

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC, 2013:1) indicates that the total contribution of travel and tourism to the South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2012 was ZAR315.4 billion (9.8% of GDP). This contribution is estimated to have risen in 2013 by 1.9% and forecast to increase by 4.4% per annum to ZAR492.7 billion in 2023. In the same positive vein, the travel and tourism economy employment in 2012 was 1 399 500 jobs, constituting 10.3 percent of total employment. This trend is set to continue with a 2.1 percent rise per annum to 1 750 000 jobs in 2023 (10.9% of total employment). These statistics attest to the great potential that the travel and tourism industry has in the South African economy, particularly with regards to income generation and job creation.

However, in sharp contrast to this positive picture presented by the tourism industry is the high unemployment rate in the country, which is currently at 25.2% (Statistics South Africa, 2013:V). A large number of these unemployed persons can be found in the townships, such as Soshanguve, and other informal settlements. The Soshanguve township lies just forty-five kilometers from the City of Tshwane Central Business District (CBD). With an estimated population of 403 140, the unemployment rate in Soshanguve stands at 36% (Stats SA, 2013).

This deplorable economic situation remains prevalent in communities like Soshanguve, despite the fact that at the beginning of the present millennium, the United Nations General Assembly committed itself to

*[sparing] no effort to free fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty, to which more than a billion of them are currently subjected (UN, 2000:4).*

More than one decade after this commitment, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) reveals that there are still about 1.4 billion people

living on less than US\$ 1.25 a day and close to one billion suffering from hunger, with 70 percent of these living in rural areas (IFAD, 2010:16).

IFAD further states that

*rural poverty results from lack of assets, limited economic opportunities and poor education and capabilities, as well as disadvantages rooted in social and political inequalities* (IFAD, 2010:16).

The paradox in the perpetuation of this untenable situation is the fact that research since the early 1970s (Erbes, 1973:14; De Kadt, 1979:2; Jenkins, 1994:1; Sinclair, 1998:4; Oh, 2005:40; Lee & Chang, 2008:182; Tao & Wall, 2009:91) indicates that tourism can be used as a means of orchestrating development. Many tourism resources, such as wildlife, unique cultural patterns, and beautiful landscapes are found in peripheral communities such as Soshanguve. The challenge lies with how to develop and exploit these potential tourist attractions in a viable and sustainable manner (Lea, 1988 cited in Sebele, 2010:137), especially in areas where poverty levels are high.

The study of tourism business development has gained impetus in recent times. Lee and Chang (2008:180) allude to the general truism that tourism development attracts foreign exchange earnings, avails opportunities for job creation, stimulates growth in local industries, and triggers overall economic growth. According Sebele (2010:136) the concept of community development was introduced as an approach to rural development in the 1950s and 1960s. This approach calls for the more active involvement of locals in development issues. Similarly, tourism literature since the 1980s has advocated the inclusion and involvement of local communities in tourism as local residents have been identified as being instrumental in sustaining the product (Sin & Minca, 2014:97; Nyaupane, Morais & Dowler, 2006:1374; Sutawa, 2012:417). Furthermore, Tosun (2006:493) asserts that apart from being instrumental in tourism sustainability, community participation also ensures that a number of benefits accrue from tourism, namely employment opportunities for local people, positive local attitudes, conservation of local resources and physical development within the community.

It is evident from the above that there is a considerable overlap between community tourism, sustainable tourism and sustainable development, hence the need to design a strategy that would ensure that local communities benefit from all three.

Considering the rapid growth of tourism and the subsequent impacts (economic, environmental, and socio-cultural), its strong association with issues of sustainability is hardly surprising. Hall (2008:19) points to the highly intricate relationship between tourism and sustainable development as confirmed by the large volume of literature since the late 1980s dealing with the subject of sustainable forms of development and mitigating or managing tourism's undesired effects. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines sustainable tourism as tourism development that

*meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity, and life support systems (WTO, 2004).*

Three types of impacts are identified as originating from tourism development, namely:

- ✚ Impacts on the environment (both natural and man-made);
- ✚ Socio-cultural impacts (effects on host communities through direct and indirect relations with tourists, and interaction with the tourism industry); and
- ✚ Economic impacts.

