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Tourism-Induced Labour Mobility in Tanzania — Case Study Zanzibar

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Abstract

Tanzania has seen a remarkable increase in tourist arrivals in recent years and particularly Zanzibar has already evolved into a mass tourism destination. Such a development of a modern industry obviously leads to a substantial demand for labour. Labour requirements are met by the huge labour surplus among the local population. But there are also migrants from the mainland and even from abroad working in the tourism industry in Zanzibar. However considering the high unemployment rates on the island and the rapid population growth rate of about 3% p.a., labour supply still seems to be greater than demand.

The aim of this study is to make a contribution to the discussion concerning the effects on tourism in developing countries, focusing on labour mobility, which results from the expanding tourism industry. Therefore a survey has been conducted to investigate the pre-conditions, structures and consequences of tourism-induced labour mobility in Zanzibar, which occurs in spatial mobility as well as in social mobility. The focus of the survey is the informal tourism sector (ITS), which can be seen as the most important labour market for migrants. The major aspects to be analysed are demographic and socio economic characteristics of the participants, who perform the tourism induced labour mobility process. Furthermore push and pull factors, scale and intensity of tourism-induced migration in the spatial-time dimension have been emphasised.

The growing attractiveness of the tourism labour market in Zanzibar has been underlined by the analysis of the collected data. It turned out that mostly migrant workers from the mainland of Tanzania and the neighbouring country Kenya benefit, while the local employees are underrepresented both in the formal and in the informal tourism sector. This phenomenon results in a rising conflict potentially between the migrant workers and the indigenous population, which could lead to a backward developing process for the island and for the whole country in the end. To avoid such negative development, Zanzibarian employees should be enabled to compete with the better qualified immigrant labourers.

Keywords: Developing countries, labour mobility, migration, Tanzania, tourism, Zanzibar