed as the most suitable target market and advice in the form of a branding strategy was created. Furthermore, the PDCA-cycle was incorporated in order to visualize the implementation of the strategy. Included within this are the financial implications which will occur in the event of implementing the advice. In order to finalize the advice, the benefits and feasibility of the project are discussed and elaborated. Conclusions are utilized to wrap up the completion of the thesis report

The final section of the report contains the afterword which serves as a basis for reflection of the entire process of writing the thesis report. This includes day to day practices as well as the implications that this report will have on the tourism industry as a whole.

List of Abbreviations

MMU:	Mountains of the Moon University
QENP:	Queen Elizabeth National Park
UNWTO:	United Nation World Tourism Organization
USP:	Unique Selling Point
UTB:	Uganda Tourism Board

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1. Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the most diverse, agile and rapidly growing industries in the world. Destination management organizations (DMO's) strive to effectively present the characteristics and core values of the destination in order to define a brand identity and position themselves within the market. Destination brand identification plays a crucial role in the decision making process of prospective tourism consumers, ensuring that the brand identity aligns with the destination image. According to Echtner and Ritchie (2003) successful tourism marketing can only be accomplished when the projected brand identity and the tourists' image of the destination are aligned. Destination image is constructed through a combination of induced and organic sources of information; Organic sources refer to those without direct intent to contribute to the promotion of tourism (Abodeeb, 2015). Consequently, research shows that prospective consumers are more likely to refer to organic sources of information as they can be seen as more valid through unbiased consumer perspectives. Factors such as political instability, inconsistent climate change or outbreak of virus epidemic form as organic factors which will impact the image of the destination negatively in the minds of potential tourists.

1.1 – The client

This thesis research has been conducted on behalf of Dr. Moses Muhumuza and the Mountains of the Moon University (MMU) in Fort Portal, in the Ruwenzori region of Uganda. The Mountains of the Moon University was founded in 2002 by a group of indigenous community members from the Ruwenzori region (MMU, 2016). The MMU was granted an operational license by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHC) in March 2005, officially opening its doors to enhance higher education for the populations of the Western Region of Uganda. The unique nature of being founded, owned and governed by the local community provides further emphasis on community service and development. Dr. Moses Muhumuza is the Director of postgraduate studies and research at the MMU, as well as a Chairperson in the Board of Trustees for the Ruwenzori regional Tourism Cluster. The Ruwenzori regional tourism cluster forms as an independent destination management organization segmented from the Ugandan Tourism Board (UTB), with focus on corresponding national projects leading to shared results and focused goals. **The regional tourism cluster responsible for the Ruwenzori region serves as the client and will obtain the results of this research as primary data to serve as input for further marketing development.**

1.2 – Reasoning behind the research

The western area of Uganda forms as the Ruwenzori region which is divided between seven districts; Kabarole, Kasese, Kamwenge, Kyenjojo, Bundibugyo, Ntoroko and Kyegegwa. Fort Portal, the largest city within the Western region is located in the Kabarole district which can be seen as the hub of the Ruwenzori region with approximately 297km distance from Kampala, Uganda's capital. Alongside magnificent landscapes of the Ruwenzori Mountains, Fort Portal forms as a gateway to an abundance of national parks including Kibale forest, Semliki national park, Queen Elizabeth national park (QENP) and Toro-Semliki wildlife reserve. In addition, the region is home to the Amabere caves, Sempaya hot springs and a multitude of pristine Crater lakes. It can be said that the region is a haven of natural amenities, ideal for those interested in exploring the wilderness for rare plant species, seeking near endangered bird species as well as observing wild primate life. Due to the nature of the majority of the attractions within the region, it can be assumed that many of the travelers are earthly based tourists with prime interest in consuming and viewing amenities of natural essence.

Upon recent detection, it has been recognized that the regional tourism cluster and stakeholders have little to no data concerning the consumers currently travelling to the Ruwenzori region. The lack of data concerns the consumer profiles; demographic, purpose of visit and their image of the region

itself. The lack in data also concerns the identity of the region through the perceptions of the stakeholders within the region. It is crucial for destination management organizations to ensure coherency between the image and identity of a destination in order to provide a sustainable tourism product. The management problem central to this research is the insufficient data of consumers travelling within the Ruwenzori region and the destination image through the perceptions of tourists and stakeholders. The Mountains of the Moon University and regional tourism cluster are challenged in further developing tourism processes within the Ruwenzori region due to insufficient data of consumers as well as the profile of the region itself. The aim of the research is to find out about the current markets travelling to the region and their image of the region in combination with the identity developed by the stakeholders in order to indicate coherency. **The results of the research will lead to an advice in the form of a regional profile which serves as input for a marketing campaign. In order to visualize the regional profile, a branding strategy will comply through obtaining a thorough brand identity.** A brand identity can be formulated when the consumer image and stakeholder identity are aligned by combining opinions to validate the potential product to future markets. The branding strategy will be utilized as a preliminary destination profile system which may indicate focus points within the marketing process, or faulty factors within the consumer journey.

1.3 – The advice objective & management question

Research will be performed on the inbound tourism in Fort Portal and surrounding attractions within Ruwenzori region in Uganda. The following section describes the objectives, management problem and research questions for this research. The following advice objective and corresponding management question have been formulated as suitable based on the previous reasoning and management problem described.

The objective of this advice is to inform the Mountains of the Moon University on a suitable branding strategy with focus on destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a profile of the Ruwenzori region.

The following advice question has been determined based on the information mentioned previously and serves as a basis for advice for the Mountains of the Moon University:

How can the Mountains of the Moon University determine destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a regional profile?

The advice objective indicates the need for defining the image and identity of the region by gathering consumer data and their preferences and reasoning for visiting Ruwenzori in alignment with the service providers. By focusing on which products Ruwenzori is currently offering and the markets utilizing the services provided, a profile of the region can be developed. As mentioned previously, the development of brand image and identity will lead to an advice in the form of a preliminary marketing campaign; defining a regional brand identity. The theoretical research consists of a literature review which contributes to the advice of a branding strategy, the literature review includes definitions of core concepts which support the research and advice for improved validity and focus. The following core concepts have been constructed and defined; “Destination image”, “Destination identity” and “Destination Branding”. The objective of the literature is to gain insights into destination image, identity and branding in order to determine cohesive consumer and destination profiles within the Ruwenzori region with the intent to create a regional branding strategy.

1.4 – The objective of the research and the research questions

The following research objective and research questions have been formulated following the constructed advice objective and management question.

The objective of the research is to determine the identity of the Ruwenzori region in order to create a suitable branding framework.

In order to conduct the research, two opposing methods of research will be utilized; indication of the image, perspective and identity of the Ruwenzori region from the consumer's personal insights will be considered. Secondly, stakeholders within the region will provide their insights of the product they are marketing. By determining an identity of the region, a branding strategy can be developed.

The research questions have been formulated based on the objectives of the advice and research as well as the management advice question. The following central research questions have been further defined by developing sub questions for each central question:

- I. What are the core components of the tourism product offered in the Ruwenzori region?
 - a. What types of attractions are offered in the Ruwenzori region?
 - b. What are the key drivers attracting tourists to the Ruwenzori region?
 - c. What types of facilitating services are provided? (Accommodation)
- II. What are the segmentation characteristics of the current tourists travelling to the Ruwenzori region for tourism purposes?
 - a. What does the typical tourist travelling to the Ruwenzori region look like?
 - b. What is the purpose of travel of current visitors in the Ruwenzori region?
- III. What are the defining characteristics of the Ruwenzori region personality?
 - a. What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?
 - b. What are the most appealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?
 - c. What are the most unappealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?
 - d. What are the most unique features about the Ruwenzori region?
- IV. What is the current image of the region?
 - A. Which similarities of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?
 - b. Which differences of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

1.5 – The reading guide

The introduction of the thesis project as provided above, contains background information on the problem which has been segmented into aspects; the research objective, reasoning behind the project and the management question including research questions. The introduction serves as basis for the remainder of the review and can be labelled as chapter one. The following chapter; chapter two, serves as the framework of the theoretical framework to the management problem. In this chapter, applied methods of research will be defined as well as differing definitions of the core concepts will be provided. The theoretical framework also includes the field research involved, methodological justification of the research strategies will be provided as well as the results and conclusions. The results are visualized by providing answers to the research questions. In order to finalize chapter two, an analysis of the chosen research method will be discussed including validity and reliability of the research. Chapter three refers to the advice formulated to the client in order to solve the management problem. The advice section is formulated with alternative advices leading to a full explanation of the most suitable advice stemmed from the research. The advice fully describes visualization of financial implications involved and PDCA cycle. The final element of the thesis review includes an afterword with a detailed explanation of day to day practices and a reflection of the entire research procedure.

2. The theoretical framework

The following section of the report consists of the theoretical framework. Prior to conducting the field research, it is necessary to have a solid framework of information regarding the concepts and ideals in order to provide valid and operational advice. The constant progression of the World Wide Web has led to a multitude of platforms and databases filled with an abundance of information, it can be assumed that much of that information may be outdated, irrelevant or incorrect. The AAOCC criteria is a set of principles defined as Authority, Accuracy, Objectivity, Currency and Coverage. When utilizing these criteria, a research is able to identify sources containing valid and reliable information written by authors with qualifications to accredit the information (Appendix: Table 6: AAOCC Criteria, p.50). Furthermore, in order to find the relevant information, search engines such as Saxion Library, Google Scholar and Cornell University have been utilized. The “snowballing method” indicates the scanning of reference lists of full text papers in order to source additional information, in correspondence with the AAOCC criteria; this method of research can be seen as a useful method for obtaining further validation.

2.1 – Research objective and research questions

The following section comprises the previously mentioned research objective and research questions. The research questions will be answered in the results section of the theoretical framework, upon completion of the field research.

The objective of the research is to determine the identity of the Ruwenzori region in order to create a suitable branding framework.

- I. What are the core components of the tourism product offered in the Ruwenzori region?
 - a. What types of attractions are offered in the Ruwenzori region?
 - b. What are the key drivers attracting tourists to the Ruwenzori region?
 - c. What types of facilitating services are provided? (Accommodation)
- II. What are the segmentation characteristics of the current tourists travelling to the Ruwenzori region for tourism purposes?
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 - a. What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?
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 - d. What are the most unique features about the Ruwenzori region?
- IV. What is the current image of the region?
 - A. Which similarities of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?
 - b. Which differences of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

2.2 – The definition of the core concepts

The following core concepts have been thoroughly defined in order to compliment the reasoning behind the research. Primarily, the core concept “Destination Branding” forms as a significant topic as it composes the advice. The following core concepts include “Destination image” in contrast with “Destination identity”. These core concepts have been indicated as most relevant to this project due to

the issue of inconsistent regional profile development due to lack of data. The theoretical framework contributes to the construction of the research tools by elaborating on factors of high importance when shaping destination identity.

2.2.1 – Definition of Destination Branding

The term “Branding” can be defined as identifying unique attributes of a product and selling those explicitly. According to Holloway, C. (2004), by giving a product a brand identity it benefits the company by differentiating from competitors as well as adds perceived value to the product. A brand can be defined as a ‘name, sign, symbol or design’ or a combination of these to distinguish a specific product from competitors. When utilizing the term ‘branding’ in relation to destinations, it can be difficult to use the same definition. This is due to the broad nature of the term ‘destination’ as there are opposing brands within a country, region, city, or town. Ritchie and Ritchie (2004) claim that destination brand is a name, symbol, logo or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates a destination. Destination branding conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with that specific destination.

According to Kotler et al. (2016) branding refers to a product or service whose dimensions differentiate in some way from other products or services designed to satisfy the same needs. It can be assumed that branding also provides a promise to the consumer as there are clear expectations to be met. Page & Connell (2009) distinguish branding as helping destinations to harness their USP (Unique Selling Point) in order to promote their attractive features in a manner that stands out from others. Destination branding can also be seen as more than just selling the USP, but as Morgan and Pritchard (2002) state; branding is designed to connect the consumer with the destination in both the present and future. This can already be seen as an effective promotions tool with destinations such as New York City; in 1970 the campaign launched ‘The Big Apple’, and with this slogan it has allowed consumers to identify the destination with personality.

Destination branding can be seen as the step following destination profile development, it can be seen as the marketing of the destination profile, by focusing on key forces driving consumers and using those as the element of promotion. According to Morgan, N., & Pritchard, A., (2004) Brands differentiate products and represent a promise of value. This notion also indicates the element of loyalty, as branding of products specifically initiates customer loyalty in many cases; for example Apple Inc. products. This can be seen for destination as well, Shimp and Saeed (1993) applied the term country equity, referring to the emotional value resulting from consumers’ association with a brand of a country. Destinations have the ability to brand themselves as the image they wish to be perceived, with this they must be able to provide the corresponding products to the consumers in order to create an emotional bond with the brand and the consumer’s ideals. According to Anholt (2009) a destination brand is the DNA that defines the destination. It should run through every act of marketing communication and behavior by the national tourism offices and stakeholders within the destination.

According to Cai (2002) building a positive destination image that identifies and differentiates the destination by selecting a consistent brand element mix remains as the core of creating a destination brand. As stated by Anholt (2009) one defining aspect of the branding process includes the validation of the profile of the brand. There are two common brand building models which assist in thoroughly analyzing the prospects which the destination has to offer in order to develop the brand. These models include the Brand pyramid and the Brand wheel. These models are used to breakdown the core components making up the genetic matter of the brand, the brand wheel is a further detailed version which deems qualitative emotional characteristics as equally important to the DNA, this thesis report

will make use of the brand pyramid as it acts as a blueprint for the regional profile set up without the need for in depth qualitative consumer data. As stated by Fan (2006) is it inevitable that a target market must be defined due to the multitude of products within a destination brand. The process of branding is simplified by the incorporation of the branding wheel, and can be more easily directed to a specific target market (Please refer to Figures 2 & 3 pg. 52 in Appendix). It is almost impossible to interpret one core brand value with a destination. Cai (2002), & Nandan (2005) both argue that a successful destination brand is comprised of two essential ingredients; Brand identity and Brand image.

2.2.2 – Definition of Destination Image

The following core concept concerns the destination image. Definitions of Destination image have been found to be a controversial topic due to challenges in conceptualizing core factors of consumer perception. The image of a destination is based on the perceptions of the visitors involved. According to Page & Connell (2014), destination image can be clarified as the perceived and promoted elements of a destination, which determine appeal to visitors. Naturally, it can be assumed that a destination must provide truthful, feasible and attractive characteristics in order to ensure that the predetermined needs of the consumers are met. According to Middleton and Clarke (2001) images and expectations of travel experiences are closely linked in prospective customers' minds and the ultimate objective of destination marketing is to "sustain, alter or develop images in order to influence prospective buyers" expectations. Destination image is the destination personality from the perception of the consumer. Hunt (1975) pioneered the idea and importance of image of a tourism destination in development of the tourism product. According to Crompton (1979) destination image can be defined as an attitudinal concept consisting of the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that tourists hold of the destination.

Echtner and Ritchie (1991) prompted an alternate method of defining destination image which concerned multiple axes to support the image of a destination, these include; psychological/ functional dimension, the unique dimension and holistic/ attributes axes. Following this definition, the conceptualization of destination image was simplified with a set of aspects within the destination which have influence on the perceptions of consumers. Beerli and Martin (2004) conceptualized the image of a destination into nine categories which all concern the perceptions of consumers. These nine items can be defined as destination personality or character traits which influence the image of the destination. This model can be used as a tool in order to define the personality of the destination, however these factors may not include the emotional value of the consumers, and the differing views on aspects. In order to find the image of the destination, the destination identity table (Figure 6: Destination Image and Identity Operationalization p.55) will be utilized as a set of criteria which are to be assessed by the current consumers within the Ruwenzori region.

Kotler et al (1994) has defined destination image as the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person holds of it. Destination image can be seen as a crucial factor within the consumer's decision making process. Destination image are the combinations of perceptual/ cognitive and affective evaluations formed of the entire image of a place (Stern and Krakover, 1993). The image of a destination can be defined as the destination identity from the perspective and opinions of the consumer. This includes opinions and emotional value over the destinations amenities and defining combination characteristics. The majority of miscomprehension regarding destination branding concerns the differences between destination brand image and brand identity, in accordance with Florek et al (2006) the difference relies on opinions generated by two differing perspectives; the supplier and the receiver. Furthermore, it can also be established that brand identity and brand image are reciprocal and cannot be fully defined without one another. In order to establish destination brand

image, the consumer perspectives must be analyzed based on the assets that the identity consists of, and vice versa; a thorough brand identity can solely be established inclusive of consumer perspectives.

A successful destination brand consists of a positive brand image; this can be succeeded by emphasizing strong, favorable and unique brand associations (Qu et al., 2011). By avoiding attention through negative organic sources, and up keeping valid and reliable induced data to the market; a destination may strive and create a sustainable and powerful destination brand for themselves.

2.2.3 – Definition of Destination Identity

As it has become apparent, destination identity and destination image share similar values and can be perceived as a shared entity simply differentiated by opposing perspectives. Destination identity is a crucial aspect in creating a destination brand. Similarly, destination identity is the combined characteristics of a destination from the perspective of the tourism providers. According to Upshaw (1995), there are various aspects which makeup a brand. The brand identity as distinguished (Upshaw, 1995) can be described as a brand's overall equity; the total perception of a brand in the marketplace, driven mostly by its positioning and personality. Gnoth (2007) describes destination personality as a combination of place characteristics which represent values by which destination are perceived, compared and judged. Rokeach (1973) concluded that the destination brand is determined more so by the quality and values perceived by the consumers (Brand image) as opposed to the values of the destination community (brand identity). Buhalis (2000) states that a destination's unique identity can a useful source of competitive advantage for destinations by creating a distinctive brand.

Researchers have been challenged in distinguishing a sole brand for destinations due to their multidimensional personality traits and characteristics (Morgan et al, 2004). Destinations are segmented between differing cultural roots, social processes and landscapes; leading to multiple identities within one destination or place, regional DMO's have assisted in differentiating between separate parts of one destination and including separated market promotions planning. According to Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott (2003) due to a large span of diverse landscapes containing numerous local communities and tourism operators, individual brand identities arise, challenging the destination further in developing a collective destination brand or identity. Keller (1998) distinguished brand identity as a component reflecting the contribution of all brand elements to awareness and image. It can be determined that brand identity can be utilized for an enterprises marketing blueprint as it distinguishes the unique selling points, target markets and provides a conceptual breakdown of the core values of a brand; **two conceptualized tools for distinguishing brand identity include the brand pyramid and brand wheel**. Aaker (1996) approves this ideal as stated that brand identity provides direction, purpose and meaning for the brand. Accordingly, the brand identity is fundamental when determining a strategic vision and is the driver of brand associations.

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2002) have also established that brand identity is the representation of core values that a business wants to communicate. One notion which is yet to be mentioned is how brand identity of a destination can also establish simultaneous independent company values. As stated by Burmann and Zeplin (2005); brand identity allows staff members to gain an understanding of the brand values and how to behave upon them. This can be extremely effective in regards to destination branding and identification as it allows for a collective ideology within one region, country or area providing a more powerful product to the consumers. Specifically in regards to a destination, local communities must be involved and included in the brand identification stage as an inconsistent brand presence will lead to overall confusion from the perceptions of the consumers. Coordination with

stakeholders and local environment allows for consistent brand awareness and improved sense of place of consumers (Wheeler (2011)).

It can be defined that destination identity and destination image share common characteristics and rely on one another in order to define a thorough destination branding strategy. Identification of a destination can be seen as a simpler task as there are fewer emotional and intangible factors involved in the representations of a destinations assets. There are many organic sources of information based on non-tourism related industries which will impact the image of a destination regardless of the efforts to support the destination identity; making it a challenging role for DMO's to have full control over promotion and marketing to attract incoming travelers.

2.3 – Relationship between the core concepts

Following the thoroughly defined data on the three core concepts, distinguished and clear definitions of Destination Branding, Destination Image and Destination Identity are provided below.

Destination Branding

Following the definitions of the literature review it can be concluded that 'destination branding' is the identification of a destination by means of a unique symbol, name of sign which projects the image of the destination in order to distinguish itself from others.

Destination Image

Following the definitions of the literature review it can be concluded that 'destination image' is the perceived and promoted elements of a destination, which determine appeal to visitors based on the perspective from the consumers.

Destination Identity

Following the definitions of the literature review it can be concluded that 'destination identity' is the collective elements that make up the characteristics of a destination based on the perspectives of the suppliers.

Operationalization is the process of defining phenomenon into measurable tools, this is a research method to ensure that there is sufficient focus on the topics involved. The core concepts have been operationalized into defining aspects, these have been visualized in the Appendix (Figure 4: Destination Branding Operationalization & Figure 5 Destination Image and Identity Operationalization. Pp. 53–54) the three core concepts of destination image, destination identity and destination branding can be clearly distinguished as interconnected entities. There is a dependence on each elaborated core concept with another, destination image from the perspective of the consumers must be aligned with the destination identity in order to provide a valid destination branding strategy. It can be concluded that the core values and factors used to assess destination identity are shared between destination image; the difference between them is the audience whom provide perspectives. As visualized in Figure 1: Relation between core concepts, it can be determined that an alliance between destination image and identity will make up the core components of destination branding itself.

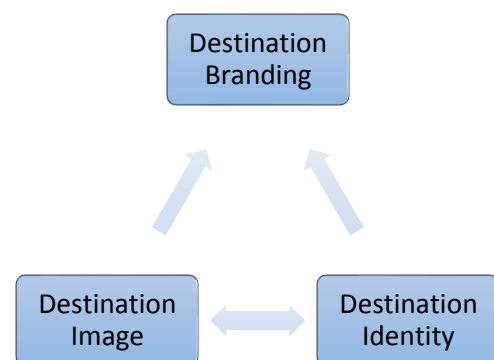


Figure 1 Relation between core concepts

Destination branding cannot be formulated without conducting a research to primarily investigate the

destination identity. By focusing on the core components and elements which makeup a destination, an identity can be determined. Followed by a similar analysis through the perceptions of consumers of the destination, alignment of image and identity can be determined. It is important to consider that a destination brand consists of a multitude of characteristics which will appeal to numerous target markets; DMO's must be aware of defining target markets prior to determining a brand strategy. A destination brand can be utilized as a blueprint containing core values and characteristics which appeal to multiple markets, this can be utilized to further create segmented marketing and promotional activities. This research will focus on destination image and destination identity alignment in order to determine a regional destination brand for the Ruwenzori region. As mentioned by Park, Jaworski et al (1986) a branding strategy can provide an intensive and rigorous framework for managing the total reputation of a destination and its ability to attract visitors.

3. The Methodological framework

The following section of the report consists of the methodological justification for the specified research methods to be utilized during the field research. This includes detailed explanations of the research strategy, methods of data collection, the selection of data sources as well as the methods of data analysis.

The objective of the research is to gain insight into catalysts comprising the characteristics of the Ruwenzori region in order to create a suitable branding framework. As mentioned previously, two methods of data collection will be utilized in order to obtain the brand image and identity and formulate alignment between the two.

3.1. The research strategy

The research strategy can be determined based on the area of knowledge that is being researched. It is important to decide on a research strategy that will provide answers to the research questions. Based on the information, it has been decided that a pragmatic approach to the research is the most appropriate in order to answer the management problem. The following research strategies will be utilized in this research:

1. Secondary research (desk research) through existing data
2. Quantitative research
3. Qualitative research

The pragmatic approach to the research has been chosen due to the differing research respondents specified in order to conduct valid and reliable research. In order to differentiate the research questions with the research strategy, the following colors have been utilized for visual representation.

1. Secondary research (desk research) through existing data

Desk research also known as secondary research involves the summarization of existing theories and research (2011). Commonly desk research is utilized within the literature review of a research however it can also be a method of gathering data as a part of the field research. According to Bulmer et al. (2009) secondary research includes raw data and published summaries which are analyzed to provide additional differing knowledge and interpretations. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2011) state that the main advantage of desk research is the reduced consumption of time and money. One clear disadvantage of secondary research refers to differing research objectives, this indicates that the information may not completely match the knowledge which is required for this research (Denscombe, 2007). This is apparent when researching statistical data on tourism within a destination as most secondary data are

on national level rather than regional. The desk research is used for gathering statistical data during the primary phase of the field research.

The following sub questions will be answered by conducting desk research:

- What are the defining characteristics of the Ruwenzori region personality?
- What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the core components of the tourism product offered in the Ruwenzori region?
- What types of attractions are offered in the Ruwenzori region?

Desk research will be conducted in order to find out which products, attractions and services are being offered within the Ruwenzori region. Furthermore, by looking at previous statistical data on tourism activity within the region, a primary indication can be made as well as comparisons based on quantitative research.

2. Quantitative research

The majority of the research within this report will be quantitative based on the need for numerical data. Quantitative research refers to numerical data or data that have been quantified (2012), statistics, figures and facts are those factors which are crucial to quantitative research. Quantitative research examines relationships between variables which are measured numerical and analyzed using a range of statistical techniques (Saunders, 2012). This research paper includes quantitative research as the prime source of data due to the fact that the required knowledge are facts, figures and statistical data on both the region itself and the markets traveling within the region. A key advantage of this research method includes the opportunity to reach a large number of respondents with the use of a questionnaire, this can increase the validity of the results through a large sample base.

The following sub questions will be answered by conducting quantitative research:

- What types of attractions are offered in the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the key drivers attracting tourists to the Ruwenzori region?
- What types of facilitating services are provided? (Accommodation)
- What does the typical tourist travelling to the Ruwenzori region look like?
- What is the purpose of travel of current visitors in the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?
- Which similarities of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?
- Which differences of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

3. Qualitative research

Qualitative research methods differ to quantitative research as there is little focus on numerical data, in contrast the focus is on the meanings, feelings and emotions that a person attaches to a situation (Verhoeven, 2011). Many researchers believe that qualitative research is less valid, however Wester (1991) disapproved this notion as qualitative research not only provides data with figures, but also the reasoning behind the data. This method of researching can be used to answer questions within the research which provide the reasoning behind decisions as well as preferences on future decisions as these rely on the experiences and feelings of those involved. Qualitative research will be utilized in order to elaborate on the wants and needs of the tourism board in relation to the product and the

presented identity of it. By obtaining the opinions of stakeholders within the industry, proper alignment of image and identity can be met.

The following sub questions will be answered by conducting qualitative research:

- What are the key drivers attracting tourists to the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the most appealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the most unappealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?
- What are the most unique features about the Ruwenzori region?
- Which similarities of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?
- Which differences of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

3.2 – Methods of data collection

Data collection is one of the most important aspects involved when conducting a research study. Inaccurate or undeveloped data collection methods can lead to invalid results, this occurs when the tools of collection are inappropriate for the field of research or if the research questions themselves are formulated incorrectly. Methods of data collection differ within quantitative research and qualitative research; quantitative research can be seen as more structured as a standard set of predetermined questions (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001), whereas qualitative research focuses more on the direction the opinions of the respondents lead.

This thesis assignment will utilize quantitative research as the key method of data collection. Research in the form of a survey involves the development of a survey including open ended questions in order to gain numerical data. Random sampling has been determined as the most appropriate method of data collection with questionnaires in a hard copy handout as the suitable tool for dissemination. Paper– pencil questionnaires can be costly and require time for valid distribution, therefore recent preference leads to web based questionnaires, unfortunately sufficient personal data about the sample population is not available therefore this cannot be utilized. The distribution of questionnaires will be undertaken within the Ruwenzori region, identifying tourists within the region. An advantage of this method is that the respondents are more likely to provide truthful responses as the results will remain anonymous as well as the questions indicating non personal statistical data. The questionnaires will be handed out in multiple areas within the region, however mainly focusing on Fort Portal as it is a main gateway for tourists travelling to the multitude of amenities in the area. Hotels will be used as hubs as these are where most tourists can be found. **Furthermore, the larger restaurant chains located in Fort Portal can be used for disseminating the questionnaires as it is known that package tours and trips have arranged joint ventures with these companies for their lunch breaks and meetings for discussing the activities; therefore can be justified to locate incoming tourists to the region.** There is no specific target market in terms of type of tourist as that is an aspect yet to be defined within the research.

Qualitative research is another data collection method which will be utilized, within this research this will be in the form of an interview. There are three fundamental types of research interviews: Structured, semi structured and unstructured (Gill, et al. 2008). The most appropriate types of interview for the research is structured as the research topics and questions have been predetermined however still indicate the need for the thoughts, ideas and opinions of the respondents. In this case specifically the qualitative research will be performed on respondents within the tourism board and/ or stakeholders with responsibilities in the development of the region. This method of research motivates

importance of the researcher not presenting their own ideas or opinions as factors which may influence the responses. The stakeholders which are to be targeted for this research include hoteliers, restaurant managers and touring companies. A balance of opposing managers of differing hospitality industry firms improves the quality of the results as comparisons can be made.

Quantitative and Qualitative research is necessary for this research as to gain insights from both the supplier and consumer of the product. It is essential to gain information from both sides of the spectrum to ensure that the needs of both will be fulfilled. The current consumers are able to provide their opinions on the region and their preferences in the amenities; the industry professionals are also able to provide their desired profile of the region as well as personal insights on the region. As mentioned previously, destination image and destination identity share similar core values; the difference is the perception. In accordance to gain valid data, similar questions will be answered through the two target groups for the research.

3.3 – The sampling plan

As mentioned in the previous sections, the populations which will be targeted within this research are current consumers travelling within the Ruwenzori region for tourism purposes. The qualitative research will target populations within the tourism board and stakeholders contributing to the tourism product. It can be assumed that the entire populations visiting the region cannot be interviewed to gain insights, therefore the method of sampling will be utilized. Sampling refers to the distinctions of populations that are selected for the data. In this research a non-probability based sample has been defined as the most appropriate method due to the reason that no sampling frame can be predetermined.

In order to deliberate the sample size for the research, several indicators have been utilized. Due to the reason that it is impossible to obtain regional tourism data, a sample size cannot be calculated based on the tourism arrival numbers for the country. Therefore statistical data on national parks has been utilized. There are 12 national parks within Uganda, of which 6 are located within the Ruwenzori region. There are also 4 more national parks located around the region as well, therefore it can be concluded that the Western parts of the country have the richest natural amenities. According to the Ministry of tourism (2014) the total number of tourists visiting the national parks in 2013 was 213,950 visitors. In accordance with the previously mentioned factors, approximately half of the national parks are located within the Ruwenzori region. Assuming that there has been equal distribution to the national parks, 50% of the visitor number have visited the region. Therefore the total population for one year's visitations is 106,975 travelers (Ministry of tourism, wildlife and antiquities, 2014). Due to the reason that this research can only be conducted over the period of one month, it is also important to look at seasonal differences. This research will be conducted over the month of April 2017, this is not the peak season however the numbers of visitors in the national parks in April 2013 was approximately 15,000. Based on the information above, the total population for researching in the month of April will result in 50% of the 15,000 and from this, the sample can be determined.

With the use of a calculation (Sample Calculation, 2017), with a confidence level of 90% and margin of error as 5% the determined sample size will be 260 respondents in order to gain an appropriate result.

Due to costly entry fees in order to locate the calculated sample population, it can be concluded that it will be challenging for the researcher to be able to obtain 260 respondents within the monthly time frame, therefore it has been deliberated that a decreased sample size of 100 respondents will provide valid and beneficial statistical data, which aligns with the qualitative research. In order to conduct the qualitative research the method of simple random sampling will be applied to the calculated sample

population. For the qualitative research, few interviews will take place with differing officials concerned with the tourism product of Uganda; these include a member of the regional tourism board, members of management within the accommodation sector and restaurant sector. The most appropriate method has been deliberated as quota sampling due to the prior knowledge on the topic. The interview will be one independent face to face meeting with an individual, therefore the sample population is one member affiliated with the tourism sector. There will be a total of 4 interviews conducted from slightly varying perspectives of the tourism affiliation within the Ruwenzori region.

