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Success Stories

from tourism enterprises in South Africa

Case studies from the ILO Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) project



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Stories from tourism enterprises in South Africa.
Case studies from the ILO Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) project.

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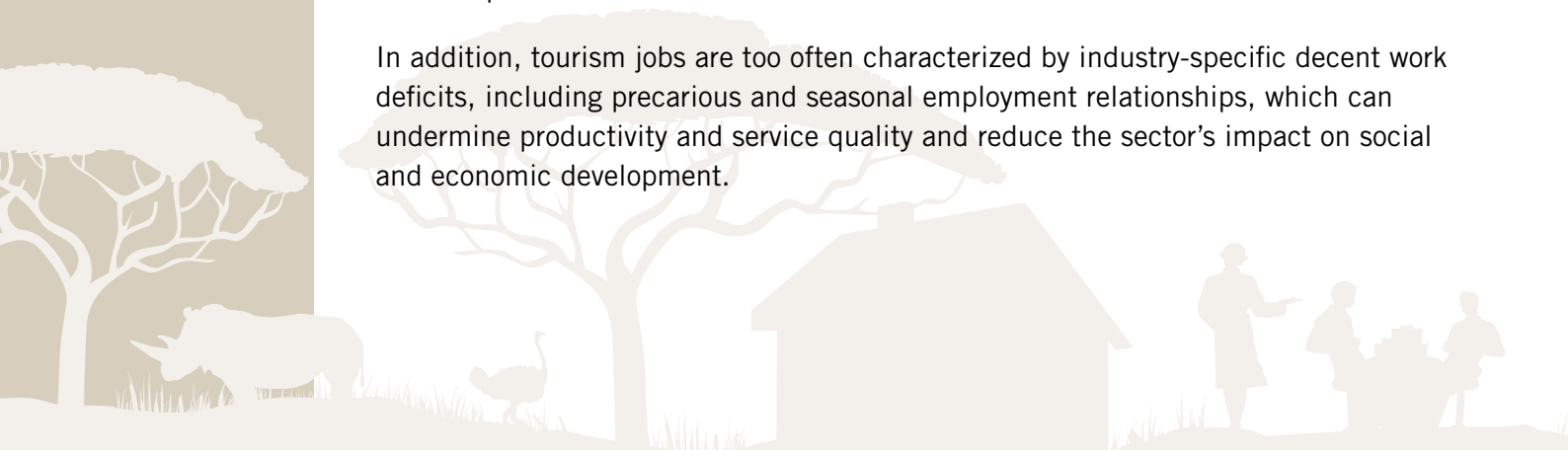
The tourism sector in South Africa

Tourism supports one out of every twelve jobs in South Africa through a variety of opportunities, including beach, wildlife, adventure, business, cultural and eco-tourism. In fact, the natural wildlife and cultural diversity have made South Africa one of the world's fastest-growing tourism destinations.

This is all good news since the tourism industry is employment-intensive, creating much-needed work opportunities for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled job-seekers. What's more, as a sector that will continue to expand in South Africa, it has the potential to provide more jobs and make an even greater contribution to the country's economy.

Unfortunately, South Africa's travel and tourism industry faces a number of challenges that must be addressed if its potential is to be fulfilled. While it may be relatively easy to start a small tourism business (if capital is available) too many of these start-ups fail to survive or grow; poor management skills and limited access to trained staff or training opportunities make it impossible for them to compete with more sophisticated international service offerings. As a result, large numbers of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises are not meeting their growth or job creation potential.

In addition, tourism jobs are too often characterized by industry-specific decent work deficits, including precarious and seasonal employment relationships, which can undermine productivity and service quality and reduce the sector's impact on social and economic development.



With these challenges in mind, the South African Government launched the National Tourism Sector Strategy (NTSS) in 2011 to ensure that the sector achieves its potential in terms of service exports, foreign exchange earnings, green transformation, job creation and social inclusion for unskilled workers, including many in rural areas and within disadvantaged populations. Tourism has been further highlighted in the New Growth Path (2011) and the National Development Plan - Vision 2030 (2012) as a priority industry for development intervention in support of broad-based wealth and job creation.

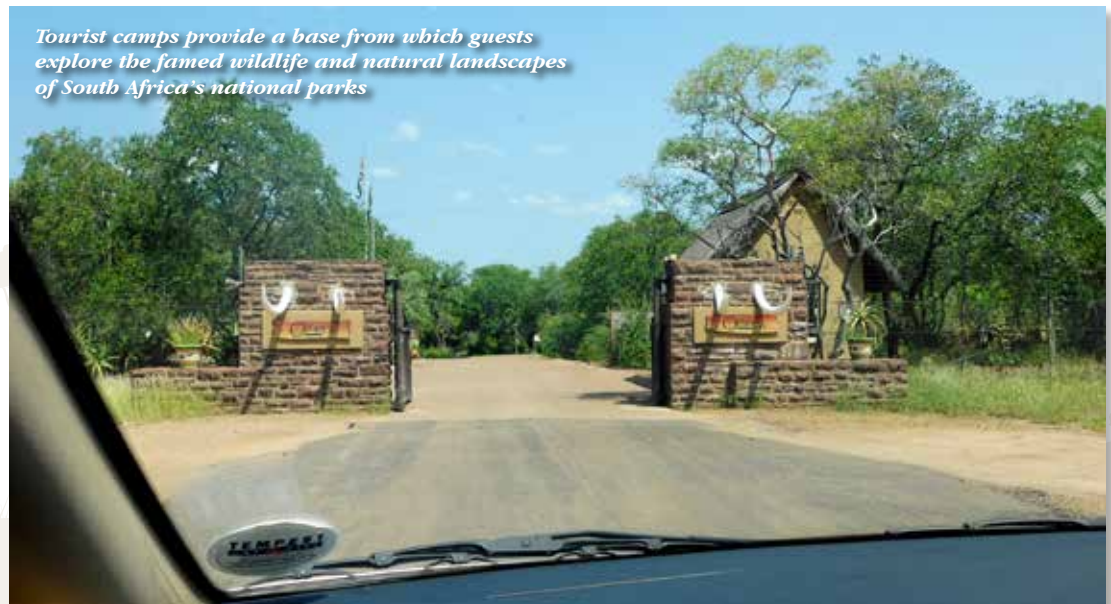
The vast open landscapes of South Africa attract tourists from around the world



The Responsible Tourism agenda

South Africa adopted the National Minimum Standard for Responsible Tourism (NMSRT) in 2011, following extensive consultations and building on the Responsible Tourism Guidelines of 2002. South Africa's National Department of Tourism emphasises that responsible tourism is about enabling local communities to enjoy a better quality of life through increased socioeconomic benefits and an improved environment while also providing better holiday experiences for guests and good business opportunities for tourism enterprises. The NMSRT is at the heart of South Africa's strategy to grow the tourism sector in a way that everyone shares the benefits that it can bring.