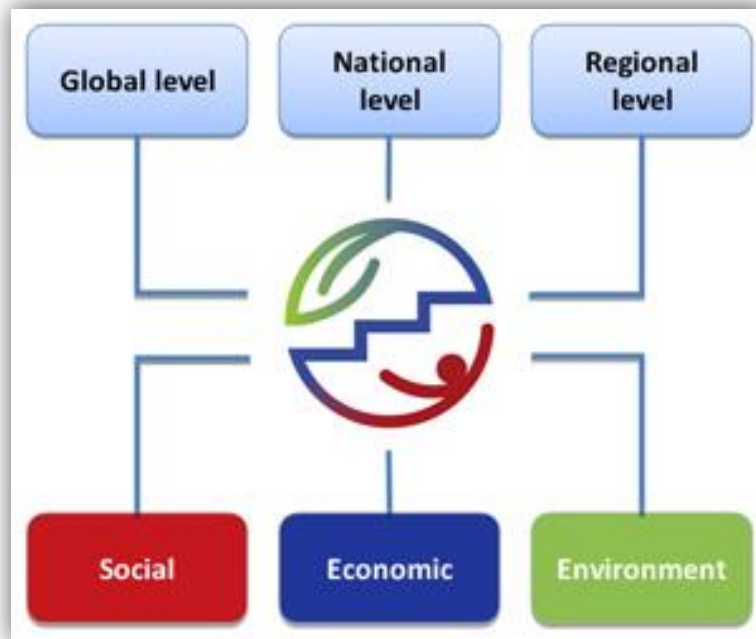
Briedenhann and Wickens (2004:71) assert that due to the pressure of rural poverty many governments in developing countries have fallen prey to *ad hoc* and unplanned methods of development, without giving due consideration to the environmental, socio-cultural, economic and conservation well-being of the rural communities. In the same vein Matarrita-Cascante (2010:1142) emphasizes the need to distinguish between economic growth whose primary focus is to attract as much foreign exchange and capital, and increase employment maximally; and

development which goes beyond these economic gains to ensure poverty alleviation, responsible environmental practices, promote equity and a better quality of life for as many community members as possible.

Holden (2008:111) further states that using tourism as a means of community development would seek to achieve an increase in tourist numbers and the subsequent expenditure, thereby making it possible for tourism benefits to trickle down to community members. However, as Spencer and Nsiah (2013:221), Al Haija (2011:93), and Sharpley and Telfer (2002:34) point out, this approach is flawed in the sense that generally not enough effort is placed on issues such as equity, poverty reduction and other community-driven benefits. Achieving community development necessitates the adoption of a community-level participatory process (Kruger, 2005:584).

Keyser (2009:24) indicates that sustainable development should be grounded on the three pillars of economic efficiency, environmental integrity, and social justice. It is important to note that these three pillars of sustainable development are interconnected and mutually supportive of one another. Applied to community tourism, the primary goal of this model would be to ensure that the present generation maximizes on the opportunities presented by the tourism industry, while spreading the benefits as widely as possible and ensuring that the resources are not depleted beyond the use of future generations to meet their own needs.

Several sustainable development frameworks have equally been proposed including the following by the United Nations' sustainable development division of the department of Economic and Social affairs (Figure 1.1) below.



**Figure 1.1: Sustainable development framework**

Source: UNDESA (2012:8)

This strategy emphasises similar values to the one proposed by Keyser above, hence, social justice, economic viability and environmental protection.

Based on the European Union's sustainable development strategy, the Irish government (2002:5) proposed a framework for sustainable development for Ireland with the following key pillars:

- ❑ Economic viability
- ❑ Satisfaction of human needs by the efficient use of resources;
- ❑ Equity between generations;
- ❑ Gender equity;
- ❑ Respect for ecological integrity and biodiversity;
- ❑ Social equity;
- ❑ Respect for cultural heritage/diversity;
- ❑ Equity between countries and regions.

However, the development strategy adopted by this study is grounded in the Keyser (2009:24) model described above, based on the fact that it considers the local conditions in South Africa, but, more importantly, because it has a strong

emphasis on community participation, poverty alleviation and the conservation of the tourism resource base (Holden, 2008:111).