3.4 – Methods of data analysis

In order to analyze the results of the research, differing methods must be utilized for the quantitative and qualitative data. The method of data analysis for the quantitative research includes the SPSS software. SPSS is a software package used for logical batched and non-batched statistical analysis (2015). This is a useful tool in quantitative research due to the reason that all of the information obtained from the questionnaires can be collected as data with SPSS and can be converted into varying diagrams and further conceptualizations of the results which will assist in defining relations between values. This is also a useful tool in answering the research questions as visual relations between aspects can lead to discoveries. *SPSS can be used to effectively segment the results in cohesive orders, by including univariate and bivariate data from the quantitative results, comparisons of differing variables are made and relations between them can be distinguished. Coding in a separate form for qualitative responses will be included in contrast with the interview responses. Tables for visualization such as simple bar graphs are utilized, as well as bivariate data analysis in the form of cross tabulation and Cramer's V.*

In order to analyze the results of the qualitative research, the method of coding can be utilized. The interviews with professionals within the tourism industry of Ruwenzori region will provide answers to the qualitative research questions. These interviews will be transcribed which will lead to open, axial and selective coding in order to analyze the collected information. The combined results of the statistical data through quantitative research and information provided through qualitative data will lead to an overall image of the region. A coherent image of the region can be defined and a branding strategy can be implemented with the intent to suit the wishes and needs of all parties involved.

3.5 – The Results

The following section includes the results of the conducted research. The results include data through quantitative questionnaires in combination with qualitative data through interviews. During the conducting of the research phase there were some unexpected turnouts of sample populations. Of the 100 planned respondents, 72 fully filled questionnaires were obtained from varied target markets within the Ruwenzori region. Furthermore, 5 interviews were conducted with officials with relations to the tourism product of the region; these include 3 interviews with differing accommodation providers within Fort Portal, one member of the regional tourism cluster as well as an interview with a tourism marketing and product consultant for the UNWTO fulfilling similar research within the region. The results include univariate data of the quantitative and qualitative research, bivariate analysis has been completed to further distinguish relations between the responses. These include relations between differing variables within each specified research.

3.5.1 – Quantitative results

The quantitative research was conducted on tourists travelling within the Ruwenzori region. The main location of dissemination of questionnaires was within Fort Portal as it forms as a hub for tourists travelling to the many amenities within the region. 77 out of the 100 intended respondents provided

answers on their travel preferences as well as further insights. A copy of the questionnaire has been included in the Appendix as: Figure 7: The questionnaire p.58.

The tourism market profile

Firstly, demographic statistical data concerning the market has been analyzed. The results indicate that the highest number of visitors were between the ages of 26–35 (37.7%) and the lowest numbers shared between the ages of 14 – 19 (2.6%) and 66–100 (2.7%). It can be assumed that due to the types of activities offered within the region, one must be physically fit, patient and open-minded. The Ruwenzori region offers a multitude of assets which include hiking, trekking and plentiful movement therefore the tourists would be challenged in case of immobility. Furthermore, more than half of the respondents were between the ages of 20 – 35 amounting to 62.4% of the total sample population. The following value concludes the nationalities of the respondents, the highest populations includes Germany (20.8%) and the lowest of Chinese (1.3%). Other nationalities range from American (14.3%), Dutch (13.0%), British (11.7%) and Belgium (7.8%). A surprising figure includes the domestic tourism within the region with 13.0% of Ugandan travelers within the Ruwenzori region. This is due to the weather, as many domestic tourists travel away from the crowded cities for fresh air and a peaceful environment. The genders of the respondents can almost be equally divided between Male (45.5%) and Female (54.5%). Following, the most common duration of travel within the region is shared between 13–17 days (26%) and 4 – 8 days (26%), this can conclude that most travelers will either book a travel between one or two week periods. The second highest duration of travel includes 1 – 3 day visits (15.6%). When focusing on whom the visitors are traveling with, out of the respondents 42.9% were travelling with their family, the second highest Travel Company was with friends (24.7%). The lowest scoring travel company concludes with partner (7.8%), indicating that many people travel with larger groups and not on couples trips.

The following value includes the purpose of travel; with just over half of the responses stating that their purpose of travel was discovery and exploration (51.9%). The purpose of travel with the lowest number of respondents includes business travel (6.5%). When asked about the type of tourist the respondent sees themselves as during their travel within the region, 37.7% mentioned Adventure tourist, followed by Leisure tourist (15.6%). Again, the lowest figures were from Business tourists (2.6%). To conclude the consumer profile, the preference in accommodation varies within the region; 31.2% of the respondents chose Guesthouses as their preference for stay, the second highest figures were guests staying in Lodges (27.3%). A mere 2.6% chose to stay in a Bed and Breakfast, it can be concluded that Guesthouses and homesteads provide similar products and have been chosen as primary means of accommodation.

Image of the region – Consumer perspectives

During the quantitative research, the respondents were asked questions on their likelihood of visitation to specific attractions, open questions on the image of the region as well as opinions on the region itself. The respondents were provided with a list of activities offered within the region which are popularly advertised online. According to the results, 61.5% of the respondents answered 'highly likely' for visitation to a national park, a further 16.9% responded with 'likely' to visit therefore visitation to a national park can be concluded as the most popular activity as it scored the highest numbers. The second highest activity with 46.2% of the responses with 'highly likely' include Chimpanzee trekking. The lowest scoring activity includes visitation and tour of the Amabere caves with a mere 5.1% of the responses of 'highly likely' and 23.1% of the respondents answering 'highly unlikely'.

	Highly Likely	Likely	Neutral	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely	Missing
Hike up the Ruwenzori mountain	20.5%	25.6%	5.1%	12.8%	16.7%	19.2%
Visit to a national park	61.5%	16.7%	2.6%	3.8%	1.3%	14.1%
Chimpanzee trekking	46.2%	14.1%	9%	9%	7.7%	14.1%
Gorilla trekking	29.5%	10.3%	9%	11.5%	23.1%	16.7%
Cultural tour of crater lakes	24.4%	20.5%	19.2%	7.7%	11.5%	16.7%
Visit and tour of Amabere caves	5.1%	7.7%	21.8%	20.5%	23.1%	21.8%
Safari adventure	35.9%	19.2%	14.1%	9.0%	6.4%	15.4%
Visit to the botanical gardens	6.4%	17.9%	24.4%	10.3%	23.1%	17.9%

Table 1 Descriptive results quantitative; likelihood of visitation

The following values focus on the types of experiences that tourists believe the Ruwenzori region is able to offer. According to the responses, The Ruwenzori region is good at offering Adventure experiences with 65.4% of the respondents answering with 'very well' and a further 19.2% with 'somewhat'; it can be concluded that the region is ideal for adventure experiences. Shopping and recreation on the other hand is not so popular with a score of 2.6% answering with 'very well'. Furthermore, Beach and leisure cannot be seen as a niche market as 30.8% of the respondents believe that Ruwenzori are 'not at all' good at offering these services. The following questions are related to the type of environment that the Ruwenzori offers. 76.9% of the respondents strongly agree that the Ruwenzori region has Beautiful landscapes, 39.7% also strongly agree that the region offers unique and memorable experiences. The second highest factor includes a 'friendly environment' with 92.3% of the responses being either 'strongly agree' or 'agree'. This indicates that the local communities are seen through a positive light. Furthermore, when questioned about more unattractive features of the tourism product, results remain to indicate positive sentiments. 43.6% disagreed with the statement that there is a dangerous environment, alongside a further 21.8% strongly disagreeing. The aspect of safety is crucial to the image of a destination, therefore this result will be beneficial to the regional tourism cluster.

The visitors of the region were also asked a few open questions; primarily, in order to create an image through consumer perspective, the question was to provide three words to describe the region. 84.4% of the population was able to provide answers, these have been coded and can be found in the Appendix (Figure 30: Respondent descriptive data analysis. pp. 67–68). It can be clearly stated that the Ruwenzori Mountains are key to the image of the region as the word 'Mountains' was mentioned 33 times. The second highest scoring words relate to the natural environment with 'Nature' being mentioned 18 times. Wildlife and animals are also mentioned multiple times; specifically 'Chimpanzees' (9 times mentioned) as well as many others associations. Finally, 'Friendly people' has been mentioned 8 times, and can be seen also as a recurring response during the analysis. When asked about the most appealing aspects, again similar code trees can be formulated, the most frequent responses include; Beautiful nature (18 times), Mountains (14 times), Climate (10 times) and friendly people (9 times). When analyzing a destination it is also crucial to focus on the less appealing factors contributing to the image. When asked about the most unappealing aspects within the region the most frequent answers include; Transportation to the region (19 times), the roads (16 times) and Dirt in the streets (5 times). It can be concluded that many of the less appealing aspects are all related to the general infrastructure related to transportation.

Bivariate analysis

Bivariate analysis of variables can be a useful method of indicating results, as two variables are compared in order to find relations between them. One factor which can be considered interesting is the relationship between those who have previously visited Africa and their view on aspects within the

region; 71.8% of the respondents have previously visited Africa. 1 out of the 77 respondents agreed that there is a dangerous environment, they had previously travelled to Africa. When utilizing the method of cross tabulation combined with Cramer's V, the relation between these two variables provides the value of 0.170, indicating a very weak relation between the two (Figure 24: Cross tabulation; visit to Africa vs. dangerous environment, p.65) This approach to analyzing has been utilized to compare visitation to Africa as the independent variable in comparison to unique experiences as the dependent variable. As visualized in Figure 26: Cross tabulation; visit to Africa vs unique, p. 65; it can be concluded that there is a slight relation between these two variable with the Cramer's V value of 0.095, indicating that those who have travelled to Africa previously were less likely to view Ruwenzori as unique and memorable. The final bivariate result to be examined includes the relation between gender and their view on the friendliness of the people within the region. According to (Figure 28: cross tabulation; gender vs friendliness, p.66) , gender does not impact the view of the friendliness of the local populations, Cramer's V value stated 0,111 indicating there is a weak relation between these variables.

3.5.2 – The Qualitative results

The following section comprises of the qualitative results of the five conducted interviews with professionals within the tourism industry. The method of open and axial coding has been utilized in order to visualize the responses. (Table 44: Axial coding, pp 109–114)

Regional Assets

In order to develop a realistic image of the region itself, it is important to look into the amenities which make up the characteristics of the area. It can be clearly stated that when asked about the key attractions within the region 'Chimpanzees in Kibale forest' is a core component; mentioned by all 5 of the interview respondents. Furthermore, the Crater lakes, Ruwenzori Mountains as well as numerous named national parks are also seen as key revenue spurring activities within the region. According to Mrs. Meijer (13.04.17) "you have got a 99% chance of seeing them" (l.24), in reference to the Chimpanzees. Indicating that chimpanzee trekking can be seen a crucial activity for the tourism product of the region. Secondly, when asked about the most appealing aspects of the region, a common theme included the climate and weather. All five of the respondents have stated that the climate is one of the most appealing factors of the Ruwenzori region. A further realization includes the importance of the culture and local communities on the image of the region; The Tooro culture covers 5 out of the 7 districts of the region, and can be seen as inevitably important to the local community. Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) stated that "visitors they come to Uganda for the gorillas, but they leave Uganda talking about the people" (l.48–49). Mr. Tooro (19.04.17) also stated that Ruwenzori 'has good weather and very welcoming people', it can be concluded that the culture and the people are highly important to the tourism product and are not showcased sufficiently through marketing and promotions.

During an analysis of a destination, negative and unappealing factors must also be questioned. Unfortunately, a common theme includes the perceived image of prospective consumers as a negative factor as there remains to be a sense of danger and unwillingness to visit Uganda as a whole. Furthermore, there is a common feeling that the products provided within the region are not always in accordance with the value and quality. According to Mrs. Makela (07.05.17); "price vs quality ratio and value for money" is one of the lesser appealing aspects in the Ruwenzori region. Public transportation has also been stated, this aligns with the tourists perspectives as transportation and infrastructure were the most common negative factors. Prior to further marketing the Ruwenzori region, it is also

important to be aware of the assets which could be in danger of being destroyed through tourism. It can be concluded that differing perspectives have specific interests and areas which they prefer to protect, however an underlying theme includes government regulations regarding the protection of the tourism assets. Mr. Rwabwogo (27.04.17) states that “we need proper law that governs, the natural environment” (l.64–65). Mrs. Makela agrees with this statement as she believes that the problem lies in the implementation of the regulations and not the regulations themselves.

In order to attract tourism, a unique selling point can be an extremely enticing marketing tool. There are a few unique attributes within the Ruwenzori region. As mentioned previously, the culture of the people within the region is seen as unique in the sense that they are extremely friendly, welcoming people who make people feel wanted. This can be seen from the perspectives of the local respondents themselves as well as foreign interpretations. It has become apparent that due to the broad range of activities available, there is a high degree of diversity within the tourism product. As stated by Mr. Rwabwogo (27.04.17) “it is the center of so many tourist attractions” (l.73), indicating that visitors have accessibility to pick their preferences on a daily basis. Mrs. Makela (07.04.17) defended this statement as she believes from a marketing consultant perspective that Uganda must use these attributes to their own advantage. Surrounding countries and similar East African countries are offering similar products, Kenya and Tanzania specifically are leading in terms of quality of Safari products. Uganda, especially focusing on Ruwenzori can be seen as incredibly diverse; with an abundance of differing terrains, multitude of ecosystems coexisting with one another as well as a range of niche markets; Bird watching enthusiasts & mountaineers etc. Mrs. Meijer (13.04.17) agrees with this statement “Uganda has much more to offer” (l.290).

Tourism is a delicate balance of bringing the promise of economic stability, employment and recognition whilst ensuring that the assets are not compromised or destroyed. It can be agreed that increased number of visitors may have negative impacts on the environments as well as the communities involved. The Ruwenzori region is currently hungry for visitors (Tooro, 19.04.17), the main focus is on increasing the market and forming specific niche markets. Unfortunately, according to Makela (07.05.17) “The government is not following a long term strategy for development”, this may indicate that the need for tourism arrival numbers is so apparent that they are failing to notice effects which may arise long term. Mrs. Jongerius (15.04.17) states that there are no problems at the moment in regards to tourism. Interestingly, Mr. Rwabwogo (27.04.17) has a differing view of the situation; he believes that the local communities may suffer from a sudden influx of visitors unless there are some changes made in the tour packages. He stated that tourism “adds another cost on a native or local person” as prices of products start to increase as well as entrepreneurs investing in construction of new accommodations and tourism related facilities. The local communities are unable to keep up with the price changes, which could lead to devastating results for the culture.

Stakeholders within the tourism industry are responsible for more than their own business, they also invest time and efforts in promoting the tourism product as a whole. A common notion within the Ruwenzori region includes community work and assistance. It is apparent that many of the accommodations, tour operators and food and beverage providers include products or services made by external people within the community. ‘We are supporting the guys from here who are making cards’ (Jongerius, 15.04.17); many of the local populations are skilled in creating handicrafts such as baskets, cards and souvenirs. 4 out of the 5 interview respondents have incorporated locally made products into their service; “The money spreads, it doesn’t come to Kabarole” (Tooro, 19.04.17); it has also been stated that there are no commissions involved with the current promotions and sales of these included products. This community development is a beneficial way for the region to evenly

spread out the economic wealth through tourism, it also has a positive impact on further populations to invest in the tourism industry. Furthermore, as stated by Mr. Rwabwogo “if we preserve nature [...] we will keep the great Tooro, great Ruwenzori region” (27.04.17). The Ruwenzori region can be clearly seen as a nature based tourism product; it is crucial that if there would be a sudden influx of consumers, that the nature conservation regulations are properly implemented and regulated as not to cause any negative influence on the products themselves. Mr. Tooro (19.04.17) reassures this notion “protect the area they visit” (l.130) as the priority when it comes to regional development. The image of the region is divided into few common themes; wildlife, adventure and nature, indicating the delicacy of the products as well. All of the interview respondents shared similar views on the region as a whole, when comparing the overall interviews of the Ugandan respondents (Tooro, 19.04.17 & Rwabwogo 27.04.17) in comparison to foreign entrepreneurs it has become apparent that the Tooro culture is of extreme importance to the community living in the Ruwenzori region. This is an aspect which is untouched within the tourism product and challenging to read about prior to visitation. Mrs. Makela agrees that “Culture should be highlighted [...] local people would be more proud of their customs” (07.05.17).

3.5.3 – The Conclusions

The following section comprises the responses to the central research questions and sub research questions. The results of both the qualitative and quantitative research will be included within the answers of the questions.

What are the core components of the tourism product offered in the Ruwenzori region?

As mentioned in the previous section, Diversity is a common theme for the tourism product of the Ruwenzori region. The core components include nature based products such as wildlife interactions in national parks, hiking/trekking in the mountains or just the foothills and further Crater Lake visitations. The region includes assets of natural essence for differing niche markets; the Ruwenzori Mountains are the second highest Mountains in Africa, stretching just over 5000 meters high, these mountains are traitorous and meant solely for experienced mountaineers with completed altitude training. This stretch of mountains is oddly unknown but a unique experience for those professionals. Secondly, specifically within the Semuliki national park; Birding and bird watching is a peak location. Thirdly, the Kibale forest has been stated to have one of the densest areas with wild chimpanzees, “you have got a 99% chance of seeing them” (l.30–31) (Meijer, 13.04.17). The core components of the tourism product include niche segments of differing services of natural essence.

What types of attractions are offered in the Ruwenzori region?

As mentioned previously, the attractions offered within the region vary. The Ruwenzori Mountains themselves are one of the commonly stated attractions, with options for a full hike (for mountaineers), or trails for walking and hiking in the foothills. The crater lakes are also unique to the region as there are a large number of them, a nice feature with the lakes includes the hikes in the forests and ability to see up to 9 different types of wild monkeys. The national parks vary in accordance with the type of wildlife and terrain you are interested in. QENP is in the lower part of the Ruwenzori and the land is much dryer, here you can find safari animals such as Tree climbing lions, elephants, giraffes etc. The Kibale forest is specifically interesting due to the large amount of chimpanzees. Therefore visitors are able to participate in activities surrounding wildlife based on their preferences. The Ruwenzori region is good at offering adventure experiences; Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) states that Uganda “has a very strong emotional link [...] to their childhood” (l.53) in regards to the types of attractions offered and the emotions that consumers experience.

What are the key drivers attracting tourists to the Ruwenzori region?

According to the results of the Qualitative research, the highest selling asset include the Kibale forest for the Chimpanzee trekking, this was stated by all 5 of the interview respondents. The quantitative results indicate that 46.2% of the visitors were 'highly likely' to go chimpanzee trekking. When focusing on the data of the visitors, the highest scoring activity in terms of likelihood of visitation comprises of visiting a national park. This is in accordance with the responses of the interviews as 4 out of the 5 respondents have named one or several national parks within the region; Kibale forest, Queen Elizabeth National Park, Semuliki and Ruwenzori national park. An interesting factor involved includes the Gorilla trekking in Bwindi, technically this is not a part of the Ruwenzori region however the majority of the visitors on a package tour will include the Gorilla trek at the end of their stay. "The gorillas will be the jewel at the end of the tour" (I.25) (Makela, 07.05.17). Many tour operators include the gorilla trekking into the general product offered on the western part of Uganda.

What types of facilitating services are provided? (Accommodation)

The types of accommodation include; hotels, hostels, guesthouses, lodges, homesteads and bed and breakfast. Currently many local entrepreneurs are setting up investments in the accommodation sector. This is apparent in the number of guesthouses and homesteads available. 31.2% of the visitors chose Guesthouses as their preference for stay. Surprisingly a whopping 27.3% chose to accommodate in lodging, these can be seen as of higher quality and a higher price range. As stated by Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) "the majority of midrange [...] missing sense of place" (I.97–99) as well as "local owners [...] don't know what international visitors would like" (I.91–93). There is an indication that improvements could be made within the accommodation sector of the Ruwenzori region.

What are the segmentation characteristics of the current tourists travelling to the Ruwenzori region for tourism purposes?

In accordance with the previous section, 65.4% of the visitors within the region believe that the Ruwenzori region is good at offering Adventure experiences. In alliance with this, 37.7% mentioned themselves as an adventure tourist. This indicates that a segmentation characteristic of the current consumers includes adventure tourism. Furthermore, the duration of travel shares common features; 26% of the respondents remain in Ruwenzori between 13–17 days, another 26% for 4–8 days. More than half of the respondents are of European descent with a surprising figure of 13% Ugandan visitors.

What does the typical tourist travelling to the Ruwenzori region look like?

The typical tourist travelling to the Ruwenzori region can be distinguished as an adventure tourist. The largest number of visitors were between the ages of 26–35 (37.7%) indicating a certain level of physical capability. European travelers are most frequently found within the Ruwenzori region, followed by US, UK and Domestic tourists. Based on the interviews, the majority of the tourists are already aware of which activities they will do, many of the visitors within the region are on a thoroughly planned through tour package. This is in accordance with the visitors travel company with 42.9% travelling with their family, indicating that international travel agencies produce package deals for large groups. 54.5% of the respondents were female, indicating that there is almost an even distribution of male and female visitors.

What is the purpose of travel of current visitors in the Ruwenzori region?

51.9% of the respondents stated that their purpose of travel is for discovery and exploration. According to the interviews; many people come here for wildlife and adventure; some for specific mountaineering

up the Ruwenzori's or alternate niche segments. In regards to the domestic visitors, many visitors travel from larger cities such as Kampala for the climate and calm. The cities can be very noisy and polluted and the Ruwenzori region offers fresh clean air, cool breeze and beautiful views. Mrs. Meijer states (13.04.17) "we have people coming from Kampala who want a leisure weekend" (l.161–162).

What are the defining characteristics of the Ruwenzori region personality?

The Ruwenzori region comprises of a diverse stretch of land including alternate terrains, constantly changing climate and a multitude of wildlife facilities. Based on the responses of the visitors the Ruwenzori Mountains, nature and chimpanzees are the most common descriptions of the region. When focusing on the responses of the interviews; climate, culture and people are the most frequent ideals. Mr. Tooro (19.04.17) stated that "Ruwenzori is [...] it should be Ruwenzora; the place of rain" (l.153–156). Interestingly, the first colonials to arrive in the region mistakenly misspelled the name of the region. The climate is a characteristic of the region which has been acknowledged as of high importance for tourism purposes as well as beneficial to the region for agriculture and general wellbeing.

What are the most prominent characteristics of the Ruwenzori region?

The Ruwenzori Mountains are unique and will impact the visitation for any visitor as they are seen in the landscapes and can be defined as beautiful, they are otherwise known as the "mountains of the moon". The chimpanzees in Kibale forest are one of the most frequently visited attractions within the region. The most common descriptions of the personality of the region include; Nature, landscapes, animals and nice people (Meijer, 13.04.17), friendly, green and surprising (Makela, 07.05.17) and very distinct place with different cultures (Tooro, 19.04.17). The diverse personality of the region include lush green forests, snowcapped mountains, crater lakes as well as dry lands for safari and wetlands.

What are the most appealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?

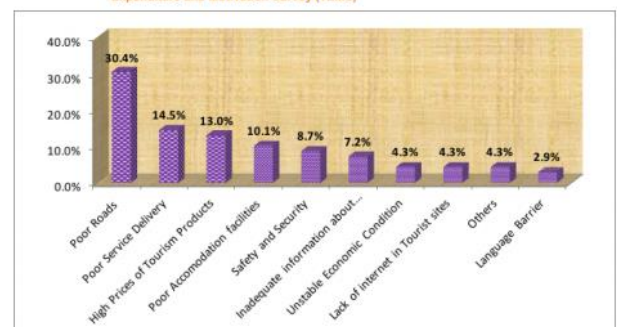
According to the qualitative research the most appealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region include the climate, crater lakes, the landscape, the people and the emotional connections that arise during a stay in the region. According to the quantitative research the most appealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region include beautiful nature, Mountains, Climate and friendly people. It can be concluded that the responses are very similar and the image of the appealing aspects within the region are in accordance one another.

What are the most unappealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region?

When focusing on the less attractive features within the region, some differences can be distinguished between the stakeholders and the visitors. The most unappealing aspect from the consumers includes transportation to the region and the quality of the roads.

According to McArthur (2016) a study was completed in 2016 on the tourism product of Uganda. The figure below indicates that Poor Roads have been stated as the leading complaint from visitors. According to the Qualitative interviews, differing negative aspects have been mentioned; price vs quality of many facilitating services have been stated as unappealing. Furthermore, professionalism within the hospitality industry still lags behind as many of the local stakeholders are not aware of the needs of the consumers. In

Figure 3.1 Major complaints of tourists to Uganda. Source: Uganda's 2014 Tourism Expenditure and Motivation Survey (TEMS)



accordance with the visitor responses, “public transportation is not that great” (Makela, 07.04.17), reassuring potential investment in the transportation sector within Uganda.

What are the most unique features about the Ruwenzori region?

The most unique features within the Ruwenzori region include; the Ruwenzori Mountains, the Landscapes, the people and diversity. Both the qualitative and quantitative research responses indicate that the people, diversity of products and mountains are the most unique features within the region.

What is the current image of the region?

The current image of the region is relatively positive. The majority of the negative factors include the transportation to and from the region as well as the state of the roads. The region is seen as culturally diverse, friendly environment with unique experiences to be shared.

Which similarities of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

Many similarities can be found of the image of the region through differing perspectives. All of the respondents have mentioned that Climate is an important factor, landscapes and beauty are also seen as prominent shared factors. It is apparent that the Chimpanzee trekking in Kibale forest is one of the most visited attraction in the region. To conclude, the responses of previous questions indicate that there is an alignment of the image of the region through the two perspectives.

Which differences of the image can be identified between the consumer and stakeholder perspectives?

One of the defining differences between the image of the consumers and stakeholders lies in the negative factors of the region. The majority of the visitor responses indicate that roads and transportation are a disappointment during their visit, whereas the interview respondents found differing factors which are in need of improvement. Furthermore, the crater lakes are highly mentioned within the interview data, however these are much less frequently mentioned by the guests. This may conclude that people are unaware of some features such as the 9 types of monkeys that can be found during tours. Furthermore, many of the responses mentioned by the interview respondents in regards to activities slightly differ, whereas the consumer data shares common themes. This may due to the fact that the majority of the consumers are on package tours indicating that they have little accessibility to modify their planning.

3.5.4 – Reliability and Validity

Upon completion of a thorough breakdown of the results of the research, it is also important to assess the quality of the results. One method of doing so includes analyzing the reliability and validity of the research. Reliability refers to the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results (Phelan, 2005). In other words, ‘the repeatability of a particular set of research findings’ (AQR, 2015). Validity refers to how well a test measures what it is purported to measure (Phelan, 2005). Validity can be defined as analyzing whether the intended measurements have been assessed.

Reliability

According to Joppe (2000) reliability refers to the extent to which results are consistent over time. In regards to the quantitative research; as mentioned previously, the sample population was determined through a calculator based on number of visitors from previous years. The reliability of research can be improved with a larger sample as to obtain as many responses as possible. Unfortunately as solely 77 out of the intended 100 respondents were gathered, reliability in this case is slightly disproved. The reliability of the research is reduced due to the fact that upon further conduction of research it cannot

be assured that the same outcomes will be received. If the research was to be repeated in the following years, it would have to be examined from the same time period (April) or compared to other seasons with higher occupancy. Furthermore, the dissemination of the questionnaires within the Fort Portal area can be seen as sporadic, this indicates that the reliability is reduced as thorough tracking of areas within the district have not been defined.

The research tool utilized was in the form of a questionnaire; this method can be seen as reliable due to the fact that the questions have been standardized in a comprehensive, simple manner. Therefore there is little room for miscomprehension for the respondents. The format of the questionnaire could be repeated therefore can lead to further reliable results. When focusing on the Qualitative research, it can be concluded that the incorporation of an interview guide will improve the degree of reliability. Furthermore, another factor in which to improve the reliability of the research includes utilizing a voice or video recorder. This method not only forms as a form of proof, but also allows the researcher to thoroughly analyze the responses. Unfortunately, the reliability of the research was slightly diminished due to the semi structured circumstances as not all of the points were covered in each interview. Finally, the specific respondents of the qualitative interviews were not entirely predetermined, such as the case with Anne-Maria Makela, therefore making this an unreliable source of data for future research.

Validity

According to Cook and Campbell (1979) validity can be best described as the approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inference. In simpler terms, validity measures the truthfulness of the results as well as whether or not the correct measures were taken to reach the results. There are four different types of validity; conclusion validity, internal, construct and external. Brotherton (2008) reassures this definition by producing 'the extent to which the measure conform with, or actually measure, the truth. Validity refers to the truthfulness of the study. Construct validity is based on the predetermined research instruments and constructed tools. The construct validity in this case for both the qualitative and quantitative research is relatively high due to the reason that the core components within the questionnaire and interview guide comprise of ideologies found in literature and theoretical knowledge. Furthermore, the two separate types of research share common research questions in order to indicate whether the image is aligned. **The construct validity may have been improved through specification of questions, as there remains to be lacking features on activities and the aspect of safety and culture were disregarded. In a further study the activities questioned may differ as well as the topics to research.**

In regards to internal validity, the triangulation method has been utilized. Specifically in this case, referring to triangulation of researchers. Primarily, the intended 4 interviews to be completed were done sufficiently with an additional source of information through a separate perspective. This improves the validity of the research. The additional interview has an effect on the research outcomes and defends further results to provide sufficient knowledge. The interview guide was prepared in order to ensure validity by asking the same questions, there are few questions which differ during the interviews therefore, the validity is decreased. In regards to the quantitative research, as not all of the respondents were captured the validity is diminished. The visitor results also indicate that some answers are missing in questionnaires, again impacting the validity of the results.

Finally, the external validity refers to whether or not the results would vary depending on the environment. In regards to the quantitative research; it can be determined that the external validity is weak as specific locations cannot be specified and research was spread throughout the region. The

qualitative research was determined based on the types of companies available; the companies have been chosen due to their diversity in perspectives from the tourism industry. The external validity in this case is high as all of the respondents were in similar environment and asked the same questions.

Conclusions can be challenging to universalize due to the low number of respondents in the case of the quantitative research. It can be concluded that the reliability of the quantitative research is high, in contrast to the qualitative research as moderate. Further, the validity of the quantitative research is moderate, whereas the qualitative shows signs of high validity.

4. – The Advice

The following section of the report comprises of the advice. This section has been segmented in order to thoroughly analyze potential and alternate advices. **The intended advice for the Mountains of the Moon University includes the preliminary stages of a marketing campaign in the form of a regional branding strategy for the Ruwenzori region.** Firstly, the objective of the advice and management question comprise of the introduction. Following, alternate solutions and advices will be analyzed in order to distinguish the most relevant method. A final recommendation will be provided including an evaluation of the advice, implementation of that advice as well as a breakdown of the financial implications involved.

4.1 – The advice objective and Management question

As mentioned in the introduction, research was performed on the inbound tourism in Fort Portal and surrounding attractions within the Ruwenzori region. The following advice objective and corresponding management question were formulated as suitable based on the previous reasoning and problem described.

The objective of this advice is to inform the Mountains of the Moon University on a suitable branding strategy with focus on destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a profile of the Ruwenzori region.

The following advice question had been determined based on the information mentioned previously and serves as basis for the advice for the Mountains of the Moon University:

How can the Mountains of the Moon University determine destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a regional profile?

