

# Tourism Development Strategies in Zimbabwe

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**Abstract** Tourism has become the largest and one of the fast growing industries globally and is currently a source of employment and livelihood for many, especially in Africa. While this industry has increasingly become an important source of income in a number of countries, its rapid growth and expansion has had a noticeable detrimental effect on the environment. Tourism development should mainly be about refocusing, planning and implementing policies that encourage development of the natural resources to benefit the indigenous people and other stakeholders that include the government, the industry itself, the communities and the visitors. Long time planning, monitoring and constant change is required to ensure that tourism is managed properly and the natural resources maintained intact. While there is no doubt that the quality of Africa's natural resources for tourism is exceptional, most countries have not developed their potential as may be expected. For instance, Zimbabwe is now focusing on tourism as a source of growth and diversification, but has only limited policy guidance from Government. Most donors, despite the sector's potential, have left it for the concerned industry to go it alone. The tourism industry, however, has continued to generate more benefits to Zimbabwe as it comes along with a package of positives. The industry has become a very attractive business to both domestic and international tourists and investors. For this reason, the government has to step in to develop and formulate successful tourism interventions that would spur the development of the industry. Such measures would include adopting appropriate tourism investment laws, construction of adequate infrastructure, collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, provision of quality products and services and the provision of health and safety facilities. Government therefore should be a key player in this development. However, for the strategies to work, there is need for proper planning, organization and promotion of the destination. This paper seeks to research on how the Zimbabwe government can develop the tourism industry business in order to enhance its competitiveness on the global market.

**Keywords** Tourism, Development, Products, Strategy, Resorts, Service, Delivery

## 1. Introduction

The United Nations World Tourism Organization in its Sustainable Tourism for Development Guidebook (2013), highlighted that over the last fifty years tourism has become one of the largest economic sectors in the world accounting for about 9% of the world's Gross Domestic Product and employing over 200 million people. The developing countries have witnessed the highest rate of growth during the past ten years and have a high potential to further improve if appropriate strategies are employed.

Zimbabwe is blessed with a spectacular variety of beautiful and exotic scenery and natural heritages. The country has a generous sampling of Africa that tourists would love to see. The country has a number of tourist attractions, some of which have been accorded world heritage status by the UNESCO World Heritage organization

such as the Great Zimbabwe Ruins and the Mighty Victoria Falls, 'Mosi-oa-tunya', 'the smoke that thunders'. The tourism industry is one of the most important service industries in Zimbabwe accounting for 8- 10% of the gross domestic product (GDP) (Mid-term Fiscal Policy, 2015). Apart from the above mentioned tourist attractions, Zimbabwe boasts of a number of tourism resources and products, such as: - the Balancing Rocks, the hot springs, the Hwange and Gonarezhou National Parks, the Eastern Highlands, Matopos Hills and National Park, and many other natural landscapes. Given these tourist attractions, it should not be a big challenge to have a vibrant industry if all the necessary policies are put in place.

Cernat and Gourdon (2007) posit that "Given its cross-sectoral nature, tourism can only grow sustainably if it is integrated into the country's overall economic, social and physical planning policies. Where national attractions are shared with neighbouring countries, joint or regional promotion and marketing can be effective." The tourism industry, therefore, needs to be developed further to be attractive and competitive in the international market.

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### 1.1. Current Situation

The tourism industry in Zimbabwe is one of the good performing industries; it could even perform much better were it not for the current macro-economic challenges facing the country (Chinamasa Patrick, 2015). Zimbabwe is currently operating under a hostile environment mostly resulting from the economic sanctions imposed on the country after the land redistribution program. The challenges include among others; high unemployment affecting demand of goods and services, bad publicity and capital flight. The infrastructure in the form of building, transport, power and technology is also cause for concern. The above stated challenges have compromised the quality of service delivery, as a result the number of tourists' arrivals into the country have declined (Chinamasa Patrick, 2015). Currently there are limited numbers of international direct flights to and from the source markets into Zimbabwe which affects the flow of tourists. Chinamasa P (2015) further commended that 'because the economy is not performing well, the tourism sector cannot realize its potential in isolation as it is well integrated with other sectors of the economy'.