In the light of the preceding, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2005:2) envisages that a sustainable tourism strategy would:

- ❏ Make optimal use of the environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity;
- ❏ Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; and
- ❏ Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

The rationale behind this research therefore lies in developing a community tourism strategy that would redress the huge imbalance between the economic, socio-cultural and environmental opportunities presented by the tourism industry on the one hand, and the abject poverty suffered by many people in local communities on the other.

## **1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Various studies have focused on developing sustainable tourism strategies for different communities (Lacitignola, Petrosillo, Cataldi & Zurlini, 2007:192; Choi & Sirakaya, 2006:1275; Tepelus & Cordoba, 2005:135; Rigall-I-Torrent, 2007:2). Despite the extensive nature of these works, there is still a need to design community tourism strategies to orchestrate sustainable development in townships like Soshanguve. The imperative for such a strategy is prompted by the high unemployment rate in Soshanguve Township which currently stands at 36% among a population of 403140 inhabitants (Stats SA, 2013:V) and compounded by the lack of industries and economic opportunities in the community. This is even more true when taking into consideration the growing appetite for township

tourism. Furthermore the Soshanguve community has iconic resources for tourism, such as the Tswaing meteorite crater and ecological resort, a rich cultural heritage and a captivating struggle history. Lastly, the City of Tshwane tourism division has a plan produced in 2005 to develop Soshanguve as a unique tourism destination that has not been implemented.

It is against this background that the core problem for this research emanates. The problem under investigation is the huge burden of unemployment, poverty and social deprivation faced by residents of Soshanguve and other townships, while opportunities exist in the tourism industry to address their economic, socio-cultural and environmental challenges.

Considering that Soshanguve township, like many others, possess vital tourism resources while the residents languish in poverty, the objectives of sustainable community tourism would be to improve the residents' quality of life by optimising local economic benefits, protecting the natural and built heritage and provide a high quality of experience for visitors (Kim, Uysal & Sirgy, 2013:527; Dolnicar, Lazarevski & Yanamandram, 2013:725; McCabe & Johnson, 2013:44; Sharpley, 2014:38; Choi & Sirakaya, 2006:1280).

The research question at the heart of this study is, therefore, what strategy can be implemented to develop sustainable community tourism in the Soshanguve community?

### **1.3 RESEARCH GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

The following goal and objectives stem from the above problem statement:

#### **1.3.1 Goal**

The goal of this study is to develop a sustainable community tourism strategy for the Soshanguve township.

### **1.3.2 Objectives**

Stemming from the goal of the study are the following objectives:

- ❏ To undertake an in-depth study of literature on the tourism system and indicators of sustainability.
- ❏ To analyse literature on tourism planning, tourism development in South Africa and community tourism.
- ❏ To undertake empirical research on the potential for developing sustainable community tourism in Soshanguve.
- ❏ To develop a strategy that will guide the planning and development of sustainable community tourism in Soshanguve based on empirical findings.
- ❏ To draw conclusions and make recommendations on the strategy to employ in developing sustainable community tourism in Soshanguve.

## **1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology employed in this study is elaborately discussed in Chapter 4. However an overview of the research process is summarised in the following sections.

### **1.4.1 Literature study**

The conceptual framework for this study emanated from an in-depth consultation of relevant sources, primarily from science direct and emerald dealing with the tourism system, sustainable tourism development, tourism development in South Africa and community tourism. Secondary sources such as journals, text books, articles, conference proceedings, internet texts, abstracts, theses and reports equally provided valuable information. Special focus was placed on the economic, environmental and socio-cultural impacts of community tourism development.



### **1.4.2 Empirical Study**

Four different surveys were conducted during the course of this study; with the first exploring the demand side of the study, namely visitors to attractions around the CBD of the City of Tshwane considered to be potential visitors to Soshanguve township. Two other surveys and three interviews were conducted in order to explore key aspects of the supply side of tourism in Soshanguve. The first supply side survey involved residents of the Soshanguve township with the purpose of exploring their perceptions on the impacts of tourism development in their community. Secondly, a survey was conducted with tourism product managers in Soshanguve to explore the range and quality of existing tourism products in Soshanguve. Finally, interviews were conducted with three community leaders to ascertain the objectives of tourism development in Soshanguve, the state of tourism planning and key issues around the Soshanguve tourism product offering.