In order to solve the management problem for the Mountains of the Moon University, it is essential to assess and evaluate alternate solutions to the problem. The management problem has been stated above and determines that the key to the research is to assure that there is a sufficient alignment of the destination image and identity in the perspectives of the consumers and stakeholders within the region. **The branding process can be seen as a useful method for developing a profile of a destination in the preliminary stages of a marketing campaign. There are several opposing methods for which to effectively visualize and develop a brand profile. In order to effectively begin the branding process, a target market must be defined. It has been determined that the key target market can be defined as 'Adventure tourists', specific niche markets segmented from adventure tourism are included and described. This market has been distinguished as the most important based on the DNA of the region.**

The Target Market

Adventure tourism can be distinguished as a trip that includes at least two of the following three elements: physical activity, natural environment, and cultural immersion (ATTA, 2016). According to Perdomo (UNWTO, 2014) Adventure tourism has grown exponentially worldwide over the past years;

indicating that this niche market is growing in importance for destinations. Adventure tourism is sought to be a valuable market and can bring possibilities for economic development; “adventure operators have reported an average of USD 3,000 spent per person” (UNWTO, 2014). The Ruwenzori region can be seen as a diverse stretch of land which offers possibilities for the criteria defined by ATTA. Based on the results of the research; 65.4% of the respondents answered very well when regarding the region as good at offering Adventure experiences. Additionally, 37.7% of the respondents stated themselves as adventure tourists, these were the highest figures when focusing on the type of tourist the respondents visualized themselves as in Uganda. In accordance with the qualitative data, Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) stated that ‘we have some adventure related tourists’ when focusing on the type of tourists found within the region. Mr. Tooro (19.04.17) agreed as he stated that the tourists come for the adventure. The region appeals to consumers who are physically active as the majority of attractions available include hiking or trekking, this also applies to the wildlife oriented activities such as the Chimpanzee trekking as these excursions can last up to 7 hours in the forest.

There are several niche markets which can be included as ‘adventure tourism’ which the Ruwenzori region is highly compatible towards, the branding identity of the region applies to all of the combined target markets. One niche market includes the focus on travelers making excursions to the Ruwenzori Mountains. Mountaineer tourism and trekking can be seen as a market suitable for the region, the Ruwenzori Mountains scale up to 5,109 meters (Ruwenzori trekking, 2016) and hold a unique attribute of having snow on the equator. In accordance with the field research; 46.1% of the respondents stated ‘highly likely’ or ‘likely’ to hiking up the Ruwenzori’s. Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) agreed that “the Ruwenzori’s” are the unique selling point for the region. The Ruwenzori Mountains hold a strong position in the minds of the general consumers in regards to the image of the region; landscapes and views of the Ruwenzori’s. Secondly, a segment of adventure tourism includes ‘Birding’ and ‘Bird watching’; Uganda ranks high among the richest destinations for birds in Africa (Avian, 2013). Currently, the region holds three national parks which are marketed for having a broad range of bird species; Ruwenzori Mountains National Park, Semuliki National Park and the Tooro Botanical Gardens. This specific niche market can be seen as unique as the region holds a large capacity in diverse and endemic bird species. In accordance with the quantitative research; when questioned on the unique features within the region, 3% of the population stated ‘birds’. It can be determined the possibilities for bird watching tourism within the Ruwenzori region is relatively high and the increasing markets make for a suitable match.

A further niche market includes culture tourism, this is an upcoming type of tourism within the industry. According to the American chapter of ICOMOS (the International Council on Monuments and Sites) cultural tourism can be defined as ‘a name means many things to many people and herein lies its strength and weakness’ (USICOMOS, 1996). Following the previous statement, it can be distinguished that the term ‘culture tourism’ is challenging to define due to diversity of the term culture as well as the specific interests of the consumers. In order to simplify the term, culture and heritage tourism can be defined as recognition of the cultural and natural heritage sites as attractions for both international and domestic tourism. When aligning the focus with the qualitative research it can be recognized that culture is a key attribute shaping the image of the Ruwenzori region. Currently, the culture and heritage of the local communities within the region are being downplayed, Mr Tooro (19.04.17) states that ‘people come for the wildlife [...] best experience was meeting the people’. Formulating a branding strategy for an adventure tourist is less specific than alternate niche markets as the demographics of the consumers are largely separated. As mentioned previously, Uganda holds a competitive advantage due to their large range in diversity of products. A visitation to the Ruwenzori region assures that you

are able to obtain the 'full Africa experience'. Due to the inclusion of cultural immersion in defining an adventure tourist, as well as the physical factor, the defined niche markets can be said to makeup the characteristics of adventure tourism within the region. Domestic tourism remains an important market however the advice is directed towards inbound adventure tourists.

4.2 – Evaluation of alternate solutions

As mentioned previously, there are alternate solutions in solving the management problem of aligning the regional destination image and identity. Within the branding process there are several tools which can be utilized to showcase the genetic makeup of the region in order to effectively develop a regional profile.

Alternative 1: Branding Blueprint: The brand identity prism

The primary alternative includes the branding identity prism as a tool for visualizing and collecting the data necessary in developing a regional profile for the Ruwenzori region. The brand identity prism designed by Kapferer (2008) is a tool for developing a brand by distinguishing the core components of the brand and visualizing them effectively. The importance of the brand prism is that it connects the consumer to the product by outlining not only the DNA but also by including emotional attachment through incorporation of a story within the brand. There are 6 components of the brand identity prism which are Brand physique, brand personality, brand culture, relationship, reflection and self-image, the model has been visualized in the appendix (Figure 46, p. 115). As stated by Kapferer (2008) a brand should be more than a slogan or a name, it should connect the consumer to the product by including brand character, personality and inevitably brand identity. The primary step known as 'brand physique' concerns the physical appearance of the brand in the mind of the consumer. This can be distinguished as the primary images that pop into a consumers mind when asked about the specific brand. In this case it can be defined that the statements 'Mountains', 'Nature' and 'Beauty' are some of the most frequently described physical attributes of the Ruwenzori region. The following step includes the brand personality, this can be described as the character of the brand. The personality is showcased during the marketing of the product in regards to the language utilized to entice the appropriate target markets. In regards to regional destination branding, this can be seen as a difficult task due to the reason that differing companies within the industry will choose their own methods of marketing however it can be assumed that similar key words and types of activities are shared.

Furthermore, the brand culture is a crucial factor in distinguishing a profile for a region. Brands with strong unique cultures are of high competitive advantage in the industry as this deems for loyal consumers. This can be seen with brands such as Apple in which the consumers are deeply connected to the products and loyal to the market. This can be a challenging step for destination branding as return visitation remains at a low level, however as stated by Mrs. Makela (07.05.17), by modifying the arrangement of the package tours and trips, there would be opportunities for several trips in order to properly ensure that all of the attractions have been visited. The culture plays a role as the local populations create an environment of comfort and homelike sensation, indicating that this could be a method for creating loyal return consumers. The following stage comprises of 'relationship', this can be distinguished as the relationship that the consumer has with the brand. This also includes the emotional impact that a brand can make on a consumer, slogans with motivational quotes are an effective way to influence the behavior of the consumer market. In the case of the Ruwenzori region, the emotional sensation of nostalgic childlike excitement as stated by Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) can be seen as a USP for the region, as it influences the thought process of the consumer and develops a relationship. Reflection refers to the consumers themselves, in regards to the branding defined

towards the intended target market. The Ruwenzori region has defined the target market as adventure tourism, therefore the brand reflection and marketing includes consumers of youthful and energetic characteristics. The final step comprises 'self-image' which refers to the way in which the consumer views himself when utilizing the product or service. This can be seen as a challenging task when regarding destination branding, as for material branded products such as designer goods, a consumer is able to identify themselves as 'affluent'. In regards to the field research, the consumer data encloses that the majority of the tourists see themselves as 'adventure tourists'.

Alternative 2: Branding Blueprint: The Brand Pyramid

The two most common tools for visualizing the brand essence include the brand wheel and brand pyramid. The brand Pyramid is a logically designed tool which assesses the core components of a brand including key strengths of the brand defining the personality. In regards to destination and service branding, the brand pyramid is ideal as it simplistically showcases the unique attributes of the destination by identifying the products available as well as emotional attachments to them. There are five facets in the brand pyramid, these include Brand essence, positioning statement, brand personality, emotional benefits and rational attributes. Rational attributes refer to the actual products and services provided by the region, in the case of the Ruwenzori this can be distinguished as wildlife excursions, trekking and bird watching. There are several assets which are available within a destination therefore by utilizing a SWOT analysis, the most important attributes will be showcased. The following step refers to the emotional benefits; this refers to the emotional impact that the brand has on the consumers. In order to define emotional benefits, qualitative consumer research is necessary in order to find out the perceptions of the destination and motivations for travel. Brand personality indicates the uniqueness of a brand. The most effective way in which to define what makes a destination stand out is to make comparisons with destinations offering similar products; this can be completed with a competitor analysis. In reference to alignment of image and identity, the brand pyramid ensures room for both consumer and market perceptions which ensures that the DNA profiled can be seen as valid, truthful and realistic.

The following facet comprises the positioning statement; this stage summarizes the strongest competitive features of a destination which can be utilized as a promotional slogan. The effective use of a positioning statement for a destination, specifically regionally is that stakeholders within the region can utilize the core essence and modify their marketing efforts based on the profile set up. The final step, at the top of the pyramid is referred to as brand essence, which comprises of the destination DNA. These can be seen as the core descriptions of the region within few words which immediately distinguish the destination as unique and are reflected through all marketing efforts. The brand essence refers to the descriptive emotional factors which a consumer endures during their visitation to the region. The brand pyramid can be seen as a method of summarizing the regional profile and targeting it effectively towards to appropriate target market. This tool can be seen as a blueprint which is shared amongst all stakeholders within a destination to ensure sufficient brand identity and brand image alignment.

Alternative 3: Branding blueprint: the brand wheel

As stated previously, the brand wheel is one of the two most commonly used tools for visualizing the brand profile. The brand wheel can be seen as a more detailed version of the brand pyramid which includes all of the core information about the destination in a model. The brand wheel differs from the alternate models as it demonstrates links between the facets which improve the distinction of the brand. There are 6 key elements within the brand wheel; values, personality, benefits, substantiators,

essence and proposition. The additional feature incorporated in the brand wheel includes the rational and emotional elements within the brand. The primary facet includes the brand values, for a destination this encompasses what the brand stands for. This can also be translated as the brand culture and the reasoning for developing a regional marketing dispersion. Brand personality refers to the core components which are delivered to the consumers in order to entice the intended market, this refers to which components are of key importance and how to communicate them effectively. The following segment includes benefits, these refer to the tangible assets which are delivered to the consumer. These include the emotional attachments that a consumer has with the brand as well as the sensations that are endured during their visitation.

Substantiators within the brand wheel are assets which are seen as unique and define the destination as different from others. This includes the tangible attractions and experiences provided within the region which are incomparable to other competitors, as well as emotional attachments with the brand. The brand essence can be seen as the most important facet within the brand wheel; the essence aligns the character of the brand by including consumer and market input. The brand essence describes key characteristics in few describing words which distinguishes the brand as unique and markets these towards the intended target segments. In combination with the brand essence, a proposition is seen as similar to a proposition statement, which captures the most crucial attributes within the destination brand and communicates them simplistically. This is an effective way to ensure collective ideals within a region as stakeholders can incorporate these values into their own marketing campaigns. The image and identity of the region has a higher chance of being aligned when utilizing a model such as the branding wheel due to the reason that all opinions are considered during the summarization of the DNA of the region. The brand wheel requires time consumption as there is a need for in depth qualitative research with numerous stakeholders as well as consumer inputs, the results however are much more detailed and remain to provide a stronger brand and regional profile.

4.3 – Description assessment criteria

In order to ensure that the best possible practice is undertaken in solving the management problem, alternate solutions must be evaluated and assessed. Upon completion of elaborating the previously mentioned alternatives to the problem, these will be compared and analyzed with incorporation of a set of criterion. The criteria has been determined based on literature and theoretical knowledge on branding strategies in accordance with destination image and identity. The following criterion form as basis for the evaluation of the alternatives. The three tools for summarizing the core components of a destination have been analyzed.

1 – Descriptive accuracy

The descriptive accuracy has been defined as the information which is included within the model in defining the profile of a brand. This includes the DNA and the core components of the brand comprising the genetic makeup. This has been segmented by physical attributes and attractions as well as intangible characteristics of the brand.

2 – Emotional attributes

The emotional attributes refers to the models ability to include emotional connects and relationships to the product and brand. An effective way to market a brand is by creating an emotional attachment therefore by incorporating factors of this essence within the blue print, further promotions processes are simplified and improve chances for success.

3 – Coverage

The following criteria refers to the ability of the tool in covering all core aspects in one model which can be directly translated into further processes. Coverage refers to the strength of the blueprint to simplistically outline all of the necessary information about the regional profile for a multitude of differing users; stakeholders within the industry.

4 – Duration of time

The duration of time refers to the efforts required in developing the regional profile with incorporation with the previously mentioned models. It can be assumed that additional research is required in order to obtain consumer data, and this may vary over time which highlights the importance of an easy to use model. This criteria refers to the duration of time it takes to complete a destination brand model.

5 – Modification abilities

The modification applies to the users of the branding model as a blueprint for marketing. This includes stakeholder involvement as it is important to provide a profile which effectively applies to all enterprises within the industry and that can be easily modified to their own marketing efforts. Furthermore, it can be assumed that changes and development will occur within the product over time, the capability of the product in being modified will be assessed.

6 – Image vs Identity

The final criterion refers to the level of alignment of regional destination image and identity. This refers to the incorporation of consumer and market input in the development of the regional profile with one of the models. In order to ensure image and identity alignment the opinions of both opposing sides; supply and demand must be assessed and included in the development in order to ensure authenticity.

The six criterion have been determined as crucial attributes in creating the most effective blueprint of a region profile as a branding strategy. The alternative solutions have been assessed in regards to the information required in the development of a regional brand in combination with the efforts involved.

The criteria has been based on the current abilities to market the region in a specific direction. In order to evaluate the different solutions these have been distinguished: 1: Very weak, 2: Weak, 3: Moderate, 4: Strong, 5: Very strong.

Criteria	Brand identity prism	Brand pyramid	Brand Wheel
Descriptive accuracy	2	3	3
Emotional attributes	2	3	3
Coverage	3	3	3
Duration of time	2	3	1
Modification abilities	2	4	2
Image VS Identity	2	4	4
Total score:	13	20	16

Table 2 Assessment Criteria scoring

4.4 – Assessment of Alternatives

Based on the scores of the criteria, it can be clearly stated that the brand identity prism is the least favorable model to utilize as a blueprint for the genetic makeup of the region in order to develop a brand profile. This can be assumed as such due to the reason that the image in the perspective of the consumer lacks to be considered and would impact the image and identity alignment in the long run.

The coverage of the brand identity prism remains at low level, though does indicate the core components to some extent. The identity of the region would be thoroughly developed without the need for current consumer data and input, additionally the model could be viewed as a step in the later stages of marketing as to develop promotional slogans and catchy advertising campaigns rather than to develop the personality of the destination brand. Furthermore, the brand identity prism is more suitable in developing a product based brand rather than an intangible destination.

The brand wheel can be seen as an effective tool for thoroughly assessing a destination and creating an in depth analysis of the DNA of the brand. The brand wheel provides all of the core brand information in a visually appealing manner. The inclusion of physical attributes within the brand are included as well as emotional connections which are apparent for the consumers as well as the market. It can be said that the brand wheel is a comprehensive tool which can be provided to all stakeholders as a blueprint for marketing and easily forms as a basis. Unfortunately, one negative factor involves the duration of time required to develop and complete the brand wheel. This is due to the reason that an abundance of qualitative research must be completed with a large sample population in order to define the core components as well as emotional attributes concerned. Furthermore, the branding wheel contains a lot of information which may be incomprehensible. Concerned with stakeholder involvement; the brand wheel is challenging to decipher to align with entrepreneurs individual branding processes, therefore the essence of being a collective blueprint for regional profile alignment is diminished. The brand wheel is a thoroughly detailed brand model which covers all aspects which define the personality of a destination brand, however lacks in usability.

The brand pyramid can be seen as the most suitable tool for presenting the regional profile of the Ruwenzori as a brand. This model provides a simple summary of the brands elements which are visualized in an appealing manner to highlight the brand personality. One key advantage of developing a brand pyramid entails the ability to apply to the industry as a whole within the region. The model can be easily adapted and applied to stakeholders own products and marketing efforts. Furthermore, the simplicity of the model ensures easy modification in future based on developments in the market. The brand pyramid may be less specific than the branding wheel however remains to cover the key factors required to develop a collective identity for the region and ensure that these are communicated effectively. In regards to the time consumption in developing the brand pyramid for a destination, field research is required as there are both tangible and emotional attributes present. The image and identity alignment is strongly improved as during the creation of the model, the consumer inputs are also considered as equally important.

4.5 – The Final advice

The Mountains of the Moon University were challenged in developing a regional profile for the Ruwenzori region. In order to effectively indicate a destination brand for the region, a target market has been defined. In accordance with the field research, the image and identity of the region are aligned and provide insights into the characteristics of the region. With reference to the field research, Adventure tourists have been defined as the most important target market for the destination brand of Ruwenzori. In order to develop a regional profile and ensure image and identity alignment, the brand process including the brand pyramid has been deemed as the most effective manner in which to visualize and represent the region. This can be seen as the preliminary stages of a marketing campaign and will be communicated to stakeholders within the region to ensure collective ideologies. In order to effectively represent the brand pyramid, the following steps have been undertaken to thoroughly analyze the field research and develop the suitable blueprint of advice. These steps have been evaluated and analyzed in order to produce a regional destination brand directed towards adventure

tourists. The branding process has been completed in these steps leading to the profile development in the form of a brand pyramid.

4.5.1 – Brand Objectives

The primary factor includes the brand objectives. Brand objectives ensure that destination managers are able to maintain a continual awareness of what the destination has to offer and what they desire to gain from the market. Four important objectives for destination brands include; differentiation, awareness and recognition, positive image creation and a strong brand identity. It can be challenging to develop a strong brand identity due to differing target markets. These can be seen as single minded approaches which highlight certain strengths of the destination however focus on niche markets; making up only partly for the complete regional personality.

4.5.2 – Brand positioning

Destination brand positioning refers to “ensuring that a destination elaborates the most positive position in the perceptions of consumers” (Anholt, 2010). Positioning is about understanding the core components of the destination product and aligning those with the perceptions of the consumers. The brand positioning for the Ruwenzori region has been catered to the market of Adventure tourists. The strengths and defining attributes within the region are differentiated from competitors. According to Kotler (1999) ‘Image is the key construct in destination positioning’. Indicating that the field research aligns with the brand positioning procedure.

4.5.3 – The Branding process

The method of branding can be challenging when focusing on a destination in contrast to a product or service due to the inherent makeup of the assets. The primary step in developing a branding strategy includes assessment of the destinations characteristics as well as defined target markets. The first stage of Destination audit has been completed as the field research. In order to effectively complete the destination audit, it is important to categorize and prioritize the assets. Based on the findings of the research the most appealing attractions within the region include; the Chimpanzees, the Ruwenzori Mountains, Crater lakes, National Parks, wildlife and trekking services. The responses indicate that the climate, people, landscapes and diversity make up the personality of the region. The aspect of diversity and range of activities spurs an advantage for the Ruwenzori region in contrast to alternate competition.

The following stage comprises the segmentation analysis; this stage has already been completed as the key market segments have been evaluated. It has been defined that the main target group are Adventure tourists. Based on the results of the research, this includes mainly youth travelers between the ages of 20 – 35 years. Adventure tourists are classified as those physically capable, interested in adventure, wildlife and cultural immersion. The multitude of regional assets suits the needs of an adventure tourist. It can be determined that the alternative target markets of mountaineering, bird watching and culture tourism are segmented from the general definition of adventure tourism.

In order to provide a suitable brand pyramid, a few steps are necessary in order to provide the intended information. A SWOT analysis as well as a competitor analysis have been completed in order to define the regional brand profile. These are effective tools in the development of a regional profile and further ensuring image and identity alignment.

SWOT Analysis the Ruwenzori region

Strengths	Opportunities
Rich and diverse nature landscapes	Projections of increased adventure tourists
Wildlife trekking with Chimpanzees	Investment in the tourism product of Uganda
Ruwenzori Mountain Range (snow-capped equator)	Diversity of product (differentiation)
National Parks for Safari (Kibale, QENP, Semuliki)	Accessibility in contrast to competitors (instability in surrounding states)
Crater lakes	Increased importance on health and physique
Bird watching	Sustainable product development initiatives
Gorilla trekking	Increased long haul travel by niche markets
Climate	
People and culture	
Emotional connections arise in consumers	
Unique and endemic wildlife	
Weaknesses	Threats
Poor infrastructure of roads	Tourism development in competitor regions
Poor availability of quality transportation	Sudden outbreak of illness in West Africa
Price vs quality ratio	Unforeseen political instability
Image of country through previous instability (Idi Amin)	Climate changes influencing the Wildlife and Nature preservation
Professionalism in hospitality	Increasing quality demand of consumers
Waste disposal systems	Crime rate fluctuation

Table 3 SWOT analysis of Ruwenzori region

By incorporating the SWOT analysis; it can be classified that the core strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats have been highlighted in order to distinguish positioning in the market for the region. The features have been concluded as the most important based on the findings of the field research.

The following stage of branding includes stakeholder engagement, it can be concluded that performing field research which incorporated differing stakeholders within the tourism product of the Ruwenzori and assessing their willingness to cooperate; developing stakeholder engagement shan't be a challenge when promoting the regional brand. Furthermore, the opinions of the stakeholders are highly similar indicating that the regional profile can be standardized. Secondly, the field research of consumer perceptions forms as vital knowledge in the branding process. Research amongst current visitors assists in understanding the perceived image of the destination and identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the product. A deeming factor includes also performing research on non-visitors in order to gain the perceptions on the image of those with no former knowledge of the region, however this factor was not considered during the research stage.

Competitor Analysis

In order to effectively market a destination, it is important to also focus on the attributes and experiences that competitors are providing. As stated previously, 51.9% of the respondents stated that their purpose of travel was discovery and exploration. This can be seen as the motivation for travel, unfortunately this statement remains relatively broad. It can be identified that the Ruwenzori region offers a beautiful natural environment with a diverse range of adventurous activities in a cultural, friendly setting. In order to describe the visitor experience which is being sought, the following terms

have been indicated as the criterion; Diverse, Adventurous, Nature-based and Cultural. Following these criterion, the following countries have been concluded as the closest direct competitors mainly due to geographical location; Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania. These have been visualized in the following graph.

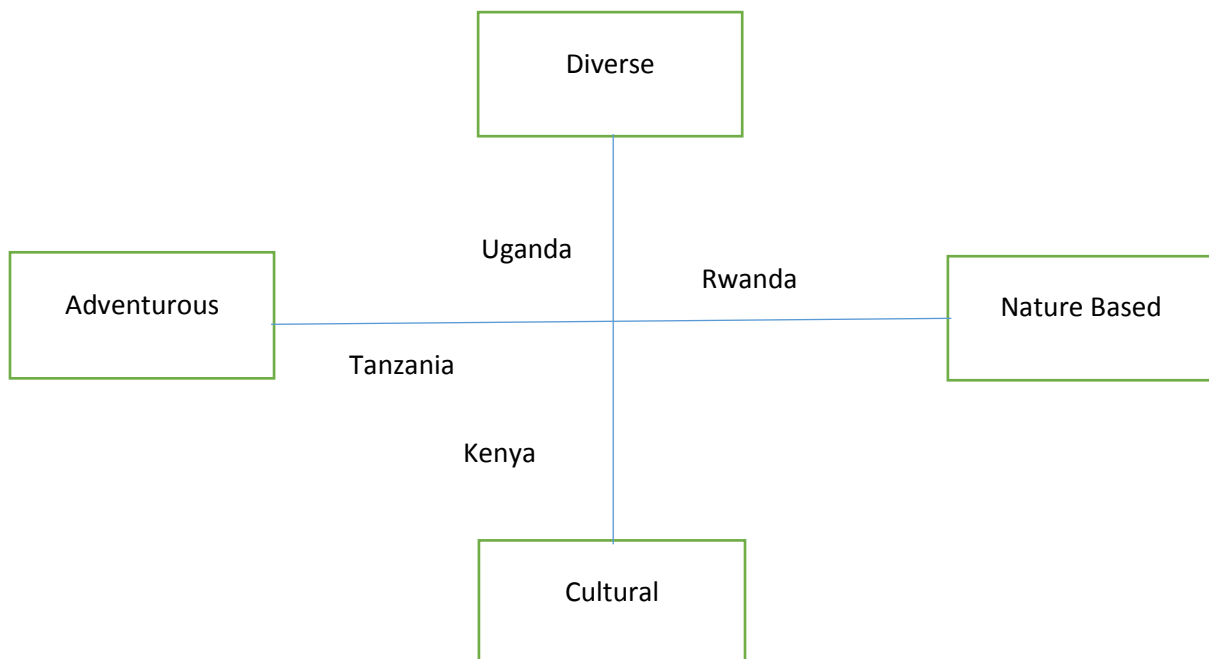


Figure 39 – Competitor Analysis

The competitor analysis as visualized above indicates Uganda relies on the core strengths of diversity and adventure. Kenya and Tanzania remain dominant in regards to cultural experiences due to the pilgrimage of the Maasai tribes in eastern Africa. Rwanda shares similar environments and products such as Gorilla trekking with Uganda.

4.5.4 – The Brand Pyramid

When it comes to branding a product, there are numerous models available which assist in visualizing the core essence of the brand. In order to visualize the regional destination brand of the Ruwenzori region, the brand pyramid has been deemed as the most suitable. Please refer to Figure 47; the brand pyramid; Ruwenzori, p.116 for visual representation. The 5 stage brand pyramid is segmented into five defining categories; Rational attributes, emotional attributes, brand personality, positioning statement and brand essence. The rational attributes have been determined in the SWOT analysis as these comprise of the destinations core assets and features which attracts visitors to the region. These have been determined as the Ruwenzori Mountains, Wildlife excursions, hiking and trekking in alternate areas as well as consequent advantages of the weather conditions and cultural appeal of the local community. The emotional attributes refer to the emotions that consumers experience whilst visiting the destination. In accordance with the results of the consumer research, it has been concluded that the sense of tranquility and relaxation is a core theme. Furthermore, as stated by Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) the region is able to bring out a nostalgic emotion of childhood experiences, which is challenging to reconstruct and can be seen as unique. The majority of the respondents stated that their motivation for travel was for ‘exploration and discovery’ however when questioned about the region itself, the responses comprise mainly of ‘relaxing’ ‘quiet’ and tranquil.

The following stage concludes the brand personality; with the assistance of the competitor analysis the following core themes are seen to makeup the personality of the region “a un spoilt, unique, wildly

cultural place with friendly, welcoming and surprising community in setting of natural diversity". The core features which contrast from competitors include diversity and culture. Many destinations within Africa offer wildlife and adventure tourism however the differing factor involves that the Ruwenzori region has accessibility to a range of differing wildlife activities, from chimpanzee trekking, to the Queen Elizabeth Park with Safari animals such as the tree climbing lions, and many visitors finalize their trip at the Bwindi national park for gorilla trekking. The following positioning statement has been determined for the Ruwenzori region:

"A pristine area of diverse natural heritage guided by welcoming communities in a tranquil environment. Tooro Kokasemera; Tooro you are beautiful"

It can be clearly stated that the region is home to beautiful nature, lush green flora and fauna, scattered with wildlife in all stretches of the land. Tooro Kokasemera is translated from the local language and means "Tooro you are beautiful". As stated previously, the kingdom of Tooro makes up for five out of the seven districts and can be seen as a crucial part of the culture of the local populations. The cultural aspect is also an important factor to include as the friendly, welcoming and accommodating environment provided by the community improves the general image of the region for the consumer. The final stage comprises the Brand essence which also refers to the DNA of the destination. The brand essence defined for the Ruwenzori region are as follows; diverse, liberating, rediscovery, exquisite nature and wildlife. These five attributes have been distinguished as crucial to the genetic makeup of the region. Diversity has been a core theme during the analysis of the destination. Liberating refers both to the feeling that the consumers have during their visit to the region; sense of quiet, relaxation, tranquility and escape from day to day living. It also refers to the sense of freedom in regards to accessibility of travelling without a guide, this is unique specifically within African states as it is unusual to have the availability to move around as one pleases. Rediscovery refers to the matter of bringing one back to their childhood in combination with the popular motivation for travel being 'exploration and discovery'. When a destination is able to offer products which bring back untapped emotions, such as childhood excitements; this can be perceived as highly advantageous amongst competition. Exquisite nature and wildlife do not require much explanations as it can clearly be stated that the assets within the region are of high natural quality and diverse in wildlife opportunities.

The branding pyramid forms as a type of blueprint for destination management organizations in order to promote the character, personality and essence of the destination brand. One challenge with the branding pyramid includes the stakeholder involvement. In order to ensure destination brand image and identity alignment, there must be a sense of synergy between all corporations who are involved in the tourism industry of the region. Due to the cryptic formulation of the brand positioning statement and brand essence, stakeholders are challenged in applying similar methods to their own company values. A fluent brand of a destination ensures that all stakeholders continually market and sell not only their personal brand but also highlight the destinations core amenities. In order to simplify the process and ensure synergy between the enterprises; the brand assets template can be utilized by stakeholders. In order to visualize the influence on the stakeholders, a brand assets template has been included with a few examples of stakeholders within the region. Firstly, in regards to products, three accommodations have been analyzed; The Ruwenzori view guesthouse, The Dutchess hotel and the Kyaninga Lodge. All three are differing accommodations with differing products. The Ruwenzori view guesthouse is set in a green, lush environment and offered at a relatively low cost. On the other hand, Kyaninga lodge is one of the more expensive accommodations within the Ruwenzori location in the middle of crater lakes submerged into the forests in small bungalow style houses. The following comprises of experiences which include the most popular activities and their ability to promote the regional brand.

Products and experiences	Brand values				
	Diverse	Liberating	Rediscovery	Natural	Wildlife
The Ruwenzori guesthouse		x		X	X
The Dutchess hotel		x			
Kyaninga Lodge	X	x		X	X
Hike up Ruwenzori		x	X	X	X
Safari adventure	X		X	X	X
Crater lake tour		x		X	X
Ape tracking			X	X	X

Table 4 Brand Template Assets

4.6 – The implementation of the advice

The objective of this project is to provide the Mountains of the Moon University with a suitable regional brand profile for the Ruwenzori region as an initial step in further campaigns. In order to sufficiently produce a brand, a target market has been distinguished. As mentioned previously, a crucial attribute in the branding process includes positioning; this has been completed through the field research as alignment of the image and identity has been identified. The brand pyramid forms as a blueprint of the core characteristics of the area as well as the primary stage in developing further marketing communications. The previous information includes recommendations for the brand; in order to ensure that the brand pyramid is used as a tool for implementation, the PDCA cycle has been incorporated as a method for dissecting the information into concrete actions.

The development of the brand pyramid can be seen as the preliminary stage in developing a marketing campaign and serves as a standard tool to ensure identity alignment throughout the region with differing stakeholders. The image through consumer perspective has been considered during the field research and impacted the information provided in the model.

The PDCA cycle (Deming) is otherwise known as Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle. This model ensures that improvements can be continuously made as there is no end to the cycle. The primary stage includes 'plan', this stage involves recognition of the goals or purposes for the project and is finalized by putting the plan into action. The second stage comprises 'do' this includes the process of implementing the components of the plan. The following stage consists of the 'check' or 'study' phase, this ensures that the product or service is sufficiently monitored; signs of progress, success or failure are checked for improvement. The final stage 'act' refers to the reformulation or improvements that will be adjusted based on the previous stages. Feedback and monitoring ensures that all improvement areas are covered and aligned in order to consistently produce successful products and services. In accordance with the thesis project, it can be concluded that the Mountains of the Moon University should base their focus on the 'adventure tourist' as the market segment and utilize the brand pyramid as a blueprint for presenting the regional profile and ensuring image and identity alignment through the standard adjustable model.