This standard establishes specific minimum requirements for the performance of organizations and enterprises in the tourism sector in relation to sustainability. One of the requirements is Sustainable Operations and Management, whereby the organization or enterprise must facilitate staff awareness of and training in its responsible tourism policy.





Extract from the NMSRT - Responsible Tourism Requirements

The Responsible Tourism approach in South Africa is based on and promotes the following minimum set of principles:

- a. avoid waste and overconsumption;
- b. use local resources in a sustainable manner;
- c. maintain and encourage natural, economic, social and cultural diversity;
- d. be sensitive to the host culture;
- e. involve people from the local area in the planning and decision-making;
- f. assess the environmental, social and economic impact as a prerequisite to developing tourism;
- g. ensure that people from the local area are involved in and benefit from tourism;
- h. market tourism that is responsible, and that respects the local, natural and cultural environments; and
- i. monitor the impact of tourism and ensure open disclosure of information.



SCORE Training: making responsible tourism a reality in tourism enterprises

SCORE Training was introduced in South Africa in 2009 and is fully aligned with the objectives of the NMSRT. The training was developed and continues to be implemented under a multi-country project managed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and supported by the Governments of Norway and Switzerland. The overall objective of this project in South Africa, which is now in its second phase, is to contribute to sustainable enterprise development by promoting the NMSRT and supporting the application of decent and productive workplace practices that can drive competitiveness and employment creation in SMEs (Small and medium-sized enterprises).

SCORE Training helps and motivates SMEs to meet the requirements of the NMSRT by giving employees and managers a real understanding of what responsible tourism and sustainability means in practice: what they can do to protect their environment, involve and benefit local communities, improve workplace relations and employee engagement and, importantly, grow their business as a result. It also gives guidance on governance and sustainability reporting.



*The first SCORE
Training in the Kruger
National Park*

From its initial implementation, key actors in South Africa's tourism sector have helped the ILO to shape training content and facilitate its roll out and they are continuing to promote SCORE Training outreach through their networks. In the first phase of the SCORE project partners included the National Department of Tourism and provincial tourism departments, South African National Parks (SANParks); FEDHASA, Productivity SA, the Southern African Wildlife College (SAWC); and the Southern Cross Foundation.

Experience gained through the SCORE South Africa project has confirmed learning gained by ILO in many other countries: in order to boost the productivity and competitiveness of tourism operations in a sustainable way, it is essential to build workplace cooperation within the enterprise and engage with adjacent communities or communities affected by enterprise operations. This approach ensures mutual understanding, so that everyone influenced by or having a potential influence on the enterprise feels that they have a stake in making it a success. With this in mind, SCORE is a timely partner in South African tourism, aligned with the NMSRT and helping to ensure that the impact of the NMRST brings long-term benefits.

Between 2012 and 2014, SCORE Training was rolled out in the Madikwe Game Reserve, the Amakhala Game Reserve, Kruger National Park and Maloti-Drakensberg Park and it continues to expand its reach. The programme has, so far, focused on enterprises in and around wildlife parks because of the importance of tourism and hospitality services in these areas; the sector is one of the main sources of formal employment in rural areas of South Africa and the wider sub-region (alongside agriculture and mining). However, a gradual expansion into other tourism areas and sub-sectors has commenced.

This collection of stories from tourism enterprises in South Africa illustrates the potential impact of SCORE Training through case studies from a few of the hotels and lodges that participated in the training in Maloti-Drakensberg Park (KwaZulu-Natal province) and the Kruger National Park (Limpopo province) during phase 1 of the project.

About SCORE Training

Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) is a practical training and consulting programme that improves efficiency, service quality and working conditions in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SCORE Training demonstrates best international practice in the service sector and helps SMEs to participate in global tourism supply chains.

SCORE Training focuses on the development of cooperative working relations that result in shared benefits for participating enterprises and their employees. There are five SCORE Training modules: Workplace cooperation, Community engagement and responsible tourism, Quality management, Human resource management and Occupational safety and health. In South Africa, the SCORE methodology has been carefully adapted for implementation in the tourism sector and, more specifically, in order to promote business sustainability through community engagement and the NMSRT.

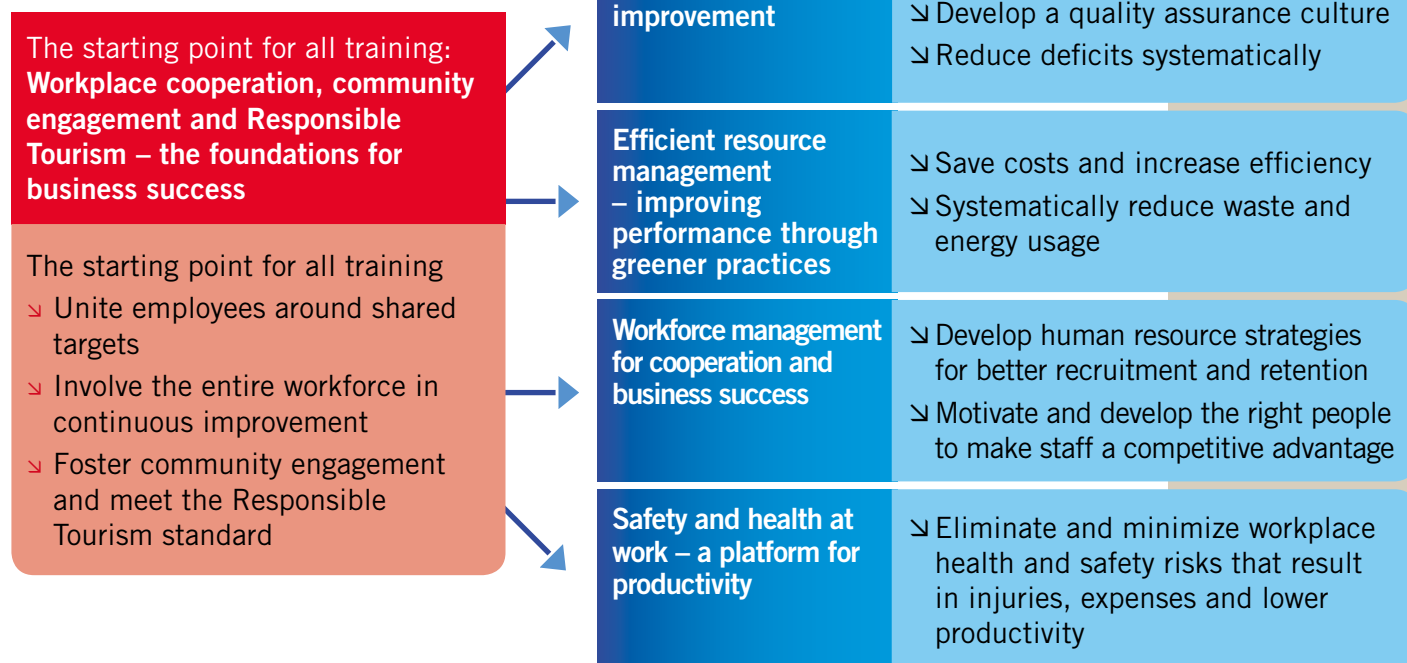
Each SCORE Training module involves two days of classroom training for managers and employees, followed by on-site consultations with industry experts that help to put the training into action in the workplace.

