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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

RESIDENTS' EXPERIENCES WITH TOURISM AS A LIVELIHOOD  
STRATEGY IN WLI, GHANA

BY

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of the Faculty of Social Sciences, College of Humanities and Legal Studies,  
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award of Doctor of Philosophy degree in Tourism Management

MAY 2018

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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### Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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## ABSTRACT

The role of tourism in rural livelihood enhancement continues to be a subject of debate among academia and practitioners. This study delves into this debate by assessing the experiences of residents who have adopted tourism as livelihood strategy in Wli, Ghana within the context of the sustainable livelihood approach. A case study design with a qualitative approach was adopted for the study. Data was obtained from 38 study participants between November and December 2016. Twenty-seven (27) of them were engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in the community and the remaining eleven (11) were representatives of institutions/organisations involved in tourism governance in Wli. Findings from the study showed that tourism has provided livelihood diversification opportunities for residents in the community especially in the areas of accommodation and food and beverage operations, guiding services and souvenir trade. The nature of the tourism-related livelihood activities enabled the residents to transfer their existing skills and knowledge. Furthermore, it emerged that these opportunities have positively contributed towards the achievement of residents' livelihood objectives. Nevertheless, there was weak institutional support for tourism-related livelihood activities in the community. In addition, there were challenges with access to credit and unhealthy competition and mistrust among tourism enterprises. The study therefore recommends that the Hohoe Municipal Assembly, the Ghana Tourism Authority, community level institutions and other relevant stakeholders provide more support for tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli in order to strengthen tourism's effectiveness as a livelihood strategy in the community.

**KEY WORDS**

Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary

Experiences

Ghana

Rural Livelihoods

Tourism Enterprises

Wli

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**DEDICATION**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

|          |                                                          |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| DFID     | Department for International Development                 |
| EQUATION | Equitable Tourism Options                                |
| GTA      | Ghana Tourism Authority                                  |
| GSS      | Ghana Statistical Service                                |
| HMA      | Hohoe Municipal Assembly                                 |
| HOTCATT  | Hotel, Catering & Tourism Training Institute             |
| NCRC     | Nature Conservation Research Centre                      |
| IDI      | In-Depth Interview                                       |
| ILO      | International Labour Organization                        |
| IMF      | International Monetary Fund                              |
| IPCC     | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                |
| MDGs     | Millennium Development Goals                             |
| OECD     | Organization for Economic Cooperation and<br>Development |
| PHC      | Population and Housing Census                            |
| SDGs     | Sustainable Development Goals                            |
| OSLF     | Sustainable Livelihood Framework                         |
| SLFT     | Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism             |
| SRLF     | Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework                   |
| TMT      | Tourism Management Team                                  |
| USAID    | United States Agency for International Development       |
| UN       | United Nations                                           |
| UNEP     | United Nations Environment Programme                     |
| UNWTO    | United Nations World Tourism Organisation                |

WHO

World Health Organisation

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background to the Study**

Rural livelihoods have been prominent on the development agenda since the 1950s and continue to remain a global concern in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (De Hann & Zoomers, 2005; Scoones, 2009; The World Bank, 2018). This is because rural dwellers are bedevilled with a number of challenges which limits their ability to make economic, social or political progress. Overtime, the forces of globalisation, technological advancements and industrialisation have gradually altered the economic, environmental, social and political positions of rural areas (Lane, 1994).

Agriculture-related activities in rural areas have been on a decline globally. Farm incomes have fallen, food insecurity threats have increased and the increasing out-migration of the youth has contributed to the fragility of rural economies (Bock, 2016; Lane, 1994; Liu, 2006). Again, the poverty levels in rural areas are high. Many rural dwellers have limited access to the basic necessities of life such as education, healthcare, potable water and sanitation, housing, transport and communication (Khan, 2001; Olinto, Beegle, Sobrado & Uematsu, 2013). The fact that an estimated 78% of the global poor are located in rural areas (Olinto et al, 2013) further accentuates the need for conscious efforts toward improving the lives of rural dwellers.

Over the years, developmental efforts geared toward enhancing rural livelihoods have largely not been successful (De Hann & Zoomers, 2005; Scoones, 2009). The World Bank's (2015) estimated figure of a little over one

billion people, representing about 14.5% of the world's population, still living on less than one dollar a day is an attestation of the situation. De Haan and Zoomers (2005) argue that unless development efforts or interventions are tailored to meaningfully meet the needs, priorities and aspirations of rural dwellers, rural livelihood enhancement progress will remain slow.

Since the early 1990s, livelihood approaches have been strongly advocated for (Chambers & Conway, 1992; De Haan & Zoomers, 2005, Ellis, 1998; Scoones, 1998; 2009; 2015) as being more effective in dealing with the challenges confronting rural dwellers. These approaches place a lot of emphasis on understanding how rural dwellers make their living. This is with the hope that, the understanding gained will serve as a guide in aligning strategies or interventions with rural needs, priorities and conditions.

In reality, how rural dwellers make their living is a complex phenomenon. According to Ellis (2000), rural livelihoods are formed based on the interaction between people's assets (financial, social, natural, physical, human), capabilities, activities, institutions, processes and risks within their environments. Scoones (2009) equates it to a system which operates on an input-process-output-outcome basis. To him, people's assets and capabilities serve as inputs which determine the type of activities including tourism (outputs) they engage in to make a living (outcomes). The outputs then lead to a number of outcomes which could take on an economical or non-economical dimension such as improved well-being, increased income or sustainability of natural resources.

Over the last three decades, tourism has gained renewed recognition in the global development discourse as a favoured rural development strategy. The

United Nations World Tourism Organisation [UNWTO] (1980, p.1) in the Manila Declaration on tourism averred that:

*world tourism can contribute to the establishment of a new international economic order that will help eliminate the widening economic gap between developed and developing countries and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social development and progress, in particular in developing countries.*

Several international development agencies including the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa have built strategies around tourism (Boakye, Otibo & Frempong, 2013).

According to Gerosa (2003 as cited in Mitchell & Ashley, 2010), tourism has been recommended as a strategy in over 80 per cent of African Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) papers. The United Nations General Assembly in its new 2015-2030 developmental agenda - Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - mapped out tourism as a key strategy for poverty reduction and creation of decent jobs for improved livelihoods (UNWTO, 2015). Indeed, for many developing countries, tourism is considered as “manna from heaven” (Erbes, 1973), or a “last resort” economic activity where development alternatives are limited (Page, Brunt, Bushy & Connell, 2001). In Ghana’s recent National Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027), tourism has been identified as one of the engines for growth and development: an important

sector with the potential of contributing to employment creation and poverty reduction (Ministry of Tourism, 2013).

A number of reasons have been advanced in the literature to justify tourism's suitability as a rural development strategy (Ashley, 2000; Ashley & Roe, 1998; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). First of all, tourism is posited as a potential alternative source of income for rural dwellers. According to Ashley (2000), tourism generates four types of cash income for rural dwellers namely wages from direct tourism employment such as cooks, income from indirect tourism employment (through the provision of support services such as farm produce), profit from individually owned tourism enterprises (home stays) and income from community-based tourism enterprises.

Furthermore, because there are different sub-sectors (accommodation, food and beverages, transportation, travel intermediary, attractions, and ancillary service providers) involved in delivering the tourism product, more opportunities exist for tourism to have linkages throughout the local economy (Rickard & Carmichael, 1995; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). For example, Telfer and Wall (2000) reported that the Indonesian hotel industry's heavy reliance on local food producers for their food supplies has contributed to the expansion of the local farming industry. Such an initiative will consequently lead to the expansion of these local enterprises, a situation which is economically desirable.

Again, comparatively, tourism development requires a low start-up capital as against other products in the manufacturing industry. For instance, the majority of the rural attractions are based on natural resources which are basically free and are at the disposal of rural dwellers to use as they desire (Jenkins, 1991). This, therefore, makes it less expensive and more attractive for

rural communities to consider tourism as a development option. Coupled with that, rural communities considering embarking on tourism as an international trade do not have to deal with quotas and tariffs which are often placed on international trades. Hence, as put out by Sharpley and Telfer (2015, p.12), “(rural) destinations can attract as many tourists as they wish, from where they wish” once they have the capacity to sufficiently cater for them.

Since most developing countries’ attractions are rural based (Holland, Burian & Dixey, 2003), it is logical to consider tourism as a feasible rural development option. However, as pointed out by Boakye, Otibo and Frempong (2013), tourism can be equated to a coin with two sides. Even though it has the potential to be an agent of development as earlier discussed, it can also become a conduit of underdevelopment, threatening the very livelihoods of the people it seeks to improve.