The planning stage

As stated previously, the primary step of the 'plan' consists of identifying objectives and goals for the project. The objective of the advice consists of informing the client on a suitable branding method which distinguishes a regional profile as well as consistently ensures image and identity alignment through standard marketing factors. The branding process can be seen as the preliminary stage within a marketing campaign, and the provided brand pyramid outlines the profile that is to be promoted. The application of a branding strategy for further use can be challenging, this need to be address in two

areas; in marketing communications plans and stakeholder and resident involvement. It can be determined that the MMU will utilize the brand pyramid as an initial blueprint of the regional profile. Based on the management problem described in the review, the following objective has been described.

- To develop a marketing campaign targeted towards adventure tourists in alignment with the regional branding strategy

It is important to reformulate the objective in regards to the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely) criterion. The objective comprises:

- By 2020 of the implementation, a regional marketing campaign will be launched which incorporates the branding strategy.

It has been determined that the branding strategy forms as the preparatory blueprints for further marketing communications activities which are to be undertaken in order to retrieve the aligned target market and continually promote the identity of the region. The primary step involves communication of the branding strategy to all officials responsible for the marketing of the region of Ruwenzori in order to ensure that the current brand aligns with the ideals of the tourism board. This will require time in communicating effectively to all necessary stakeholders. Furthermore, there may be need for additional research for the content of the brand strategy as the field research was only completed over the period of one month and differing character traits may appear at other times of the year. It can be assumed that the process of ensuring that the current branding strategy is complete and relevant will take up to one year. Another factor which is crucial to the marketing of the region includes stakeholder involvement, the branding strategy will be communicated to all tourism industry officials to align the information to their own marketing strategies.

The 'do' phase

The following stage comprises the implementation of the planned actions. It is important to consider the time and budget involved in processes in developing a marketing campaign from the branding strategy.

Stakeholders will be contacted in order to discuss and evaluate the current branding blueprint for the Ruwenzori region. Hereby it can be determined whether or not the information provided is sufficient or whether there is need for further analytical data of consumers or missing information in regards to identity. It can be concluded that the branding strategy completion will have a duration of approximately 1.5 years with modifications as well as standard values which suit the needs of stakeholders involved. This may interfere with the daily operations for many stakeholders as this will take their time as well as that of those communicating the promotions to them. The regional tourism cluster hosts meetings for discussing tourism activities on a quarterly basis, these meetings include stakeholders who are interested in participating to provide and receive input on the performance in regards to tourism. This would form as an ideal premise for the stakeholders and tourism officials. Once this has been completed, experts within the tourism board and marketing officials may begin their efforts in communicating the information to the adventure market.

The 'check' phase

The following step contains potential improvement on problems and difficulties which may occur during the implementation of the project. As mentioned previously, there is need for further research to ensure that the brand profile is relevant for the entire region on an annual basis. Based on the

research results being based on one month of the year, the responses may vary and could have led to differing brand identity. There is a need to readjust and continually maneuver the branding strategy based on the future image and identity of the region. The strategy has to be completely relevant and precise prior to the development of promotional activities. The brand pyramid is a useful tool as it can be easily modified and adjusted, therefore the adjustments would require minimal efforts and provide useful data.

The 'act' stage

The step of 'act' refers to the improvement of any problems or issues which may have occurred in the monitoring stage. In order to assure that the improvements can be made, the previous steps must be analyzed effectively. There may be adjustments to be made within the branding strategy or the marketing promotion campaign of the future based on developments within the region. During the 'act' stage it is equally important to align the marketing promotion with the branding strategy. Within this phase it may become apparent that the schedule time frame may adjust based on the consumer markets. Incidents may occur in which the image of the region shifts, this is a factor that would be considered and deliberated prior to further development of marketing.

As the branding process provided is the initial phase of developing a marketing campaign, the MMU is solely responsible for the monitoring and adjustment of the branding strategy.

4.7 – Financial implications

This stage focuses on the financial implications which would arise in regards to the project. Due to the reason that the branding strategy forms as a preliminary stage in the marketing communications process, a limited amount of financial implications take place. When discussing the activities during the 1.5 year period of adjusting and perfecting the branding strategy it can be assumed that few costs will arise. It can be assumed that further research may need to be performed in order to assure that the information is completely compliant with the identity of the region. The field research with consumers may be completed in a more logical manner by distributing surveys within tourist attractions, this would decrease costs and save time simultaneously. As mentioned, for this stage it has been determined that the financial implications occur solely for human activity as well as costs for materials involved. The employee wages and time taken out of their business in order to discuss regional branding planning will be considered additionally. The local salary for an operational staff member in the hospitality industry of Uganda is approximately 200,000 USH (Ugandan Shillings) per month, this is equivalent to approximately \$55 US dollars. It can be acknowledged that the wages in Uganda contrast heavily to European states, therefore the budget for the tourism industry also contrasts vastly. The distribution of manual questionnaires require printing costs, there are a multitude of printing shops available in Fort Portal, one page of printed A4 paper costs 358 USH (Ugandan Shillings) which amounts to \$0,10 US dollars. The costs of distributing materials remain relatively minimal.

When discussing the development of a marketing promotions campaign which incorporates the brand positioning statement as a slogan; many costs will arise depending on the tools and methods utilized to communicate the products to the target audience. In regards to focusing on handling a branding budget, the development of a completed marketing campaign including presentations and materials can cost up to \$30,000. The promotional tools and materials vary in price depending on the method of dispersion therefore these activities amount to approximately \$4,000 – \$10,000 dollars. As the branding strategy remains at the primary stages, the costs for this project can be calculated as those mentioned prior to the marketing campaign.

4.8 – Benefits and Feasibility

As it has been stated previously, the image of a destination is a key construct of the positioning of a destination in the market. The development of a thorough branding scheme introduces an easily adaptable, useful and coherent blueprint of the personality of a destination. The implementation of the branding strategy involves a multitude of employees from the regional tourism cluster as well as stakeholder involvement to ensure coherent promotions activities are to take place. The benefit of the branding strategy is to develop a regional profile for the Ruwenzori. An additional benefit of the branding pyramid within the strategy includes the ability to align image and identity of the region.

The introduction of a branding strategy to the Mountains of the Moon University is beneficial in order to distinguish a regional profile as well as for determining target markets and focus points. The problem of data collection and audit processes is a current theme in African countries as there remains to be a great deal of development necessary in data collection but mainly data and knowledge storage. The simplicity of the brand personality traits indicate that multiple target markets can be captured through enticing language and formulation.

Furthermore, the stakeholder willingness to comply is another factor to consider. It can be assumed that many stakeholders within the region have their own opinions and ideals of the region and how to market their product effectively without having to consider more aspects. However, due to the willingness of participation in the research itself it can be determined that the stakeholders specifically accommodation owners would be eager to contribute to the regional brand and attempt to promote their business as well. The Tooro culture also encompasses community building and community development. This indicates that the stakeholders will likely work cooperatively.

One aspect which is to be considered includes the need for further research during alternate seasons within the region in order to gain a realistic year round image of the region. This step involves a researcher willing to distribute and analyze the data, this can be a timely and costly matter. In the case that a student is interested in contributing their time and patience as a part of a project, these costs will decrease simultaneously.

A benefit of the branding strategy ensures continual image and identity alignment in the minds of future and prospective consumers. By ensuring that the brand has been created based on the opinions of former and current consumers in collaboration with stakeholders, the identity and image makeup the brand equity and brand personality. The branding strategy can be seen as a continuous cycle as product development impacts the DNA of the destination and external image perceptions are likely to alter in the future. The branding strategy forms as a method of differentiation from competitors. The incorporation of a branding strategy into the marketing communications plans for a destination can assist in making a destination “shine’ in a crowd.

Finally, the feasibility of the project is relatively high, the materials provided form as primary stages in the branding process and can be utilized as theoretical knowledge on the regional profile. Factors which diminish the feasibility include time consumption and costs. The costs are relatively low in the case that the branding strategy is taken into practice, the time consumption is the more unappealing aspect involved in the implementation of the project.

4.9 – Final Conclusion

This thesis report has been constructed in order to answer the management question of ‘How can the Mountains of the Moon University determine destination image and identity alignment in order to develop a regional profile?’. Resulting from the previous chapters it can be determined that the brand pyramid and branding strategy are effective in developing a regional profile. The results of the research indicate that there is an alignment of the image and identity in the perspectives of the consumers and stakeholders. The responses between the parties were shared and the overall image could be determined. The client is able to utilize the constructed branding strategy as a blueprint of advice in order to further develop products or marketing communications plans.

The following statement comprises the brand positioning statement which can otherwise be seen as a slogan for the region, specifically “Tooro kokasemera; Tooro you are beautiful”.

“A pristine area of diverse natural heritage guided by welcoming communities in a tranquil environment. Tooro Kokasemera; Tooro you are beautiful”

This can be seen as influential as it not only incorporates the culture of the people within the region but also leaves room for interpretation and mystery which entices markets to visit the region. Furthermore, the target group of ‘adventure market’ could be defined as the most important target sector to focus on. The Ruwenzori region is a culturally enriched, naturally immersed and diverse stretch of land with possibilities to obtain a multitude of unique and memorable experiences. The unique selling point comprises of the emotional connections that are captured such as the revival of childhood sentiments, which is a rare ability for a destination. The key attractions include; the Chimpanzee trekking in Kibale Forest, the equatorial snow-capped Mountains, the Queen Elizabeth national park for tree climbing lions and the general environment of beautiful landscapes and scenery.

The market research indicates that the main groups of travelers are of European descent. The main ages of the travelers are between 20–35 years of age, indicating that the region appeals to those with a certain level of physical ability. There is an equal division of male and female visitors and it is apparent that the majority of the consumers are travelling with their family or friends. The accommodation sector deems importance on guest houses and homesteads as these impact the visit for the consumers. This type of accommodation is more personal and inviting for the consumer. It can also be concluded that the majority of the consumers travelling within the region are between midrange to high end in regards to costs. This is due to the high cost of the attractions. This advice has been directed towards the adventure tourist market, this does not entirely cover the promotional activities which are aimed at domestic tourism.

To conclude, with the given branding strategy the Mountains of the Moon University are able to determine a regional profile for the Ruwenzori. In order to continually ensure image and identity alignment further research and monitoring must take place. Furthermore, costs may be involved with further marketing campaigns in the future.

5.0 – The Afterword

Over the past six months the preparation, the conduction of the field research and evaluations have been completed in order to produce a final advice in the form of a thesis review. The completion of the thesis report has been one of the most challenging academic accomplishments of the entire study at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences.

The primary stage consisted of the reformulation of the management problem into a concrete project. This was challenging at first due to the broad scope of the problem being the insufficient data making up the regional profile for the Ruwenzori region. It had been decided to primarily focus on marketing communications planning as a result of the research findings, however this step was too distant from the current capabilities and a branding strategy was deemed more suitable as a preparatory stage for profile development. The formulation of the research questions and sub questions were challenging as distinguishing key components of the destination DNA in simple terms to cater to the respondents had to be dissected and segmented. Fortunately, the assistance of the first examiner and research teacher came as extremely useful input in order to ensure that the project had a focal point.

The first months of the thesis preparation caused a lot of stress, this was due to structural complications and misidentification of the red line which ensures coherency of the information leading to suitable advice. After completion of the Thesis proposal defense the entire focal point became clear and the project development after this stage came as ease.

The completion of the field research was one of the most rewarding and invigorating moments during the thesis semester. It was deemed that the conduction of the research would be impossible without visiting the region of Ruwenzori to manually distribute the questionnaires to the visitors as well as conduct face to face interviews with stakeholders. The field research took place in April 2017, and can be said to be one of the most educational, breath taking and inspirational destinations that I have visited in my life. Firstly, the factor that this was my first trip to Uganda, or similar countries in central Africa, came as a frightening feeling and I was unsure of what to expect. One of the most memorable moments will be that this was also the first trip that I have taken with my father as a motivator and supporter during the entire research stage, all I can say is I wouldn't have been able to be as successful without his assistance. Furthermore, I was pleasantly surprised by the amount of participants willing to assist and provide further information in order to improve the research. I would like to specifically thank the members of staff at the 'forest bar and restaurant' for taking out their time to distribute questionnaires to domestic tourists. All of the respondents of this research were incredibly helpful and many provided additional remarks or contacts to improve the results of the research. If this research was to be duplicated, I would stay in Uganda for a longer period of time in order to gain more responses as well as gain personal insights.

The final stages of the thesis completion comprise of the result evaluation, analysis leading to the advice. This has been the most difficult part of the report as there was a lot of data to disseminate and a multitude of directions were recognized. This may have been due to poor structure and time planning, however it felt that the final months were the most tiring to handle. I feel that I was able to handle the majority of the challenges independently with the use of theoretical knowledge during the final stages of the thesis, there was not much need for communication between myself and the examiners. However, without the constant support and motivation from my family, siblings and companions, this thesis project would not be complete.

The most successful moment during the entire process includes the field research and the time surrounding the visit to Uganda. I feel that I was most motivated and clear of mind at this point making it easy to complete sufficient interviews and ensure that I was on track with the then approaching deadline. I also began to notice that I could see the conclusions and advice in my head based on what I had seen and experienced myself during my time there.

My communication with the client has been relatively strong during the entire process, and during our face to face meeting in Fort Portal, he agreed that I was following the correct direction based on his management problem. The first examiner has been of great influence as she was available for communication at almost any moment of difficulty. I believe that communication channels have been strong during the process of the thesis. All in all I feel satisfied with my level of focus during these past months, when working on an independent project without too much assistance from external forces it can be challenging to ensure focus, structure and keeping within a timeframe. I feel that I was able to stick to my own deadlines relatively cohesively and keep up with communication to all of the important parties involved. I have learned a great deal of self-discipline as well as realizing my own abilities as well as my own weaknesses.

If I were to redo this thesis report I would attempt to better structure my time, specifically for when dealing with the results and advice section of the report. Furthermore, I would also prefer to gain data which includes seasonality as a factor as this may have an impact on the total image of the region and it is difficult to assume that the responses within April are entirely coherent with those of alternate periods within the year.

Finally, one of the most beneficial contacts that I was directed to through an interview respondent includes Mrs. Makela (07.05.17) whom provided me with crucial information. She is a product consultant for the UNWTO and has been performing independent studies within Uganda over the past years. It was rewarding to be able to gain her insight and expertise for the thesis project but also gain insights on the type of work that she is performing for my own personal career pursuit. I would like to thank Ineke Jongerius for providing me the contact and Mrs Makela for taking her time to assist and provide professional input for the thesis project.

The following aspect concerns the value of this thesis report to the tourism industry as a whole. The underlying theme involved in the report consists of destination image and identity alignment, which in this case was successful. Destination branding can be a useful tool in shaping the image and identity of a destination and vice versa, as the image and identity make up the blocks for building a strong brand. It can be stated that this thesis is not valuable to the entire tourism industry due to the reason that it is mainly focusing on the region of Ruwenzori. However the underlying theories and models utilized can be reproduced for any destination. It can be concluded that the data within this thesis report could be of interest to the Ugandan Tourism Board. The thesis report is not that important for the tourism industry but is of great importance to the Ruwenzori regional tourism cluster. Furthermore, the thesis report could be utilized as basis for other regions within Uganda, or surrounding countries due to the lack of statistical data that they are currently able to manage and store. This thesis report is of value to the client, Mountains of the Moon University as they are able to save costs and time for the research. The advice can be utilized as an initial blueprint for the Ruwenzori region.

This thesis report will be of value to the client and potentially further persons within the tourism industry of Uganda. All in all, this thesis report is of great value to myself as it is a representation of my own abilities within a given time frame. Further, I feel that I have developed personal linkages to the region and eagerly await my return for further development.

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The Appendix

Authority	<p>Who is the author?</p> <p>Who is responsible for the intellectual content?</p> <p>What are his/ her credentials?</p> <p>Is there any indication of the author's education?</p> <p>Professional affiliation or experience?</p>
Accuracy	<p>Is the information provided specific?</p> <p>Is the information verifiable?</p> <p>Are conclusions based on research?</p> <p>Are conclusions based on actual figures that can be checked?</p>
Objectivity	<p>Is there any advertising or solicitation for donations associated with the source?</p> <p>Does the author provide more than one point of view?</p> <p>Does the writing use inflammatory or biased language?</p>
Currency	<p>The date of publication?</p> <p>Is it still relevant to this day and age?</p> <p>When was the research conducted?</p>
Coverage	<p>Who?</p> <p>What?</p> <p>When?</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>Why?</p> <p>How?</p>

Figure 1: AAOCC Criteria

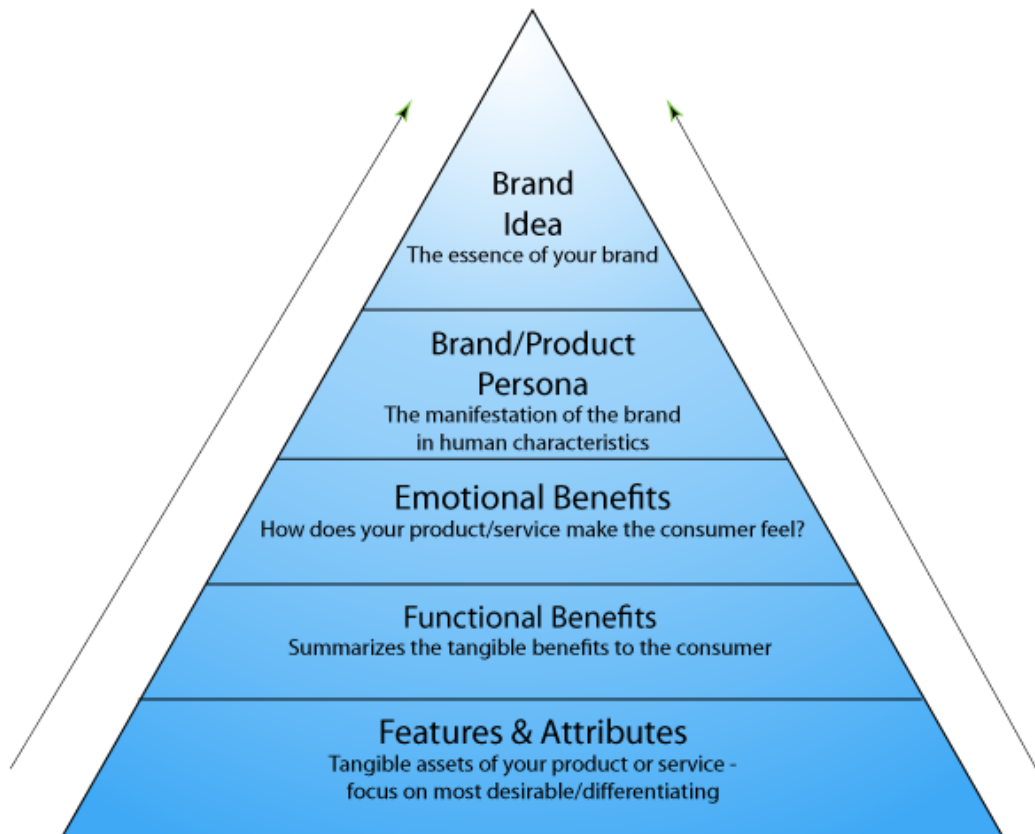


Figure 2: Branding Pyramid Layout

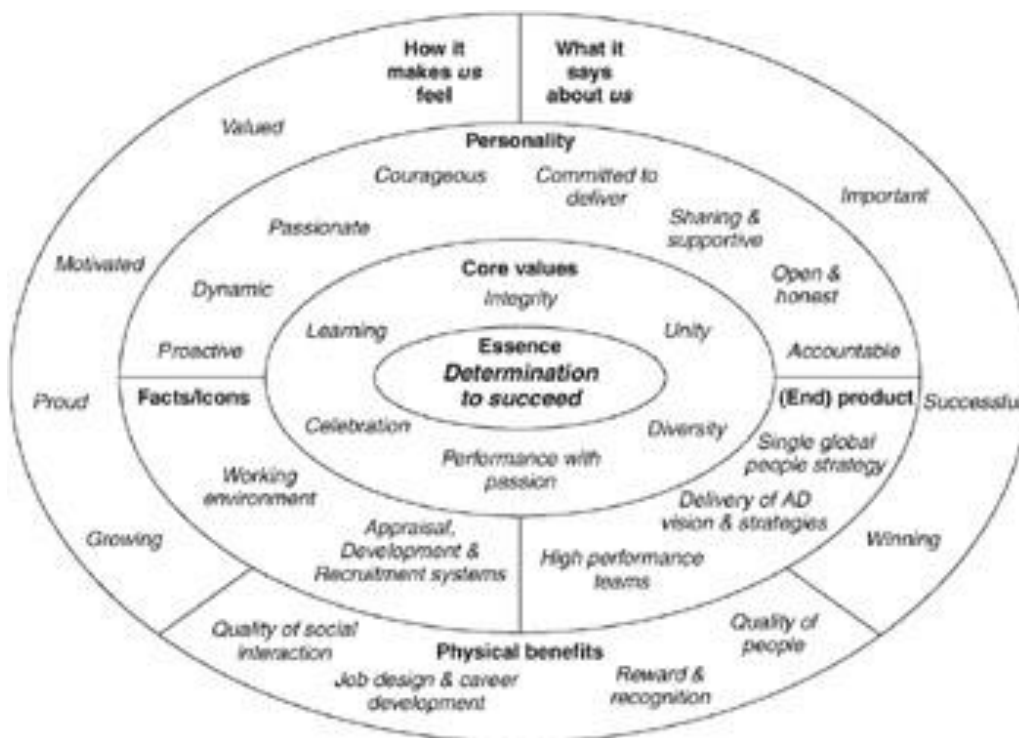


Figure 3: Branding Wheel Layout

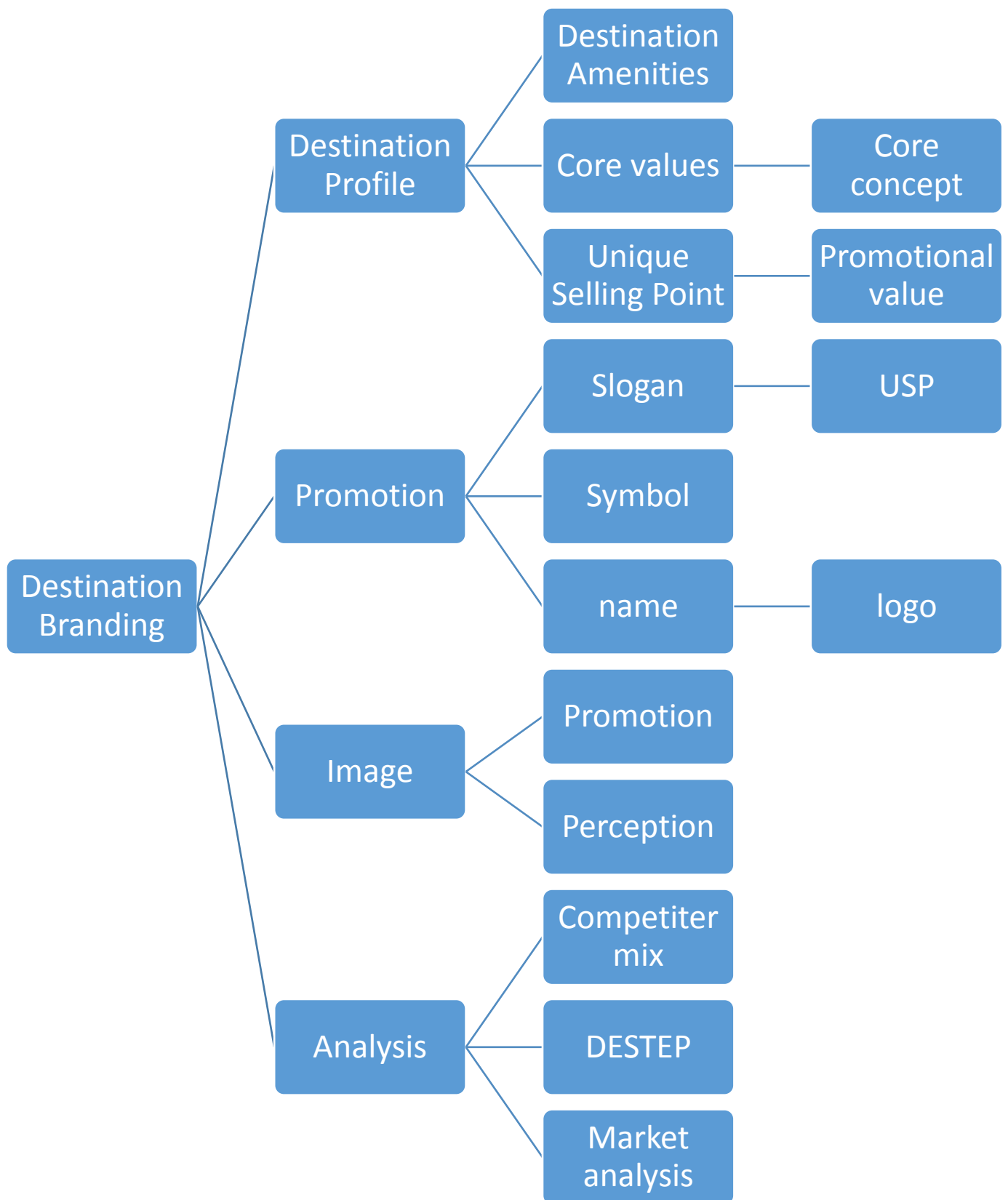


Figure 4 Destination Branding Operationalization

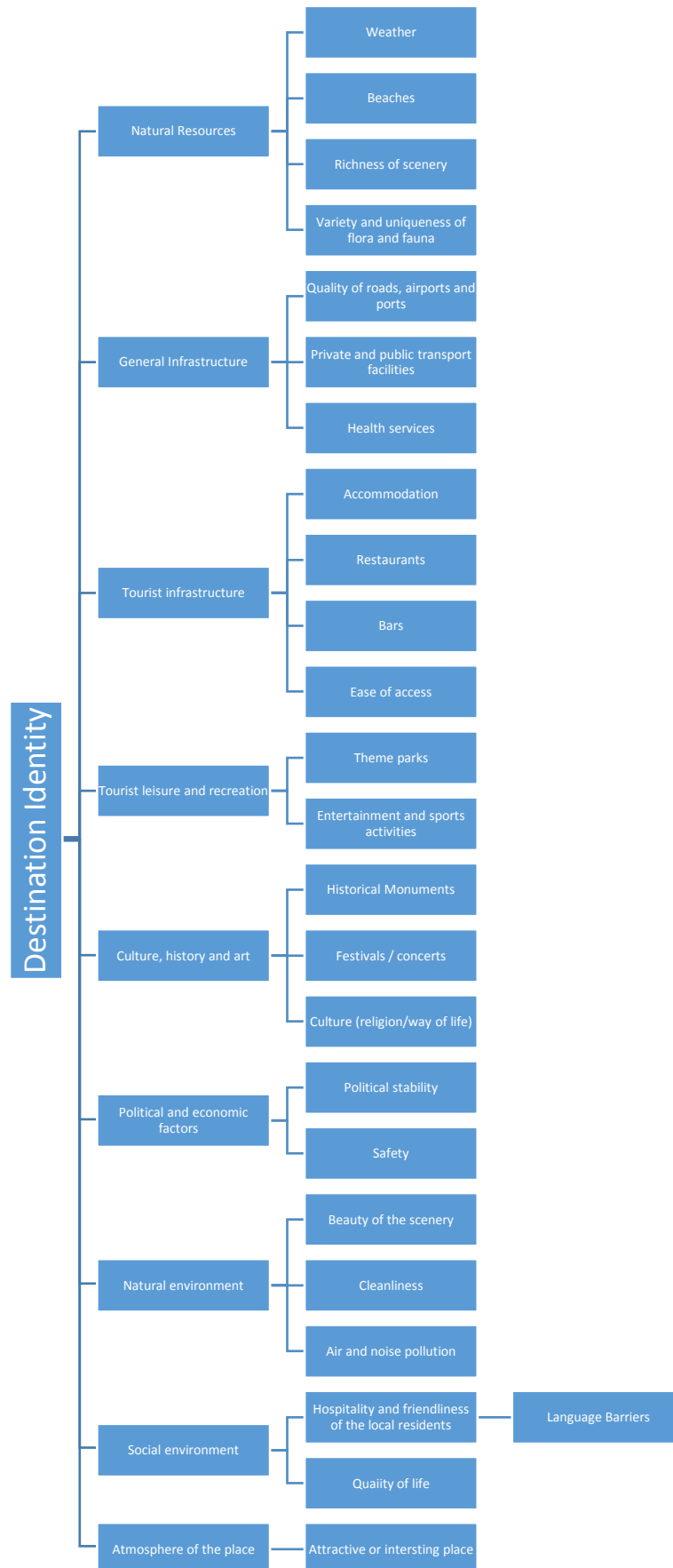


Figure 5: Destination Image and Identity Operationalization

Table: Dimensions and attributes determining the perceived tourist destination image		
Natural resources	General Infrastructure	Tourist infrastructure
Weather <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temperature - Rainfall - Humidity - Hours of sunshine Beaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of seawater - Sandy or rocky beaches - Length of beaches - Overcrowding of beaches Richness of scenery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protected nature reserves - Lakes, mountains, deserts Variety and uniqueness of flora and fauna	Development and quality of roads, airports and ports Public and private transport facilities Development of health services Development of commercial infrastructure Extent of building development	Hotel and self-catering accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of beds - Categories - Quality Restaurants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number - Categories Bars, discotheques and clubs Ease of access to destination Excursions at the destination Tourist centers Network of tourist information
Tourist leisure and recreation	Culture, history and art	Political and economic factors
Theme parks Entertainment and sports activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Golf, fishing, hunting, skiing, scuba - Water parks - Zoos - Trekking - Adventure activities - Casinos - Nightlife - Shopping 	Museums, historical buildings, monuments Festival, concerts, etc. Handicraft Gastronomy Folklore Religion Customs and ways of life	Political stability Political tendencies Economic development Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crime rate - Terrorist attacks Prices
Natural environment	Social environment	Atmosphere of the place
Beauty of the scenery Beauty of the cities and towns Cleanliness Overcrowding Air and noise pollution Traffic congestion	Hospitality and friendliness of the local residents Underprivileged and poverty Quality of life Language barriers	Luxurious place Fashionable place Place with fame and reputation Place oriented toward families Exotic place Mystic place Relaxing place Stressful place Happy, enjoyable place Pleasant place Boring place Attractive or interesting place

Figure 6: Destination Identity classification

Dear fellow traveler!

My name is Anna Paasikoski, I am studying Tourism Management at the Saxion University of Applied Sciences in Deventer, The Netherlands. I am currently conducting research for my final Bachelor Thesis, the topic concerns the tourism products within the Rwenzori region and the tourism activity within the districts of the region. This survey has been segmented into three sections and will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your answers will be treated confidential.

I would like to sincerely thank you for your participation and for the time taken to fill in this questionnaire. If there are any further questions or interests in the topic please feel free to provide your contact details.

Part I: Personal Information

1) What is your age?.....Years

2) What is your nationality? (If other, please specify which nationality)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American | <input type="checkbox"/> British |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canadian | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> German | <input type="checkbox"/> South African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Australian | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

3) What is your Gender?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Female |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|

4) What is your duration of travel?

.....Days

5) Have you visited Africa before?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

6) Who are you travelling with within Rwenzori?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alone | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | <input type="checkbox"/> Colleagues |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... |

7) What is your purpose of travel?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting friends or relatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure and relaxation | <input type="checkbox"/> Discovery and exploration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural | <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... |
- enhancement

8) Which of the following types of tourist best describes you within the Rwenzori region?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business tourist | <input type="checkbox"/> Leisure tourist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adventure tourist | <input type="checkbox"/> Sport and recreation tourist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural tourist | <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking or youth tourist |

- ☐ Eco tourist ☐ Other.....