Figure 1: The SCORE Training process





Figure 2: SCORE Training modules

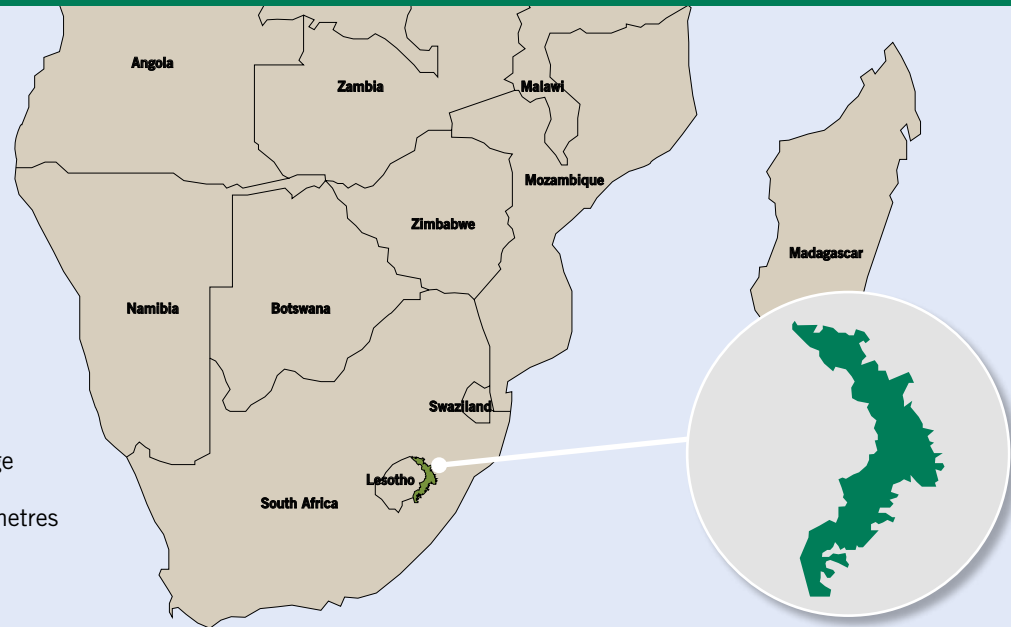




SCORE Training in the Maloti-Drakensberg World Heritage site

Maloti-Drakensberg

Became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2000 (extended in 2013).
Current size: 14,740 square kilometres

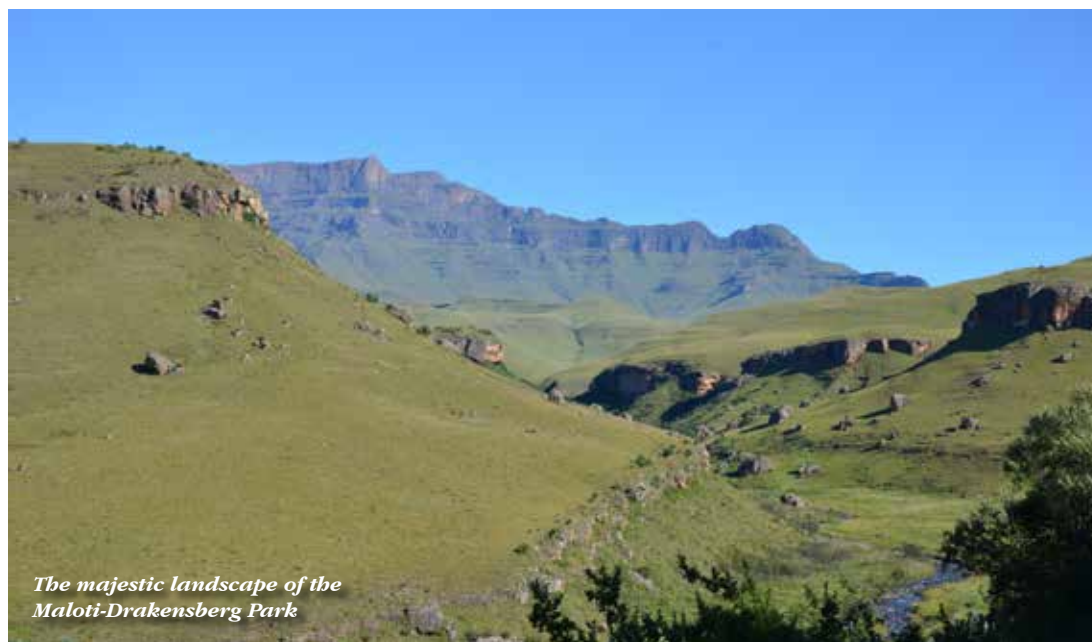


The Drakensberg mountain range forms the longest and highest range in southern Africa, stretching along the entire western boundary of KwaZulu-Natal province and spanning a distance of over 1,000 km. It also serves as South Africa's eastern border with the Kingdom of Lesotho. The region is one of South Africa's most outstanding attractions and draws thousands of visitors annually to its scenic beauty, crisp mountain air and clear waters. The Maloti-Drakensberg Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, comprises the uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park in South Africa (uKhahlamba means "Barrier of Spears") and the Sehlathebe National Park in Lesotho. Biodiversity and culture are the area's leading attractions with over 2,000 plant species and over 40,000 prehistoric Bushman rock art paintings. Craggy peaks, sandstone cliffs, waterfalls, crystal streams, rocky paths and sweeping grasslands make the Park a unique attraction for tourists.

Owing to its scenic beauty and designation as a World Heritage Site, the uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park has witnessed an increase in domestic and international tourism. Domestic tourists are particularly attracted by the wide range of outdoor activities on offer (e.g. climbing, fishing, golf and tennis), the accessibility of the park and the expanding range of tourist accommodation available there.

Tourism is, in fact, one of the main drivers of economic development in the area, with continued expansion increasingly providing opportunities for tourism businesses on the periphery of the Park, in smaller towns like Estcourt, Winterton and Bergville. This is where the SCORE Programme has been active.

SCORE Training was originally introduced in the region in 2012, after it was highlighted as a priority by the Department of Tourism. At that time, a number of local community organizations were providing services to lodges in the area with mixed results. The SCORE Training was introduced to help these organisations to cut costs and increase efficiency, thereby enabling them to participate competitively in tourism supply chains.