The displacement of rural communities to pave way for tourism development and the risks posed to their livelihoods has been well chronicled in the literature. The displacement of rural dwellers for tourism development in Kenya and Tanzania are not isolated cases (Goldman, 2011; Ogutu, 2002; Sirima & Backman, 2013). In the case of the Island of Langkawi in Malaysia, tourism development led to the disintegration of communities and a loss of livelihood for many (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). Also, in the Philippines, Knudsen (2008) documented cases of forced eviction of local coastal residents to make way for tourism development along the coasts.

Closely related to this issue is the restrictions placed on rural communities’ access to resources on their lands. Several of such incidents have been reported in Ghana (Akyeampong, 2011; Eshun, 2011), Kenya (Campbell,

Gichohi, Mwangi & Chege, 2000), Maldives (Robinson, 2001), Nepal (Mathieson & Wall, 1982), and Gambia (Dieke, 1993).

These differing effects of tourism on rural livelihoods are indicative of the complexities inherent in the utilisation of tourism in enhancing rural livelihoods. As posited by Mihalic (2015), one can better understand and appreciate tourism's developmental potentials if the context within which they are occurring is considered. This is because the tourism development process is shaped by economic, cultural, social, environmental and political conditions, both at the local and global levels which these rural communities have no control over (Sharpley & Telfer, 2015) and hence respond differently to them. Nonetheless, globally, tourism remains an attractive rural livelihood option for many communities (e.g. Dedeke, 2017; Liu, 2006; Snyman, 2012).

Based on the discussions so far, it can be concluded that the relationship between tourism and rural livelihoods is not one-dimensional. The mere introduction of tourism into rural areas is not enough to bring about livelihood enhancement. The enhancement is also contingent upon how these livelihoods are constructed around tourism to take advantage of the opportunities it offers (Mohamed, 2013; Shen, 2009; Tao, 2006). Since research (e.g. Ellis & Freeman, 2005; Hussein & Nelson, 1998) has established that rural livelihoods are multifaceted in nature, studies including this one cannot ignore examining the role and influence of the various facets of the livelihood system in relation to tourism.

Studies including Akyeampong (2011), Ashley (2000), Shinde (2010) and Tosun (1999) have established linkages between the availability and access to wide range of livelihood assets and rural dwellers' engagement in direct and

indirect tourism-related livelihood activities. Livelihood assets including financial (loans, savings, jewellery), human (skills, knowledge, education, good health), social (associations, networks, power, authority), natural (water bodies, landscapes, wildlife) and physical (buildings, vehicles, motor cycles, boats) have been documented.

Related to the interrelations between the various facets of a livelihood system is the issue of the influence of institutional processes and structures on tourism activities and outcomes. These institutional processes and structures are represented by organizations, policies and legislation which exist both at the macro and micro levels. According to Department For International Development [DFID] (1999) and Hobley and Shields (2000), these structures mainly regulate access to assets and invariably affect livelihood outcomes. To Hobley and Shields (2000), the livelihood opportunities available to individuals are highly conditioned by the institutional environment in which they operate. Documented evidence to this effect had been reported by Ahebwa (2012) in Uganda, Equitable Tourism Options [EQUATION] (2010) in India, Eshun (2011) in Ghana and Telfer and Sharpley (2008) in Mexico.

Beyond that, tourism related livelihoods are vulnerable to a wide range of shocks and stressors (climate change, seasonality, health scares, natural disasters, conflicts, and economic recessions) which can and do threaten their sustainability. Findings from the literature suggest that the economic, social, cultural and political context within which tourism-related rural livelihoods are formed increases their vulnerability to these threats as well as the effectiveness of their adaptive capacities (Dieke, 2005; Tosun, 1999). Tourism-related rural livelihoods are constantly being confronted with the challenges of access to

credit, inadequate skills and knowledge, adequate tourist services and facilities, basic infrastructure, autocratic leadership, and elite dominations. These make them more prone to shocks and stressors.

Another dimension to the tourism-rural livelihood relationship worth considering is tourism's co-existence with existing livelihood activities of rural dwellers. It will be erroneous to assume that rural dwellers rely on single livelihood activities (Goodwin & Roe, 2001). In fact, in rural areas, people use their available livelihood resources to earn a living through combining multiple activities - on-farm and/or off-farm (Ashley & Roe, 1998; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Tao & Wall, 2009). Hence, when tourism is introduced into a community, it is often added to the existing mix of livelihood activities in order to diversify the livelihood options.

Tao and Wall (2009) posit that the presence of tourism within the livelihood mix can lead to two possible scenarios; conflicts or complements with existing livelihood activities. These two scenarios are likely to occur because tourism activities are also dependent on the same livelihood resources which are supporting other livelihood activities within the mix. A more desirable situation is when tourism occurs as a complementary activity, emerging as offshoots of existing livelihood activities. That is the philosophy driving some forms of tourism (farm tourism, agri-tourism, rural tourism, village tourism, community-based ecotourism) and approaches to tourism development (pro-poor, community-based).

Consequently, Eder (2008) is of the view that if tourism's aim to improve rural livelihoods is to be achieved, its introduction should fit into the existing priorities, needs and local conditions of the people. In the same vein,

Goodwin and Roe (2001) called for deliberate linkages to be created between tourism and existing indigenous knowledge, skills and capacities and local technologies. This can be achieved through the use of local transport, and accommodation, indigenous food production and preparation, and the use of local crafts and artefacts for tourism in rural areas.

### **Tourism Development in Rural Ghana**

Tourism in Ghana is not a recent phenomenon. The country has over time established itself as a key tourism destination within the West African sub-region (Teye, 2000). Tourist arrivals and receipts have been increasing steadily over the years. For instance, in 1990, international arrivals stood at 145, 780 with receipts of about US\$ 81 million. This increased to 456,275 visitors in 2000 with an accompanying receipt of US\$ 289.5 million (Ministry of Tourism, 2013). The World Travel and Tourism Council's 2017 Travel and Tourism Economic Impact report on Ghana indicated that about 288,000 jobs were directly generated through the tourism industry in 2016.

The Government of Ghana, therefore, considers tourism as a priority sector. Consequently, since the 1980s, a number of policy documents on tourism have been formulated. They include Tourism Policy Proposals (1987), National Tourism Development Plan (1996-2010), Medium Term Tourism Policy (2005) and the more recent National Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027). At the core of these plans and policies is the desire by government to use tourism as a tool to achieve macroeconomic objectives and rural development (Akyeampong, 2011). In the country's medium-term development agenda framework for the period 2014-2017, tourism is equally recognised as one of

the prospects for the socio-economic transformation of the economy (National Development Planning Commission – Government of Ghana 2014).

Accordingly, there have been a number of attempts at community and district levels to develop tourism in rural Ghana, where most of the country's natural and cultural attractions are based. These varied efforts are aimed basically at offering opportunities for rural livelihood enhancement through tourism. A typical example is the 1996 and 2005 collaborations between Nature Conservation Research Centre (NCRC), United States Peace Corps – Ghana, Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Netherlands Development Organisation (Ghana), and selected communities with funding assistance from United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which saw the implementation of a number of community-based ecotourism projects nationwide. The idea behind the projects was “to develop environmentally and culturally sensitive locations in rural Ghana as tourism destinations in order to create opportunities for rural communities to earn income through the conservation of local ecosystems and culture” (Netherlands Development Organisation - Ghana, 2004:1). Similar projects undertaken in other parts of the country by other agencies and organizations include the Mognori Eco-village and Wechiau Community Hippo Sanctuary projects in Northern Ghana, the Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary project in Brong Ahafo Region and the Ghana West Coast project in the Western Region. There are also several community-based tourism projects scattered all over the country.

Despite all these interventions, statistics from the 2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC) on rural Ghana still paints a rather gloomy picture of the existing socio-economic conditions. Currently, about 49.1% of the country's

total population lives in rural areas. Literacy rate is also low as about 33.1% of the rural population have never been to school. Rural dwellers' access to basic necessities such as telecommunication, health care, electricity, potable water, and sanitation, as compared to their counterparts in urban areas, is low. The same can be said of the ownership of livelihood assets (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). This situation warrants more attention to be paid towards finding or improving upon earlier interventions (e.g tourism) aimed at improving the livelihoods of these rural dwellers. Thus, specifically, this study attempts to assess local residents' experiences with tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli, a rural community in Ghana.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Tourism is widely regarded in theory as an effective means of achieving development particularly in the context of developing countries (Godfrey & Clarke, 2000; Gokovali, 2010; Holzner, 2011; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Pratt, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). For most rural areas affected by the decline in traditional agrarian activities, dwindling rural industrialisation and out-migration of the youth, tourism has become the new impetus to drive socio-economic development and regeneration of those rural economies (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004; Cawley & Gillmor, 2008; Godfrey & Clarke, 2000; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Page, Brunt, Bushy, & Connell, 2001).