The tourism products on offer in the country are still in natural heritage form without much value addition. There are no additional activities that complement the tourist attractions such as duty free and curio shops. Tourists find themselves spending one or two days in the country a period that is too short for any meaningful spending (Muzembi Walter, quoted in the Herald newspaper, 2015).

The Ministry of tourism reported that the slow development of the local tourism industry had witnessed a marginal increase of tourist traffic of just 10% from 2014 to 2015 as indicated by Table 1. This indicates that the industry needs to be developed.

**Table 1.** Tourist Arrivals into Zimbabwe: Overview

Source Country	2015	2014	% Change
Africa	1,277,884	1,127,150	13%
America	51,546	51,432	0.20%
Asia	23,162	34,217	-32%
Europe	107,108	105,092	2%
Middle East	2,800	4,879	-43%
Oceania	21,126	20,248	4%
GRAND TOTAL	1,483,626	1,343,018	10%

Tourist Arrivals, January – September 2015

Zimbabwe has a wonderful asset that cannot be replicated by any other country in the form of its people who are welcoming and friendly (Muzembi W, 2015). Furthermore, Zimbabwe's natural tourist attractions also cannot be replicated by any other state or place; therefore, the country should take advantage of its attractive uniqueness. It is therefore, essential to develop the tourism industry to compliment the peace that prevails among citizens.

## 2. Theoretical Strategic Framework for Tourism Development: Components of Sustainable Tourism

The idea of adopting the tourism sustainable development concept was a positive approach designed to reduce tensions and frictions that were created by the complexity of interactions between tourism industry, tourist, natural environment and the local communities as host of tourist' (Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 1993).

Sustainable tourism as explained by Tourism Concern (1992) article titled *Beyond Green Horizon* quoted in Daniela Dumbrăveanu, 2006) is that 'tourism and associated infrastructures that, both now and in the future: operate within natural capacities for the regeneration and future productivity of natural resources; recognize the contribution that people and communities, customs and lifestyles, make to the tourism experience; except that these people must have and equitable share in the economic benefits of tourism; are guided by the wishes of local people and communities in the host areas.

Sustainable tourism is based on the following principles: a) minimizing the impact of tourism activity on the environment in order to acquire ecological sustainability, by contributing to maintaining and enhancement of conservation through the return of a part of the revenues towards the protected area. It means practices that do not have a negative impact on the environment but contribute to its development. b) minimizing the negative impact of tourism activity on the local community and its members so as to obtain social sustainability. It goes by a system that does not upset and disturb the daily life of the population at the tourist destination. It maintains the avoidance of hostile situations at all cost. c) minimizing the negative impact of tourism activity on the culture/traditions/customs of the local communities so as to obtain cultural sustainability. Developing tourism capable of determining the authenticity and individuality of local cultures to be preserved, and avoid their saturation with 'external' cultural influences. d) maximizing the economic benefits of the local population as a result of developing tourism, to obtain economic sustainability. e) education, preparation, information. Educating the tourist through a superior awareness and consideration of the impact generated, to improve personal attitude towards the environment and reducing the impact. It should include an ecological education component (for visitors, locals, local administration, rural and urban population, e.a.) that is crucial besides the interpretation component, at the eco-tourism level, both from the point of view of the product and of the local administrations. f) local control – a basic principle in sustainable tourism. The local community should participate for the development of tourism in the areas of concern (Tourism Concern, 1992, quoted in Daniela Dumbrăveanu, 2006 and The Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, 2013).

The Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg

(South Africa) from 26 August to 4 September 2002, identified further measures to promote sustainable tourism development, with a view to increasing “the benefits from tourism resources for the population in host communities while maintaining the cultural and environmental integrity of the host communities and enhancing the protection of ecologically sensitive areas and natural heritages” (UN, 2002b:ch. I.2).

The objective of sustainable tourism development, however, is concerned with factors that stabilize and promote tourism. In short, it includes (not conclusive) establishing protected areas; management of tourist techniques; management of resort center carrying capacity; environmental impact assessment; establishing codes of ethics for tourists and operators and establishing laws, regulations as well as right policies. Zimbabwe tourism can develop along these lines of sustainable tourism.