*The majestic landscape of the
Maloti-Drakensberg Park*

The Langalibalele Laundry story

Resilience through workplace cooperation

ENTERPRISE PROFILE

- Name:** Langalibalele Laundry
(cooperative)
- Location:** Maloti-Drakensberg Park,
KwaZulu-Natal province
- Established:** 2008
- Current size:** 14 (6 cooperative members and
8 employees); 3 of these employees
were hired following the SCORE Training
- Products:** Laundry and dry cleaning services



*Ms. Nikiwe Sithole,
Cooperative member,
Langalibalele Laundry*



*Newly organised
workspace following
SCORE Training at
Langalibalele Laundry
cooperative*



Maloti-Drakensberg

Langalibalele Laundry seemed to have everything going for it. It had benefited from financial assistance for its start-up and, later, for upgrading its equipment. It also had a steady income stream with a contract to provide laundry services to camps owned by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (the provincial nature conservation authority) in the Giant's Castle, Kamberg and Injisuthi nature reserves. Thus, despite its rural location, it was well positioned for growth and success.

However, before SCORE Training was implemented business was not good and this was an issue not only for employees, but for the wider community as well. The Laundry is located in Mahlutshini, in the Uthukela district, which shares the problems of many rural areas of South Africa: inadequate road infrastructure, limited access to basic services, low levels of economic activity and education and high unemployment. Against this backdrop, the survival and growth of rural enterprises such as the Laundry are essential as they provide a financial lifeline for families. In the case of Langalibalele Laundry, the majority of the 14 staff members have low literacy levels, but their combined income supports some 45 people.

“we definitely feel more motivated and the team spirit is stronger.”

Enterprise Improvement Team (EIT)

In SCORE, workplace cooperation is encouraged through the setting up of an EIT. This brings together a cross-section of workers and managers who then work together to identify areas for improvement in the enterprise and implement improvements.

The formation of an EIT creates a new dynamic in the enterprise. It builds communication and employee engagement, encourages the sharing

of insights and ideas, and enhances problem-solving.

Employee involvement in the EIT ensures that those that implement improvements are involved from the very beginning. They also play the important role of engaging colleagues, by seeking their suggestions and involving them in implementing improvements, to gradually build an enterprise-wide culture change.



A closer look inside the enterprise

Ms. Nikiwe Sithole, cooperative member, vividly recalls the tense atmosphere at the Laundry prior to SCORE Training. “We did not have policies and set procedures in place” she recollects, adding that they had not realized that they needed to “give attention to the basic rights of employment”. This resulted in “bad feelings” between team members and low motivation, a sad and unsustainable situation.

The pre-training SCORE baseline assessment provided early insight into the way that the business was operating. Some of the main of the challenges highlighted were:

1. Human resource management

There were no human resource management and occupational health and safety systems in place, meetings with employees were ad hoc and information-sharing was



sporadic. The business was also not fully up to date with the country's cooperative and employment legislation and thus risked losing customers, especially public sector clients that must have confidence that suppliers are fully legal compliant.

2. Workplace organization

Poor workplace organization was taking a toll on the business and all who worked there. As operational areas were not properly designated, customers frequently found themselves walking through working areas, including the laundry; this created safety issues as well as revealing the chaos behind the scenes.

The results of workplace change at Langalibalele Laundry

After the SCORE Training, a five-member EIT (Enterprise Improvement Team) immediately got to work identifying and prioritizing areas for improvement. A routine of holding weekly meetings was established with the list of on-going projects being displayed in the form of an Enterprise Improvement Plan on a board in the Laundry.



Well-marked bins, introduced by the EIT, have boosted recycling at the Laundry



The reorganisation of areas outside of the Laundry has resulted in a more efficient and pleasant working environment

Although many improvements were introduced as a result of the SCORE Training, the actions taken on the two key issues above were particularly impressive:

1. Human resource management

There has been significant progress in the approach to employee records and contracts. Now, in full compliance with the labour legislation governing cooperatives (Co-operatives Amendment Act 2013 (Act No. 6 of 2013)), all employees have appropriate contracts and there is a functioning employee record system. Policies on issues such as employment equity, annual leave, family responsibility leave, working hours and smoking have also been introduced, giving the team a sense of increased competence and professionalism, removing uncertainty and friction.

“Some of the changes are quite big, especially the new policies regarding family responsibility and sick leave, and we’ve had to spend quite a bit of time to make sure that everyone has a good grasp of how these policies work. But we know that it will make the business a better place to work and easier to manage in the long run”, says Ms. Nikiwe Sithole.

2. Workplace organization

Organization of the workplace and processes has been transformed through simple steps. Signs have been placed on doors to identify area usage and arrows direct customers to the reception area, away from the main laundry facility. The storage areas have been organized, so everything now has its place, and in public areas bins for different types of waste have been introduced, to ease recycling. Customers now get a more professional impression: a tidy reception area, screened-off working areas and altogether a more organized, safe and efficient space.

Human Resource policies are now in place and communicated to all cooperative members





Maloti-Drakensberg

Following the SCORE Training the Laundry attracted a contract to provide a local hospital with laundry services. The 6 cooperative members remain, while the number of employees has increased from 5 to 14, the additional 9 staff members were required in order to deal with increased demand.

The Laundry has opened an additional office in Estcourt to service its ever-growing clientele, and is expanding its operations having recently added a gift shop, selling locally produced items such as wood carvings at its two locations.

For Ms Nikiwe Sithole, however, it is the improvement in working relationships, particularly between members of the cooperative and its employees that really set the business on the road to becoming more resilient and sustainable. She notes, “We definitely feel more motivated and the team spirit is stronger”. She also notes that work is needed to maintain these gains: “We just have to stay committed to implementing what we learnt through the SCORE Training”.

“Some of the changes are quite big... But we know that it will make the business a better place to work and easier to manage in the long run.”



The Laundry has expanded operations, adding a gift shop that sells locally produced items such as wood carvings and local fabrics

The Antbear Guest House story

A collaborative culture for business growth

ENTERPRISE PROFILE

Name: Antbear Guest House
Location: Maloti-Drakensberg,
 KwaZulu-Natal province
Established: 2000
Current size: 16 employees
Products: Serviced guest
 accommodation and
 events venue



*Andrew & Conny Atwood,
 owners of Antbear Guest House*

Antbear Guest House is located on Fernhurst Farm, near the town of Estcourt and the uKhahlamba/Drakensberg Park in western KwaZulu-

Natal province. Owners Mr Andrew and Mrs Conny Atwood manage the business with assistance from Mr Phumlani Ndumo, Operations Manager. Antbear offers 15 accommodation units and is used as a special events venue.

As is often the case in remote rural areas, Antbear offers one of the only employment opportunities for local residents.

All 16 employees come from the local village and received hospitality training in-house. Strong relationships with the local community have been cultivated, not only by employing local people but by using funds raised through guest donations to upgrade the village and local school. Antbear has also adopted other responsible and sustainable tourism practices, such as the use of renewable energy, alien plant removal, water conservation and recycling, and organic permaculture.



Maloti-Drakensberg

“My business has definitely benefited. We’re now doing things more efficiently, there’s greater staff involvement and better customer service.”