However, efforts at enhancing rural livelihoods through tourism development in practice have achieved mixed successes. The relationship between tourism and rural livelihoods has been complementary in some instances and conflicting in other cases. For instance, while some scholars claim

tourism has the potential to complement rural livelihoods by diversifying off-farm income sources and spreading risk to rural livelihoods' security (Ashley & Roe, 1998), others have cited many instances where tourism has undermined the very livelihoods it was supposed to protect and enhance (Goldman, 2011; Ogutu, 2002; Sirima & Backman, 2013). Sirima and Backman (2013) for instance noted that the creation of a national park within the Usangu Plains of Tanzania led to the displacement of communities in the area as well as land use conflicts between the communities and the tourism developers. Similar observations were made by Appiah-Opoku (2011) in relation to the creation of the Kakum National Park in Ghana. In view of these conflicting views, there is the need for further research such as this study to clarify the situation.

Some authors are of the view that tourism's potentials are overhyped and often lack credible empirical evidence to substantiate its purported claims (Goodwin, 2006; Mitchell & Ashely, 2010; Scheyvens, 2000). Goodwin (2006) stated that despite the multiplicity of tourism development studies, many have limited empirical evidence concerning the intended beneficiaries. To him, the fall out of such actions is the formulation of policy that lacks strong empirical foundations. This, therefore, brings to the fore the need for the experiences of rural dwellers who have engaged in tourism as a livelihood strategy to be highlighted.

From a methodological perspective, the contradictions have been attributed to lack of a concerted perspective in assessing tourism's impacts (Ashley, 2000; Mihalic, 2015). Ashley (2000) noted that most tourism impact assessments focus on economic, cultural or environmental issues usually in isolation from each other. In response, the sustainable livelihood approach has

been suggested as a more people-centred and more holistic approach to tourism impact assessment. This approach which does not disregard the earlier approaches but broadens the scope of assessment in order to inculcate a wider range of livelihood issues (Ashley, 2000; Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010; Wu & Pearce, 2014). But a look at the research in Ghana has shown that is still in its embryotic stage hence the need to shed more light on the situation.

Furthermore, the majority of research works available on tourism-related livelihood strategies and/or activities, with a focus on local residents were conducted outside the West African context. Typical examples include Asia (Choo & Jamal, 2009; Knowd, 2006; Tao & Wall, 2009; Shen, 2009), Europe (Garcia-Ramon, Canoves & Valdovinos, 1995), Americas (Torres, 2003), and Southern Africa (Mbaiwa, 1999; Rogerson, 2012). Till date, little is known about how rural dwellers engage in tourism as a livelihood strategy within the West African context. The chieftaincy institution is one of the few indigenous institutions in Ghana and the West African sub-region which predates colonial rule and is still prominent in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Domanbang, 2011). This indigenous governance institution plays religious, legislative, custodian executive and judicial roles and still has strong influence especially in rural areas (Domanbang, 2011). Hence, it is expected that the sphere of authority of the chieftaincy institution could shape how livelihoods are constructed in rural areas (Lawer, 2012).

Additionally, in Ghana, most tourism-development studies from the host communities' perspectives are skewed towards perceptions, support and attitudes towards tourism's impact (Afenyo, 2011; Afenyo & Amuquandoh, 2014; Akyeampong, 2011; Amuquandoh, 2010; Manu & Kuuder, 2012;

Mensah, 2012; Sirakaya, Teye, Sommez, 2002; Yankholmes, Boakye, Wellington, 2010). Few studies including Asiedu and Gbedema (2011), Eshun and Tettey (2014) and Holden, Sonne and Novelli (2011) have looked at rural tourism enterprises and alternative livelihood opportunities in Ghana. Yet, there is a dearth of information on the experiences of rural dwellers in the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in rural Ghana.

Similarly, Wli, a rural community in the Volta region of Ghana, has been involved in tourism development for over 40 years. However, a review of available information shows that empirical studies on the area have leaned mainly towards residents' perceptions, community-based ecotourism development, and flora and fauna conservation (Ackuayi, Godsway, Dzeto George & Bonsu-Owu, 2014, Bormann, 2015; Fiagome, 2002). That is, no detailed studies have been conducted to assess how tourism has been incorporated as a livelihood strategy in the community. In view of these identified gaps, this study seeks to assess local residents' experiences with tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli, Ghana.

### **Research Questions**

The study is guided by these research questions:

1. What types of tourism-related livelihood activities do local residents in Wli engage in?
2. How do local residents' livelihood assets influence their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli?
3. How do institutional/organisational structures shape local residents' adoption of tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli?

4. How vulnerable are tourism-related livelihoods in Wli (to stressors, shocks, seasonality)?
5. What are local residents' perspectives on tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli?

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of the study is to assess tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli;
2. explore the influence of local residents' livelihood assets on their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli;
3. assess the influence of institutional structures on local residents' adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli;
4. examine the vulnerability of tourism-related livelihoods in Wli (to stressors, shocks and seasonality); and
5. analyse local residents' perspectives on tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study will provide useful information to tourism policy makers and planners, academicians and other stakeholders in tourism development on how rural residents incorporate tourism into their livelihood activities. This information may be beneficial in the planning and implementation of future tourism interventions in rural areas. This is important because, in rural areas, people engage in multiple livelihood activities which are all dependent on the

same livelihood resources available to them. Hence, an understanding of how tourism fits into the existing needs, priorities and local conditions and how it can complement the existing livelihood activities, will be useful in establishing its potential to forge positive linkages with other forms of production and ensure economic diversification in rural areas (Eder, 2008; Tao & Wall, 2009).

Secondly, this study will contribute to existing literature by highlighting contextual issues that shape tourism-related livelihood activities in rural areas. Livelihoods are constructed and best understood within contexts, and this has been aptly acknowledged in the literature (Mihalic, 2015; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). However, most of the existing empirical studies have been confined to Asia, which has different contextual issues from that of West Africa and Ghana to be specific. This study will, therefore, bring to the fore the contextual issues which shape the adoption of tourism as a rural livelihood strategy in West Africa and Ghana in particular. It will also add a voice to the on-going discourse that tourism's potentials should be assessed and understood based on the context within which it is occurring.

Furthermore, the study is also envisaged to contribute to the knowledge on the application of the sustainable livelihoods approach in tourism livelihood analysis. Although Ashley (2000) posits that this approach is people-centred and provides a more broadened scope for assessing the multiple interactions between the various factors that influence people livelihoods, only few tourism studies have actually adopted it. Since this study employs this approach in assessing tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli, its efficacy or otherwise will be highlighted. This may inform further discourse on the utility of this approach in assessing rural livelihoods.

In addition, this study is consistent with global and national efforts towards the enhancement of rural livelihoods. In the current global development agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, tourism has specifically been identified as a key target in achieving goals 8 and 12, which focus on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and sustainable consumption and production respectively (UNWTO, 2015). Similarly, Ghana's National Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027) has among its objectives the creation of employment and other livelihood opportunities and empowerment for women, youth and vulnerable groups through tourism development (Ministry of Tourism, 2013). This study will contribute to these efforts by providing information on the dynamics of creating employment opportunities for rural dwellers through tourism. It will also highlight how tourism and rural livelihoods dependent on it can be made more sustainable. This information will be useful to communities, tourism planners and developers in their efforts at improving rural livelihoods globally and in Ghana specifically.

Finally, an assessment of this nature, which is looking at local residents' experiences with tourism as a livelihood strategy, may provide baseline information for further studies on tourism as a livelihood strategy in rural Ghana. It may also provide baseline information for studies interested in tourism livelihood trajectories in Wli and its environs. Likewise, it may serve as a comparative case for similar studies that may be replicated in the country.

### **Scope and Limitations of the Study**

The study is delimited to assessing the experiences of persons engaged in tier-one tourism enterprises in Wli as a source of livelihood. Again, the study was limited by the researcher's inability to have access to records on the Wli tourism constitution, tourist arrivals, tourist receipts, financial records of tourism enterprises which would have helped in providing further explanation to some of the findings which emerged from the study. This was due to study participants' reluctance or unwillingness to provide such information. Hence, caution was exercised in the interpretation of such issues which did not have documentary evidence to support them.