### 3. Role of Government

There are various opportunities of improving the operations of the tourism industry in order to attract both domestic and international tourism. Tourism development requires that the government establishes policies that support the continued sustenance of the industry. The government policies should address among other issues the operating environment that should be conducive to investors and operators. Muzembi Walter, (2014) pointed out that in order to achieve the desired growth from the tourism industry, policies that revamp and support economic growth are necessary. This concurs with Ritchie, B and Crouch, G (2003: 148), who affirmed that an effective tourism policy would seek to provide high-quality visitors’ experience to the destination, while ensuring that the destination is not compromised in terms of its social, environmental and cultural integrity.

Government may encourage capitalization of the industry, through offering duty relief to tour operators and hotels to import where necessary vehicles and hotel equipment that is not manufactured locally. At government-to-government level with other countries, the government may enter into joint tourism programs with neighboring countries, country-to-country tourism agreements and country-to-country cultural exchanges.

Furthermore, strengthening industry management and regulation of the tourism market through standardization (uniformity to international standards) and the implementation of the tourism law should be encouraged as it will facilitate the orderly development of the tourism market and accelerate the progress towards advanced international level. The standards set by government for this industry should meet international standards at the same time have Zimbabwean characteristics.

The Government should take a leading role in marketing and promotion of tourism brand through competitive multiple means. This can be done through a variety of

tourism marketing and promotion media platforms at home and abroad, publications, advertisements and use of tourism, trade and investment promotion officers. The platforms may include major international events, large-scale festivals, various international exchanges and international tourism fairs through foreign tourism media and tourism industry representatives. Zimbabwe’s embassies can add another dimension to the promotion of tourism as they are constantly in touch with the international market. The Zimbabwe Tourism, Trade and Investment promotion officers should be adequately resourced to enable them to execute their duties efficiently.

However, the government’s role should also ensure proper planning and policy-making; facilitation and implementation of policies; regulation and monitoring; development promotion and policy coordination in order to support the growth and maintain tourism business.

### 4. Environment and Sustainable Development

The natural tourism resource is a heritage that should be protected because it is what tourists are interested in; therefore, protection of natural resources, environment and cultural centers is paramount for sustainable development (Frederico Neto, March 2003). The government should formulate correct and scientific strategies for tourism development to ensure the proper arrangements and rational use of tourism resources. There should always be a balance between use of the natural resources and protection of such resources. The authorities should also relieve the pressure on the scenic spots through measures such as the designation of protected areas and limiting opening hours of some centers. There is need to strengthen the supervision and control on tourism operators and tourists to avoid irreparable damage to the ecology.

### 5. Market Development

Local private players should be encouraged to participate in investing in tourism activities. The government should also attract foreign investors to take a significant role by fully participating in the development of domestic tourism. For example, the Chinese model of “government guidance and market operations” has been used successfully in the tourism resources development and management, separating ownership and management. The Chinese government mainly performed the function of guidance, coordination, supervision and management, while various companies develop and operate scenic spots through delegation of authority or contract. The Chinese government encourages the creation of Chinese brands overseas such as the China Towns, China Malls, museums and other resorts (China Tourism, 2015).

Taking a leaf from the Chinese tourism engagements, the government of Zimbabwe can develop and implement preferential policies to develop inbound tourism. Various policies can include visa free period of entry into the country, for example, 72 or 100 hours visa free entry period for foreign tourists in transit to enable them to visit interesting places at convenience and further simplifying entry and exit procedures for tourists.

The domestic market is still untapped as religious tourism is strongly growing. Religious conferences and meetings are vibrant in the country on a regular basis. This sector is still to be embraced as it has the ability to develop further.

The introduction of direct flights from upcoming source markets such as the Asia region has the capacity to convince and attract tourists. The country is also suffering from the lack of international, regional and internal airline connectivity, which hampers the growth of tourist movement. Currently, Zimbabwe is serviced by very limited airlines. Only South African Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines, Emirates, Kenyan Airlines and Air Zimbabwe are flying into the country. With these numbers, one can observe that Zimbabwe falls short of the required fleet. Therefore, there is need for the government to engage more airlines and link the country with more source markets.