Part II: Tourism Travel

1) In what type of accommodation are you staying during your visit in Rwenzori? Indicate multiple if necessary

- ☐ Hotel ☐ Guesthouse
☐ Lodge ☐ Hostel
☐ Bed and Breakfast ☐ Other.....

2) Please indicate the likeliness of visitation to the following attractions offered within the Rwenzori region. Mark an X in the table for each activity. (Also applicable for already visited sites)

Highly likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Highly Unlikely

Hike up Rwenzori Mountain					
Visit to a national park					
Chimpanzee trekking					
Gorilla trekking					
Cultural tour of crater lakes					
Visit and tour of Amabere caves					
Safari adventure					
Visit to the botanical gardens					

Please indicate any further tourism activities which have not been mentioned above:

Other.....

3) What kind of tourist activities do you think Rwenzori is good at offering? Mark and X in the appropriate box.

	Very well	Somewhat	Not entirely	Not at all
Cultural experiences				
Adventure experiences				
Beach and Leisure				
Natural heritage experiences				
Shopping and recreation				

Part III: Natural Environment

1) What images or characteristics come to mind when thinking about Rwenzori as a tourism destination? Please provide 3 words to describe.

.....

2) What are the most appealing aspects of the Rwenzori Region?

.....

.....
.....

3) What are the most unappealing aspects of the Rwenzori region?

.....
.....
.....

4) What are the most unique features about the Rwenzori region?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5) Please mark the most appropriate box with an X. The answers will follow the statement:

Ruwenzori region has...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Moderate	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A friendly environment					
A dangerous environment					
A cultural environment					
Beautiful landscapes					
Polluted environment					
Welcoming Local community					
Unique memorable experiences					
Expensive attractions					
Rich natural amenities					
Crowded mass tourism					
Too much traffic					

Thank you for your participation!

Figure 7: The Questionnaire

Interview Guide:

First of all when meeting the interviewee, the interviewer had to introduce themselves, explain the purpose of the meeting and the goals of the research. Furthermore, it has to be mentioned that the interview will be recorded in order to increase the validity and reliability of the outcomes and to use the transcript of the interview for the data analysis. During the interview, the respondent will be provided questions which focus on the interviewee's personal insights and opinions of the Rwenzori region. The agenda and approximate time required for the interview will be communicated prior to starting the interview in order to provide clarity and an overview of the meeting.

To conclude the interview the interviewer will thank the interviewee for the time spent, which is useful in order to conduct the research and to gather efficient input. Furthermore the interviewer will provide the interviewee with the possibility to receive the outcomes of the field research upon completion.

Name of the company:

Interview respondent:

Position of respondent: managing director

Start of interview – Small talk – Easter wishes & purpose of travel

1. Natural Environment – amenities/ assets

- 1.1 – What are the key attractions within the region in terms of tourism according to you?
 - 1.2 – Which are the highest selling services offered to tourists in the region?
 - 1.3 – Are the tourists already aware of the attractions prior to arrival?
 - 1.4 – What do you think are the most appealing aspects within the Rwenzori region?
 - 1.5 – What do you think are the least appealing aspects within the Rwenzori region?
- What are the most important natural attractions which you wish to protect from mass tourism?
Why?

2. Unique Selling Point

- 2.1 – What is a unique selling point of the Rwenzori region? What can you only see or experience here and nowhere else?

3. Tourists

- 3.1 – In your opinion, what is the main purpose of travel of the tourists within the region?
- 3.2 – What is the biggest problem that tourism brings to the region?
- 3.3 – How would you describe the main types of tourists visiting the Rwenzori region?
- 3.4 – What are the most common nationality that you would say visits your property?
e.g. Adventure traveler, ecotourist, etc.

4. Stakeholder role

What is your main priority when it comes to regional destination development?

5. Rwenzori personality

If you could describe Rwenzori in three words, what would those three words be?
What do you think personally is the best thing about the Rwenzori region?
What emotions do you relate to the region from your own perspective?

Figure 8: The interview guide

Results and Data

		Age			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	14 - 19	2	2,6	2,6	2,6
	20-25	19	24,7	24,7	27,3
	26-35	29	37,7	37,7	64,9
	36-45	6	7,8	7,8	72,7
	46-55	9	11,7	11,7	84,4
	56 - 65	10	13,0	13,0	97,4
	66-100	2	2,6	2,6	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 9: The age of the respondents

		Nationality			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	American	11	14,3	14,3	14,3
	German	16	20,8	20,8	35,1
	Australian	3	3,9	3,9	39,0
	British	9	11,7	11,7	50,6
	Chinese	1	1,3	1,3	51,9
	Dutch	10	13,0	13,0	64,9
	Belgium	6	7,8	7,8	72,7
	Ugandan	10	13,0	13,0	85,7
	Other	11	14,3	14,3	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 10: The nationality of the respondents

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	35	45,5	45,5	45,5
	Female	42	54,5	54,5	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 11: The gender of the respondents

Duration of travel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 - 3	12	15,6	15,6	15,6
	4 - 8	20	26,0	26,0	41,6
	9 - 12	5	6,5	6,5	48,1
	13-17	20	26,0	26,0	74,0
	18 - 21	8	10,4	10,4	84,4
	26 - 30	3	3,9	3,9	88,3
	30 and higher	9	11,7	11,7	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 12: Duration of travel of respondents

Travel Company

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Alone	10	13,0	13,0	13,0
	Family	33	42,9	42,9	55,8
	Partner	6	7,8	7,8	63,6
	Friends	19	24,7	24,7	88,3
	Colleagues	7	9,1	9,1	97,4
	Other	2	2,6	2,6	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 13: Travel Company

Purpose of travel

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business	5	6,5	6,5	6,5
	Leisure and relaxation	15	19,5	19,5	26,0
	Cultural enhancement	5	6,5	6,5	32,5
	Visiting friends and relatives	10	13,0	13,0	45,5
	Discovery and exploration	40	51,9	51,9	97,4
	Other	2	2,6	2,6	100,0
	Total	77	100,0	100,0	

Figure 14: Purpose of travel

		Type of Tourist			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Business tourist	2	2,6	2,9	2,9
	Adventure tourist	29	37,7	41,4	44,3
	Cultural tourist	7	9,1	10,0	54,3
	Ecotourist	4	5,2	5,7	60,0
	Leisure tourist	12	15,6	17,1	77,1
	Sport and recreation tourist	2	2,6	2,9	80,0
	Backpacking or youth tourist	11	14,3	15,7	95,7
	Other	3	3,9	4,3	100,0
	Total	70	90,9	100,0	
Missing	System	7	9,1		
Total		77	100,0		

Figure 15: Type of tourist

		Type of Accommodation			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hotel	7	9,1	10,0	10,0
	Lodge	21	27,3	30,0	40,0
	Bed and Breakfast	2	2,6	2,9	42,9
	Guesthouse	24	31,2	34,3	77,1
	Hostel	5	6,5	7,1	84,3
	Other	11	14,3	15,7	100,0
	Total	70	90,9	100,0	
Missing	System	7	9,1		
Total		77	100,0		

Figure 17: Type of accommodation

Likelihood of National Park

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly unlikely	1	1,3	1,5	1,5
	Unlikely	3	3,9	4,5	6,0
	Neutral	2	2,6	3,0	9,0
	Likely	13	16,9	19,4	28,4
	Highly likely	48	62,3	71,6	100,0
	Total	67	87,0	100,0	
Missing	System	10	13,0		
Total		77	100,0		

Figure 18: Likelihood of National Park visitation

Likelihood of Chimpanzee trekking

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly Unlikely	6	7,8	9,0	9,0
	Unlikely	7	9,1	10,4	19,4
	Neutral	7	9,1	10,4	29,9
	Likely	11	14,3	16,4	46,3
	Highly likely	36	46,8	53,7	100,0
	Total	67	87,0	100,0	
Missing	System	10	13,0		
Total		77	100,0		

Figure 19: Likelihood of Chimpanzee trek participation

Likelihood of Amabere Cave

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly unlikely	18	23,1	29,5	29,5
	Unlikely	16	20,5	26,2	55,7
	Neutral	17	21,8	27,9	83,6
	Likely	6	7,7	9,8	93,4
	Highly likely	4	5,1	6,6	100,0
	Total	61	78,2	100,0	
Missing	System	17	21,8		
Total		78	100,0		

Figure 20: Likelihood of Amabere cave visitation

Degree of Adventure experiences

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat	15	19,2	22,7	22,7
	Very well	51	65,4	77,3	100,0
	Total	66	84,6	100,0	
Missing	System	12	15,4		
Total		78	100,0		

Figure 21: Degree of adventure experiences

Degree of Shopping & rec

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	17	21,8	26,6	26,6
	Not entirely	30	38,5	46,9	73,4
	Somewhat	15	19,2	23,4	96,9
	Very well	2	2,6	3,1	100,0
	Total	64	82,1	100,0	
Missing	System	14	17,9		
Total		78	100,0		

Figure 22: Degree of shopping and recreation

Degree of beach & leisure

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	24	30,8	38,1	38,1
	Not entirely	29	37,2	46,0	84,1
	Somewhat	5	6,4	7,9	92,1
	Very well	5	6,4	7,9	100,0
	Total	63	80,8	100,0	
Missing	System	15	19,2		
Total		78	100,0		

Figure 23: Degree of beach and leisure

Visit to Africa * Dangerous environment Crosstabulation

Count

		Dangerous environment				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Moderate	Agree	Total
Visit to Africa	Yes	14	24	12	1	51
	No	3	10	7	0	20
Total		17	34	19	1	71

Figure 24 :Crosstabulation; visit to africa vs dangerous environment

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,170	,561
	Cramer's V	,170	,561
N of Valid Cases		71	

Figure 25: Cross tabulation measures

Visit to Africa * Unique memorable experiences Crosstabulation

Count

		Unique memorable experiences				
		Disagree	Moderate	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Visit to Africa	Yes	1	4	23	22	50
	No	0	1	10	9	20
Total		1	5	33	31	70

Figure 26: Crosstabulation: Visit to africa vs unique

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,095	,889
	Cramer's V	,095	,889
N of Valid Cases		70	

Figure 27: Crosstabulation: Symmetric measures

Gender * Friendly environment Crosstabulation

Count

		Friendly environment			
		Moderate	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Gender	Male	0	13	21	34
	Female	1	14	24	39
Total		1	27	45	73

Figure 28: Crosstabulation: Gender vs friendliness

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approximate Significance
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,111	,638
	Cramer's V	,111	,638
N of Valid Cases		73	

Figure 29: Crosstabulation: Symmetric measures

Descriptive Information from consumer data collection

3 Words to describe Ruwenzori as Tourism Destination:

Ruwenzori Mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mountains (33x) - Hills (3x) - Glaciers at the equator (1x) - Mountain treks (1x) - High altitude region Africa (1x) - Snow (1x) - View of the Ruwenzori's (1x)
Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nature (18x) - Green (10x) - Forest (7x) - Crater lakes (7x) - Beautiful landscapes (6x) - Adventure (5x) - Tea plantations (3x) - Beautiful nature (2x) - Serene environment (2x) - Hot springs (2x) - Relaxed atmosphere (1x) - Untouched picturesque (1x) - Conserved and lovely (1x) - Fresh air (1x) - Quietness (1x)
Wildlife & Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chimpanzees (9x) - Wildlife (8x) - Unique animals (6x) - Apes (4x) - National Parks (3x) - Birds (2x) - Safaris (2x) - Game drive (1x) - Gorillas (1x) - Endemics (1x) - Savannah (1x) - Hippos (1x) - Mosquitoes (1x)
Local Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friendly people (8x) - Culture (5x) - Community (1x) - Relaxed town (1x) - Friendly (1x)
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Weather (4x) - Climate (3x)
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diverse environment (4x) - Many activities; diversity (1x)
Hiking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hiking (7x) - Trekking (2x)

Other (Which could not be categorized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water (2x) - Food (1x) - Wonderful (1x) - Different (1x) - Clean (1x) - Cows (1x) - Good place to be (1x) - Coffee (1x) - Cocoa (1x)
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Figure 30: Respondent descriptive data analyses

195/231 responses. 231 responses for this question

Most Appealing aspects in Ruwenzori region

Ruwenzori mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mountains (14x) - Hills
Natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beautiful nature (18x) - Landscapes (14x) - Flora and Fauna (4x) - Forest (3x) - Crater lakes (2x) - the environment (2x) - Quietness (2x) - Unique and unheard of - Untouched - Relaxed environment - Peace - Hot springs
Wildlife & Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wildlife (8x) - Chimpanzees (8x) - National parks (2x) - Endemic animals - Gorillas - Birds
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate (10x) - Cool clean air (3x)
Diverse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity (4x)
Hiking/ Trekking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trekking (4x)
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friendly people (9x) - Culture (2x)
Other (responses which could not be categorized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General stability - Relatively low costs - Good road to Kampala

Figure 31: Respondent descriptive most appealing data

Most unappealing aspects within the Ruwenzori region

Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The roads (16x) - Dirt in streets (5x) - Waste disposal (3x) - Chaos in cities (2x) - Poverty (2x) - Infrastructure - Pollution - Burning everything - Reducing snow - Danger
Tourist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires patience and open minded travelers - Too many tourists
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transportation to region (19x) - No public transportation
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lot of rain (4x) - Mosquitoes (2x) - Foggy - Cold
Food and beverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice in dining (2x) - Dull food
Other (Cannot otherwise be categorized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prices (2x) - The mineral industries - Botanical garden - Luxury - Tribal practices - Accommodation

Figure 32: Respondent descriptive data analysis: least appealing

Most unique features within the Ruwenzori region

Ruwenzori mountains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mountains (18 x) - Snow on the equator (4x)
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate (6x)
Natural Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Landscapes (8x) - Nature (6x) - Crater lakes (4x) - Hot springs (4x) - Forest (2x)
Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People (7x) - Culture (4x) - Safety
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Animals (8x) - Chimpanzees (8x) - Wildlife (3x) - Gorillas (3x) - Birds (3x) - Three horned chameleon - Safari
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity (9x)
Other (Uncategorized)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authentic - Agriculture

Figure 33: Respondent descriptive data analysis: USP

Preliminary information for interview transcripts:

Descriptive codes

Interpretative codes

In-vivo codes

Constructed codes

Name of the company: Ruwenzori view Guest house

The Ruwenzori view guest house is a guest house located a few kilometers from the center of Fort Portal. The main business concerns the accommodation service in a peaceful, quiet location surrounded by lush, green environment with large bird species populations in the gardens. Ideal for bird watchers and other nature seeking tourists, and those looking to find peace from the city.

Interview respondent: Ineke Jongerius

Position of the respondent: Owner of the Ruwenzori View Guest house

Name of the company: Dutchess Hotel and Restaurant

The Dutchess is a Hotel and restaurant located in the center of Fort Portal, the main business concerns the restaurant business and started as innovators of European and international cuisine into the region.

Interview respondent: Heleen Meijer

Position of respondent: Owner of the Dutchess

Name of the company: Kabarole Tours and Safaris

Kabarole tours and Safaris is a touring company located in the center of Fort Portal, they have been designing tours and tourism packages since 1992, the company is locally owned and operated with collaborations and further partner enterprises with community focus.

Interview respondent: Richard Tooro

Position of the respondent: Managing director & founder of Kabarole Tours and Safaris

Name of the company: Golf Course view Guesthouse

Golf course view Guesthouse is a guesthouse owned by a local entrepreneur located near the center of Fort Portal. They have been providing beds and accommodation for several years mainly focusing on Budget travelers and backpackers.

Interview respondent: Paul Rwabwogo

Position of the respondent: Founder & General Manager of Golf course view Guesthouse

Name of the company: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Anne-Maria Makela has visited Uganda on numerous occasions on differing projects to analyze the tourism product. In 2014 Anne- Maria Makela was contracted by UNWTO for a project called inclusive markets in tourism, which is implemented by the Ugandan Tourism board and funded by the United Nations development program. Anne- Maria has main focus on the West region including Fort Portal, The Ruwenzori Mountains and Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Interview respondent: Anne-Maria Makela

Position of the respondent: Tourism Marketing and Product Development Consultant

Anna So, we will start the interview now with the Ruwenzori view guest house, and I will start with the first question which is what in your opinion are the **key attractions** that they have here in the Ruwenzori region, or mainly if you can mention the ones at least closest to Fort Portal?

Ineke **the main attractions**

Anna yes,

Ineke Ok, **I think many people come here** for **the crater lakes**, there are different crater lakes, we have **Kanyinga Crater Lake**, we have the **lakes by Amabere caves** and we have the **big Crater Lake area by Kasinda and Dali**. Many people come here also for **the chimpanzees** and they also like to go to **the Ruwenzori Mountains**, **here you can walk in the foothills of the mountains** also. And also the attraction here is also **the botanical gardens**, we have **a bird walk** people that go early in the morning, **some people from botanical garden can pick them up here and they see first the birds here in the garden and then they walk to botanical garden and after that they come back here for their breakfast.**

Anna Oh ok, yeah, nice, Ehm... and if those are **the key attractions**, what would you say are some of the **least appealing attractions** that have been mentioned when tourists have come here?

Ineke Ehhh... now like **some attractions like Semuliki hot springs**, **that is a nice park with a tropical rain forest** but I would say that **it is very expensive to go there** because per person you have to pay \$65 dollars, **which is too much over the top**. Then you have also **Semuliki game reserve**, **it is an interesting area but there is not much game**, you see but, people go there yeah and you can go to the lake, to lake albert and then you see the boats coming from the Congo and that that can be quite nice but to go in the park for animals, you don't do that. **Maybe you see some interesting birds that can work.**

Anna yeah, ok, Ehm... what would you say then are **the most important attractions** which you think need to be protected and sort of regulated to ensure that there isn't a problem if too many tourists suddenly started to come in?

Ineke mm jaa, **the point is that I hear some stories about the people going to the chimpanzees**, but they have so many people you know that **sometimes people feel they are chasing the chimps instead of the following the chimps**

Anna Yeah, exactly

Ineke **sometimes there are thirty people, others from different groups all thirty**, and they all elbow each other to make a picture, you see and some people feel sorry for that. **What some people do now is going for the whole day habituation which is a bit more expensive but getting more popular** because you follow the chimpanzees the whole day with the researchers. What also is a nice thing to do after **the Kibale forest** from this way, you can go to **the Bigodi wetlands** and that is a community project and people like to do that walk. **You see many different monkeys, not chimpanzees, but birds sometimes snakes and that**

Anna yeah exactly, so the yeah okay no. Ehm... what would you say are some of **the unique selling points** that they have here which you wouldn't be able to get in potentially other parts of Uganda for example?

Ineke **I think you have the best way to see the chimpanzees, crater lakes also are very beautiful, waterfalls**. And here you see this end, You mean here this end? **The foothills of the whole**

Ruwenzoris. You can make walks in there with a guide which is very nice. And ehm... and or you can walk over from this side to the other side to Bundibudjo and that is a whole day trekking, and that is quite unique, the other side it is quite difficult if you go up to the tops of the mountains, you really have to be trained.

Anna Yeah, exactly. I have heard that the mountaineering is for specific mountaineers

Ineke Yeah that is quite steep, you know you go up quite steep, they have some people here who are coming from say Austria, Switzerland and they say we go up the mountains like a serpentine but here they go

Anna Straight up hahaha

Ineke Straight up yeah

Anna Exactly, Okay ehm... then for the actual tourists you see specifically on your property, what is the main purpose of travel for the tourists that stay here on your property?

Ineke Now, yes some people come from Kampala, they live in Kampala, it's very noisy and polluted place so they feel fresh air, they come to the countryside and they can do different things what they want. You can make walks on your own here for example to Kaninga Lodge that is 8km walk. And people like to have the freedom or they like to go to see the tea factories or some things like that, you can even do bike tours.

Anna Yeah, exactly. What would you say then could be the biggest problem that tourism brings to the region?

Ineke Problem?

Anna If you see it is as a problem?

Ineke problem? Tourism?

Anna That it could bring to this region?

Ineke could bring to this region, I don't see many problems at the moment.

Anna ok, so for now you think it is regulated enough

Ineke Ahh, ja, there was also some guys, I got a card yesterday that there was a boda boda driver and he picks people on a boda, you know to go to the crater lakes

Anna Ohh, that's nice

Ineke you know, so that is for people who have a little bit less money. I think some lodges and some places are very expensive but you also have cheaper options so like here you pay some amount but next door you have the hostel, yes hostel that is for a cheaper option but some places are very expensive, but you know, you have accommodation for all kind of things.

Anna yeah exactly, I think there is a midrange kind of tourism is perfect for this region and you still get to see what you want

Ineke Yeah you can do that, But you can also do it a bit cheaper

Anna Yep, ehm... then how would you describe the main types of tourists if you could put like a label on it for example,

Ineke Ok, now the point is, that in a guest house we don't only have tourists we also have people who are working here, like that lady this morning she is going back to the Congo.

Anna Oh okay, yes

Ineke and you for your university, we have people living in Bundobundjo, missionary people they come here. Because bunobudjo is a bit far in, and the climate is better here. Yeah that's is also a good thing, climate. The climate here is very good, and very green

Anna Yeah, very green

Ineke But euhm... yeah so also people working here, or for study. We don't only have tourists and we have quite some people and that is what I like very much, who lived here before in the past. we had a gentleman and his family, if you go this way left to the mountains of the moon on the corner up, before you go up the hill there is a house, and they were staying there from 89 to 92 or something, before I was here, and I like that. And this guy came back with his, what was it yeah with his wife. They came back for the first time,

Anna Oh wow, that's a long time

Ineke it's a long time, his son had been back but he had never been back. And they were American missionaries but I think yeah, that's also the kind of people I like to see here also.

Anna Yeah exactly, then they can also see how it changed a lot

Ineke Yeah how it changed and how it is, how many more people there are.

Anna Okay ehmm, then when it comes to the personality of Ruwenzori, if you could describe it in three words what would those three words be? For the region or for maybe just fort portal itself if its easier?

Ineke three words for what?

Anna to describe sort of how, the first three words that come to mind for the personality?

Ineke We always say the best in the west, but for the guest house we have the unique selling point, like the communal dining, and that is what they don't do in a lot of places

Anna No, that's true

Ineke And then people can meet up and exchange ideas and get, because we don't only have tourists we also have other people so you don't talk only about chimpanzees or something. And that makes it a nice thing

Anna Definitely a unique selling point, yep exactly, ehmm... what would you say represents the, what are the core values of the communities here I guess as well in terms of the actual people in this region? As the product as well, what do you think for them is the most important?

Ineke I don't get the question, the core values of who?

Anna of the community, or of the Ruwenzori region

Ineke I think people here normally the people here are quite friendly, you can talk to everybody. They are quite polite, some women are too polite that they kneel down, oh ja not totally kneel down but if you don't stop them. Euhmm... I don't think we have many begging children yet, some

- places you have it like if you go to the gorillas, the children will come begging, because the tourists spoil them you know, they give money, they feel sorry, this and that. Sometimes you hear it but most times people are quite good and they say hello, how are you? Here people grow many nice things and they like good foods and for the tourists it is also important that have different types of vegetables, in the guesthouse we like many vegetables but that's growing here also and people are jumping on the market like that, there is a lady, she grows vegetables and she brings it to the door, like unique things. Like celery, or fennel or broccoli
- Anna Oh, yeah exactly
- Ineke But also on the market you see many more things coming up, like if you go to the market you have a lot of cauliflower, beetroots, in the past you didn't see that much
- Anna Where do you think that this came from then?
- Ineke Now, yeah, because of more the demand and people see more the market for that
- Anna Yeah, yes exactly, do you feel that you see a difference between the friendliness of the people here in the west in comparison to the rest of the country, or is it just the whole Ugandan feel?
- Ineke I don't know, ja, of course here you know them better, than in other places but I think mostly Ugandans are very friendly, very welcoming, if you need assistance or you have a problem on the road or whatever. One time we had a dog here, and I had to go to town to get a bus, and the dog was following me and we couldn't send it back yeah, there was a man coming with the bicycle and I said can you bring my dog back to the guest house, no problem, you know things like that, or they help to carry things. Very friendly and helpful.
- Anna Yeah, very helpful, very welcoming. I have that impression already since a few days here,
- Ineke I don't know if you have been in other parts of the country but
- Anna Only kampala, It was too busy to get some sort of personal feeling I guess so, Ehm... also the one last question was when the tourists come here, are they already aware of, the ones who do actually come as a tourist, are they already aware of the activities or do they come here...
- Ineke No they ask many questions, what can we do, we spend a few days here, we also had that lady from Finland here, Anna Maria and she said it is a good marketing strategy if you can say stay another day, because we have a lot of individual travelers who haven't made their plans yet and they come here, some say ohh pity we only stay one day, we would have stayed longer. But other ones they stay on, and that is a good thing because sometimes book with a tour company they plan everything, and people have no idea how far the distances are so they are sitting a lot of time in the car
- Anna And then time goes quickly
- Ineke and then, you see oh what have they seen of the country, we think mostly that people, most people you know appreciate a day of rest. Sometimes people have problems with the car and they have to stay here and they enjoy it.
- Anna Hahah yeah,
- Ineke but it was not planned you know,

- Anna Exactly, but yeah from what I have seen there is a lot to do around here, so you can easily do almost two week holiday and a good amount of things to do
- Ineke I am also working together with the ladies who make the baskets, so you can also go there to see demonstrations of the baskets making and we also work together with a group in the Netherlands who supports small scale, so like they can go to the botanical garden and support them, and also like a school, there is a school for handicapped children. You know if people are interested in that we can also arrange that, or if you want to go to the hospital, maybe the medical people, things like that. It also makes a connection.
- Anna My father saw a school for the deaf, on our way here so that was quite nice to already see that, that they have these kind of things here which is important as well I think
- Yeah I think for there I think I have what I need for my actual thing for that, you must have a lot of experiences from here
- Ineke We are also supporting the guys from here who are making the cards, like the guys who make the bicycles.

End of interview

Few additional remarks:

- Arts and handicrafts are all locally produced with acclaimed no commission involved
- Disappointed by other company's beginning to bring in imported souvenirs
- Need more local souvenir distribution

Figure 34: Interview transcript with Ruwenzori view guesthouse

Name of the company: Dutchess Hotel and Restaurant

The Dutchess is a Hotel and restaurant located in the center of Fort Portal, the main business concerns the restaurant business and started as innovators of European and international cuisine into the region.

Interview respondent: Heleen Meijer

Position of respondent: Owner of the Dutchess

Anna: Hello, Good morning we are here at the Dutchess hotel in Fort Portal and we will start the interview... Ehm so I think I will just get straight into it and we can start with looking at the actual attractions and everything that they have in Ruwenzori. So what would you say are the key attractions within the region for tourism? And what are the ones that you direct tourists to when they are staying here?

Heleen: Ehm, if you talk about directly close to Fort Portal, to be honest you can also look on our website cause that's where I have summarized it but I will tell you, it is the chimpanzees which are in Kibale forest and it's the views of the crater lakes and the rift valley. And then if we look a bit further it is the Ruwenzoris itself, where people like to not so much go into the mountains but to at least go into the foothills. Those are the prime attractions of this and then we've got the people that are on their way to Queen Elizabeth and that's sometimes people take a day trip to the Queen Elizabeth National Park and there we have well anything you want to see in a safari, elephants, lions, hippos, buffalos, many birds, and the best boat trip in Uganda, actually the best boat trip in East Africa to see many animals. I used to be a tour guide so I can compare.

Anna: Yeah...

Heleen: It really is a very nice boat trip

Anna: Yeah, and that one is in Queen Elizabeth?

Heleen: Its in Queen Elizabeth, Yes

Anna: Good to know, Haha, Ehhh.. And then what would you say is one of the highest selling, as the actual highest out of the lot of them? Is it the chimpanzees?

Heleen: The chimpanzees

Anna: Okay, so definitely the top one? Ok. I was going to ask why it is the most popular but I assume it's because they're so

Heleen: (Interruption) What I didn't say is around the crater lakes I say it's not only the views but they have a lot of monkeys around here in the wild. So even if you go just walking in certain areas you have a chance of seeing eight types on monkeys. It doesn't need to be in the national park, just go to a crater lake which is specially protected. Most people don't know that but it is a major attraction but the chimpanzee is well known. There are several places in Uganda to see chimpanzees and here in Kibale forest its 25 kilometers it's the best viewing point. You've got well let's say a 99 percent chance of seeing them.

Anna: That's good, definitely worth it to come here then, ehm... and when the tourists come here, are they already aware of all of the attractions that they are planning to do or is it that you then direct them on which ones they should see?

Heleen: No, it depends on the people. You have a group of people who come with a tour operator so they don't know much in advance and they let the tour operator decide for themselves. Normally I don't have anything to do with them. Then you've got two types of people, people who planned the trip very special and they have researched everything and they just want to know how to get somewhere or maybe get some insight information and then you've got the people who come here, know that it's beautiful here, know that there are chimpanzees and then I advise them or we advise them on what they can do.

Anna: Yep, Exactly.

Heleen: I think our website we try to promote that Fort Portal is a nice area and that you can spend nine days here without getting bored. And that is very unusual, not only in Uganda but also in Africa. Mostly places have like one attraction but if you like walking, ehm and not even if you only like walking but yeah there is a lot to see here. Then you can spend easily nine days and we've put activities down there and we have noticed that people on our website, even if they don't stay with us that they look at the activities that we recommend people that they can do.

Anna: Yep, exactly. There is a lot I think in this region to do

Heleen And it's unusual

Anna: Yes, Ehm... speaking of that as well, because there are a lot of appealing assets, are there any you would say are the least appealing assets that they have here in Fort Portal or in Ruwenzori? Or ones that maybe tourists are put off by when they arrive here which they weren't aware of?

Heleen: Well, the chimpanzees, no one ever gets disappointed on that, so, some things which are quoted sometimes in the books are the Amabere caves

Anna: Oh yeah

Heleen: there is not that much to see its just the story that people tell and it depends on the guide, so it depends on the expectations of people and there's many school trips, Ugandan school trips going there, but the caves on itself because there's in the states there's so many beautiful things to see, the caves sometimes disappoint people. Then there is the Karambi tombs, I don't know if many people go there but there are no tourist facilities there, so that is the tombs of the kings who have passed away and ehm,

(Interruption)

Heleen: That is something that could be improved if it were made into a real tourist facility, ehm.. and there is a third thing I was thinking of, now I forgot, maybe I will remember it. Oh yeah, the tea plantations. So, this region is full of tea, and unfortunately getting to go to a tea factory is very difficult, there have been, there was one tea factory which were very accessible that had like two days a week where you could go. And the rest of them either don't have the facilities or they ask ridiculous amounts

Anna: yeah, exactly

Heleen ehm, I think maybe even the tea plantations is the biggest disappointment because you see them and you can go in the fields but you don't see how tea is processed and being there

Anna: The whole production phase

Heleen yes, and I have been in two factories myself and it is very interesting to see, three factories myself yes but it is very difficult to get in which is a pity

Anna Have you noticed from other tourists as well mentioning that they would have wanted to see further?

Heleen Yes, it is not based on what I do, it is based on what people have asked me

Anna exactly,

Heleen so I've got the name of the managers of one of the tea plantations which is a bit further out and then if he picks up the phone and if they are willing it's a favor, it's not a regular thing. Which is a pity

Anna Yeah, yes, exactly. So that could be something that could be looked into as well

Heleen yes, I've spoken to a few factories to say that they should develop this because I know the tea prices have gone down and they all complaining about it but apparently the money which is in tourism which I think is a really reasonable amount if they just would have a guide who also has another job, they could ask 10/15 dollars per person to come in and a tourist would do that and if it is organized, I have so many people who I would recommend to go there.