One weakness of the qualitative research approach adopted for this study is its lack of generalisation. Thus, the results presented in this thesis only represent the views of the study participants and not of all persons engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in rural Ghana. Nevertheless, the study has provided valuable information on tourism-related livelihood experiences of local residents in Wli.

### **Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis has ten chapters. Chapter one is the introductory chapter of the thesis and presents the background information to the study, the statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, and the significance of the study. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks guiding the study are discussed in the second chapter. The rational choice, structuration and social construction theories, as well as a number of concepts related to the study and livelihood frameworks, are precisely discussed. The third chapter reviews the

extant empirical literature on facets of tourism as a livelihood strategy while the methodologies followed in conducting this study are presented in chapter four. Specific issues relating to the research philosophy and study design, case study profile, target population, data sources, sampling and fieldwork issues, data analysis and presentation as well as ethical considerations are discussed under chapter four.

The fifth to ninth chapters explore emerging issues from the interview transcripts in relation to the study's objectives. The fifth chapter explores the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli whereas the sixth chapter focuses on the livelihood assets of the study participants and how they influence their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities. The seventh chapter, however, looks at the institutional influence on the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy by the study participants while the eighth chapter presents issues on the vulnerability of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli to shocks, stressors and seasonality. It also explores study participants' coping strategies in response to the identified livelihood threats. The ninth chapter discusses study participants' perspectives on tourism-related livelihood outcomes and the sustainability of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. The concluding chapter (chapter ten), presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL ISSUES

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of selected concepts, theories and frameworks which underline the study. These concepts, theories and frameworks have shaped perspectives on livelihoods in the literature and hence are deemed relevant in offering some theoretical and conceptual guidance to the assessment of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. The review is divided into three sections. The first section presents some conceptual definitions of development, livelihood and rurality. The second section specifically focuses on the discussion, application and critique of the rational choice, structuration and social constructionism theories as well as livelihood frameworks developed by Department For International Development (DFID), Scoones (1998) and Shen (2009). The third section of this chapter presents the study's conceptual framework which is based on these frameworks.

#### **Perspectives on Development**

What development means or seeks to represent has been a subject of debate over the years. Even though there is no universally accepted definition of the concept, it has been used in the literature to connote either a process or an end, encompassing issues of economic growth, structural changes, self-esteem, self-reliance, human development, freedom of choice, and sustainability (Seers, 1977; Sen, 1999; Todaro & Smith, 2012; World Commission On Environment and Development, 1987).

The variations in what development, as a concept, represents results from its evolving paradigms. Sharpley and Telfer (2015) identified seven paradigms namely modernization, dependency, economic neoliberalism, alternative development, impasse and post-development, human development and global development which have shaped development thinking over the years. The evolution of these paradigms has, overtime, led to the expansion in the meaning and measurement of the concept of development (Holden, 2013) and by extension, tourism.

The modernisation theory of development that was prevalent during the 1950s and 1960s perceived development as following a linear path as demonstrated by Rostow's (1960) stages of economic growth. Developing countries were perceived to be lagging behind in development, hence they needed to be helped to emulate the development patterns of the developed world. The general expectation was that through the transfer of investments and experiences from the west to the rest and through national economic planning, the problems of developing countries will be solved (Holden, 2013).

However, this gave way to the dependency paradigm of the late 1960s that saw major criticisms levelled against the modernisation theory of development. Critics argued that economic growth as a measure of development as prescribed by the modernisation theory had failed as some countries had obtained favourable economic growth rates but still had a large proportion of their masses with poor living standards (Todaro & Smith, 2012). In addition, a situation had been created where developing countries are made to depend on developed countries to their own detriment and to the benefits of these developed countries. Thus, to Seers (1977 as cited in Sharpley & Telfer, 2015),

development should focus on the reduction of poverty, unemployment and inequality while, at the same time, encouraging people (nations, communities) to be self-reliant.

With the criticisms arising from the failure of the earlier top-down diffusion of growth model approaches, the focus of development thinking changed to alternative development in the late 1970s. This paradigm called for more local involvement in the development process. It emphasised issues of local control in decision making, women empowerment and sustainability of the environment as focal to the developmental process.

The 1990s marked another turning point in development thinking. Human development became the new focus of development. The United Nations Development - Human Development Reports of the 1990s and 2000s sought to present additional measurement indicators of development beyond economic issues (Holden, 2013). The reports focused on life expectancy, education and income as indicators of decent standards of living. Other issues which came into prominence within this development paradigm were human rights, good governance, human security and poverty reduction (Knutsson, 2009 as cited in Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). Furthermore, expanding upon people's capabilities to take actions concerning their lives was also deemed important to development (Sen, 1999). The global development agendas of the 2000s have seen a re-emergence of these same tenets captured under the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015) and SDGs (2015-2030).

Given this study's leaning towards the human development paradigm, Sharpley and Telfer's (2015) definition of development is adopted. Therefore, development within the context of this study is "continuous and positive change

in the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of the human condition, guided by the principle of freedom of choice and limited by the capacity of the environment to sustain such change” (Sharpley & Telfer, 2015: 22). This definition best suits the study because it provides a platform for assessing tourism’s contribution to enhancing livelihoods and by extension human development in Wli.

### **Concept of Livelihood**

The 1990s experienced a new orientation in rural development thinking with the introduction of livelihood perspectives in rural development practices (Scoones, 2009). This new focus, which followed the bottom-up approach to development, placed emphasis on the realities of rural lives: the interactions between people’s capabilities and assets. But what does this new focus really mean?

Livelihood as a concept has been used largely to represent everything that concerns how people make a living. It goes beyond what people do to survive to include the assets, capabilities, and entitlements which enable them to make a living. It also focuses on both the material and non-material aspects of well-being (De Haan & Zoomers, 2005). This is well captured in Ellis and Allison’s (2004, p. 3) assertion that the livelihoods concept...

*attempts to capture not just what people do in order to make a living but the resources that provide them with the capability to build a satisfactory living, the risk factors that they must consider in managing their resources, and the*

*institutional and policy context that either helps or hinders them in their pursuit of a viable or improving living.*

Several attempts have been made in the literature to define what livelihoods are. The most cited definition is that of Chambers and Conway (1992, p. 6). They defined it as:

*Comprising the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.*

Most livelihood definitions in the literature are modified or extended versions of this earlier definition. According to Titi and Singh (1994, p. 2), livelihoods refer to:

*People's capacity to generate and maintain their means of living, enhance their well-being and that of future generations. These capacities are contingent upon the availability and accessibility of options which are ecological, economic and political and which are predicated on equity, ownership of resources and participatory decision making.*

Again, Ellis (2000, p. 10) stated that the concept “comprises the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine

the living gained by the individual or household.” To Long (2001, p. 241), livelihoods “are made up of practices by which individuals and groups strive to make a living, meet their consumption necessities, cope with adversities and uncertainties, engage with new opportunities, protect existing or pursue new lifestyles and cultural identifications, and fulfil their social obligations.”

The livelihood concept reveals the complexities inherent in how people make and sustain their livings. The definitions above suggest that how people construct their livelihoods is based on the interactions between their livelihood assets, capabilities, activities, and risks within their environments (Ellis, 2000). Scoones (2009) for instance, compares livelihoods to a system. In this system, assets and capabilities are the resources which are inputted and they determine the outputs. The outputs are the activities or strategies people employ to earn a living. The outcomes of this system could be in the form of enhanced well-being and/or sustainability of natural resources.

Capabilities as identified in the definitions basically refers to people’s abilities and what they can achieve based on their economic, social and personal characteristics (Drèze & Sen, 1989 as cited in Ellis, 2000). Within the livelihood context, capabilities border on issues of people’s ability to look for, identify and make use of livelihood opportunities as well as being able to cope with and adapt to stress and shocks (Chambers & Conway, 1992).

The assets are often considered as the “building blocks” of livelihoods (Ellis, 2000). They are what people have (both material and non-material) and use to enhance their livelihoods. Although there is a debate over what constitute livelihood assets, five main types of assets: human, social, physical, natural, and financial are commonly referred to in the literature (Scoones, 1998) as indicated

in Table 1. In recent times, livelihood assets are being expanded to include, among several others, cultural capital (Tao, 2006), information capital (Odero, 2006), attraction capital (Shen, 2009), and spiritual capital (Myers, 2011). These livelihood assets complement each other and to a large extent determine the type of livelihood activities that people can engage in (Shen, 2009).