Mr. Andrew Attwood

A closer look inside the enterprise

The owners of Antbear had always made a conscious effort to create a good working environment at Antbear and ensure high staff morale. However, before SCORE Training, most of the staff members were unsure of how the business functioned and unaware of its financial constraints and costs. The owners and manager met daily, but general staff were not involved in discussions about business dynamics; most staff members simply carried out their tasks based on daily instructions. The owners’ vision for future growth and financial sustainability was not filtering through.

Staff members were aware of the importance of good customer service and a guest comment book was used. However, other than meeting with the relevant staff members after a complaint, there was no documented service quality policy or system to ensure follow-up to guest comments. The SCORE baseline assessment revealed that both operating systems and internal communication needed improvement.

The results of workplace change at Antbear

After SCORE Training, an EIT with a rotating membership was set up. Rotation is important as, from the beginning, staff at Antbear viewed membership as a special privilege and being part of the team as a source of pride. Participation was also

What is 5S?

5S is a practical methodology, taught as part of SCORE training, which ensures improved organization and cleaning skills, promotes development and makes it easier to maintain a productive work environment. It has become the basic approach to productivity and quality improvement in all types of organizations. 5S denotes a continuous process of improvement that consists of

five stages: Sort, Set in order, Sweep, Standardize, and apply Self-discipline. Once a business achieves all five levels, it can repeatedly follow the 5S cycle to drive improvement. 5S is an excellent way of building workplace cooperation and relies on teamwork and joint problem-solving to achieve success, enhancing employee empowerment in the process.

recognised as an opportunity to build personal skills and rotation ensured all staff members could benefit from the experience. Including the business owners in the EIT helped to confirm its importance and drive the rapid implementation of improvement projects.

The enterprise improvement challenges were wide-reaching and ranged from implementation of a 5S improvement system to development of improved employment contracts. New policies, including a first-ever gender discrimination and sexual harassment policy, were also established. Although no issues relating to gender discrimination or harassment had been raised in the past, the consultative process opened up this difficult topic for the first time, raising awareness of the risks and ensuring that procedures for handling any future problems were put in place.



Maloti-Drakensberg



Lindiwe Cele, the cook at Antbear Guest House, prepares the evening meal from locally sourced produce

Before the SCORE Training, the owners and staff of Antbear were working hard but the business was not growing. and Andrew had doubts that SCORE would help. As he now says, “I really was not convinced that SCORE would have any value for my business. It took one day of training to change that view completely.”

The new understanding of how the business operates provided by SCORE Training created a sense of common purpose and individual responsibility for increasing the enterprise income and productivity. In particular:

- Improved communications on expenses meant staff members became more aware of the need to use resources efficiently and avoid wastage.
- Antbear had always been tidy, but the systems adopted after training had a noticeable positive impact on work organization.
- Improvements in attention to service quality were clear: even staff members not responsible for guest interaction began to play their part.



*Andrew Attwood with
employees Thoko Sithole
and Nomusa Ngubane
at Antbear Guest House*

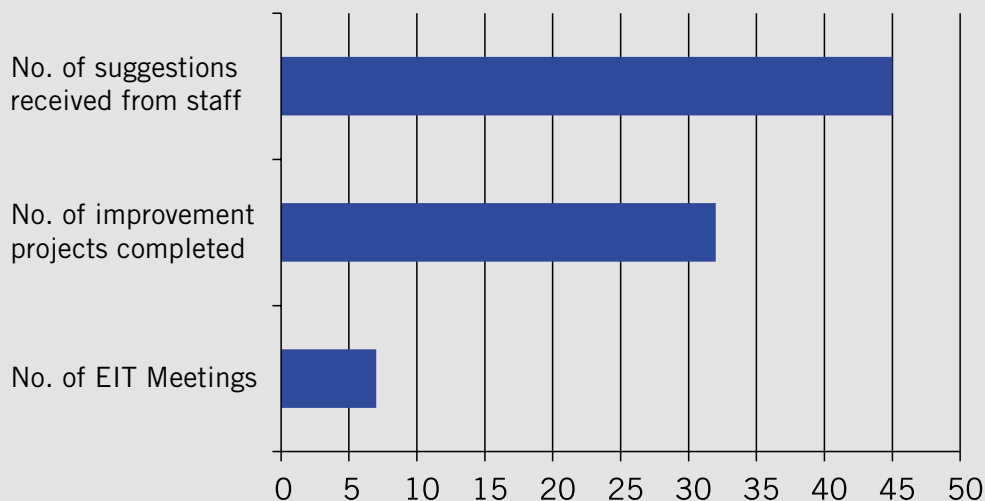
In one example of the positive impact of the training, the hotel was offered a large booking for a birthday party but could only accept it if work on a new event space was completed quickly. Aware that special events represent an important income stream and a stronger future for the enterprise, Mr Paulos Sithole, a maintenance employee at Antbear Guest House, suggested that staff could work overtime to get the job done. Everyone agreed and the new event space was ready in time for the party. In the process, staff members demonstrated new flexibility by taking on tasks outside their normal operational areas and working as a team. When the day of the event arrived, all of them joined in hosting it, showing a real spirit of cohesiveness and pride.

According to Mr Paulos Sithole, “When I heard that we had an opportunity to take a booking for a large group, it simply made sense to me that we should do everything possible to get the additional room ready. I spoke to Andrew and suggested that we could work over the weekend. We finished a job that would normally take two weeks within four days. Afterwards, we were all tired but really satisfied with what we had achieved”.



Maloti-Drakensberg

Improvement project data for the first 3 months of SCORE implementation at Antbear Guesthouse



Following Module 1 of SCORE Training - Workplace cooperation:

- Daily employee-management meetings were implemented.
- An Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS) and 5S were integrated into the culture.
- Cost savings were achieved through more efficient use of resources and reduced waste.

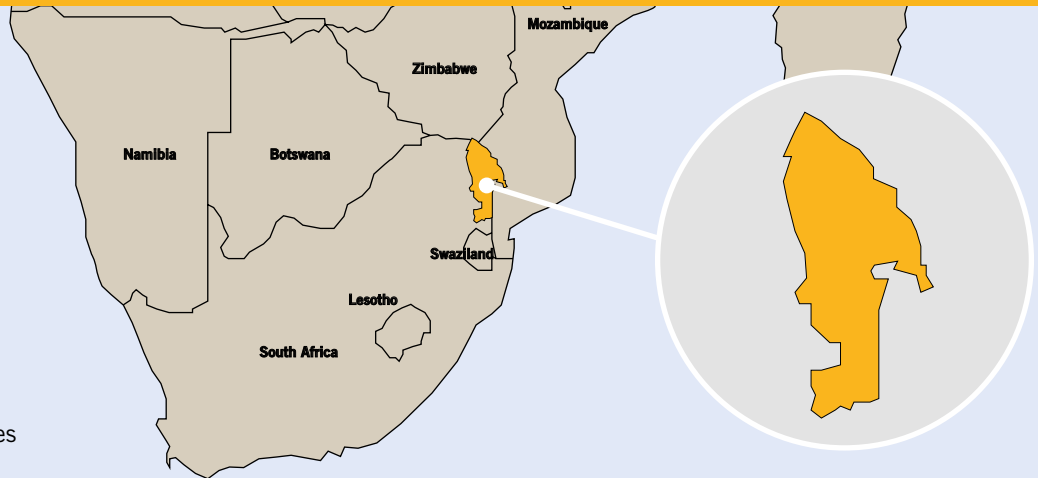


SCORE Training in the heartland: Kruger National Park and SANParks

Kruger National Park

Established: 1926

Current size: 19,633 square kilometres



Kruger National Park is one of the largest game reserves in Africa, covering almost 2 million hectares across the provinces of Limpopo and Mpumalanga in north-eastern South Africa. It attracts large numbers of domestic and international visitors every year and generates significant amounts of employment and revenue in a rural and relatively poor part of the country.