## **1.5 CHAPTER CLASSIFICATION**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction and problem statement**

The current chapter (Chapter 1) presents the background to the research by giving the introduction, discussing the problem statement and elaborating on the objectives. At the heart of this chapter is the problem necessitating this research, namely the high unemployment and poverty levels in the Soshanguve community while the community has remarkable tourism resources and well developed infrastructure. The goal of the study is therefore stated as being the development of sustainable community tourism strategy for Soshanguve township.

### **Chapter 2: The tourism system and indicators of sustainability**

This chapter addresses the first objective of this study, namely to review literature on the tourism system and indicators of sustainability. The focus of this chapter is to lay the foundation for the strategy by analyzing literature on the components of a tourism system and indicators of the factors that can sustain such a system.

### **Chapter 3: Tourism planning, tourism development in South Africa and community tourism**

The literature review is continued in this chapter in order to gain insight into tourism planning, tourism development in South Africa and community. The objective is to understand the rationale for tourism planning and the process to follow in developing community tourism. Literature on tourism development in South Africa and community tourism serves to contextualize the strategy in order to ensure that it is implementable in the South African environment.

### **Chapter 4: Research methodology**

The methodology employed in this study is discussed and explained in Chapter 4.

### **Chapter 5: Empirical results**

Chapter 5 discusses the empirical results of the study. The empirical results present the biographical characteristics of the respondents, the travel behaviour of potential visitors to Soshanguve township, their preferred holiday activities and holiday destination-choice determinants. The key focus of the Soshanguve residents' survey was to establish the residents' perceptions of tourism impacts within their community. Furthermore, a qualitative study of the community leaders is conducted through interviews in order to get greater insight into tourism development issues in the community such as the unique selling points of tourism in Soshanguve, existing tourism planning, the objectives for tourism development and possible challenges to tourism development.

### **Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations of the study**

This chapter addresses the final objective of this study by presenting the conclusions and recommendations for a sustainable community tourism strategy for Soshanguve. The conclusions emanate from the literature study and the empirical results while the recommendations relate to the way forward for Soshanguve tourism. The major contribution of this study is the proposed sustainable community tourism strategy for Soshanguve township and a tourism route to kick-start tourism in the community.

## **1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

The following concepts are considered central to the conduct of this research and thus require clarification:

### **1.6.1 *Tourism***

Hall (2008:7) describes tourism as an expression of lifestyle “identified either through voluntary travel or a voluntary temporary short-term change of residence”. The motives of such travel are increasingly wide-ranging, including education, business, health and leisure. Following on this, Fletcher, Fyall, Gilbert and Wanhill (2013:7) indicate that the core elements of tourism arise out of the movement of people to and their stay in various destinations outside their usual environments and places of work. For the purpose of this study, tourism is seen as comprising the activities of travellers taking trips to destinations outside their usual residential environments, lasting not more than one consecutive year, for purposes such as leisure, business, health, and education, among others, without seeking gainful employment in the places visited.

### **1.6.2 *Community tourism***

Spenceley (2008:230) defines community tourism as “tourism which is owned and/or managed by communities with the aim of generating wider community benefit”. In the same vein, Choi and Sirakaya (2006:1275) argue that the main aim of community tourism should be to improve the residents’ quality of life by maximizing local economic benefits, protecting the natural and built heritage, and providing a high quality of experience for the visitors. However, taking a slightly different view, Petric (cited in Viljoen & Tlabela, 2007:3) emphasizes that community tourism should aim at giving visitors personal contact with the physical and human environment of the countryside, and allow them to participate in the activities, traditions and lifestyles of the local people. Community tourism shall be used in this study to refer to tourism ventures in which local people exercise at least fifty percent of ownership and management, and participate in the provision of quality services to tourists and the tourism industry.

### **1.6.3 Sustainable tourism development**

The concept of sustainability gained prominence after the publication of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) report *Our Common Future* which defined sustainable development as “[meeting] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987:43). Keyser (2009:24) points out that the attainment of sustainable development necessitates a balance between economic efficiency, environmental integrity and social justice.