Table 1 - *Description of Livelihood Assets*

| Livelihood Asset  | Description                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Human capital     | Skills, knowledge, ability to labour, good health                                                                                         |
| Social capital    | Networks, affiliations, social claims membership of more formalised groups, relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges,            |
| Physical capital  | Transportation, shelter and buildings, water supply, sanitation, energy, communication                                                    |
| Natural capital   | Natural resource stocks (land, vegetation, livestock, minerals, water bodies, atmosphere) and environmental services (hydrological cycle) |
| Financial capital | Capital base (savings, loans, remittances, pension allowances and other economic assets)                                                  |

Source: Scoones (1998)

Livelihood activities could be described as the sources of incomes which provide people with goods or cash to satisfy a range of human needs (Abdalla, 2013). These activities may be natural resource-based, non-natural resource

based or migration related (Carney, 1998). They could also be looked at from the perspectives of on-farm activities such as crop cultivation, livestock rearing, and herding and off-farm activities such as basket weaving, retail selling, migration and tourism (Ellis, 2000). When a number of livelihood activities and livelihood assets are combined and pursued by an individual or household, it is known as a livelihood strategy (Scoones, 1998).

Within the context of livelihood also lie the issues of sustainability and vulnerability. Sustainability connotes some sense of continuity or long-term use and has three main facets: economic, environmental and social (Morse & McNamara, 2013). Hence, livelihoods that are considered sustainable must be seen to improve on the quality of life and the usage of livelihood assets and capabilities in these three dimensions (Chambers & Conway, 1992). Environmentally, sustainable livelihoods should not contribute towards the depletion or degradation of both the tangible and intangible livelihood assets and capabilities. Socially, sustainable livelihoods should have the ability to proactively and reactively cope and withstand shocks and stress to livelihoods. Economically, sustainable livelihoods should generate adequate income to enhance the quality of life (Carney, 1998; Chambers & Conway, 1992; Morse & McNamara, 2013).

However, livelihoods are vulnerable to stress and shocks (Chambers & Conway, 1992). These stressors include issues of seasonality, declining resource stock and rising populations. The shocks, on the other hand, relate to wars, conflicts, fire, floods and epidemics. While the stressors to livelihoods are predictable, the shocks are not (Carney, 1998; Chambers & Conway, 1992). Livelihoods which have been exposed to stress and shocks but are unable to

cope and recover from them may be labelled as vulnerable livelihoods (Chambers & Conway, 1992).

Within the context of this study, Chambers and Conway (1992) and Ellis and Allison (2004) definitions of livelihoods are adopted. These definitions best suit the focus of this thesis which aims at assessing the interactions between people's capabilities and their livelihood assets, the institutional processes that shape the interactions and the risks they are confronted with in their attempt to construct their livelihoods around tourism in Wli.

### **Concept of Rurality**

Scholars and theorists have been divided over what the concept of rurality actually means (Bryden, Leblanc, & Teal, 1994; Cloke, 2006; Halfacree, 1994). According to Bosworth and Somerville (2013), the concept is a mental construct. Mormont (1990) for instance, posits that rurality belongs to a 'category of thought' and there is no typology that can effectively capture all aspects of rurality. On the other hand, Carolan (2008) is of the view that rurality goes beyond social construction to also include material or visible manifestations.

Rurality can be viewed from two main perspectives: location-based and social representation (Halfacree, 2006). The former, which is the approach adopted by this study, views rurality in terms of geographic areas and practices or activities carried out within those spaces. Its key parameters are the population density and size of the settlement, land use and its dominance by agriculture and traditional social structures and issues of community identity and heritage (Clout, 1993; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and

Development [OECD], 1992). In Ghana, localities considered as rural have a population of less than 5,000 people (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012).

The latter perspective views rurality as a social representation. The emphasis here is on the meanings people associate with rurality. Halfacree (2006) argues that rurality is imaginative and is created based on what people desire rurality to be. Rurality may connote a place of natural beauty, honesty, a repository of a nation's traditions, norms and values, and leisure pursuits to different people.

### **Theoretical Foundations of the Study**

This section discusses the rational choice, structuration and social constructionism theories, as well as, selected livelihood frameworks with the aim of offering some theoretical explanation to livelihood choices and constructions. The theories and frameworks reviewed in this section informed the study's conceptual framework.

#### **Rational Choice Theory**

The rational choice theory seeks to offer an explanation of human behaviour in decision making. Zey (1998) describes the theory as an extension of exchange theories developed by George Homans and Peter Blau. Eriksson (2011) on the other hand attributes the initiation of this theory to William Riker. Though popular in economics, this theory has been applied in other social sciences disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, political science, geography, psychology and tourism. Key issues highlighted in the theory include the rationality of individuals, preferences, constraints and utility

maximisation. The rational choice theorists argue that within any given situation, people make choices that meet their optimal utility. In other words, when people are confronted with multiple alternatives, the best they are able to do under such circumstance is to make choices which most meets their needs or objectives (Green, 2002).

This theory positions choice within the economic perspectives of the scale of preference and opportunity cost (Green, 2002). It lays emphasis on constraints in people's environment which makes choice a necessity. It seeks to explain that because of constraints (budgetary, access to resources, resource scarcity), individuals are compelled to make decisions through developing a scale of preferences to aid in their selection of optimal alternatives or options (Mas-Colell, Whinston & Green, 1995). It also postulates that individuals have full information about all the alternatives available to them and since they are prime self-interest seekers, who will always set out to maximise their benefits and decrease costs, they will utilize the information to choose options that will best satisfy them (Frank, 1990).

Development economists and planners have overtime integrated these ideas into explaining livelihood choice behaviour (Kabeer, 2000; Mollinga, 2001; Rutherford, 1995; Start & Johnson, 2004). Within the context of livelihood studies, the utility models assume perfect rationality in livelihood behaviour and allocation of resources in order to maximise utility. Hence the expectation is that given the same resources, opportunities and constraints at a point in time, people will choose profit maximising livelihood activities or strategies (Start & Johnson, 2004). Similar ideas are reflected in the tourism literature which theorises that developing countries' engagement in tourism

development is basically because of the perceived economic returns of which livelihood improvement is key (Holzner, 2011; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Liu, 2006; Pratt, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015; Sharpley & Vass, 2006; Snyman, 2012).

One question that needs to be asked, however, is whether people are really rational in their choices. What about the role of structures and power relations or social classes within their environment, which redefines people's alternatives and choice? Kabeer (2000) raises the argument of 'bounded rationality' in his book "*The power to choose: Bangladeshi women and labour market decisions in London and Dhaka*", where he states that people's choices and preferences may equally be influenced by factors such as gender, race, age, and culture, resulting in choices which do not make economic sense. Thus, power dynamics (such as the caste system), for instance, can compel people to engage in livelihood activities (strategies) which are against their individual preferences. In addition, the theory makes an assumption that people have the benefit of full information about their alternatives before making a decision. But this has been criticised as it may be unrealistic in practical terms (Frank, 1990).

Although the rational choice theory provides some indications into how people make their livelihood activity (strategy) choices (of which tourism could be one), its assumption of the rationality of the individual, who is privy to all information on his available alternatives is its major flaw. There are social dimensions to choice behaviour which cannot be fully captured or explained by utility models which underpin the rational choice theory. Despite its shortcomings, this study adopts the theory in partly exploring residents' choice of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli.

## Structuration Theory

The structure-agency debate is primarily about the supremacy of the structure (social structure) or actor (agency) in explaining decision making in social systems. The structure as described by Hay (2002, p. 94) is the “setting within which social, political and economic events occur and acquire meanings”. The agency on the other hand as expressed by Callinicos (2004) constitute people’s (actors) actions and choices in their efforts to achieve specific goals in society.

The structure is projected as having a patterning or deterministic effect on the agent or actors in society (Imbroscio, 1999; Sewell, 1992; Wharton, 1991). Structuralists argue that the structure (environment) within which agents live and act puts several limitations upon them that curtail their freedom (Fine, 1992). Thus, for them, the perceived constraints faced by agents originate from the structural environment in which these agents live and perform their individual actions. However, a major criticism of the structuralist perspective is their positing the relationship between the structure and agency is unidirectional, conveniently ignoring the role of agency in shaping social outcomes (Imbroscio, 1999).