This can be complimented by collaborating with airlines to offer discounted fares. The resuscitation of the national airline is critical for tourism development as it is one of the major vehicles in the marketing of the country and as a means of communications.

A leaf could be taken from countries such as China where cities are efficiently interconnected by rail; road and air networks while international routes are also well connected. A look at Beijing's, Shanghai and Hangzhou airports to name just a few, are modern and connects several international destinations. Further, seaports express ships; high-speed trains and bullet trains are well networked linking several cities. In Beijing, efficient road network and subways link almost every place around the city. The interlink enables efficient movement, giving its local places of interest more popularity and accessibility and allowing business and tourism to flourish.

On a positive note, the country had been working on a number of programmes that promote the Zimbabwe brand through campaigns such as "Creating Brand Zimbabwean" and "Buy Zimbabwe" campaigns, which focus on the need to create an effective brand in marketing Zimbabwe exports and promoting FDI.

## 6. Visa Regime

A visa application system that is not complicated or too strict is ideal for a country in order to lure more tourists. A visa application system that can be done online without a string of conditions attached will tend to benefit the applicants. The system should be reliable and convenient, i.e.

technology must make sense. Responses should also be effectively timed to avoid inconveniencing clients.

Furthermore, a country should collaborate with other countries to enable free movement of people across countries. For example, Zimbabwe can negotiate with neighboring countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region and introduce a uni-visa or something similar to EU Schengen visa that allows foreign tourists to pass through borders or visit member countries with a single visa. The uni-visa system can be valid for a considerable period, say at least six months to two years with multiple entries. Zimbabwe used to have such visa type with Zambia but was discontinued in 2015 because of logistical challenges between the two countries (Ministry of Tourism Report, 2015).

Relaxation of visa application and requirements system can be achieved through application and issuing visas at the port of entry as part of efforts to boost tourism traffic and make the country a more favorable and accessible destination. The immigration officers may be trained to handle tourist numbers in a manner that is welcoming to visitors.

## 7. Local Media Alignment

The effective use of local media to market the country to the global market should be promoted and emphasized. Local media should be aligned to put national interests first and promote the country brand. Its major role would be to positively project the country's story to the world for the benefit of local citizens. The local media should emphasize on positive issues that promote tourism and economic development in the national interest. The Minister of Tourism advised against negative press as it scares away investors and tourists, and gives a very bad image. This was supported by the Minister of Information, who said that, "What is being published is having a negative effect on the country's image. Investors are shunning the country because of what they are getting in the media". The local media has continued to deconstruct or de-brand the country through the news items they publish which are not developmental in nature. The Minister of Tourism further emphasized that the media should be the agency of economic development rather than economic de-constructors (Zimbabwe Tourism Authority Report, 2015). Therefore, there is need to align media to speak good about the country to spur developmental goals.

The local media should take part in the development of sustainable tourism through diversified communications platforms that would enhance awareness to the market at large. This can be achieved through press coverage and special marketing campaigns; promotion of domestic tourism through familiarization tours; generation of press reports on local destinations and the provision of links to foreign markets.

## 8. Development of Tourism Support Facilities

The government should develop and speed up the development of tourism support facilities and services that include hotel and accommodation, entertainment, sightseeing, food, transportation and shopping. It should continue to improve tourism transportation efficiency through the construction of highways and train expressways and the development of relevant ICT facilities. The construction of complete infrastructure can enable the country to successfully host international events. A tourism destination needs a good product portfolio strategy that enhances its attractiveness to the market. The portfolio may be based on the existing attractions and resources or modified, but should take into account the essential facilities, infrastructures and services needed for development (Jordi Datzira Masip, 2006).

The ministry should also continue to develop diversified tourism products, such as ecological, cultural, rural, self-driving and health tours, creating a large number of scenic spots and resorts. However, in some ecologically sensitive areas, over-exploitation should be avoided to ensure the sustainable development of tourism resources.