The Park was first protected by the Government in 1828. It became South Africa's first national park in 1926 and has since been included in the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere, an area designated as part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and Biosphere Programme.

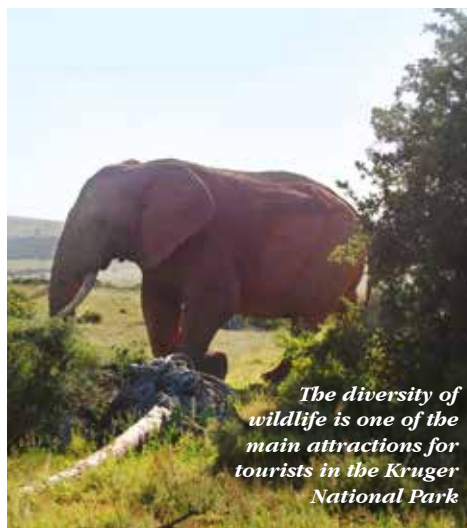
SANParks is the custodian of the country's network of 22 national parks, of which Kruger is the largest and oldest as well as the flagship. Its primary mandate is to conserve, protect, control and manage national parks and other defined protected areas and their biodiversity. It also operates a system of tourist camps with various types of accommodation and nature-based activities. The tourism pillar of SANParks is an essential supplement to government seed funding of conservation management as it makes up 63 per cent of revenue.

The majority of SANParks tourist accommodation is found in Kruger National Park, which also generates a large percentage of the organization's tourism income as it receives 4.5 million visitors a year. The Park not only boasts a wide variety of wildlife and ecosystems, but also employs 2,200 staff members at its 17 camps (12 main rest camps and five bush camps). These camps bring direct or indirect benefits to the 300,000 to 500,000 people who live in the Park and the surrounding communities.

The natural setting of the SANParks camps gives the organization a strong competitive edge. However, SANParks tourism operations in the Park must compete not only with other international destinations, but also with other national parks and private sector tourism operations for visitors and income. Guest satisfaction is a key metric for the business and, since many visitors are environmentally and socially conscious, the Park needs to deliver a world-class guest experience in a sustainable manner to satisfy customer demands.

Various initiatives have been taken with a view to improving both service quality and sustainability, including the introduction of annual achievement awards through which SANParks camps compete for national honours such as Camp of the Year and Bush Camp of the Year. The judging criteria include tidiness, guest compliments and complaints, implementation of management systems, financial performance and management, and policy compliance.

However, in 2012 SANParks recognized that, in order to better meet its challenges, its employees and managers needed to develop a shared vision of service excellence and responsible tourism practices and a shared drive to deliver them continuously. This realization led it to look for ways to encourage responsible workplace practices and create a healthy and productive working environment and a sustainable and competitive tourism service in the Kruger camps through the implementation of SCORE Training.



Stories from the Nxanatseni camps

Setting the house in order

ENTERPRISE PROFILE

- Name:** Letaba Rest Camp and Olifants Rest Camp
- Location:** Kruger National Park – Nxanatseni / Northern Region
- Established:** Olifants Rest Camp rebuilt 1962 Letaba Rest Camp 1936
- Products:** Tourist accommodation, activities (game drives, game walks, bush braais), restaurant and filling station



The natural setting of the SANParks camps within the Kruger Park gives the organization a unique selling proposition; however, getting the basics right has not always been easy. When SCORE pre-training enterprise assessments took place in the Nxanatseni or northern region of the Park, seven camps were struggling in ways that management had been unable to tackle, so began SCORE Training in 2012 with Module 1. This story recounts the experience at two of these camps: Letaba Rest Camp and Olifants Rest Camp.

Mr Martin Mmako, Duty Manager at Letaba Rest Camp, recalls that, prior to SCORE Training, chaos reigned in the Camp's storage areas. Small spaces overflowed with unlabelled boxes, maintenance storage yards were cluttered with obsolete equipment and linens were piled haphazardly on shelves in housekeeping cupboards, leading to an inefficient use of staff time.



Kruger National Park

“This programme gives staff the power to manage their own working space, which keeps them motivated and gives them skills that they can apply in their private lives.”

Ms. Mpho Mudau
Hospitality
Services Manager,
Letaba Rest Camp



Mr Martin Mmako recalls the electric storeroom in particular: “That storeroom was a complete mess before 5S. One of the problems was that we did not separate spent and new light bulbs. Many times one of the maintenance team would go to a guest chalet to replace a blown light bulb, only to find that the one he’d taken off the shelf was also blown. He’d then have to come all the way back to the storeroom to fetch a new one”.

The general lack of organization was having an impact across the lodges, and an impact on business performance; inadequate stock control often resulted in duplicate items being ordered or stock not being ordered in a timely manner, adding to costs and affecting service. Guests who saw behind the scenes or experienced poor service were left with a bad impression of the Camps.

Results of workplace change in the Nxanatseni camps

Within two months of the Module 1 SCORE Training and the baseline assessment, 5S had been successfully applied in all three of the Camps. Obsolete items were discarded, stock reorganized and shelves labelled, transforming the previously messy linen rooms and other storage areas.

Immediately after the training, the staff began to apply the principles taught in the classroom workshop. The trainees got straight to work by encouraging their colleagues to form Enterprise Improvement Teams (EITs), report any problems identified and share ideas for workplace improvements. The EITs at each camp went on to implement a range of improvements that would still be visible 12 months after the training.

Mr Sylvester Ndlovu of Olifants Rest Camp is one of many employees who feel pride in the changes made: “I’m very proud of my tidy and organized maintenance storeroom”. Neat stacks of air conditioners are ready to be fetched by Skukuza for disposal (a recycling system where items are either donated or sold):

“Previously, we would have thrown them on a heap in a corner somewhere – nobody would know that they were obsolete as they stayed on the asset register”. Mr Sylvester Ndlovu also notes that the process of “tidying” led to improvements in record-keeping, helping to boost service levels and save the staff time, and improved safety by reducing the risk of tripping injuries and back strain inherent in poor storage and retrieval systems.