Giddens’s (1984) theory of structuration has added another dimension to the on-going debate which is considered useful in this study; hence, its adoption. His theory emphasises the duality of structure and the power of human agency. In trying to seek a balance between the structure and agency relationship, Giddens’s theory veered from the stance of extremist structuralists to emphasise the reflective relationship between structure and agency. He consents that though structure does define people’s actions, their actions also

shape structure. This he sums up by saying “the structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems” (Giddens 1984 as cited in Imbroscio, 1999, p. 4). Therefore, the outcomes of the relationships between structure and agency as asserted by Abrams (1982) is contingent on both of them.

The structure-agency debate permeates livelihood studies. The structural issues in livelihood studies pertain to the macro environment, vulnerability and institutional and policy contexts which mediate people’s access to livelihood resources, exchange of resources as well as their livelihood outcomes. The agency issues are embedded in people’s capabilities to transform their livelihood resources into activities through which livelihood objectives are achieved. Several researches (Leach, Mearns & Scoones, 1999; Li, 1996; Scott, 1998; Sikor & Lund, 2010) have hypothesised and tested the interrelationships between livelihood contexts, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. In fact, evidence from these and other related studies have highlighted the need to focus on both the structure and the agency (Scoones, 2015) in order to have a better understanding of the complexities of livelihoods. In adopting Giddens’s (1984) saturation theory, this study will examine the relationships between the role of structure and agency in the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. This is in line with the study’s conceptual framework which makes assumptions about the influence of institutions/organisations/processes (structure) on the other facets of an individual’s livelihood (assets, strategies, vulnerability, outcomes).

## Social Constructionism Theory

Social constructionism provides a unique perspective to the study of knowledge, meaning and understanding of human actions. The theory has its origins in sociology and its advancement largely credited to the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966): *The Social Construction of Reality* (Burr, 2003; Gergen & Gergen, 2008). Berger and Luckmann (1966) also acknowledged the influence of Mead, Marx, Schutz and Durkheim on their writings.

Social constructionists adopt an epistemological perspective rather than an ontological perspective to the explanation of knowledge. In other words, they are less concerned about the nature of knowledge as their focus is on how knowledge is constructed and understood (Andrews, 2012). Social constructionists posit that people construct rather than discover their knowledge of the world. They do so as they engage in social interactions and processes on daily basis. According to Burr (2003), people's knowledge of the world is not a product of an objective observation of the world but of the social processes and interactions in which they constantly engage with each other. Through these interactions, people's realities become socially defined (Andrews, 2012; Burr, 2003).

The theory also highlights the plurality of meanings emerging from subjective experiences and historical and cultural relativity of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Burr, 2003; Gergen & Gergen, 2008). During the course of people's daily social interactions, different perspectives emerge which influence the construction of several meanings about the same thing. Furthermore, social processes and interactions are historically and culturally

defined. Thus, the same thing could have varied meanings for people based on their historical and cultural settings or perspectives.

Adopting this viewpoint in the assessment of tourism as a livelihood strategy implies that much attention must be given to the meanings people associate with tourism (either positive or negative), how those meanings are constructed and their influence on people's behaviour. Even though social constructionism theory has been sparingly applied to local residents' perception, experience and attitude researches in tourism (e.g. Nyaupane & Poudel, 2012), Hollinshead (2006) and Pernecky (2012) laud the theory as providing an important perspective to the study of tourism which will advance our understanding of the human and societal dimensions of tourism. Pernecky (2012), further, avers that the social constructionism theory fits into tourism research because the tourism phenomenon itself is socially constructed. In all, this theory may be a useful approach in extending our appreciation of rural dwellers' understanding and adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy. As asserted by Gergen (2009, p. 44), "we not only construct together, we also live out the implications of these constructions.

Although the usefulness of the theory has been acknowledged, it is not without criticisms. The major criticism of social constructionism is its position on issues of realism and relativism; objective reality and multiple realities (Andrews, 2012). From the point of realism, the theory has been labelled as anti-realist due to its denial that knowledge is a direct perception of reality. Critics argue that such a position is a rejection of objectivism in the constructionist enquiry (Craib, 1997). However, social constructionists have disagreed with this assertion by emphasising that the theory makes no claims dismissing objective

reality but is rather interested in how people experience and construct knowledge in their worlds (Andrews, 2012; Burr, 2003; Slife & Williams, 1995). Again, social constructionism's emphasis on multiple realities and multiple interpretations (relativism) has also been criticised. Bury (1986) wonders how constructionist enquiry can unravel 'the truth' if all realities regarding a social phenomenon are regarded as equal. Andrew (2012) concludes that criticisms about social constructionism will continue to exist if the theory is viewed from an ontological perspective.

### **Livelihood Frameworks**

There has been a proliferation of livelihood frameworks since the 1990s. This surge could be attributed to increasing understanding of the development platform that livelihood perspectives must be central in poverty reduction strategies and interventions (Hussein, 2002). Livelihood perspectives are based on the premise that the interrelationships between people's assets and capabilities, the threats they are confronted with as well as the institutional environments they find themselves in, must be clearly understood and should inform any intervention or strategies directed towards them (Ellis, 2000).

The varied interpretations given to this premise and its application has resulted in the development of varied livelihood frameworks by several international development agencies including DFID, United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), CARE, Khanya, and Oxfam. Scoones (2015) describes these frameworks as not existing to offer a description of reality but to direct our thinking about livelihoods.

Livelihood frameworks are generally geared toward guiding development interventions (Morse & McNamara, 2013). They are people-focused and seek to gain a realistic understanding of people's resources and capabilities and how they endeavour to convert these into positive livelihood outcomes (DFID, 1999). Livelihood frameworks are very flexible and can be adapted to suit different contexts (Ashley & Carney, 1999; DFID, 1999).

Nevertheless, livelihood frameworks have not been without criticism. There remains a lack of clarity in the conceptualisation and measurement of key components of the framework such as assets, vulnerability and sustainability (Beall, 2002; Murray, 2000; Morse & McNamara, 2013; Prowse, 2010). Again, the frameworks do not have a prescriptive methodology, therefore, making their operationalization and application, in reality, difficult and overwhelming (Morse & McNamara, 2013; Prowse, 2010).

The following section presents a review of selected livelihood frameworks which have been applied in tourism livelihood studies and underpin the study's conceptual framework.

#### Sustainable Livelihood Framework

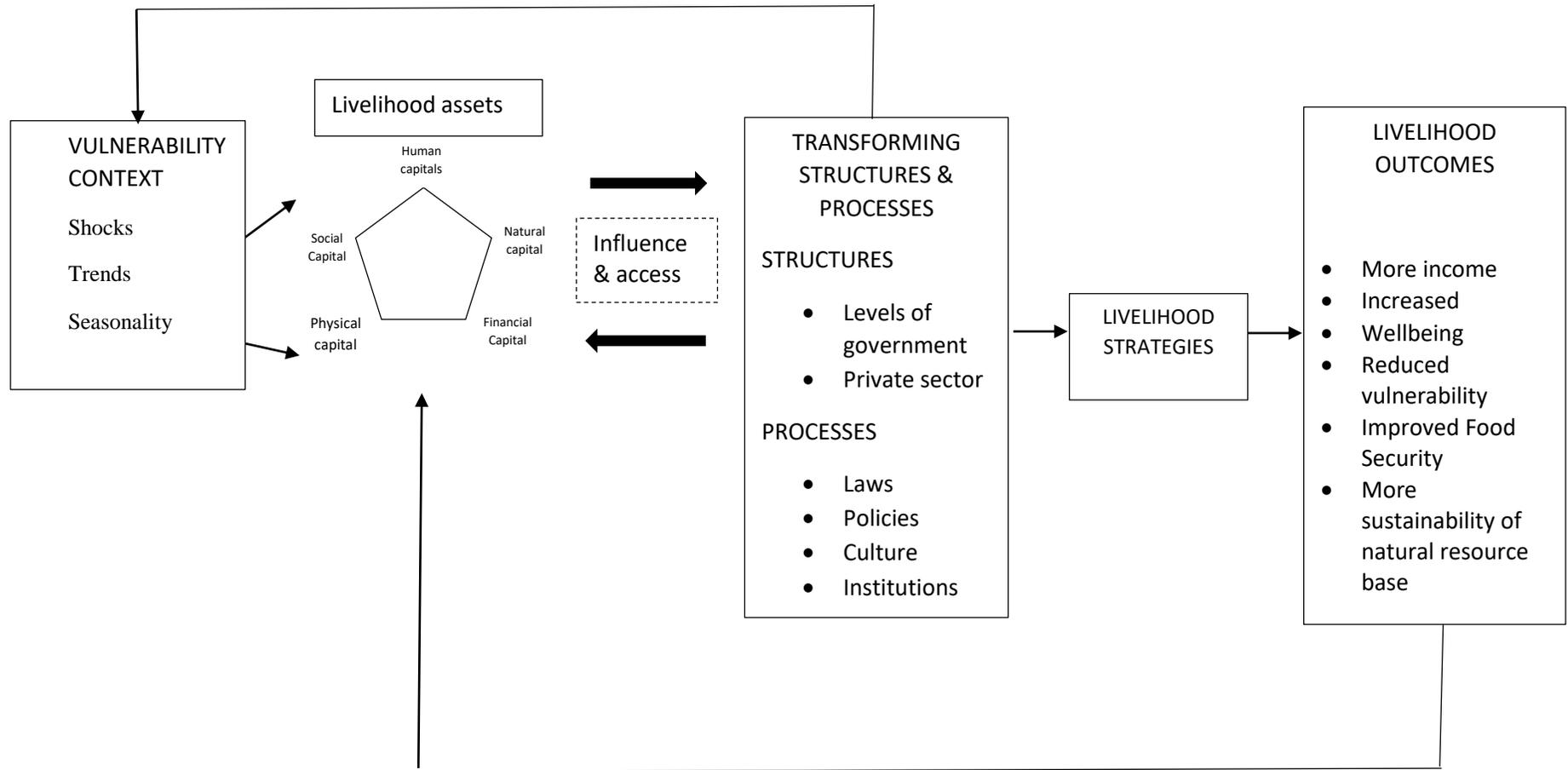
The Sustainable Livelihood Framework (SLF) is the most popular of all the existing livelihood frameworks. It was developed by UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in the late 1990s as an approach to poverty elimination (Morse & McNamara, 2013). This people-centred framework is based on an adapted version of Chambers and Conway's livelihood definition. DFID defined livelihood as:

*“comprising the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future while not undermining the natural resource base (Carney, 1998, p. 4).*

From this definition, they developed a list of key sustainable livelihood concepts which underpin the entire framework and informs its application in practical terms. Based on these concepts, sustainable livelihood orientated activities are expected to be people-centred, holistic, dynamic, responsive and participatory, conducted in partnership, multi-levelled, sustainable and built on existing strengths (Ashley & Carney, 1999).

The framework as shown in Figure 1, highlights the interactions between essential elements which shape people’s livelihood. These elements, which are five in number include vulnerability context, livelihood assets, transforming structures and processes, livelihood strategy and livelihood outcomes. The framework stresses the importance of capital assets to livelihoods and identifies five categories of such assets: natural, social, physical, human and financial.

It also underscores the importance of livelihood assessments within the context of transforming structures and processes as they govern access and exchange of livelihood assets, livelihood option choices as well as livelihood outcomes (Carney, Drinkwater, Rusinow, Neefjes, Wanmali & Singh, 1999; Hussein, 2002).



**Fig. 1: Sustainable Livelihood Framework**

Source: Department For International Development (1999)

This framework has been used in multiple contexts in project design, monitoring and evaluation. The major flaw of this framework within the context of this study is its narrowing of the macro environment or context within which livelihoods are constructed to just vulnerability issues and transformational structure and processes. The study assumes that there are other issues which shape the context of livelihoods as indicated in the subsequent frameworks (SRLF and SLFT). Despite its limitation, SLF has been described as making a good attempt at capturing the multidimensional nature of livelihoods (Baumgartner & Högger, 2004). However, a number of authors have cautioned that too much faith should not be placed in the SLF as possessing the solutions to the problems of poverty elimination, environment management and rural development (Kelman & Mather, 2008; Small, 2007).

#### Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework

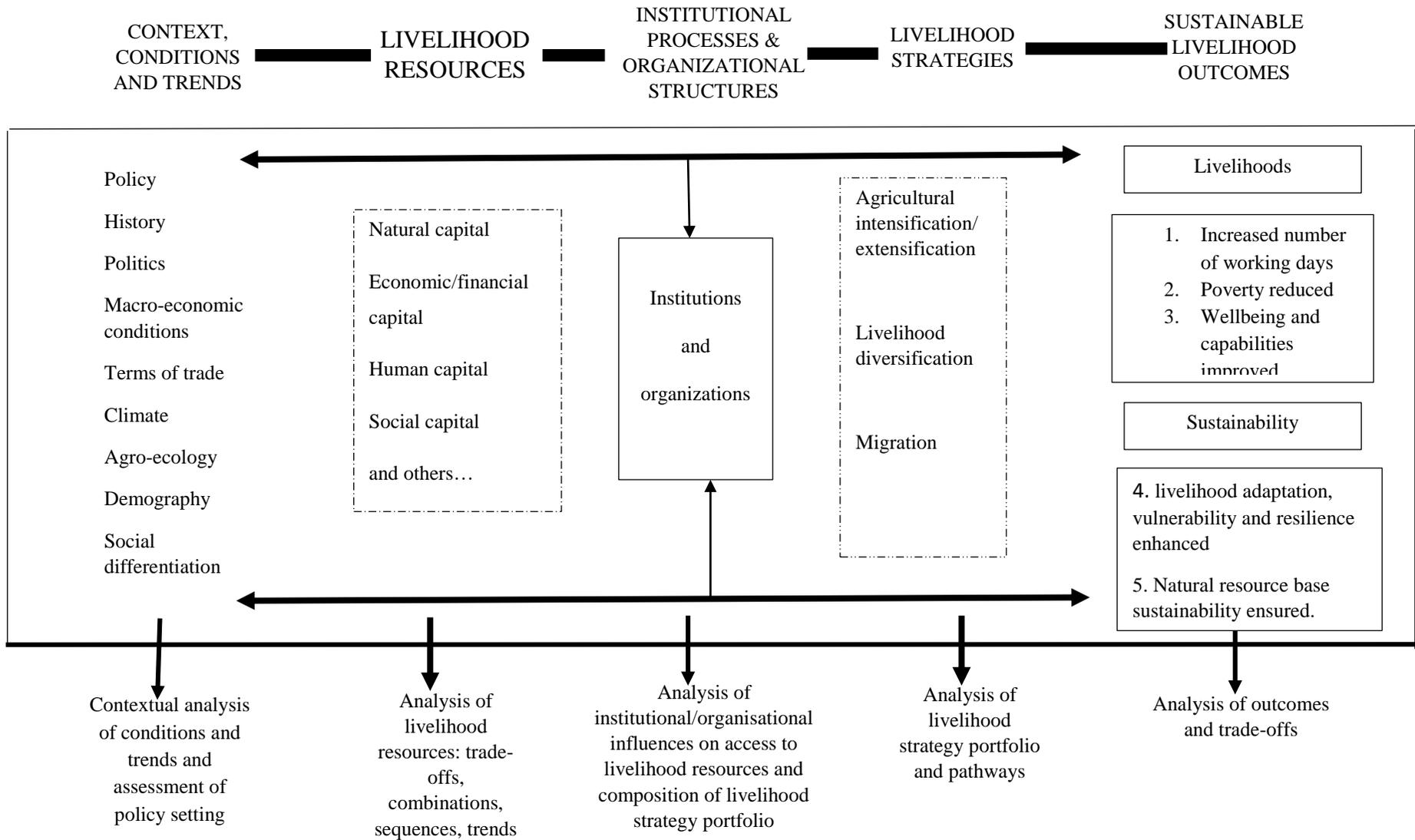
Scoones's (1998) framework (Figure 2) also evolved from Chambers and Conway's (1992) definition of livelihoods. He developed the Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework (SRLF) as a guide to analysing sustainable rural livelihoods. His framework (Figure 2) is embedded in the developmental discourse about achieving a balance between rural development, poverty reduction and environmental management. He maintains that livelihoods are very complex in nature, having multiple dimensions. Hence, in the assessment of livelihoods within a rural setting, a holistic approach must be adopted.

SRLF can be summed up in a question which Scoones (1998) asserts is the most important question that needs answering in our attempt to analyse sustainable livelihoods. His question (p.3) is:

*Given a particular context, what combination of livelihood resources, result in the ability to follow what combination of livelihood strategies with what outcomes? And which institutional processes mediate the ability to carry out such strategies and achieve (or not) such outcomes?*

The framework identifies five fundamental elements of livelihoods: context, livelihood resources, institutional processes and organisational structures, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. As a system, it is the interactions between these elements which will or will not produce outcomes that meet the livelihood objectives of people, especially within rural settings. The SRLF as shown in Figure 2, has five main components.