## 9. Diversify Tourism Products

The government should encourage the acceleration of diversified tourism products development through exploring the natural landscape and cultural history. The tourism industry and the country in general, should make full use of the country's mountains, jungles, lakes, grasslands, wetlands, and arts and crafts. Based on the characteristics of resources in Zimbabwe, the country can create a series of tourism products such as, "natural wonders", "culture quest" and "eco-resort" and organized themed events such as expedition, hunting, camping, hiking and golf activities. The government can enhance the uniqueness and diversity of tourism products through value addition while increasing the number of tourism products. The creation of value in a tourism destination can be determined by the specialization through the creation of products targeted toward specific market segments (Jordi Datzira Masip, 2006)

## 10. Target the Middle and High-End Tourism Market

According to the quality of tourism resources in Zimbabwe and the preferences of international tourists, the tourism market in Zimbabwe may target middle and high-end markets. This is the most able market segment for tourism business, as it possesses the ability to be adventurous. Furthermore, a number of tourist reception facilities such as high-grade resorts and resort hotels may be developed to cater for the perceived high quality market segment. Tourism products associated with leisure, holiday and health such as

boating, fishing, health spa and golf may be developed aiming at attracting middle and high-level tourists and effectively increasing per capita spending of tourists.

The tourism industry should expand the range of tourism consumer goods. There can be establishment of tourism products that enhance the experience of tourists by exploring the features of scenic spots; therefore, consumer demand will be greatly enriched. Thus, exquisite souvenirs, crafts, specialties, creative gifts, videos and images may be provided to further boost tourist spending. Worth noting is that there should be effective application of the required tourism standards to all tourism activities that is not limited to the accommodation sector. The adopted standards and their related costs should not act as barriers to the development of tourism business. The adoption would go a long way in upgrading the standards of service.

Potential investors could be encouraged to take opportunities in establishing the following; golf courses; racecourses; water parks; theme parks; marinas; shopping malls; entertainment studios and adventure sports. At tourism centers or sites, duty free shopping for international products may be provided to foreign tourists to increase the spending of tourists in the country. In Sanya, a tourist resort city in Hainan Province of China, duty free shops have added value to tourism and is also accessible to domestic tourists. The duty free shop has become a tourist attraction on its own (China Tourism, 2015). Zimbabwe may learn from this experience.

## 11. Establishing Tourism Development Zones

The country should develop a number of pilot tourism areas and national resorts with international competitiveness. The resorts should be given preferential policies such as corporate tax reliefs, customs duties reliefs, planned and constructed to international standards, playing powerful leading and exemplary role across the country and tax free shopping policy.

Once the pilot resorts are successful then the government can embark on the implementation of comprehensive tourism development zones around the country. The country is rich in diversified tourism attraction centers, which can be further developed to accommodate more facilities and activities aimed at enhancing more duration of stay in the country. Special tourism development zones could be in areas of tourist interests. For example, Victoria Falls would be a good site. Game reserves like Hwange and Gonarezhou may be further developed into special tourism development zones.

The government, together with the private sector, can further develop and add value to the natural areas of interest to make them more interesting. The development zone can be developed as an important platform for international economic cooperation and cultural exchanges. It may also be enhanced by the creation of sports facilities such as golf,

cycling, mountain hiking and tennis. Modern shopping centers with acclaimed international brands may also be introduced in the special tourism development zones. World-class leisure facilities that are competitive should be developed to make Zimbabwe a tourism destination of choice. The zones may also be designated safe havens for financial services or other specialized businesses as the case in Mauritius and Hong Kong that have become regional financial hubs.

Within the special tourism development zones, the government can introduce special and flexible tourism policies and an advanced tourism management system. Such policies and systems may include; providing 'visa on arrival', and other simplified visa systems for tourists; developing preferential tariff measures and convenient customs administration system for international tourists and cross border tourism corporations; regulating the operations of travel agencies and improving their service quality. The government may establish cooperation mechanism between travel agencies and local institutions in such areas as language, habits, food, religion and medical treatment to please tourists beyond sightseeing.

Medical tourism may also be considered in the tourism development zones. State of the art hospitals can be put in place in the tourist resorts with medical specialists and other ancillary services can attract high-class tourists who are seeking medical attention far away from their countries in a conducive environment. For example, Zimbabwe can develop world-class specialized hospitals that can attract foreigners. South Korea has developed Botulinum Toxin Type A (Botox) hospitals, (i.e. cosmetic hospitals) which have become international attraction on their own. These are specialized hospitals for plastic surgeries. Sports persons at times look for places to recoup from injuries, therefore facilities with state of the art gyms and rehabilitation equipment maybe availed at these health institutions. Some hospital rooms maybe of hotel standard to cater for the rich and famous.