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“I have no doubt that the changes we implemented as a result of SCORE Training gave us the winning edge over other camps in the 2012 Camp of the Year contest.”

Mr David Magagula,
Duty Manager,
Olifants Rest
Camp



The EIT added signage to work areas in Olipbants, as shown here, to avoid guests wondering into them by mistake.



At Olifants, retrieving housekeeping items was speeded up through improved storage layout and labelling

Unsurprisingly, all of these changes had a positive impact on staff morale, motivation and job satisfaction. The new fresh and tidy facilities inspired them to pay more attention to their personal appearance in the realization that this contributes to the guests' experience.

SCORE Training in the three Nxanatseni camps paid off for both employees and businesses. Daily employee-management meetings were established and an Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS) was implemented. The employees benefitted from safer and healthier working spaces and improved workplace satisfaction and motivation while productivity and guest service also improved. At Olifants Rest Camp alone, 13 Enterprise Improvement Projects were completed in the first 3 months including implementation of 5S across house-keeping store rooms, maintenance workshop, managers office and front reception, and energy consumption fell by 7 per cent. The camp even went on to win the ultimate accolade: Camp of the Year 2012 award. The trophy has a place of honour in the reception area and serves as a constant reminder of the teamwork that led to key improvements at the Camp.

The Shimuwini Bushveld Camp story

The power of suggestions

ENTERPRISE PROFILE

Name: Shimuwini Bushveld Camp
Location: Kruger National Park
Established: 1991
Current size: 12 permanent staff members 15 units, 77 beds
Products: Tourist accommodation and activities
 such as game drives and walks



*Ms. Portia Ndlovu,
Duty Manager,
Shimuwini
Bushveld Camp*

Located in an isolated spot in the northern Nxanatseni region, Shimuwini Bushveld Camp is one of the smallest camps in Kruger Park. Typically employees are accommodated in staff villages in the camps, rather than the towns and villages outside the Park boundaries. Although practical, this also poses problems. For example, as the Shimuwini Bushveld Camp is located in a remote area, staff members may have problems accessing general services, including medical treatment and basic necessities (e.g. fresh vegetables).

When he joined the SCORE programme in 2012, Mr Christo Knox, Camp Manager, wanted to address a major challenge from the business perspective: a regular stream of guest complaints about the quality of service. At the time, he did not realize that the issue of staff living and working conditions was a significant one or that it had any bearing on the quality of service.

Aided by SCORE trainers, he and his team gained new insights and were soon able to bring about positive changes to benefit all.

After receiving training on SCORE Module 1, Mr Christo Knox led the formation of an EIT team composed of ten staff members, three of whom had joined the SCORE classroom training, so had a fresh understanding of the importance of workplace cooperation principles for enterprise improvement.



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The EIT meetings became Shimuwini's first official forum for employees to express their common concerns. The staff had several long-standing problems that had been raised previously by individuals but had not been addressed collectively. Armed with new skills gained through SCORE Training, the EIT members carried out a full analysis to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) faced by the Camp. At the same time, they introduced an Employee Suggestion Scheme (ESS) that encouraged staff to "write down the important things that needed to be addressed", anonymously if they wished.

Through this combination of approaches, three major issues affecting employees came to the fore:

- **Fresh produce availability**

Shopping trips were only possible twice a month, so employees often had to go without fresh vegetables. This was a cost and health issue that also affected their quality of life.

- **Access to medical services**

Employees had to travel a considerable distance for medical attention. This created a sense of resentment, resulted in unplanned absences for simple medical concerns and led to delays in getting treatment that prolonged sick leave.

- **Personal laundry facilities**

A lack of proper washing basins meant that laundry had to be done in plastic containers, making the task harder and creating problems with wastewater disposal.



Shimuwini Bushveld Camp

“ The greatest challenge we came across while establishing the suggestion box was that some of the employees couldn't write. They were so motivated... they got help with writing their suggestions down.”

Ms. Portia Ndlovu,
Duty Manager

Solutions to all of these problems were found, approved and implemented as a direct result of the work of the EIT and the suggestions that it received from staff members:

- To ensure a supply of fresh produce, it was proposed that the Camp provide a modest budget to buy seeds for a vegetable garden. The garden was successfully established and meets the needs of the staff and is largely self-sustaining. Moreover, its success inspired the creation of another green space: a formerly dusty courtyard in the staff village now boasts a manicured lawn, providing a much-needed “green lung” that has a soothing and cooling effect on this common living space.





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- Regarding access to health care, a staff member suggested that a mobile clinic that visited other camps on a monthly basis should add Shimuwini to its stops. It was determined that this would be possible if the Camp provided a space for consultations with the doctor. As a result, Shimuwini management undertook to construct a new private room for clinic visits in the future.
- In order to remedy the inadequate personal laundry facilities, cement washing basins were installed in the staff village, resolving the problem at very low cost.



A total of 5 improvement projects were implemented in the first month after SCORE Training. Staff morale, motivation and job satisfaction all improved. The new fresh and tidy facilities inspired them to pay more attention to their personal appearance in the realization that this contributes to the guests' experience. "It feels good to work in an organized space", explains Ms. Portia Ndlovu.



The EIT and its activities have encouraged the development of a new culture of collaboration and trust, and the many changes have been implemented based on employee suggestions, have been mostly cost-free or at low-cost. The Camp has become smarter with the introduction of 5S across the camp, service quality is up and guest complaints are down (management estimate a reduction of 70 per cent). Everyone at Shimuwini Bushveld Camp is working together with high hopes of holding on to the coveted title of Bush Camp of the Year for some time to come.

The Satara Rest Camp story

Small changes with an environmental impact

ENTERPRISE PROFILE

Name: Satara Rest Camp
Location: Kruger National Park
Established: 1898
Current size: 68 full-time staff, 12 casual employees
Products: Accommodation, restaurant, activities (game drives, bush walks), petrol station, car wash



*Mr Ezrom Mathumbu,
Hospitality Services
Manager;
Satara Rest Camp*

Satara Rest Camp is one of the largest and most popular camps in Kruger National Park. With an average annual occupancy level of 85 per cent and 68 fulltime employees, Satara is also one of the Park's most complex camps to manage. Operational complexities have often resulted in high numbers of guest complaints, however, following SCORE Training, the Camp's EIT, which comprises five employees and four managers, was able to identify and implement a number of significant improvement projects to improve the running of the camp.

Re-establishing the Bird Sanctuary

The Satara Bird Sanctuary used to be a very special environmental feature that was enjoyed by both young and older visitors to the Camp. Over a few years, however, it had become rundown due to neglect. A broken water reticulation pump compounded the problem and the Sanctuary became a breeding place for mosquitoes.



*The Bird
Sanctuary has
once again
become the key
feature of Satara*



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“ [The establishment of the EIT has] created a winning spirit and ensured that information flows through all departments and that they all work together as a team.”