Anna Yeah, exactly

Heleen (Interruption) just continue, just ignore the tea

Anna Just as we were speaking about it, ehm.. The next question would be more to do with the protection of the assets as well, so what would you say are the most important attractions which you wouldn't want to be affected by mass tourism if suddenly for some reason this area did get overly promoted? So which for you do you think are the ones which need to be sort of monitored and regulated to make sure that they don't get destroyed?

Heleen you, very rare, but I can understand what people mean. You get a negative comment about the chimpanzees. So there is a regulation there that there is I think the maximum of 6 people in a group but then they have like 8 groups going,

Anna Ooh, exactly

Heleen And they end up with the same group of chimpanzees, ehm not all 8 but ehm so I think UWA (Ugandan Wildlife Authority) is trying to develop other chimpanzee families, only it goes all very very slow. And because they ask a high price there's also other places where chimpanzees viewing is starting to shoot up, past queen Elizabeth there is a place where they do research and it's supposed to be very nice to see the chimpanzees there. So I think that is, that is the biggest risk here but I think that there is an organization who is controlling it. Then if you look at the monkeys like I said they're in the wild, they are not protected at all, so they only exist in areas where there are crater lakes which are too steep for people to do agriculture.

Or for example I know one place where the Ugandan church has got the land and they have built not a lodge but a small camping place and they don't do any agriculture with it so it has its own protection because of that, normally it's a more natural protection but ehm I think the wild monkeys are getting chased more and more

Anna Yeah, exactly good to know. Then I wanted to know what you think is their unique selling point? Or something that you could only experience here in Rwenzori specifically that you maybe couldn't get in other parts of Uganda or eastern Africa because I know that there is a lot of competition with the gorillas with Rwandan gorilla trekking and everything like that

Heleen I don't think there is competition I have been there, of course its competition but I think if you compare Uganda with Rwanda for me it's very clear that Uganda has much more to offer, much more diversity. Rwanda has primarily only the gorillas, you can go to lake Kibo and some small things but the country is over populated and there is less animals to see and things like that and they are much more expensive so I don't consider Rwanda as a big competition.

Then if you look at the Rwenzori region compared to other regions, I think it is, well what I like here, that's maybe a more personal point of view, the climate is excellent here, and it is very lush and green which is very unique towards accessible Africa, you know you also have Congo like that but it's not so accessible. You have the chimpanzees and very close by you've got Queen Elizabeth which had the down part of the rift valley where there is more like savannah. So the diversity in the landscape is beautiful. We've got the Ruwenzori Mountains which are 5000 meters high, we've got here at 1500 meter high and we are at the border of the rift valley. And you can do a walk from here and if you go down the rift valley you experience a completely different climate and beautiful views, and then we've got the crater lakes and we have tea. So the landscape, the climate is gorgeous and we have different attractions which are, combined with Queen Elizabeth you could spend your whole holiday here the only thing that you would miss is the gorillas and they are not that far from here either.

Anna Yeah, exactly.

Heleen Oh, I forgot to say one thing, what is quite unique, in Uganda it has much more places, you can walk around on your own here without a guide, you will notice, I don't know if you have been in Africa before but if you go to Kenya or Tanzania if you just go and take a walk in the village or just in town, people look at you and they, I don't want to say disturb you but especially in Kenya you do get harassed they expect you to have a guide with you, here that is not the case. So that makes it very pleasant, there is other areas in Uganda where you can do the same but if you go in the area of lake Byoni, it's a different tribe, there is more poverty there and the people are different so people get bothered more. In the north it's a very dry climate, its also not common so they are not so many areas, and it's very beautiful here so like around Amabere probably the people would be okay with it but the area is not so nice, so for walking this is many possibilities and cycling, many possibilities.

Anna Its very comforting to be here I think, I also have this impression from walking around so far, you just feel like ohh... Euhmm.. Then I can already connect to the actual tourists then, the main tourists, what have you noticed as the main purpose of travel for the tourists that stay here in your hotel for example?

Heleen we have a lot of business people so it's not only tourism, so we have a lot of NGO's who come here, we are close to Bunjobudjo and that's an area where there are pigmies and people are more backwards, so there is a lot of work going on there, and the facilities in Fort Portal are much better than in any other town in the area so for us that is half of the people that stay in our hotel, so it has to do with the area but its not really connected with tourism then most people just come here to see the chimpanzees and then they are surprised that there is so many other things to do

Anna Yeah, exactly. I think that that's the main thing that they haven't quite found a way to express everything that they actually have here, so far in terms of tourism

Heleen It also has to do with the tour operators, well of course when people go to Uganda and they are only have two weeks which is quite short, or if they have three weeks, they want to see the whole country. So there is not so many people who want to stay in one area and then see more and see a country in more depth which you have the possibility here. Then we have people coming from Kampala who want to have a leisure weekend or something like that, so that is more local tourism

Anna Yeah, exactly. Ehm.. okay then I wanted to ask a few questions about you and your position, so what is your main priority when it comes to the regional development of here if you have any focus on things like this?

Heleen hmm... the reason why we came here, I met my husband who is also Dutch, in Zambia where we did development work, I was working at the university and he was working at a school so we think development work is very difficult and I was even asked back 10 years later to do exactly the same work that I had done at the university ten years before, implementing a new financial system, nobody is interested in a transparent financial system in a country where corruption is very high. So you can imagine that it is not one of the priorities, if there are problems that is the first thing they let go but to make things sustainable with the development work we have seen too many examples of things that go bad so this has not so much to do with tourism, so when we were travelling here we found the climates, the people, the landscape everything here very nice. We are also on the crossroad for tourism, people who go to Kibale forest to see the chimpanzees, people who go to Queen Elizabeth, people who come from Murchison Falls, so it's also a good cross track and we see here that we don't, I try to influence people to do something about tourism but our main issue here is to develop Fort Portal in hotel and restaurants, to improve the standard of what people normally deliver here, so we are a trendsetter here, all of our dishes are getting copied by other people, all of our staff, they try to steal them, they go elsewhere. We were the first one to make pizza, we were the first one to serve real coffee, we were the first one to serve proper international food, we were the first one to make brown bread ourselves, it sounds ridiculous but all the bread is sweet and white here. So we make a lot of things ourselves and now you can see that there is like five places that serve coffee, there are three places that serve pizza, not that pizza is important but instead of just having local food, we are changing things so that is nice to see and we think what we are doing here is sustainable, we employ thirty staff so that is a big economic development cause we try to buy all of the goods locally, so we focused primarily on the economical side for Fort Portal to improve in the area of hotel and restaurant but it could have been something else. Because we get a lot of tourists here, we also have an influence on the tourist area, so the people that we work well with together with who are not very organized, not the big tour operators, we recommend them, we don't ask any commission.

So there is a guy who lives 8 km from here who used to do like 4 trips a year, we are promoting him to our clients but also to other people and his business is striving, and the trips he does, it is community trip so he walks on the lands of other people, so other people he pays them a bit to walk on their land, so the whole community there is getting an improvement because of that so I think he is the best example but we have it with others too. There is a foundation who is called Ruwenzori arts, we have a beautiful bronze statue that we bought from them, a lot of people ask where does it come from, so we recommend people to visit them, they are before Queen Elizabeth, they are 60km from here. So I think they are getting more visitors just cause people see their things and there is a place that we like a lot which is called Konkupat its one of the crater lakes, it has two crater lakes, one is a dry crater lake which of course then is not a lake but and the other one wet so you can go there for lunch we recommend a lot of people to go there, and I think since we have recommended people to go there I think they get, their business has doubled compared to what they were. So I think, and also the tea plantations I try to tell them develop tourism and it will help you to gain money.

I think also the palaces is a big miss, you can go there, you can see the view from the palace, it's a round thing on top of the hill.

Anna Yeah, we did see that one when we came

Heleen But you can't go in there, I think it's a pity because whenever I go to Hoima, I have got the number of the personal secretary of the king there. I take people there too and we are allowed to go in one room which is a display room of his artifacts of the king

Anna That's very nice,

Heleen Yes, and those are unusual things, and it makes a trip very special. We don't ... my husband met the king a couple of times but its not something that you can discuss with him on that level but I think there are so many possibilities to develop tourism and people like that because its ... whenever I take them to the visit in Hoima to the kings house, there is not that much to see but the whole story behind it and the spears and the skins of the leopards and its impressive even though its covered with dust and things

Anna Yeah, exactly, that sounds really interesting, and its nice to keep this sort of community, or like that you work together bring through each other

Heleen I think diversity in tourism is important, most African countries sell their animals. And we have the chimpanzees here and they sell themselves there are not so many places where they are so easily accessible. But there is so much more than that, especially in this region.

Anna Yeah exactly, perfect. Ehmm, okay so it was only a few things to get a few describing words but I think you have already explained it quite well, but is there, if you could put it into three words to describe the Ruwenzori region which is very difficult cause I think there is way more than three words to describe it, what would those three words be?

Heleen Nature or Landscape, animals, and nice people. Because I haven't talked about the nice people but one of the reasons why you can walk around here is because the people are nice.

Anna And do you think there is clearly a difference in that then here and then when you are in the city?

Heleen Yes,

Anna Do you know why it is that they are much more open and sort of comforting when you are here?

Heleen I don't know, it's a different tribe. There is one or two areas which is around the village where the children have not been brought up very well, maybe this region has been a bit more rich than the rest. Nobody ever has been hungry here, we have two raining seasons here, the soil is filled with volcano stuff, so it's very fertile. So people never had to work very hard, so they call themselves lazy but I don't think its that much laziness its just, ive seen people struggling to survive and here people are bit further than that, and that makes it easier but they are not that far gone like if you go to a big city that people get impersonal, although Kampala is still not impersonal, I think people are still nice there

Anna Yeah exactly, okay, I think one more question would be what emotions do you personally relate to here, what kind of feelings do you get when you are here, I assume now it has become home but, not from a tourist perspective only coming in for a little while, but

Heleen Ehm... a for me it is the freedom here, there are many restrictions when you have a business and you have to work very hard but if I compare it to the Netherlands, yeah that is very personal, where there are all these rules and restrictions and where every idea is, I don't want to say but because of rules and regulations it is like cut down, you cant do anything there, I don't have a background in hospitality but I started a restaurant and a hotel with my husband and we are very successful, just because we know what people like and we are not restrained by all, there are regulations but, its more than that. There are so many business opportunities here, that if you have a good idea, and you have the stamina to follow it up because that's really what you need here, because its not easy. You can do anything, so we chose, because we like food and restaurant, we have a hotel with it, but the prime thing is the restaurant, our food really is very good. And you excel in it, just because you put a focus on it and determination and I think in Europe there are much more other problems that will restrict you.

There is other problems here, no good water, no good electricity. Staff that needs to be well trained, nothing is available, products are very expensive anything which is not bought locally. But you know still, creativity and freedom. And the other thing is I love the climate here, its perfect.

Anna Yeah, it looks amazing, and it should be rain season I

Heleen yeah, but it can rain within two hours it can rain, I lived in Zambia for two and a half years and there you had nine months a year always exactly the same, you open the curtains and you think ah, blue sky again and then you've got raining season and it pours all day long almost. And here we've got fog, we've got rain, we've got drizzle, we've got hailstones, we've got sunshine and you can have it all in one day, seriously I love that!

Anna Diversity seems to be the main aspect here in everything that they have here, climate and just everything. That's great though, I think this region has really a lot to offer

Heleen I think the biggest problem is that, but that is on a global level, and that is promotion of Uganda and the image that people have in Europe that people have is very negative. In Holland its even more negative than in other places because of the gay law, they are very sensitive towards that, and that has been in the news a lot and there was a very bad documentary which was made by somebody about witchcraft and child sacrificing

Anna Yeah, I have also read a little about this, I heard that they put earrings on the children to make , to protect them from that. Cause that apparently makes them less..

Heleen Oh I have no idea, I've also been in west Africa and if you talk about superstition, witchcraft and misuse of children and maybe of animals there, west Africa is full of it. In Zambia, even in Zambia it was worse than here, they even have the national museum in the capital has half, they've got two floors, half of one floor is dedicated to witchcraft artifacts, here you don't have that. They are very far away from their original custom and traditions. I think witchcraft for extinguished. Its there, but I don't know where those stories come from. The gay law is a big thing, ebola has been an issue but nothing compares to west Africa, my sister didn't even want to come, I said you had ebola in Germany that is closer by than west Africa than where we are here.

Anna Yeah exactly, yeah that's true I think that a lot of people just kind of cluster it all together and think like no, lets not go there and you associate all the countries as one

Heleen and I think if you compare to Kenya and Tanzania, the amount of animals they have to offer is much more than here. You know, nothing can compare with the Serengeti and the masahara.

And the migration they have there is really unique but if you want to see a bit more and you don't want to only see animals and if you don't want to have all these long distances, that you have to drive to see that then I think Uganda has much more to offer. And its like you say I think diversity and I have been a tour guide, part time since 2005, so its primarily Dutch people that I have been with, but diversity is there the key. People don't want to on safari for six park, ahh we now have this other antelope, the giraffe antelope with the long neck.

Anna Yeah, here I think you get the best of everything if you come here, in two weeks you can really see everything. So yeah, I think that that might be everything I need for my part so I just quickly switch this off,

End of interview

Additional remarks:

Midrange tourism is possible within this region

Less expensive tours, possibilities to see just as much

Figure 35: Interview with the Dutchess Hotel and Restaurant

Name of the company: Kabarole Tours and Safaris

Kabarole tours and Safaris is a touring company located in the center of Fort Portal, they have been designing tours and tourism packages since 1992, the company is locally owned and operated with collaborations and further partner enterprises with community focus.

Interview respondent: Richard Tooro

Position of the respondent: Managing director & founder of Kabarole Tours and Safaris

Anna Okay, I put it here. I think it will be able to hear it I hope.

Tooro If you want it near here it is no problem

Anna okay maybe then it's better to move it from here. Okay I will start the interview now at the Kabarole tours with Richard Tooro. Ehmm.. And I will start with the first question, so what are the key attractions within this region in terms of tourism according to you? The main ones, the key ones?

Tooro Yes, my name is Richard Tooro, and I am the founder of Kabarole tours and Safaris. And ehm.... This year we are celebrating 25 years in business, so it's a big milestone in our tourism performance in this area. Fort portal is centered in the middle of tourist attractions and the main attractions here, visitors come for visiting the national parks, in particular Kibale national park which has Chimpanzees and other primates and other walks. Then we have the Ruwenzori national park where people go walking, we have a number of activities around there. Then we have the Semuliki national park which has hot springs and also the Semuliki wildlife reserve which is located near lake Albert. But in the course of our operations here we have also developed other tourist attractions, community attractions as well. We have walks in the crater lakes area, we have walks in the communities and we do a lot of the Ecotourism promotion in the area. So when visitors come here, they have a lot of choice to do, we are located in an area where there is still some wilderness, forests and swamps, so we have a lot of birds, we have bird tours and ehm... as well as we have activities like recreation tours like mountain biking, and walking so they can decide. So all of that makes Fort portal a very good destination for visitors to come

Anna Yes, perfect. There is a lot here, I have noticed that as well, a lot to do. Okay, which do you think would be the most popular ones, which are sold the most currently?

Tooro Yes, the most popular ones, the Kibale national park for Chimpanzees trekking. Because they have a number of products, different products which attract many visitors. So, all the visitors who come here usually would make a day tour to Kibale national park to track chimpanzees. Then they would do another tour to do the crater lakes, then for the energetic ones they would do some hikes in the Ruwenzori Mountains, in that order.

Anna Okay, that's good to know. Ehmm... then I wanted to ask about the tourists are they already aware of the attractions, of the things that they will do when they are here or do they then come here and then

Tooro Many of them are aware of what things are around here, because we have guide books, like the Uganda, guide Uganda by Brandt, we have the lonely planet. So those have information on this area. And also with Kabarole tours we have a website which gives the information, we are on social media, we are on Tripadvisor, we are on facebook, Instagram, all of those things help tell people what we have here, so many people usually come an already know what they want to do, but in addition when they come here sometimes they find something new which they always wished to do as well. And we have had this promotion for many years that "come and stay an extra day" so if you stay an extra day there is always something you can do when you are here

Anna definitely, I don't think you get bored here

Tooro No, not at all

- Anna There is more than enough to do. Okay, Ehm... then you have mentioned a lot of the most attractive attractions and things like this, what would say **are the least appealing sort of assets** within this region that could hinder tourists from coming here?
- Tooro I beg your pardon?
- Anna Is there something that could **prevent the tourists from coming here** to this region like something **negative**?
- Tooro **Something negative would be associated with the security. That would be the only thing, otherwise all this region is good, has good weather, and has very welcoming people.** Unless something insecure happened, or maybe an outbreak of disease, those would be the negative things would stop people from coming but otherwise as per now, and as for the foreseeable future, everything is very inusive for people to come.
- Anna Yep, exactly. And you don't hear anything negative, **negative feedback from tourists**?
- Tooro No, **what we hear we have feedback here is people tell us how to improve on our tours because we are always improving.** You can never know that you are doing it correctly, you think you are doing it correctly but there is always something you learn from the visitors. So over the years **we have been improving, creating new tours, listening to the tourists exchanging.** So it has been a dialogue between us and the tourists all the time. That's why we have been here so long
- Anna Haha, that's good. Okay, Ehm... and then I wanted to ask if now a lot of tourists come in, what would be for you **the most important** sort of natural, because as you mentioned it's a lot of wildlife so you also **need to protect** that, what for you would be the most important things to protect and to make sure that there aren't too many visitors going there, I know that UWA is doing work to keep regulations that you don't have too many people visiting the chimpanzees at the same time, but are there other assets that you think should be protected first? Or something like this?
- Tooro Yeah, at the moment **the region is very hungry for tourists**, they want as many tourists to come, because many people have put up **investments in hotels, guest houses**, there is a big campaign so, and right now we don't see a big threat of tourism. **But I think in the next maybe 20 years there might be something, and ehm... something in particular would be looking at the wetlands. Because those are very fragile,** and there are not many. **In Uganda we have a big population Boom, there are many people and they are crushing the wetlands**, so those would be the very very first sites to try to protect and ehm... we don't have to wait for then but we need to do it now, and in particular **Kabarole tours has begun its work of protecting one of the wetlands**, and it is doing that and I would hope other stakeholders would as well begin protecting the wetlands so that they are not either destroyed by the locals or by the number of visitors whom we hope will come.
- Anna Yes, exactly. Okay, ehm... then I wanted to go into like **the unique selling point**, what would you say is the **most unique part of Ruwenzori** which you can't find in other parts of Uganda? If there was one thing that is really unique,
- Tooro **Our unique here, our uniqueness here is our people here.** I think that is, we are, I have travelled in many many places in Uganda and other places, other countries. But ehm... all the time **I come here I find we are very unique people, very welcoming, we make visitors feel wanted, welcome and I think that is very very unique.** In other places you may not get that kind

of feeling, personally that is what I think, so we **are unique** in one way that we are very welcoming people and we are, any visitor comes, feels very welcome, I think that is one of our **unique selling points** and then too we have a culture, the culture is still around and ehm... it is being promoted and protected. So if we keep that, doing that one, **I think it will attract many other people, both locals and international visitors to come and look at our culture and thirdly is of course the attractions around us, those would be I would feel the unique selling points we have around here.** And for Kabarole tours in particular **our unique selling point is we are the locals, we know our country, we know this area very well, and we started it with the idea of showing what we have so we talk with passion, we know what it is and we give it to people and our guides are all local, trained by us so I think we are unique in one way.**

Anna Yeah, I think that that is definitely a winning aspect because that's what you want from. Ehm... Okay, then I wanted to ask about the actual travelers/ tourists that come here. **What in your opinion is the main purpose of travel,** if you could distinguish it as kind of like a label, is it adventure tourists, or like do they come here to seek adventure, or do they come here to see the wildlife or if you understand what I mean? If there is like a main purpose or is it that there is all for different reasons?

Tooro It is all for different reasons, ehmm **mainly many people come for wildlife,** but in the end you ask them they say our best point, our best experience was meeting the people. **They come mainly looking for wildlife, they see the lions that's the end of it, they see the elephant, the see the chimpanzees,** but once, because that was with Kabarole tours we combine it with the visitors, some homestead and some community work, usually that experience gives more meaning to the visitors. So I don't know whether that would. **Yes they come for adventure, some come for climbing the mountains,** yes we have those but not many. But we have a **general tourist who usually want to come for the Safari** but at the end of the day they say we are very very happy to have met the people, so I don't know how you term that one whether it is the adventure, whether it is i don't know but that is the general description I can give

Anna Okay, that's good. Ehm... I think you already basically answered what the biggest problem that tourism could bring to the region, so I think I don't need to ask this one again, and do you by any chance know what the **most common nationality of guests** that are coming here? Or the main nationalities?

Tooro Yes I know, there are many, **many of our visitors come from the UK,** mainly because of our historical background we are under the colonial government. Then we have many from the **Netherlands, then Germany, then the US, and then from other European countries.** Yeah but mainly, our tourist visitors come from the UK, yes.

Anna Okay, Good. Ehm... and then I can ask for your role, **what is your main priority when it comes to the regional development of this destination,** of the regional destination development? If you want to develop the community, what would you say that your role is?

Tooro What we have done as Kabarole tours is when we started in 1992, there was hardly anything, there was only a small paragraph about Fort Portal in 1992 in the lonely planet. **And that was, Fort portal is just a stopping place for you to go to Semuliki to see the Pygmies.** Just one paragraph, but since then Kabarole tours has created a lot of all these activities you see written about, so in a way we have as a private company created many many operations, many many products for visitors to come. So in the development of the tourism sector in this area we have

played quite a big role, and our focus is on ecotourism where we are engaging local communities to gain from the tourist expenditures as well as to get interaction with the visitors and the local communities and as well as protect the area as they visit, so that has been our driving force behind all this growing, so we have invested a lot in communities, in schools, we work with many different schools, uhh, right now we are working on trying to get ready culture gain, thirteen different communities, we are doing that one, and uhh, still encourage communities to get in ecotourism. So we have a number of villages we think would be good for that purpose, in particular we have one community, one village, I think you will go that one, Ruwana village we have a day tour which goes to visit a womens group, engage in what they are doing, basket weaving, all that sort of thing, then there is a bee keeping community, we reach that one. Then there is a banana wine, yes a facility where people are making wine from banana, so we reach that one. So it is a very interesting tour for someone to go and have a look, as well as when they go there they spend money, they buy the baskets from the women, they buy the wine, they buy the honey and the products. So the money spreads, it doesn't come to Kabarole, to us alone but it is spread in the area. So in that way we encourage, so we have a number of villages like that one, we have another one up in the Ruwenzori mountains, then there is a town where we are protecting the wetlands, and there is a school we have started for training guides, so Kabarole tours is playing a role.

Anna Yes, very much so, a big role.

Tooro And personally I am also the secretary for the Ruwenzori regional tourism cluster which is a regional body for promoting tourism in the area.

Anna Yes, exactly. Ehmm... then I just wanted to ask a little bit about the personality of this region, so if you could describe Ruwenzori in three words, what would those three words be?

Tooro Ruwenzori? Woah ...

Anna Its very tricky, cause I think that it is very diverse

Tooro very tricky, it is a very diverse question. Ruwenzori is uhh... first of all the meaning of the word Ruwenzori, as it is it has no meaning in our language, because the colonials who wrote the word Ruwenzori wrote it wrongly, but that's what it is, it should be Ruwenzora the place of rain.

Anna Ohhh okay, that's interesting

Tooro Yes, the place of lots of rain, so we are located in an area where we have very good weather. So the Ruwenzori is a place of good weather. And a very distinct place with different cultures, we have people of the mountains we have people of the lowlands, we have farmers and cattle keepers down south and in place of welcoming people, so I don't know I can't go further than that about Ruwenzori.

Anna That is okay, no I learned something about the word Ruwenzori, I didn't know that

Tooro mmm... it should be Ruwenzora

Anna Yeah, I did not know that one before, and they made a mistake haha. Ehmm.... And then I wanted to ask as well what do you personally think is the best part of here? As not as a tourist but for you what do you think?

Tooro For me the best part is uhh... right now we are doing that in fact, we are promoting the best part of this area, we are calling it "Tooro kokasemera" meaning Tooro was the big region, was the kingdom that was divided up, so in our legends from long ago, they used to sing the beauty of Tooro, there are many many songs about Tooro kokasemera, tooro you are beautiful, and that area we have identified is between the Ruwenzori mountains further north, I don't know if you have been to Lake Kyaninga?

Anna Yeah, no no I haven't been there yet, I only went to Nkuruba

Tooro Oh ok, so there is a stretch of about 18 km and personally I believe, and other people agree with me that is the most beautiful are of this region, and we are promoting that one as a walking trail, it is called the Tooro Kokasemera walking trail, and we believe once it becomes a well known trail, there will be developments along that trail, because people will be walking along that trail, so other side growths will come up along the trail. But besides that it is a very very beautiful area, it has hills, it has three crater lakes, and one of them is Lake Saka, which you know very well which is near the university, You have been to the university?

Anna Not yet, I am meeting him tomorrow, but here nearby

Tooro Ohh okay, there are three crater lakes around there and then it has a lot of culture, and in our culture that's where the legends say our ancestors came from there, it has some waterfalls, caves, and that one. So we are promoting that areas, the Tooro kokasemera walking trail and I believe that is a very beautiful part of the area, you should one of these days walk the trail and see for yourself

Anna I think I might, I think I will go there. Yeah, I think for now it might almost be everything that I need from your side, let me just see if there was something. Maybe also if you are able to, what emotions do you relate to this region? Like what kind of feelings do you get when you are here?

Tooro Personally, I am very patriotic

Anna Okay,

Tooro yeah, my father, my late father my father died last year, he was 103

Anna WOW,

Tooro Yes, very old age. But he gave me a very unique name, Tooro; and Tooro is the name of the region

Anna Yes, I was going to ask about this, I was curious about this

Tooro Tooro is the name of the region as well, so I don't know how it came about but I am very patriotic about this, I love this region very very well, and uhh... I am so happy that I have been able to showcase this region to the people, I have been looking at things, creating products for people to see so I am very very passionate about this area, and I believe that there is a very very big future for development through ecotourism.

Anna Yes, I very much agree. I think there is huge potential, already it has started but I mean it could grow a lot. Ehmm... so you are from here, this region?

Tooro Yes, I am from here the crater lakes, I am from near just before lake Nkuruba, that's where I was born that's where I grew up, yes that's where I was born

Anna Okay, so it's home.

Tooro Yes, its home for me.

Anna Okay, let me see if there was anything else but I think that is mainly the most important things that I needed to get, so I will just switch this off haha

End of Interview

Figure 36: Interview transcript with Kabarole tours

Name of the company: Golf Course view Guesthouse

Golf course view Guesthouse is a guesthouse owned by a local entrepreneur located near the center of Fort Portal. They have been providing beds and accommodation for several years mainly focusing on Budget travelers and backpackers.

Interview respondent: Paul Rwabwogo

Position of the respondent: Founder & General Manager of Golf course view Guesthouse

Anna Let me see, alright I will start the interview now with Paul at the Golf course view guesthouse, Yes, okay the first question is what in your opinion are the key attractions in this region in terms or tourism?

Paul In terms of tourism, the key attractions... you know we are in the center of the tourism hub here in Fort Portal. We find that there is a very good attraction like the Chimps in Kibale forest, that is in the South part of it, when we go South west we have the Queen Elizabeth National Park, and when we come from QENP going north we have a strip of mountain Ruwenzori running with a beauty that sheds Fort Portal town. And on top of the Ruwenzori Mountains at the end of it as you go north we have a national park and a game reserve called Tooro Semuliki Game reserve and Semliki National park. Those run all the way up to the edge of Lake Albert. so Tooro region and Fort Portal as a whole we have an opportunity of so many Crater lakes, that is really an attraction to tourism so these crater lakes have attributed so much to the development of increment of the tourism industry here in Fort Portal because a number of people tour, tour guides, tour agencies, tour companies, and the tourists themselves all are interested in venturing and knowing these crater lakes, so we find that in the tourism industry, Fort Portal I think it's blessed because we have plenty of tourist attractions. And we see that when these guests come or tourists they all have to go visit and come back to the Fort Portal town for accommodation, for meals, for entertainment in the evening, so I think on one way or the other I have answered part of your question.

Anna Yes

Paul If I am not mistaken

Anna Definitely, then I just wanted to ask which of those do you think is the most popular, from the ones you mentioned?

Paul in Fort Portal? At least 90% of the guests who come to Fort Portal tour the Crater Lakes, so on my behalf, on my view I think the Crater lakes are most popular to people who come around Fort Portal because there are so many as in number, and they are beautiful sites, good scenery and on top of that they are close to good hotels that are fancy, so they either come to sleep in the fancy hotels or they come to see the beauty of the crater lakes and there are some animals and birds, wild animals like so many monkeys, so many beautiful birds alongside the crater lake shores and all that yeah.

Anna Okay, Thank you.

Paul You are welcome,

Anna I will let you eat a little bit, Okay I just, then the next one would be, do the tourists already know about what they are going to do before they come here or if you, for example if they come and stay with you, do they already have everything planned or do they come here with kind of like a not any plans yet and they, you recommend them on what to do?

Paul 80% have a package, they have a program of what they are going to do, what they going to reach, and what they will see and the days provided for that because most of them are here through guide books, websites, and they are guided, they are not here by mistake so I might say 90% have information of what they want. And the 10% maybe ask can we do this, is it good, is it interesting and that blab la. But must people come knowing what they want.

- Anna Okay, alright. Then what in your opinion is the most appealing aspect that they have here? In your opinion? For you, what do you think is the nicest, the best thing?
- Paul Here in Fort Portal? The weather is superb. Honestly, the weather here is superb. All seasons, you will enjoy Fort Portal in this region. In the region of East Africa and Uganda as a whole, you will enjoy Fort Portal, it is beautiful, I love the weather and everybody has talked about the weather. I think that is very good for the environment, because they go and visit other areas but they opt to stay in Fort Portal longer, so whenever tourists come they give Fort Portal a longer program because of the beautiful weather. And people are friendly.
- Anna Okay, now that you mentioned some of the good aspects, what in your opinion would you say are the more negative aspect, if you can think of something, or something that a tourist might not like when they come here, or that could prevent them from coming here.
- Paul Yeah, professionalism in hospitality. We still lag behind, we have a very big challenge in hospitality. When guests come they have all that much to spend, but sometimes they don't spend it all because they are not sure, 100% convinced to spend it up. So we still need a lot of high staffing, skilled staff and we need to train maybe more institutes which can skilled staff to work in Fort Portal so the guests expect, get what they expect and get what they deserve I think that is the negative part of it, with professionalism in this industry.
- Anna Okay, okay good.
- Interruption – Pause in interview
- Anna Okay, cool. Then one other one was for you, is there sort of an important natural environment which you think should be protected if now too many tourists came? What for you would be that has to be protected?
- Paul I think we need a proper law that governs, the natural environment and that governs the nature of this region. Because when people want to build around the crater lakes, then they will no longer be tourist attractions. And we don't see why there are so many houses around the Crater lakes instead of having so many forests covering them. For more beauty and nature, so on behalf of the government I wish we could protect the environment, the nature and preserve the beauty of this region. that's what I have to say.
- Anna Okay, perfect. Ehmm... I guess you kind of already answered this one as well, but it was if there, what is the most unique thing about here? That you can't get in other parts of Uganda? For example.
- Paul First of all it is the center of so many tourist attraction, that surrounds the region so you can make it one stop point that you view so many, you see so many, you visit so many. You go to a national park, QENP, you come back and stay a night, you go to track chimps, you come back and stay a night, and you go to track the, maybe you go to the hot springs and the crater lakes. You go to Semuliki National park for birding, you come back and stay in the town. So I see that is one of the best options, you hit so many bird with one stone. Instead of going in an area and there is only one tourist attraction. And that makes it the end, you have to move to another region. You come here, you stay, you can make a package, and you can prolong your tour in this area. Because every day you have another activity, every day you have another activity. You find you can spend a whole week having activity daily daily daily and that worth your visit.