The government, in conjunction with other stakeholders, can introduce pilot models of development and operation, such as building of high-quality tourism centers and tourism resorts through the development of investment and financing platforms; introduction of private and foreign investment and the adoption of enterprise operation models. The government can encourage partnerships between private and public sectors and other forms of ventures in order to strengthen the ability of investors to make meaningful developments in the areas of interest. The government can also formulate attractive investment policies that can attract international hotel and tourism brands to invest into the country. The presence of international hotel brands such as Park Hyatt, Sofitel, Westin, St. Regis, Wanda, Marriot, Four Seasons, Shangri-La, Hilton and Meridian are a source of tourist attraction. Their presence in any place of interest is a major booster in enhancing destination competitiveness. However, government should avail land among other incentives to attract such international hotel brands.

## 12. Provision of Quality Hotel and Accommodation

As indicated by a research survey of February 2016 which was conducted by the Zimbabwe Council for Tourism in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis Research Unit, the hotel and accommodation at Zimbabwe's tourism centers was too expensive for tourists to spend more than one day (Zimbabwe Council of Tourism, 2016). The research found out that the best option tourists would do was to reduce the length of stay in the country. This situation is not healthy for the industry. It scares away tourists who could have spent much of the time touring other places but are encouraged just to make a stop-over and proceed to spend their money somewhere else.

Furthermore, the research indicated that hotels and lodges had experienced a 27% decline in occupancy rate since 2014. It was evident also from the study that there is need to reduce or exempt the value added tax on foreign accommodation sales. Tourism operators including hoteliers should be allowed rebate to import new capital equipment for expansion and modernization, for renovations of hotels and lodges and for boat equipment among other goods for the development of tourism facilities. The benefits may be extended to restaurants and café's located around hotels and lodges or around tourism centers.

The current Minister of Tourism, Muzembi Walter observed that the country lacks adequate quality hotels. The numbers were not enough for a vibrant tourism or cannot cater for large numbers of traffic. He said that a church conference meeting could occupy all the hotels in the capital city. He further said that what if the country was to hold major international events, it means that people would be renting houses in the residential suburbs ([herald.co.zw](http://herald.co.zw)). The country needs adequate and quality hotels. Such hotels should be internationally reputable. Table 2 shows that the country lacked adequate capacity to hold large volumes of people. As shown by Table 2, there are 6439 hotel rooms and 12248 beds in the country, a number which is not adequate to contain large volumes of people. Muzembi (2014) also observed that the pricing system used by hotels in the country was more or less a case of extortion. One such example is the cost of a lunch meal in some hotels, which is ridiculously expensive. For instance, a breakfast meal in a three-star hotel cost US\$20/25 per person. This is the cost for overnight accommodation at an up market lodge in a neighboring country South Africa (ZTA Report, 2015). That means, for a family of four one has to fork out at least \$100 for the meal, which is enough for a one-month grocery at home for the same number. In addition, the same amount of \$100 can be spent for two nights in a three star hotel in South Africa for the same number of people (ZTA Report, 2015). Such exorbitant prices are deterrents in promoting tourism spending. There is need for a downward price revision of the hotel and hospitality industry services in order to encourage tourism expenditure. The implementation of such revisions would attract domestic and international tourists.

**Table 2.** Room & Bed Capacities by Region 2015

REGION	ROOMS	BEDS
Harare	2385	4558
Bulawayo	785	1633
Mutare	537	1027
Nyanga	244	508
Midlands	314	596
Masvingo	190	260
Kariba	447	834
Hwange	293	580
Victoria Falls	969	1768
Beitbridge	275	484
TOTAL	6439	12248

Source: Ministry of Tourism 2015

### 13. Expand the Financing Channels of Tourism Projects

There is need to consider building a diversified platform of investment and financing tourism industry. The tourism industry may secure loans from banks by mortgaging tourism resources and other assets and get commercial credit financing through advance payment for construction, tickets deduction and pre-sale. Assistance can be provided to organized communities towards the development of community based tourism projects.