According to Nelson, Butler and Wall (2007:59) sustainable tourism “

*is developed and maintained in an area (community or environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an infinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human or physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes.”*

This study adopts the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2005:4) definition of sustainable tourism development as development that

*“meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future [and] leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity, and life support systems.”*

The following table summarises the focus of sustainable tourism and related terms:

**Table 1.1: Sustainable tourism and related terms**

Term	Definition	Author	Focus
<b>Sustainable tourism</b>	Envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.	World Tourism Organisation (UNEP, 2002b)	The responsible use of resources for present and future generations. Maintaining a balance between economic, social and environmental aspects of tourism.
<b>Responsible tourism</b>	Responsible tourism is about providing better holiday experiences for guests and good business opportunities for tourism enterprises, and enabling local communities to enjoy a better quality of life through increased socio-economic benefits and improved natural resource management.	Department of Environmental affairs and tourism (DEAT, 2002:8).	Develop a competitive advantage. Establish meaningful partnerships. Promote sustainable use of local resources. Encourage natural, cultural, social and economic diversity. Transparency.
<b>Nature-based tourism</b>	Nature-based tourism is primarily concerned with the direct enjoyment of some relatively undisturbed phenomenon of nature.	Valentine (as quoted by Eagles, Bowman & Chung-Hung, 2005).	Tourism in a natural setting. Enjoyment of nature. Consumptive and non-consumptive.
<b>Ecotourism</b>	Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel to, and visitation of, relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features – both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations.	(Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996:20)	Environmental conservation. Community participation. Learning experience. Nature-based. Responsible travel.

*Adapted from: UNEP (2002b); DEAT (2002:8); Frey & George (2010:622)*

#### **1.6.4 Strategy**

The word strategy is mostly used in a generic sense to describe public sector approaches to the development of destinations (Fletcher & Cooper, 1996:183; Ooi, 2002:693). Tremblay (2000:5) further states that in many instances, the expression strategic planning is used instead of the word strategy. The use and

development of the word strategy is comparatively less in tourism and hospitality literature than in other fields further compounding any attempts to define it (Ooi, 2002:689). However, the term strategy is used in this study as defined by Getz (1997:93) as the integration of prescribed policies and programs with the aim of achieving pre-defined goals of a destination or organisation.

### **1.6.5 Township**

Townships in South Africa are the outcome of various legislative and policy instruments put in place by the Apartheid government in the 20<sup>th</sup> century aimed at enforcing racial segregated rule. Laws such as the Native Land Act (1913), the Natives (Urban Area) Act (1923), and the Groups Areas Act (1950) were meant to restrict the settlement and movement of people based on their racial backgrounds (Setswe, 2010:39). According to Bahre (2007:32) the townships or “non-white” areas were situated on the fringes or periphery of the city, with the mean distance between the township and the city centre being about 26 kilometres in the case of townships like Garankuwa, Mabopane and Soshanguve in the City of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. As Jurgens, Donaldson, Rule and Bahr (2013:256) point out, townships were not only differentiated from the urban centres by the spatial divide, but even more so by the level of basic infrastructure and social services available to the township inhabitants.

Paradoxically, twenty years after the eradication of the apartheid system and the birth of the democratic dispensation, both the name and the township communities are still alive and vibrant. Nonetheless, political transformation has resulted in political emancipation, infrastructural development and improvements in social services. Townships like Soshanguve do not only have good access roads to the city centre but also a good road network within the community, electricity, potable water and proper sanitation.

However, government efforts to eliminate economic and social inequalities between the townships and the urban centres have not yielded the desired results (Booyesen, 2007:29), Alexander (2010:25) and Botes, Lenka, Marais, Matebesi and Sigenu (2007:32) point to the huge divide in South African society between the

affluent city dwellers and the township communities characterised by high levels of unemployment, poor housing, informal settlements and social deprivation. At the same time, renewed interest has surged around township communities, fuelled by slums and the survival challenges, but even more so by interest in the anti-apartheid “struggle history”, cultural diversity and vibrancy, and the relatively natural environment away from the cosmopolitan centres (Rogerson, 2009:399; Booyesen, 2010:275; Nemasetoni, 2005:198, Mboniyane, 2011:556; Bahre, 2007:73), hence the appetite for township tourism.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter has elaborated on the background to this research to develop a sustainable community tourism strategy for the Soshanguve community, the problem necessitating the study, the research objectives and the key concepts guiding the study. The next two chapters focus on analysing literature that guiding the development of this strategy.