- Anna Okay, and then I wanted to look a little bit into the actual tourists, what in your opinion from who you have noticed comes here, **what is their main purpose of travel**, is it to seek adventure? Or discovery, or it's not really business I guess?
- Paul Honestly, **most of them it's a holiday tour**. Like to cut off the stress from work, **you need to be in an environment that is beautiful, that is calm, pleasing, welcoming and heart brave you know you get the beauty into your mind into your aspects**, so I find these tourists come mostly on **holiday program**. **To spend off time from work, from the stress of everyday living** and you know they are in **a very beautiful environment, you are in a calm environment, you are happy, you are laughing, smiling all the time**, and you know, excitement. Yeah yeah mmmm...
- Anna Okay, Good. Ehmm... and then about the tourists as well, **what do you think could be the biggest problem that tourism could bring to the region?** If it could bring problems?
- Paul There are so many **problems** in this region because everything, **prices of food, go high, transportation, if you are hiring private means, go high**. That **we can't compete with the tourist who has been saving for so long to come on this simple trip**. Then the service providers say we have to move you on this cost, and we find that we can't fit in the budget, so we lag behind because we have not enough income to hit the goals of tourism attraction and we also find a challenge that we don't qualify to have the like good cameras, because they are expensive. And when you go you need to take pictures, at the long distance that you find that maybe your camera is not good enough, or you don't have either one to do that. **So we find it a challenge because most wild, most natural beauty is reserved by the government fee**, that adds another cost on a native or a local person, which many people can't afford so they that hinders our environment and our living. **Sometimes you can't go in the lake fishing because they say you are spoiling the water, and then we lack food**. Most forests where we used to hunt from, we used to do local hunting, is pardoned from hunting so you go in the game to hunt, or in the forest you are being run after by **the game rangers or you are being arrested** or you can't cut trees in the forest because they are preserved for tourism so all of those **things I really see it's a big challenge to the locals**.
- Anna For the locals, yes exactly. Yep, okay. Well that's not very good. Ehm... okay and then if you could think of most common nationality of the tourists that maybe stay here, or in the region that you can think of? Or top **nationalities of tourists that come here at the moment?**
- Paul mmm... **Most Europeans come**. Most tourists from Europe come throughout the area quite often, and then we also have some quite good number of **tourists from America, US**. So but probably, at the moment we have most European, ehmm... European countries, like the **Netherlands, the Germans, and the maybe British**, because many people come from Britain. And come to tour around. We also get a number of **Canadians coming a lot**, many of them keep coming from Canada.
- Anna Ohh, okay. That's interesting, I havent... I don't think I have met one yet.
- Paul Yeah, we do
- Anna But at the moment there is a lot of Germans and a lot of Dutch.
- Paul **Germans and Dutch are common**

Anna yeah a lot haha. Ehmm... Okay, then I wanted to ask one thing, maybe you can describe it for Fort Portal, but if you could put either Ruwenzori or Fort Portal into just three words, what would those three words be to describe it, if you can think of it in three words for the region?

Paul Three words to describe Ruwenzori?

Anna Or, like Tooro. You know this area, that includes all of this?

Paul Maybe I can say, the great Ruwenzori region. Can describe it,

Anna Okay, because it has everything?

Paul it has everything.

Anna And its great!

Paul It's grateful, great great. I can say it's the great Ruwenzori region. Nobody should miss it,

Anna Good, that's nice to hear. Ehmm... and I already asked you what you thought was the best thing which you thought was the climate. Ehm... then I had one question, which is what is your priority when it comes to developing the region, if you think about yourself as contributing to the actual development of Fort Portal in general, what do you think your main role is there? Or your priority in that?

Paul My Priority? I think it is to conserve nature, if we really conserve nature, and preserve whatever is meant for forestry, ehmm... wetlands, mountainea, mountainer, mountain region, we have preserved nature, that is the all we can do, I can do, that is my role. If we preserve nature and they preserve nature that means we will keep the great Tooro, great Ruwenzori region.

Anna Okay, exactly. Then I think that is everything I need from you, so I will turn this one off. Thank you very much.

End of Interview

Additional comments:

After the interview, Paul mentioned that he is disappointed by the allowance of independent accommodations being granted licenses to build lots within National parks such as private lodges and hotels. He feels that this interrupts the natural product as the wildlife included as the product are forced to flee from their homes and habituate in smaller areas of land, as well as the flora and fauna being destroyed from the construction of the lots. He understands that tourists are keen to be inside the national park, but feels that it would be much more convenient for the government to invest in improving the standards of accommodations within the cities surrounding the parks, and leaving nature to its own course.

Figure 37: Interview transcript with the Golf course view guesthouse

Name of the company: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Anne-Maria Makela has visited Uganda on numerous occasions on differing projects to analyze the tourism product. In 2014 Anne-Maria Makela was contracted by UNWTO for a project called inclusive markets in tourism, which is implemented by the Ugandan Tourism board and funded by the United Nations development program. Anne-Maria has main focus on the West region including Fort Portal, The Ruwenzori Mountains and Queen Elizabeth National Park.

Interview respondent: Anne-Maria Makela

Position of the respondent: Tourism Marketing and Product Development Consultant

Anna Okay, I will start with the first question, ehm... so. What for you would you say are the key attractions in the region in terms of tourism?

A-M The Ruwenzori Mountains, the culture, the Tooro Culture, then of course the wildlife, I would say that those are the three basic things but ehm... as we have been discussing previously, yes I would like to have the culture as a cross cutting theme for everything, but visually, if you think about the region then it would be the Ruwenzori mountains and the crater lakes, but also the from the culture perspective of course the very hospitable, friendly people, but they are also friendly elsewhere in Uganda, but it's the culture, the Tooro culture and the embargo, all these small things that you can enjoy and experience.

Anna Yeah, exactly. Ehm... and then what would you say, or what do you think were the highest selling services which they have to offer, which most people go to when they are there?

A-M Currently? Or what is the potential opportunity? Which

Anna Currently

A-M Currently, ehm... ok. I know that okay, people go to the Kibale, for the Chimpanzees, then some people have the desire to see the birds, especially in Semliki or the Ruwenzori or even the Fort Portal area itself. Then we have some adventure related tourists and the region itself is already a part of the major route of most of the international visitors because when they arrive in Entebbe a lot of them actually bypass Kampala which is a pity, but we are trying to change that. Then they go to Murchison falls, they come down to Kibale then they either continue from Kibale directly to Queen Elizabeth without really staying in the Ruwenzoris or even in Fort Portal itself. Which is a pity, but its because of the time limitations and the type of packages that the tour operators currently offer. So they go to the Queen Elizabeth, they do the game drives there then they drive through the hmm, tree climbing ishasha, the tree climbing lions, going to Bwindi for the Gorillas. Its understandable that the tour operators have done it in this way, because its still considered that the gorillas will be the jewel at the end of the tour, but however even when we were working there back in 2012 and 13, we also recommended that each region should profile itself differently, to give a reason for the visitors to come back to actually encourage repeat visitation to Uganda. Because ehm... but its to a certain extent its like a chicken and an egg question, because currently the tour operators who are packaging Uganda. They think that okay, they are afraid that their visitors would not come back so they want to show everything in one go, which is perhaps too much to even take in for the visitors, ehm... so we also recommended actually that they should profile each region and in that case we were recommending that Ruwenzoris would be a separate one, and then lake Bunyoni and Bwindi would be a separate region in that sense.

Anna Yeah exactly, ok. Ehm... then for your own perspective, what do you think are the most appealing aspects, like the top top appealing aspects which are in the region? And not just the ones that the tourists would go to immediately in their package?

A-M Ok, hmm... I know the region quite well. So that's why I am saying okay, I was even planning, my first plan to have my 50th birthday party at the Kyaninga lodge, because of the great view.

Anna Oh, its beautiful

A-M view to the crater lakes, so I would be the, the landscape is amazing. To start from there, as I said already earlier, the Ruwenzoris but also the other landscapes, even the landscapes coming

from Fort Portal down to Semuliki, that road which is now in a good condition after the Chinese had completed it, but it's a fantastic drive. And the temperature changes, so the landscape is definitely one, eh... then, but I know it's not always easy to include it into the branding, but the human aspect. So the people, and like a colleague who is working or lives in lake Bunyoni area, he has been highlighting the Gorilla highlands, he is the locomotive for that. So he told me once that, when they receive visitors they come to Uganda for the gorillas, but they leave Uganda talking about the people. So that's, that's another fact. A third one, okay I will tell you a personal anecdote, when the locals first time took me to Queen Elizabeth National Park, it was my first time when I was on a real game drive, so, and I was like a five year old girl again, seeing the animals going free around the national parks, the herds of the elephants, the hippos and what not. So these, it has a very strong emotional link of everybody to their childhood, and if you can actually raise that in the heads of the prospective visitors, that this will bring you back emotionally back into the things that you experience when you were young and you were learning about the wildlife, so this is for the first time, game drivers who go there. So I think it's this, also this emotional connection. So landscape, the people, ok the wildlife, but very strongly the emotional connections. And I think Uganda is really able to do that, emotional connection.

Anna Okay, and then speaking of all of the appealing aspects, what would you say are the less appealing aspects? That could, either prevent someone from coming or ruin some of their experiences whilst they are there.

A-M Okay, I always say because I am working in the marketing sector as myself, so I always say that it's the pre-trip image that counts. Whether Uganda is putting it into the wishlist or next destination. So if, or for any political reasons or natural disasters or media writes about something so then that has an affect on the prospective tourist and it doesn't matter whether that image in the prospective tourists head is correct or not correct. It affects the selection, so unfortunately even when I was there, even my colleagues who were professors, and phd and whatnot, their first question to me was are you? Really are you going to Uganda? Are you not afraid? Idi Amin still even though it is so many, its thirty years ago and whatnot, but still this first image of this certain age group of people comes into their mind. So, I think still there, and I know Uganda has now been on a very positive side of the media, especially for the tourism related things. But it requires still that for a broader audience to change that false image of Uganda. So I think that is the first thing that they need to do. Then we already discussed, ok it's the infrastructure to a certain extent, especially for tourists because I always say that Uganda is not a backpackers paradise in a sense that the public transportation is not that great so for individual tourists I always say that Uganda its either on package tour or semi packaged tour that somebody has already organized part of the trip. So its still not, for individual visitors, ok it has pluses and minuses this fact and I can understand especially from the national parks point of view that its better to have groups that are under control in the national parks. So once when I met a Spanish young couple who had rented a car and they had been driven in Murchison falls and on their own. So I was really surprised that this is possible to do it, but from the safety perspective and also from the conservation perspective it would be better to have it, so infrastructure is the second, and then eh... I think the price/ quality ratio, value for money is the third one, because if you look at ok, Africa they, if we talk about in general, of the sub Saharan African countries, they always say that the wildlife is here, its nowhere else, yes its correct but then we have other type of wildlife elsewhere, and if you

would compare a holiday package in south east asia to a holiday, for two weeks, for a two week holiday package in Uganda I think the price difference. So they should really think about the value for money. And ehmm.. there, are we discussed earlier in midrange, the lack of proper midrange accommodation because now I know they have a lot of accommodation establishments who, which have been set up by the local owners who really don't know, I have to say, who really don't know what the international visitors that they would like to receive would like to have in there. The international visitors don't want to have these huge massive Chinese style of furniture, they would like to see the locally made decorations and all that, so that was one of my hot speeches while I was in Uganda that ok, you have all these handicrafts, all the textiles and everything and you still don't use it because the majority, and I am sorry to say this, but the majority of the sort of midrange accommodation it doesn't give you the sense of place, so that's I would say that sense of place, missing sense of place in the midrange accommodation, or even cheaper ones. Now okay that said I have to say that last year when I visited, ok I was in Kampala, and there was this budget place set up close to the acacia road in rolo, and the owner was a Ugandan I think rally driver and all that, he had done a simple. Basic, but still it had a lot of sense of place and it was fully booked, so that proves the fact that even at the lower level accommodation level, you could do this sense of place but still run it profitably. So this is another fact. And ehmm.. then, okay no that's it, I wont say anything else

Anna those are negative, anything more, I don't mind

A-M No, no I was just thinking about the food. Because, they should give it, the local food should be given a little bit of modern twist. Especially thinking about the international visitors. And I think a lot of restaurants would save a huge amount of money by decreasing the size of the portions. I mean for restaurants because the size of the ingredients its huge, its huge. So they would really save a lot of money and also reduce the amount of waste coming from food.

Anna Yeah that's true. Yeah. Okay, ehmm then my next question is to do with protection of the assets that they have, so what in your opinion are the most important natural assets or attractions that you think need to be protected in terms of if now mass tourism did start to appear there, or when more tourism does go into the region? What are the key ones for you that you think need to be further regulated? For example, because I know that some people were already mentioning that they don't like that they are allowed to build lodges within the national parks because that's already kind of having an effect on the wildlife that's in that part of the national park for example,

A-M ehmm... I would say that they should look into their own, it's the implementation of the regulations because I am sure that most of the national, at least the key national parks that they have the management plans. Which indicate the going areas, the buffer zones, and then the zones for and accommodation establishments or any human activities. so I don't think its, its not the problem of the laws and regulations but the rather the management implementation of all these. So, of course the national parks but Ruwenzori, but for example at the moment is not so much, visited and but it would require infrastructure development in any case, so I always say that a good interpretation plan, is also a visitor management plan. So that if you really have a good interpretation plan, you can manage the visitors in such a way that it has the lowest possible impact, on both nature and the culture of the areas. Okay, I don't know if I

want to officially be quoted on this but ehmm... I did the gorilla tracking, on my own personal time, I paid for the \$800 US dollars, after the trip I also told the UTB director because he was interested in my view on it, I was disappointed. I was happy to see of course the gorillas, but I felt ashamed intruding their life space. The briefing that was given by the UWA guides before the track did not include any information how is this \$800 US dollars divided and distributed to the local communities. I know there is a system but it was not explained and again there I would have added on, another feature into this. Instead of staying that maximum one hour with the gorilla group, I would have been even happy with half an hour or even less but then I would like loved to have been able to discuss with the local communities about their everyday life and coexistence with the gorillas, so that aspect into that gorilla tracking because now for me it was, I felt almost like we are in a zoo even though we don't have the fences there.

Anna Yeah, just minus the fence

A-M Yeah, so in that sense I felt really ashamed of being there and I was the one in our group telling the group that now we haven't been here, its we still have ten minutes but can we leave, please. So it was, I would really, that would need to be rethought and I told UTB also that I think currently there will be always people who are willing to pay and want to see the gorillas, but for me if you look at the maturity of that gorilla product. Its not somewhere here, and for me its already turning down, something is not correct. So that's another important fact in Uganda. But then its not so much of actually in the image, but it doesn't come to western Uganda, also in the beginning when I went there I told the Ugandans now, you have the Victoria lake in the history, I mean most of the people have read about Victoria lake, you have the source of the Nile, so if in the destination marketing for Uganda, not only, not for the western part of Uganda, but Uganda, you would highlight the Nile and the lake Victoria, that would already place Uganda on the map. Among the most markets, so that's an opportunity that they haven't used. Ok Victoria lake is also shared by other countries, the river Nile there is now a discussion of where the source of the Nile is, whether it is in Uganda or whether its in Rwanda or where, but basically they say its Uganda. So those things would place it. Then ehmm... to preserve, but I still think also the cultures, because they are not highlighted, the and if the culture would be brought into tourism more intensely I mean it would also raise the, the local people would also be more proud of their own habits and traditions.

Anna Yeah, I agree with that. That's true. Ehmm... okay, well the next question isn't quite related but I guess it sort of is, as you mentioned that those were key points that they should use, what in your opinion is the unique selling point of the region? That you wouldn't be able to experience in other parts of the country and then also the same question for other parts of the surrounding countries? If its different things

A-M So, now we are talking about only the western part of Uganda. So that would be the Ruwenzoris, that would be the yeah, the snowcapped mountains and the equator. The Ruwenzoris would definitely be the one for me for the western part of Uganda.

Anna Okay, and then if you compare it to surrounding countries, for example because it that's also shared with a bit with the Congo, and then for example Rwanda could be a competitor for the Gorillas or something like this, so what do you think is the unique selling point for Uganda specifically?

A-M well, in all honesty I don't think that Congo will become

Anna At least not yet,

A-M Hahaha, so in all honesty, so I don't think that it's a big competitor to Uganda at the moment, so in that sense I think Ugandans they can manage it solely of the Ruwenzoris, Okay, in ehmm... earlier times in the work, we were saying that ok for the game drives and the national parks, because I havent visited the national parks in Kenya or Tanzania, or even in Rwanda, so I am not really, this is based on the secondary research that we, I did. So Kenya is famous, Masaai mara and the national parks and then the how do you call that now, when the wilderbeest go together that huge amount of, they have that pilgrimage, that trip. So I think that its difficult for Uganda to compete only on national parks and game drives. Ehmm.. we highlighted that ok the Ruwenzori would be one, but then bird watching specifically in Uganda that they should capture that better, then we said also fishing, catch and release. Because the Nile perch and all these huge prey that they can get and that's a big lucrative market also for the catch and release fishing. Ehmm... and then using the lake Victoria better, Im still amazed that even none of the private operators, there might be a reason that we don't know about and perhaps we will not ever be told the whole stories but why is lake Victoria not used for boat rides. Crossing to Kenya or

Anna Odd, okay. Ehmm...

A-M and adventure is also one, actually in our team we were saying that Uganda should name Jinja as the capital of adventure of Africa.

Anna With the rafting and everything, I heard from some other tourists that this is the absolute best they have ever been for that and that they didn't understand why they didn't know about it before that.

A-M And you have some good operators, I believe, I have never met them but I know that there is a former Olympic kayak who has set up along with a couple of other people who are doing white water rafting and all that so they will be people who know what should be done and the safety aspect.

Anna Okay, ehmm.. Okay, then I wanted to ask a little bit about the actual tourists, because I guess you have that kind of information, so my question was what is the main purpose of travel but I guess its quite difficult to define their main purpose of the tourists that are going to that part of the region?

A-M if you stop for a while I will look for the

Anna I think I can pause this,

The recording was stopped at the point, the information regarding the previous question has been included from her own study and data from 2012 and 2014.

Anna Okay, so now we have that one, ehmm... then what I wanted to ask is what do you think is the biggest problem that tourism can bring to the region or to the country?

- A-M okay, I am being diplomatic here now, I always say that tourism is like a table. Okay, if one of the legs is not standing the whole table is not standing. So refers back to the challenges that we have in Uganda for tourism development, but then I also say that tourism is like a fire, it can warm up your place but it can also burn it. So and if its done in a half hazard way that's the fear. And for me I don't think Uganda should, I think that Uganda should never be mass tourism. It should be get for specific niche markets and so that then they would also value the experiences that they get in Uganda. So my personal biggest fear is that I don't know, don't quote me directly on this but ehm... that the government is not following a long term strategy for the development and sometimes it feels that they are like chickens without their heads running around. Using money, resources for things that are not necessarily the best things. For Uganda, so I think that there in overall, they should take a more strategic approach, it requires some courage to actually stick into the strategies, see them through properly, put all the efforts into these, and see them through properly but also then you need to monitor the development, there is no development without evaluation and monitoring and then you cannot say that you have succeeded in something if we have not monitored anything. So that's, I still think that the tourism management, should be improved, to put it shortly. At all levels basically, but starting from the top, I know that they have now tried to establish these, they didn't want to call them the tourism development areas, they called them, what was the name of it now, but different regions so that they could invite the different private sector people to it and profile and make these things. But ehmm... the management requires promise.
- Anna Yeah, Okay. Ehm... and then, its actually my last question but just as a to get a little bit of a sort of picture of it, if you could describe the region, the western region, in three words, what would those three words be?
- A-M hmm.... I would say, this is personal, you don't write it: I love Uganda, would be the three words. But ehmm... friendly, green & surprising.
- Anna Okay, why do you say surprising? The other two I understand
- A-M well it surprises sometimes and I think the surprises they belong to the tourism experiences, you need to be able to also surprise people. To give them something extra, not only what they expect, but give some surprises so that it gives a positive boost to the memories of the experiences because still I don't know whether I am old fashioned or not, but its still the good word of mouth and mice that really counts. And its so value type of tourism if you are able to do a proper experience then the word will spread around.
- Anna Okay, I think that is everything from my side, do you need to add anything or I can switch this off?
- A-M I don't think so.

Figure 38: Interview transcript with UNWTO

Regional Assets	Key attractions	The crater lakes (l.6) Lakes by Amabere caves (l.7) Big Crater lake area by Kasinda (l.7–8) The chimpanzees (l.8) The Ruwenzori Mountains (l.9) The botanical garden (l.10) Bird walk (l.10) The Bigodi wetlands (l.34)
	Highest selling point	
	Most appealing assets	‘The climate here is very good, and very green’ (l.84) I don’t think we have many begging children yet (l.115) Here people grow many things like good foods (l.119)
	Least appealing factors	Semuliki hot springs (l.16) ‘it is very expensive to go there’(l.17) Semuliki game reserve [...] there is not much game (l.18–19) ‘I think some lodges and some places are very expensive (l. 70–71)
	Most important protection	The chimpanzees (l.26) ‘sometimes people feel they are chasing the chimps instead of following the chimps’ (l.27–28)
Unique selling point	Unique selling point	‘You have the best way to see the Chimpanzees’ (l.40) Crater lakes (l.40) The foothills of the whole Ruwenzoris (l.41–42) ‘I think people here normally are quite friendly, you can talk to everybody (l.113–114) ‘I think mostly Ugandans are very friendly, very welcoming (l.130–131)
The tourist data	The market	‘we have a lot of individual travelers who havent made their plans yet’ (l.143)
	Purpose of travel	Some people come from Kampala (l.54) It is very noisy and polluted (l.54) They come to the countryside (l.55)
	Problems that tourism brings	I don’t see many problems at the moment (l.65)
	Type of tourism	‘we don’t only have tourists, we also have people who are working here’(l. 79 – 80) ‘we have quite some people [...] who have lived here before’ (l. 87)
Stakeholder role	Priority in regional development	‘working together with the ladies who make baskets’ (l. 156) ‘we are supporting the guys from here who are making the cards, like the guys who make the bicycles’(l.166–167)

Ruwenzori personality	Three words to describe Ruwenzori	‘we always say the best in the west’(l. 102)
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Figure 39 Open Coding Ruwenzori view guesthouse

Regional Assets	Key attractions	It is the chimpanzees (l.7) Kibale forest (l.8) The views of the crater lakes (l.8) The rift valley (l.8) The Ruwenzoris (l.9) Queen Elizabeth national park (l.11–12) The best boat trip in Uganda (l.13–14)
	Highest selling point	The chimpanzees (l.22) In Kibale forest its 25 km, it's the best viewing point. You have got a 99% change of seeing them. (l.30–31)
	Most appealing assets	‘the crater lakes [...] have a lot of monkeys around here in the wild’ (l.25–26) Eight types of monkeys (l.27) ‘you can spend nine days here without getting bored’ (l.43–44) ‘the climates, the people, the landscape’(l.175) I love the climate here, its perfect (l.262–263)
	Least appealing factors	‘the Amabere caves’ (l.54–55) There is not much to see (l.57) The Karambi tombs (l.60) The tea plantations (l.65–66) ‘I think [...] the tea plantations is the biggest disappointment [...] you don't see how tea is processes’(l. 71–72) ‘ I think also the palace is a big miss’(l.208) ‘there is other problems here, no good water, no good electricity; staff need to be trained’(l.260–261) ‘the biggest problem [...] the image that people have in Europe is very negative’(l. 273)
	Most important protection	‘you get a negative comment about the Chimpanzees’ (l.96–97) ‘they all end up with the same group of chimpanzees’(l. 100) ‘that is the biggest risk, but I think there is an organization who is controlling it’(l.104–105) ‘I think wild monkeys are getting chased more’ (l. 111)

Unique selling point	Unique selling point	<p>‘if you compare Uganda with Rwanda [...] Uganda has much more to offer’ (I.116–117)</p> <p>‘the climate is excellent here’ (I.122)</p> <p>‘lush and green [...] unique towards accessible Africa (I.123)</p> <p>‘the diversity in the landscape is beautiful’(I. 126)</p> <p>‘the landscape, the climate is gorgeous and we have different attractions which are combined’ (I.130–132)</p> <p>‘you can walk around on your own without a guide’(I.134–135)</p> <p>‘I think diversity in tourism is important’(I.223)</p> <p>‘diversity is key’(I.296)</p> <p>‘Uganda has much more to offer (I.290)</p>
The tourist data	The market	<p>‘you have a group of people who come with a tour operator; (I. 35)</p> <p>‘people who planned the trip very special and researched everything (I. 38)</p> <p>‘people [...] know that it is beautiful, know that there are chimpanzees’ (I.40–41)</p>
	Purpose of travel	<p>‘we have a lot of business people so its not only tourism; (I.149)</p> <p>‘we have a lot of NGO’S’(I.149)</p> <p>‘most people just come here to see the chimpanzees’ (I. 154)</p> <p>‘we have people coming from Kampala who want a leisure weekend’ (I.161–162)</p>
	Problems that tourism brings	
	Type of tourism	
Stakeholder role	Priority in regional development	<p>‘to make things sustainable with development work’ (I.173–174)</p> <p>‘our main issue here is to develop Fort Portal in hotels and restaurants’ (I.179)</p> <p>‘we make a lot of things ourselves’ (I.185)</p> <p>‘economic development’(I.189)</p> <p>‘we are promoting him to our clients (I.195)</p> <p>‘I try to tell them develop tourism and it will help you to gain money’(I. 207)</p>
Ruwenzori personality	Three words to describe Ruwenzori	<p>Nature or landscape, animals and nice people (I.230)</p> <p>You can walk around here because the people are nice (I.231)</p> <p>‘for me it is the freedom here’ (I.248)</p>

Figure 40 Open Coding The Dutchess

Regional Assets	Key attractions	<p>The national parks (l. 10)</p> <p>Kibale national park (l.10)</p> <p>Chimpanzees (l.11)</p> <p>The Ruwenzori national park (l.11)</p> <p>Semuliki national park (l.13)</p> <p>Hot springs (l.13)</p> <p>Semuliki wildlife reserve (l.13)</p> <p>The crater lakes area (l.15–16)</p> <p>Bird tours (l.19)</p>
	Highest selling point	<p>The Kibale national park for Chimpanzees trekking (l.24)</p> <p>The crater lakes (l.27)</p> <p>Hikes in the Ruwenzori mountains (l.28)</p>
	Most appealing assets	<p>This region is good, has good weather and very welcoming people (l.50)</p> <p>‘Tooro kokasemera [...] that is the most beautiful area of the region’ (l.176)</p> <p>‘Culture’(l.183)</p> <p>‘I love this region, I am so happy that I have been able to showcase this region to people’(l.199–200)</p>
	Least appealing factors	<p>‘something negative, would be associated with security’(l.49)</p>
	Most important protection	<p>‘something in particular would be looking at the wetlands’ (l.70–71)</p> <p>‘those are very fragile’(l.71)</p> <p>‘there are many people [...] crushing the wetlands (l.71–72)</p> <p>‘Kabarole tours has begun its work of protecting one of the wetlands’ (l.74–75)</p>
Unique selling point	Unique selling point	<p>‘our uniqueness here is our people here’ (l.81)</p> <p>‘we are very unique people, very welcoming, we make visitors feel wanted, welcome [...] very very unique’(l.83–84)</p> <p>We have a culture (l.87)</p> <p>‘we are the locals, we know our country [...] we talk with passion’(l.91–93)</p> <p>‘people come for the wildlife [...] best experience was meeting the people. (l.101–102)</p> <p>‘they say we are very happy to have met the people’(l.109)</p>
The tourist data	The market	<p>Many of them are aware of what things are here (l.32)</p> <p>‘people usually come and know what they want to do’ (l. 36–37)</p> <p>‘many of our visitors come from the UK (l.115)</p> <p>Netherlands (l.117)</p> <p>Germany (l.117)</p> <p>US (l.117)</p>

		Other European countries (I.117)
	Purpose of travel	Mainly people come for the wildlife (I.101) They come for adventure (I.106) Some for climbing mountains (I.107) General tourist who usually come for Safari (I.108)
	Problems that tourism brings	
Stakeholder role	Priority in regional development	Kabarole tours has created a lot of activities (I.125) 'our focus is on ecotourism where we are engaging local communities' (I.128–129) Protect the area they visit (I.130) We have invested a lot in communities (I.131) 'encourage communities to get in ecotourism (I.134) The money spreads, it doesn't come to Kabarole, but it is spread in the area (I.141–142) 'we are protecting the wetlands'(I.144) 'I am also the secretary for the Ruwenzori regional tourism cluster [...] promoting tourism'(I.147–148)
Ruwenzori personality	Three words to describe Ruwenzori	'Ruwenzori is [...] it should be Ruwenzora; the place of rain' (I.153–156) 'we are located in an area where we have very good weather' (I.158) 'very distinct place with different cultures'(I.159) 'Tooro kokasemera, Tooro you are beautiful'(I.171)

Figure 41 Open Coding Kabarole Tours

Regional Assets	Key attractions	Chimps in Kibale forest (I.5) Queen Elizabeth National park (I.6) Mountain Ruwenzori (I.7) Tooro Semuliki game reserve (I.9) Semliki national park (I.10) Crater lakes (I.11)
	Highest selling point	'90% of the guests [...] the crater lakes' (I.24) The crater lakes are most popular (I.25)
	Most appealing assets	'I think its blessed because we have plenty of tourist attractions' (I. 16) Beautiful sites (I.26) Good scenery (I.26) 'so many monkeys, so many beautiful birds alongside crater lake shores'(I.29–30) The weather is superb (I.44) All seasons, you will enjoy [...] this region (I.45) It is beautiful, I love the weather and everybody has talked about the weather (I.46–47) It is good for the environment (I.47) The beautiful weather, and people are friendly (I.49) 'a very beautiful environment, you are calm [...] happy, [...] laughing [...] smiling all the time' (I.91–92)

	Least appealing factors	Professionalism in hospitality (I.53) Very big challenge in hospitality (I.53–54) Need a lot of high staffing, skilled staff (I.55) Need to train maybe more (I.56)
	Most important protection	‘I think we need proper law that governs, the natural environment’(I.64–65) When people want to build around the crater lakes, they will no longer be tourist attractions’(I.65–66) ‘for more beauty and nature ‘(I.67) ‘wish we could protect the environment, the nature and preserve the beauty of this region’(I.68–69)
Unique selling point	Unique selling point	‘it is the center of so many tourist attractions’ (I.73) You hit so many bird with one stone, instead of going in an area and there is only one tourist attraction (I.78–79) ‘because every day you have another activity’ (I.82)
The tourist data	The market	80% have a package (I.37) They have a program (I.37) 90% have information of what they want (I.40) 10% maybe ask can we do this (I.40) Most Europeans come (I.114) America, US (I.115) Netherlands (I.117) Germans (I.117) British (I.117) Canadians (I.118) Dutch and german are common (I.123)
	Purpose of travel	Most of them it’s a holiday tour (I.87) Tourists come mostly on holiday program (I.89)
	Problems that tourism brings	Prices of food, go high (I.95) Transportation (I.96) We find it a challenge because most wild, most natural beauty is reserved by the government fee (I.102–103) ‘adds another cost on a native or local person (I.104) Big challenge to the locals (I.110)
Stakeholder role	Priority in regional development	To conserve nature (I.139) ‘if we preserve nature and they preserve nature that means we will keep the great Tooro, great Ruwenzori region’ (I.141–142)
Ruwenzori personality	Three words to describe Ruwenzori	‘the great Ruwenzori region’ (I.129) ‘it has everything’ (I.131) Nobody should miss it (I.133)