The government can strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the World Tourism Organization, the World Bank and other international tourism research institutions to actively seek soft loans and investment from international financial institutions and foreign funds. Capital operation can be introduced in the tourism industry to expand the financing channels for a number of competitive tourism enterprises such as public offering and the issuance of bonds at home and abroad.

Investing meaningfully in the tourism sector cannot be over-emphasized. This involves guaranteeing adequate financial support for the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA) to enable it to fulfill its mandate to effectively and efficiently implement programmes such as; destination marketing (domestic and international); tourism research and development; registration, licensing and grading of designated tourism facilities. It can also enable the Ministry of Tourism to second its marketing officers or tourism attachés to major source markets as well as adequately resource them.

### 14. Strengthen International Tourism Collaboration

Zimbabwe tourism operations should be actively integrated into the great market of African tourism through

strengthening tourism cooperation with other strategic African tourists' destination centers to enhance bundled marketing of tourism and create multi-national tourist routes in Africa. A "Journey to Africa" classic tour may be designed to meet different needs of major African attractions. For example, the Victoria Falls, Egyptian pyramids, the Great Rift Valley, the Kruger National Park and the Masai Mara National Reserve may be created through the joint efforts of the relevant countries. The countries involved can improve transportation between scenic spots such as increasing the number of airlines and flights and also consider subway railway systems. Appropriate bi-lateral and multilateral relations can be established with neighboring countries and other source markets. Relations can be in the form of joint marketing and promotion. For example, in March 2016, South Africa and Zimbabwe tourism boards jointly sponsored Chinese tour operators, media and investors to explore the two countries' tourism business. Such joint collaborations have the potential to improve tourism of the two countries. This can be replicated to other countries.

However, a number of collaborations can be done in the form of environmental conservation; development of tourism related products such as trans-border services; education and training; curios and handcraft production; joint visa systems; tourism health information and disease control programmes; airline code sharing; hotel and accommodation referrals and planning and policy-making.

### 15. Provision of Safe and Reliable Tourism Environment

Professional and competent personnel who are not tainted by trails of corruption and incompetence should man exit and entry points. The removal or dismissal of personnel who exhibit corrupt tendencies should be enforced in order to maintain tight security and reputation.

These border posts should be adequately resourced in terms of skilled personnel and technologically advanced equipment to ensure smooth flow of goods and passengers. Physical security measures should be maintained such as the deployment of security personnel, security dogs and other security machinery in order to give confidence and assurance to tourists. The government can enhance oversight of the operations of tourism enterprises and scenic spots related to the security of tourists and the punishment of illegal activities and eliminate safety hazards through a combination of daily inspection and special campaigns in order to provide tourists with a safe travelling environment.

### 16. Minimize Health Risks

The government can accelerate the improvement of health services through the establishment of a basic medical care system and the national system of basic drugs to ensure the adequate supply of medicine for infectious diseases at

affordable prices. The provincial and district medical centers should have at least key specialist units to combat infectious diseases and improve health emergency response and first-aid capacities. Satellites and mobile medical centers can be established to ensure rapid response systems. Infectious diseases scare away visitors. The implementation and upholding of maximum health standards would bring a

positive impact on changing the perception of the country as a safe destination.

### 17. Data Presentation

The map below shows Zimbabwe and its areas of interest.



Victoria Falls Mosi watunya ABLES

## 18. Conclusions and Recommendations

- Tourism business is anchored on planning, organization and promotion of the destination brand. Until the country's development plans are synchronized, the tourism industry will not develop to the expected international levels. The government of Zimbabwe should formulate successful tourism interventions in order to develop an appropriate model for tourism business.
- For a successful tourism, there is need to promote pragmatic cooperation with tourism players and other relevant stakeholders. Successful policies are anchored on participatory planning that begins by clearly defining the problem and define the way forward.
- Zimbabwe needs a policy framework that addresses its economic challenges and image so as to reverse the declining tourism activities. The framework should address the issue of sustainable, inclusive and coordinated tourism development.
- Health and safety of tourist should not be compromised. Zimbabwe should therefore offer a package that fully addresses health and safety issues.

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