Mr Ezrom Mathumbu



Employee with the laundry storage at Satara Rest Camp

Following the SCORE classroom training, the Satara EIT identified renovation of the Sanctuary as one of its priority projects and started immediately with a major site clean-up. However, the lack of funds for a replacement reticulation pump was a challenge. During a later EIT meeting, one of the members suggested that

the team approach an honorary ranger who had, in the past, supported the Camp with projects that exceeded the camp's budget. The ranger agreed not only to buy the required pump, but also to plant new trees in and around the Sanctuary. Thanks to this kind donation and the efforts of the EIT, the Bird Sanctuary became once again a key feature of Satara, making a significant contribution to the aesthetics of the Camp.

Curbing water wastage in the car wash facility

An important goal of SANParks' People and Conservation Programme is to empower local communities through conservation education and economic development – In line with this goal, Kruger National Park has given community members an opportunity to operate car wash facilities in various camps.

Owing to Satara Rest Camp's size and popularity, its car wash is used by many visitors on a daily basis. Although the facility was built with a drainage system, this system proved to be inadequate and led to water spilling out and being wasted. The EIT members identified this as another project to be tackled and, after consulting with the Camp Maintenance Team, the EIT proposed the introduction of a drainage system that would recycle runoff water and so it could be used to water the gardens in the Camp.

As installing a new drainage system would involve some costs, the EIT requested assistance from the Satara Camp management. In doing so, they not only brought to managers' notice the problem at Satara but also drew their attention to the fact that this problem was likely to exist in other camps. This, in turn, led managers to



request an assessment of water usage by all car wash facilities in the Park, after which remedial action will be taken at all facilities. Of course, the EIT members were extremely pleased to know that this initiative started by Satara will improve the environmental impact of activities in Kruger National Park as a whole and ensure that it continues to meet both the minimum requirements of the Park and the National Minimum Standards for Responsible Tourism.

Improving teamwork and communication

The Satara EIT has already made a huge contribution to improved communication between management and staff at the Camp, as well as between Satara and other camps in the Park, and will continue to do so.

According to Satara's Hospitality Services Manager, Mr Ezrom Mathumbu, the establishment of the EIT has "created a winning spirit and ensured that information flows through all departments and that they all work together as a team". The EIT reports on the progress of each improvement project during staff meetings and, to ensure that all departments receive adequate training and support with improvement



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projects, Satara has awarded one of its interns, Ms. Adillah Mashele, the title of “Ms SCORE”, making her responsible for coordinating improvement activities and reporting to the EIT and the Hospitality Services Manager on a regular basis.

Future projects

As a result of its successes, the Satara Rest Camp EIT members are highly motivated to implement additional improvement projects. At the time of writing, they are designing new improvement projects with the aim of reducing unplanned staff absences and improving the scheduling of time off (especially around payday). These projects will play an important role in preventing or reducing guest complaints relating to staff shortages.

Customer care register



EIT Meeting in full swing at Satara's Rest Camp



SCORE results achieved with the support of South African tourism partners



Employees from a participating camp receive an award from the ILO at a Kruger National Park knowledge sharing event (November 2013)

Building success stories together

SCORE in South Africa (to June 2015)

- 58 SMEs trained
- 243 SME staff members trained
- 1601 SME employees benefited

All participating enterprises recorded significant improvement in employee-manager dialogue and workplace communication:

- 58% introduced daily meetings (from a baseline of 27%, bringing the total to 85%)
- 85% adopted the 5S approach to routine sorting and maintenance (from baseline of 9%, bringing the total to 94%)
- 12% increased wages
- 33% reported direct cost savings

“ The ILO SCORE Training is in line with government priorities to support sustainable growth in the tourism sector, by addressing decent work deficits and helping tourism businesses to comply with the National Standards on Responsible Tourism so that they can grow and contribute to the prosperity of the communities they operate in.

We are pleased to have collaborated in the piloting of the SCORE programme in South Africa and to its continued implementation.”

Mr Bekithemba Langalibalele,

NDT Director of Responsible Tourism



SCORE in South Africa:

- supports the development of sustainable tourism enterprises and addresses the needs of local communities
- partners with South African organizations in tourism development
- promotes better working conditions to improve service and competitiveness
- is consciously aligned with South Africa's National Tourism Sector Strategy and the National Responsible Tourism Standards

More Partner Testimonials

“For us the SCORE Training is perfect as it focuses on the development of responsible tourism practices and will certainly help us to meet the Government's Responsible Tourism Standards. SCORE is helping our accommodation providers to become more responsible and sustainable, for the benefit of visitors and local communities.”



Mr Mandla Magagula,
uMhlathuze Community Tourism Organization

“Twelve of our camps have taken SCORE Training and have reported many improvements, including improved communication, better organization and improved service quality.”



Mr Jabulani Nkosi,
General Manager for Human Resources,
Kruger National Park

“ [The SCORE Training course has an] extremely good structure. It is easy for participants to understand and is practice-oriented; there is always positive feedback from all of the enterprises.”

Mrs Doris Worfel,
CEO, Southern Cross Foundation



“ FEDHASA is very supportive of SCORE Training because we have seen the positive impact it has on our member enterprises. The SCORE approach ensures that the learning is put into practice for long-term benefits.”

Mr Caleb Mabaso,
Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa
(FEDHASA) representative

“ The umhlathuze municipality has a forward-looking agenda to develop tourism in the area and the delivery of SCORE Training is part of this strategy. The hotels that have taken part have been really impressed with the training and we hope to expand this partnership with SCORE.”

Mr Sipho Mchunu,
uMhlathuze municipality





Interested in joining or supporting SCORE Training?

Services and contact information

There are five SCORE modules; Workplace cooperation, community engagement and responsible tourism; Quality – managing continuous improvement, Efficient resource management – improving performance through greener practices, Workforce management for cooperation and business success, Safety and health at work – a platform for productivity. Each module includes:

- **A half-day baseline assessment:**
An enterprise visit by a trainer to discuss and assess service quality, human resources and occupational safety and health challenges.
- **A two-day classroom workshop:**
An interactive training workshop for two managers and two employees from each enterprise to develop action plans. Up to five enterprises participate in each workshop in order to provide a dynamic training environment of knowledge-sharing and experience exchange.
- **Three enterprise visits:** Post-classroom training consultancy visits by a trainer to help the enterprises implement their action plans.

Classroom training and all enterprise visits are conducted by certified SCORE trainers with several years of business experience, including specialized knowledge of the tourism sector in areas such as business sustainability through community engagement and responsible tourism.

Training fees vary according to location.

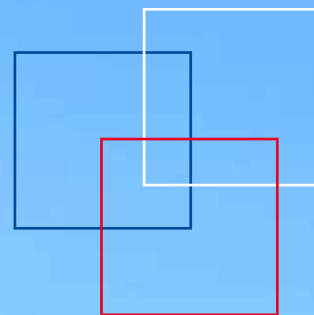
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