Figure 42 Open Coding Golf view Guesthouse

Regional Assets	Key attractions	The Ruwenzori mountains (I.3) The wildlife (I.3) The crater lakes (I.6)
	Highest selling point	Kibale (I.14) The chimpanzees (I.14) Desire to see the birds (I.15) Semuliki (I.15) Ruwenzori (I.15) Queen Elizabeth (I.20) Tree climbing lions (I.23) Bwindi for the Gorillas (I.24) 'the gorillas will be the jewel at the end of the tour' (I.25)
	Most appealing assets	The tooro culture (I.3) The culture perspective [...] very hospitable, friendly people (I.7) But it's the culture, the tooro culture (I.8) View of the crater lakes (I.41) The landscape is amazing (I.41) The Ruwenzoris (I.42) So, the people (I.46) 'visitors they come to Uganda for the gorillas, but they leave Uganda talking about the people' (I.48–49) 'it has a very strong emotional link to everybody to their childhood' (I.53) This emotional connection (I.57) 'landscape, the people, the wildlife, but very strongly the emotional connections' (I.57–58) I think Uganda is able to do that, emotional connection (I.58)
	Least appealing factors	'image in the prospective tourists head' (I.66) 'requires still that for a broader audience to change the false image of Uganda' (I.72) 'public transportation is not that great' (I.75) 'infrastructure is the second' (I.83) 'price / quality ratio, value for money is a third one' (I.84) 'lack of proper midrange accommodation' (I.89–90) 'local owners [...] don't know what international visitors would like' (I.91–93) 'the majority of midrange [...] missing sense of place' (I.97–99) 'the local food should be given a modern twist' (I.106–107) Çulture should be highlighted [...] local people would be more proud of their customs' (I.156–158)
	Most important protection	The implementation of the regulations (I.119)

		Its not the problem of the laws and regulations, but rather the management implementation (l.123) 'if you have a really good interpretation plan, you can manage [...] lowest possible impact, on nature and culture' (l.127–128)
Unique selling point	Unique selling point	The Ruwenzoris (l.165) The snowcapped mountains and the equator (l.165) The Ruwenzoris would definitely be the one for me (l.166) 'it is difficult for Uganda to compete only on national parks and game drives'(l.179–180) Bird watching (l.181)
The tourist data	The market	'we have some adventure related tourists' (l.16)
	Purpose of travel	Information has been inserted independently
	Problems that tourism brings	Uganda should never be mass tourism (l.212) For specific niche markets [...] to value experiences (l.213) The government is not following a long term strategy for development (l.215) 'I still think that the tourism management should be improved' (l.222–223)
Stakeholder role	Priority in regional development	
Ruwenzori personality	Three words to describe Ruwenzori	I love Uganda (l.231) Friendly, green and surprising (l.232) It surprises sometimes [...] surprises they belong to the tourism experiences (l.234)

Figure 43: Open Coding UNWTO Anne-maria

Axial Coding

Ruwenzori view guest house

The Dutchess hotel and restaurant

Kabarole tours and safari

Golf course view guesthouse

UNWTO

		Open coding	Axial Coding
Regional Assets	Key attractions	<p>The crater lakes (I.6) “The pearl that shines the brightest” Ruwenzori, Uganda</p> <p>Lakes by Amabere caves (I.7)</p> <p>Big Crater lake area by Kasinda (I.7–8)</p> <p>The chimpanzees (I.8)</p> <p>The Ruwenzori Mountains (I.9)</p> <p>The botanical garden (I.10)</p> <p>Bird walk (I.10)</p> <p>The Bigodi wetlands (I.34)</p> <p>It is the chimpanzees (I.7)</p> <p>Kibale forest (I.8)</p> <p>The views of the crater lakes (I.8)</p> <p>The rift valley (I.8)</p> <p>The Ruwenzoris (I.9)</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth national park (I.11–12)</p> <p>The best boat trip in Uganda (I.13–14)</p> <p>The national parks (I. 10)</p> <p>Kibale national park (I.10)</p> <p>Chimpanzees (I.11)</p> <p>The Ruwenzori national park (I.11)</p> <p>Semuliki national park (I.13)</p> <p>Hot springs (I.13)</p> <p>Semuliki wildlife reserve (I.13)</p> <p>The crater lakes area (I.15–16)</p> <p>Bird tours (I.19)</p> <p>Chimps in Kibale forest (I.5)</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth National park (I.6)</p> <p>Mountain Ruwenzori (I.7)</p> <p>Tooro Semuliki game reserve (I.9)</p> <p>Semliki national park (I.10)</p> <p>Crater lakes (I.11)</p> <p>The Ruwenzori mountains (I.3)</p> <p>The wildlife (I.3)</p> <p>The crater lakes (I.6)</p>	<p>Crater lakes</p> <p>Chimpanzees</p> <p>Ruwenzori Mountains</p> <p>National parks</p> <p>Bird watching/ birding</p>
	Highest selling point	<p>The chimpanzees (I.22)</p> <p>In Kibale forest its 25 km, it's the best viewing point. You have got a 99% change of seeing them. (I.30–31)</p> <p>The Kibale national park for Chimpanzees trekking (I.24)</p> <p>The crater lakes (I.27)</p> <p>Hikes in the Ruwenzori mountains (I.28)</p> <p>‘90% of the guests [...] the crater lakes’ (I.24)</p> <p>The crater lakes are most popular (I.25)</p> <p>Kibale (I.14)</p> <p>The chimpanzees (I.14)</p> <p>Desire to see the birds (I.15)</p> <p>Semuliki (I.15)</p> <p>Ruwenzori (I.15)</p> <p>Queen Elizabeth (I.20)</p> <p>Tree climbing lions (I.23)</p> <p>Bwindi for the Gorillas (I.24)</p>	<p>Chimpanzees</p> <p>The Kibale national park</p> <p>Queen Victoria national park</p>

		‘the gorillas will be the jewel at the end of the tour’ (l.25)	
Most appealing		<p>‘The climate here is very good, and very green’ (l.84)</p> <p>I don’t think we have many begging children yet (l.115)</p> <p>Here people grow many things like good foods (l.119)</p> <p>‘the crater lakes [...] have a lot of monkeys around here in the wild’ (l.25–26)</p> <p>Eight types of monkeys (l.27)</p> <p>‘you can spend nine days here without getting bored’ (l.43–44)</p> <p>‘the climates, the people, the landscape’(l.175)</p> <p>I love the climate here, its perfect (l.262–263)</p> <p>This region is good, has good weather and very welcoming people (l.50)</p> <p>‘Tooro kokasemera [...] that is the most beautiful area of the region’ (l.176)</p> <p>‘Culture’(l.183)</p> <p>‘I love this region, I am so happy that I have been able to showcase this region to people’(l.199–200)</p> <p>‘I think its blessed because we have plenty of tourist attractions’ (l. 16)</p> <p>Beautiful sites (l.26)</p> <p>Good scenery (l.26)</p> <p>‘so many monkeys, so many beautiful birds alongside crater lake shores’(l.29–30)</p> <p>The weather is superb (l.44)</p> <p>All seasons, you will enjoy [...] this region (l.45)</p> <p>It is beautiful, I love the weather and everybody has talked about the weather (l.46–47)</p> <p>It is good for the environment (l.47)</p> <p>The beautiful weather, and people are friendly (l.49)</p> <p>‘a very beautiful environment, you are calm [...] happy, [...] laughing [...] smiling all the time’ (l.91–92)</p> <p>The tooro culture (l.3)</p> <p>The culture perspective [...] very hospitable, friendly people (l.7)</p> <p>But it’s the culture, the tooro culture (l.8)</p> <p>View of the crater lakes (l.41)</p> <p>The landscape is amazing (l.41)</p> <p>The Ruwenzoris (l.42)</p>	<p>Climate</p> <p>Crater lakes</p> <p>The people</p> <p>The landscape</p> <p>Culture</p> <p>Emotional connection</p>

		<p>So, the people (l.46)</p> <p>‘visitors they come to Uganda for the gorillas, but they leave Uganda talking about the people’ (l.48–49)</p> <p>‘it has a very strong emotional link to everybody to their childhood’ (l.53)</p> <p>This emotional connection (l.57)</p> <p>‘landscape, the people, the wildlife, but very strongly the emotional connections’ (l.57–58)</p> <p>I think Uganda is able to do that, emotional connection (l.58)</p>	
	Least appealing	<p>Semuliki hot springs (l.16)</p> <p>‘it is very expensive to go there’(l.17)</p> <p>Semuliki game reserve [...] there is not much game (l.18–19)</p> <p>‘I think some lodges and some places are very expensive (l. 70–71)</p> <p>‘the Amabere caves’ (l.54–55)</p> <p>There is not much to see (l.57)</p> <p>The Karambi tombs (l.60)</p> <p>The tea plantations (l.65–66)</p> <p>‘I think [...] the tea plantations is the biggest disappointment [...] you don’t see how tea is processed’(l. 71–72)</p> <p>‘ I think also the palace is a big miss’(l.208)</p> <p>‘there is other problems here, no good water, no good electricity; staff need to be trained’(l.260–261)</p> <p>‘the biggest problem [...] the image that people have in Europe is very negative’(l. 273)</p> <p>‘something negative, would be associated with security’(l.49)</p> <p>Professionalism in hospitality (l.53)</p> <p>Very big challenge in hospitality (l.53–54)</p> <p>Need a lot of high staffing, skilled staff (l.55)</p> <p>Need to train maybe more (l.56)</p> <p>‘image in the prospective tourists head’ (l.66)</p> <p>‘requires still that for a broader audience to change the false image of Uganda’ (l.72)</p> <p>‘public transportation is not that great’(l.75)</p> <p>‘infrastructure is the second’ (l.83)</p> <p>‘price / quality ratio, value for money is a third one’(l.84)</p> <p>‘lack of proper midrange accommodation’(l.89–90)</p> <p>‘local owners [...] don’t know what international visitors would like’ (l.91–93)</p>	<p>Price vs quality</p> <p>The image by foreigners</p> <p>Security</p> <p>Professionalism in hospitality</p> <p>Public transportation</p>

		<p>'the majority of midrange [...] missing sense of place' (l.97–99)</p> <p>'the local food should be given a modern twist'(l.106–107)</p> <p>Çulture should be highlighted [...] local people would be more proud of their customs' (l.156–158)</p>	
	Most important protection	<p>The chimpanzees (l.26)</p> <p>'sometimes people feel they are chasing the chimps instead of following the chimps' (l.27–28)</p> <p>'you get a negative comment about the Chimpanzees' (l.96–97)</p> <p>'they all end up with the same group of chimpanzees'(l. 100)</p> <p>'that is the biggest risk, but I think there is an organization who is controlling it'(l.104–105)</p> <p>'I think wild monkeys are getting chased more' (l. 111)</p> <p>'something in particular would be looking at the wetlands' (l.70–71)</p> <p>'those are very fragile'(l.71)</p> <p>'there are many people [...] crushing the wetlands (l.71–72)</p> <p>'Kabarole tours has begun its work of protecting one of the wetlands' (l.74–75)</p> <p>'I think we need proper law that governs, the natural environment'(l.64–65)</p> <p>When people want to build around the crater lakes, they will no longer be tourist attractions'(l.65–66)</p> <p>'for more beauty and nature '(l.67)</p> <p>'wish we could protect the environment, the nature and preserve the beauty of this region'(l.68–69)</p> <p>The implementation of the regulations (l.119)</p> <p>Its not the problem of the laws and regulations, but rather the management implementation (l.123)</p> <p>'if you have a really good interpretation plan, you can manage [...] lowest possible impact, on nature and culture' (l.127–128)</p>	<p>Chimpanzees</p> <p>Wild monkeys</p> <p>Wetlands</p> <p>Crater lakes</p> <p>Government regulations</p>
Unique selling point	Unique selling point	<p>'You have the best way to see the Chimpanzees' (l.40)</p> <p>Crater lakes (l.40)</p> <p>The foothills of the whole Ruwenzoris (l.41–42)</p> <p>'I think people here normally are quite friendly, you can talk to everybody (l.113–114)</p> <p>'I think mostly Ugandans are very friendly, very welcoming (l.130–131)</p>	<p>Chimpanzees</p> <p>Crater lakes</p> <p>The people</p> <p>Climate</p> <p>Diversity</p> <p>Culture</p> <p>Mountains</p>

		<p>‘if you compare Uganda with Rwanda [...] Uganda has much more to offer’ (l.116–117)</p> <p>‘the climate is excellent here’ (l.122)</p> <p>‘lush and green [...] unique towards accessible Africa (l.123)</p> <p>‘the diversity in the landscape is beautiful’(l. 126)</p> <p>‘the landscape, the climate is gorgeous and we have different attractions which are combined’ (l.130–132)</p> <p>‘you can walk around on your own without a guide’(l.134–135)</p> <p>‘I think diversity in tourism is important’(l.223)</p> <p>‘diversity is key’(l.296)</p> <p>‘Uganda has much more to offer (l.290)</p> <p>‘our uniqueness here is our people here’ (l.81)</p> <p>‘we are very unique people, very welcoming, we make visitors feel wanted, welcome [...] very very unique’(l.83–84)</p> <p>We have a culture (l.87)</p> <p>‘we are the locals, we know our country [...] we talk with passion’(l.91–93)</p> <p>‘people come for the wildlife [...] best experience was meeting the people. (l.101–102)</p> <p>‘they say we are very happy to have met the people’(l.109)</p> <p>‘it is the center of so many tourist attractions’ (l.73)</p> <p>You hit so many bird with one stone, instead of going in an area and there is only one tourist attraction (l.78–79)</p> <p>‘because every day you have another activity’ (l.82)</p> <p>The Ruwenzoris (l.165)</p> <p>The snowcapped mountains and the equator (l.165)</p> <p>The Ruwenzoris would definitely be the one for me (l.166)</p> <p>‘it is difficult for Uganda to compete only on national parks and game drives’(l.179–180)</p> <p>Bird watching (l.181)</p>	
Tourist data	The market	<p>‘we have a lot of individual travelers who havent made their plans yet’ (l.143)</p> <p>‘you have a group of people who come with a tour operator; (l. 35)</p> <p>‘people who planned the trip very special and researched everything (l. 38)</p> <p>‘people [...] know that it is beautiful, know that there are chimpanzees’ (l.40–41)</p> <p>Many of them are aware of what things are here (l.32)</p> <p>‘people usually come and know what they want to do’ (l. 36–37)</p> <p>‘many of our visitors come from the UK (l.115)</p> <p>Netherlands (l.117)</p> <p>Germany (l.117)</p> <p>US (l.117)</p> <p>Other European countries (l.117)</p> <p>80% have a package (l.37)</p>	<p>Tour packages</p> <p>European market</p> <p>UK</p> <p>US</p> <p>Adventure tourism</p>

		<p>They have a program (I.37)</p> <p>90% have information of what they want (I.40)</p> <p>10% maybe ask can we do this (I.40)</p> <p>Most Europeans come (I.114)</p> <p>America, US (I.115)</p> <p>Netherlands (I.117)</p> <p>Germans (I.117)</p> <p>British (I.117)</p> <p>Canadians (I.118)</p> <p>Dutch and german are common (I.123)</p> <p>'we have some adventure related tourists' (I.16)</p>	
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Figure 44: Axial Coding

Figure 2.1 The branding process

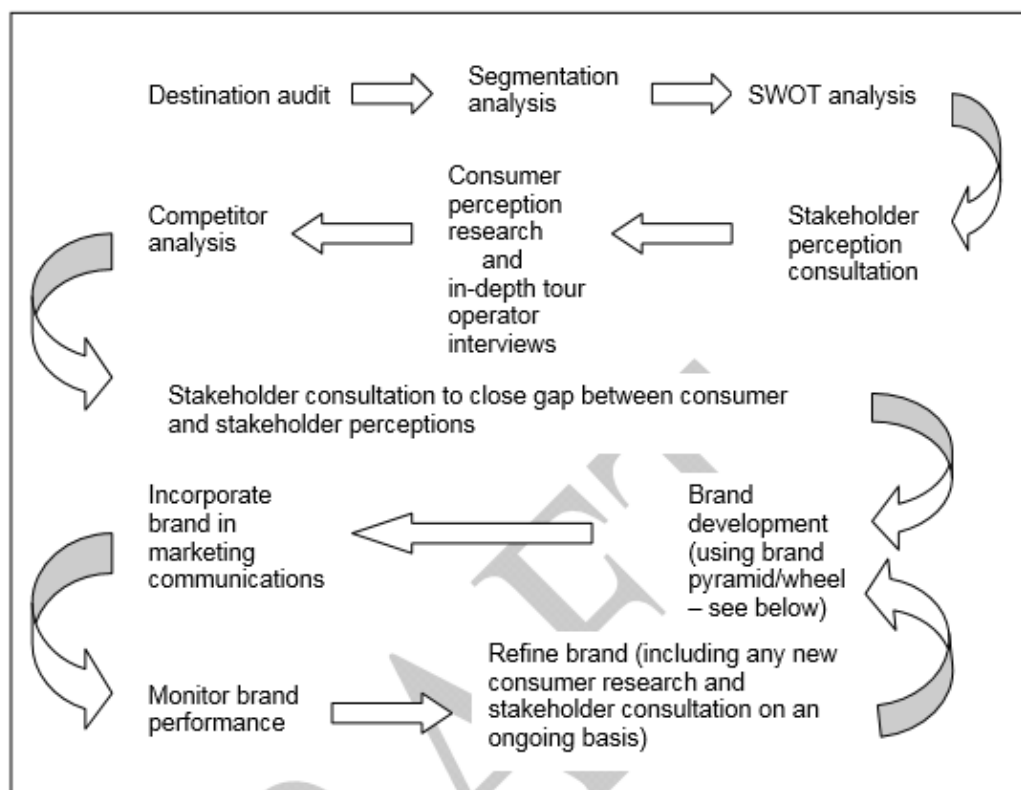


Figure 45: The Branding Process

Brand Identity Prism

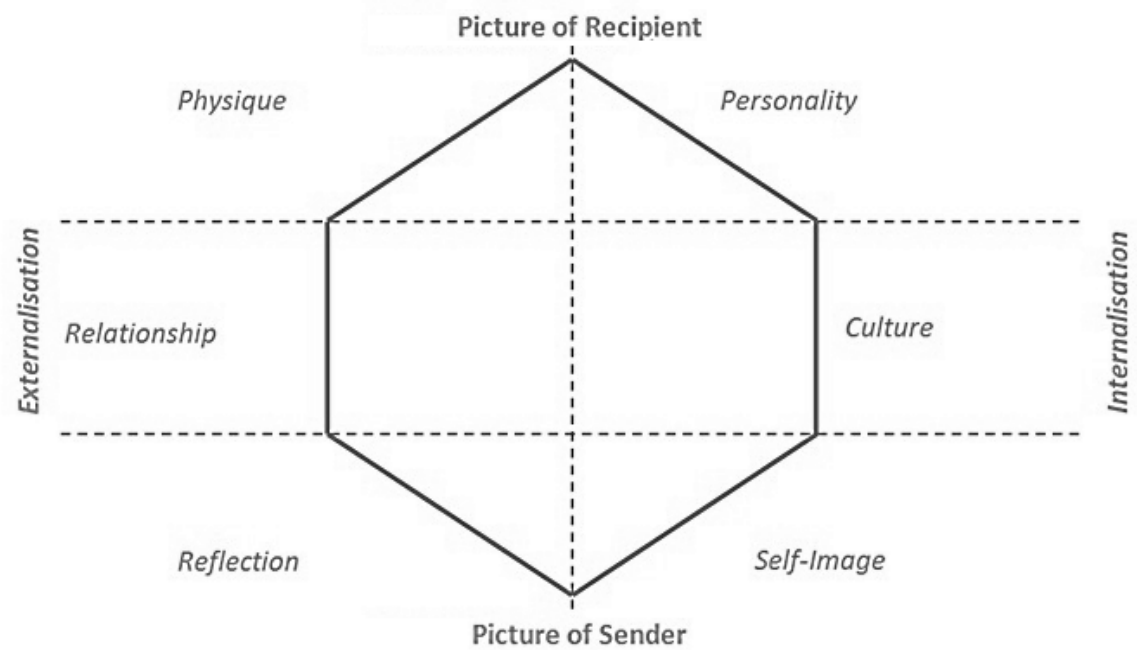


Figure46: The Brand Identity Prism

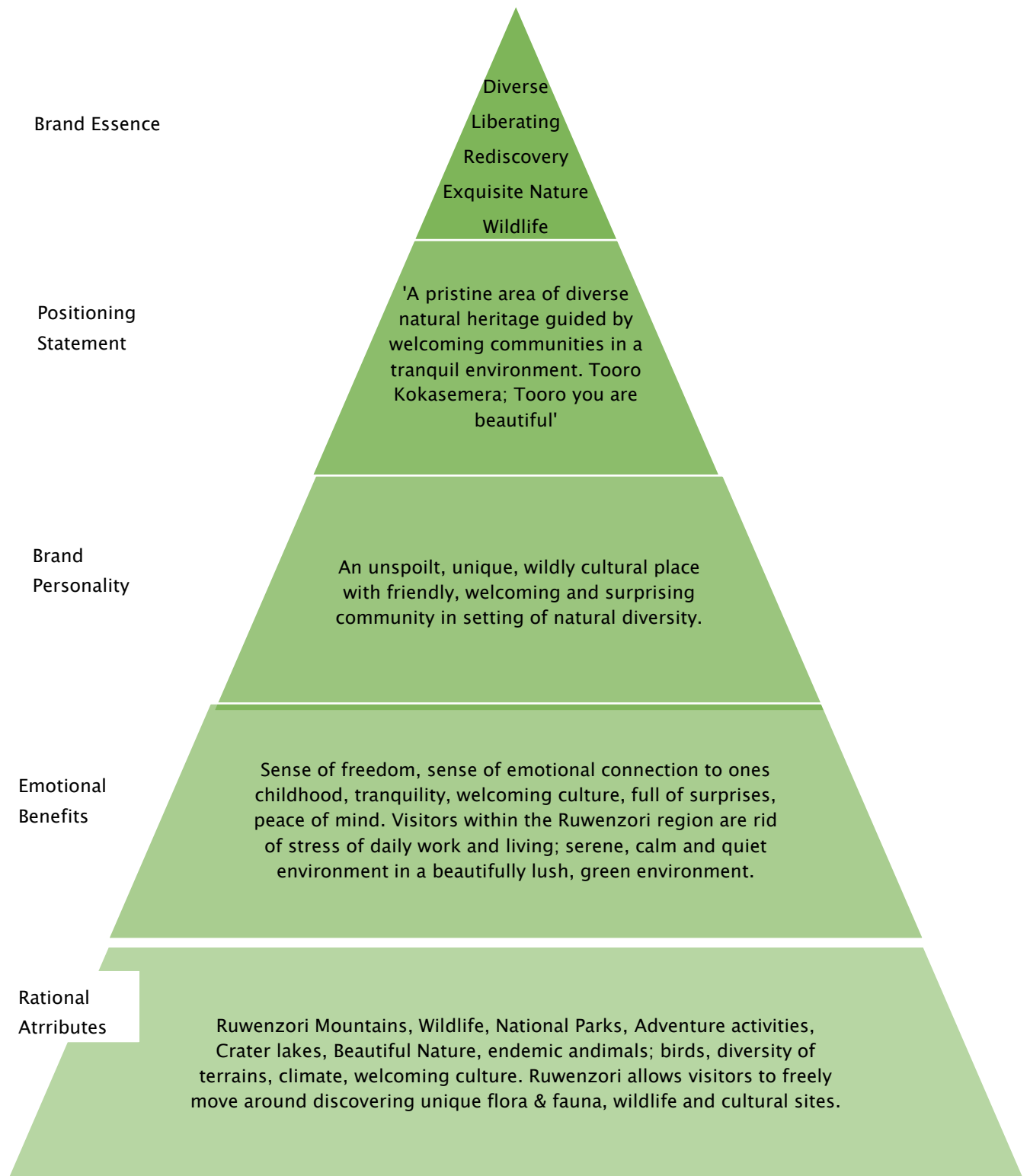


Figure 47: The Brand Pyramid: Ruwenzori

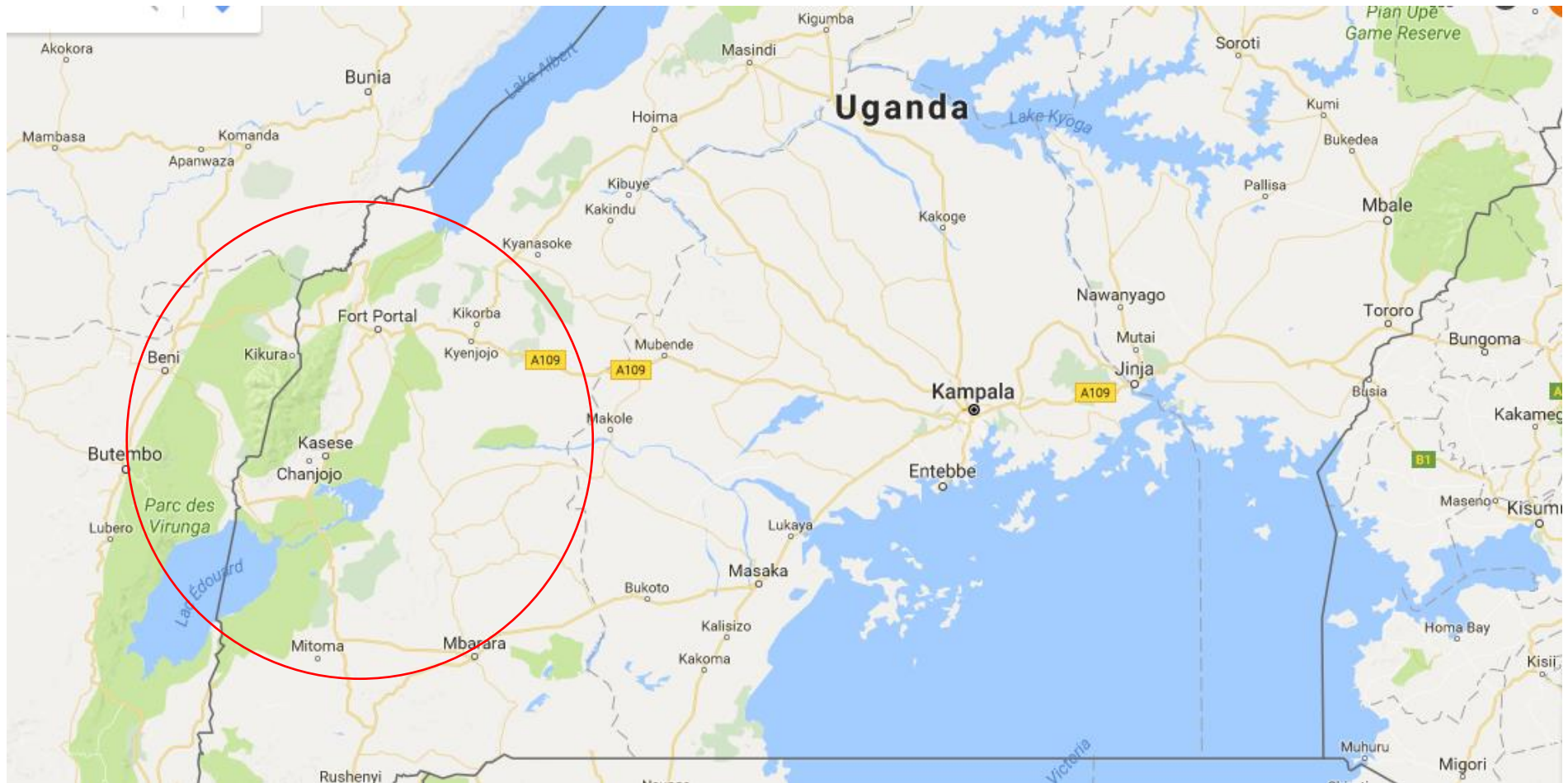


Figure 48: The Ruwenzori region on Map Uganda

“The pearl that shines the brightest” Ruwenzori, Uganda

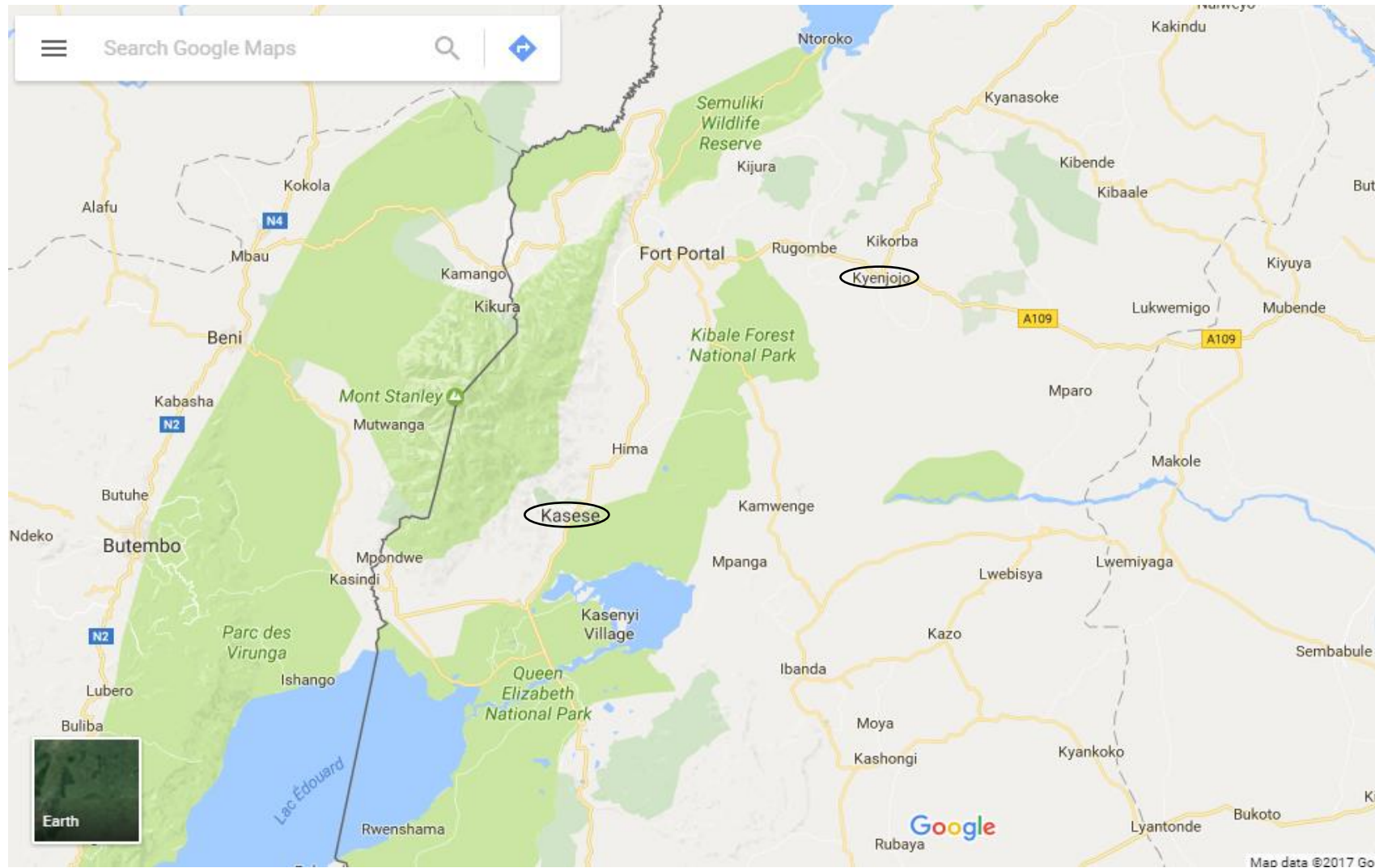


Figure 49: Map of Ruwenzori: district placement