- i. The context, conditions and trends: the macro environment or external factors which influence all aspects of livelihoods. Context includes macroeconomic conditions, globalization, and climate change.
- ii. Livelihood resources: range of livelihood assets (natural, social, physical, human, institutional, cultural, spiritual capitals etc) which are needed for building livelihood strategies.
- iii. Institutional processes and organisational structure: institutions and organisations (both formal and informal) which facilitate access to livelihood resources, choice of livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes.
- iv. Livelihood strategies: the combination of livelihood activities which are pursued in order for livelihood objectives to be met



**Fig. 2: Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework**

Source: Scoones (1998)

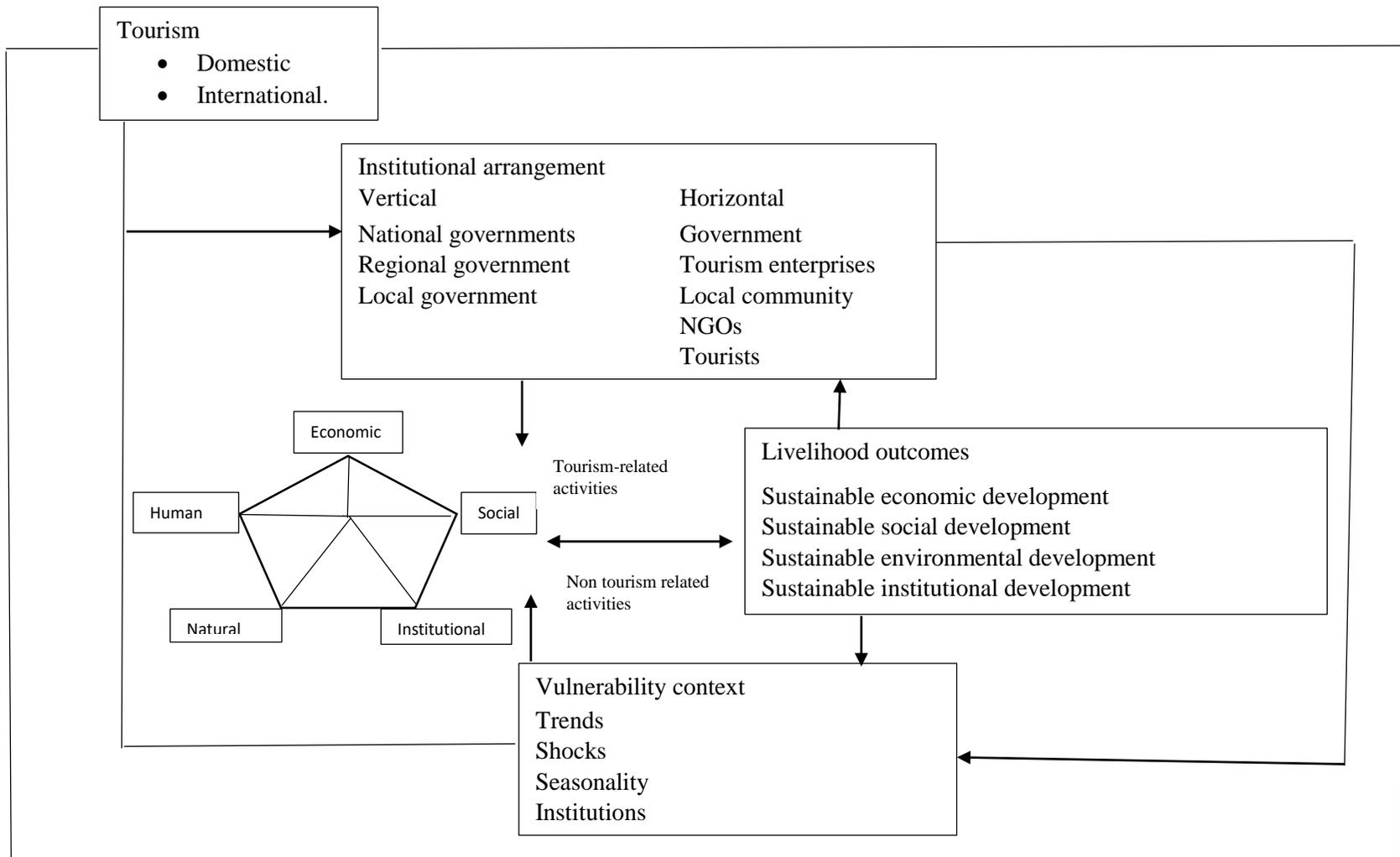
- v. Sustainable livelihood outcomes: these bother on increased income, improved wellbeing, sustainability of natural resources and enhancement of livelihood resilience.

A key issue in the analysis of livelihoods is the vulnerability context. This context does either positively or negatively affect livelihood asset stocks hence having an implication for livelihood sustainability. This component is considered pertinent to the study however, Scoones's SRLF does not directly capture it. This, therefore, makes the framework unsuitable for the study.

#### Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism

Shen (2009) developed the Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism (SLFT) by integrating the fundamental principles of sustainable livelihoods and tourism. He argues that tourism has its own peculiarities hence livelihoods which are based on tourism should be studied within the context of tourism. He, therefore, reasons that the SLF may not be appropriate in assessing tourism when adopted as a livelihood strategy. In furthering his arguments, he redefines sustainable tourism livelihood as "one that is embedded in a tourism context within which it can cope with vulnerability and achieve livelihood outcomes which should be economically, socially, environmentally as well as institutionally sustainable without undermining others' livelihoods" (p. 57).

In the SLFT presented in Figure 3, the tourism context is defined by the type of tourism being promoted (mass or alternative tourism) as well as the type of tourists (international, domestic or both) visiting the destination. It is expected that the type of tourism (and tourists visiting) will define the kind of



**Fig. 3: Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism**

Source: Shen (2009)

opportunities that would be created at the destination (Seckelmann, 2002; Wen, 1997).

It is around these opportunities that tourism-related livelihood activities can be built. Cognizance is equally given to the vulnerability context which can restrict or decrease these opportunities. But then, it will be erroneous to consider the tourism industry as existing on its own without any external influences as this framework seeks to portray. Isolating tourism and studying it within its own context may not reflect the realities on the ground especially within a rural setting. This makes this framework not entirely suitable for the study.

In terms of livelihood strategies, Shen (2009) acknowledges that people engage in multiple livelihood activities. In relating it to tourism, he identified two categories of livelihood activities namely tourism-related and non-tourism related. The tourism related activities include direct and indirect involvements in tourism while the non-tourism related activities may include migration and non-tourism related employment activities.

The SLFT is asset-based, meaning it considers livelihood assets to be central in the creation and adoption of tourism as a livelihood option. A new asset he introduced is the institutional capital defined as participation in governance. The possession of this asset is expected to increase one's participation in tourism and enjoyment of the benefits thereof.

The livelihood outcomes within the framework are coined to reflect the quadruple dimensions of sustainability; economic, social, environmental and institutional (Chambers & Conway, 1992; Morse & McNamara, 2013). For the institutional arrangements, a distinction is made between local tourism-related private and public regulatory organisation on one hand and foreign tourism

stakeholders (tourists, foreign service providers) on the other. The basis for such distinction may be to highlight issues of power dynamics and how that shapes and reconstitute tourism activities and systems.

### **Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The choice of a livelihood framework as a conceptual basis for the study is based on the strengths attributed to livelihood approaches in providing an integrated view of the complexities of livelihoods (Carney, 1998; Ellis, 2000). In addition, livelihood frameworks explore livelihoods through an optimistic lens. They are more concerned with what people have, not what is not available (Carney et al, 1999). They are also easy to adapt to suit different contexts and levels of assessment (Cahn, 2002; Ellis, 2000). Although critiques have raised concerns about ambiguity in the operationalisation of some concepts such as sustainability, measurement and comparison of livelihood assets and the place of power in the livelihood system, these frameworks provide a more appropriate guide in assessing tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli.

The three frameworks posit multiple interactions between various livelihood elements namely contextual issues, vulnerability context, livelihood assets, livelihood strategies and institutional and organizational processes which determine people's livelihood. Yet, slight variations can still be seen in their considerations of the livelihood system. Key issues of importance to this study in the three frameworks have been fused to constitute the conceptual framework.

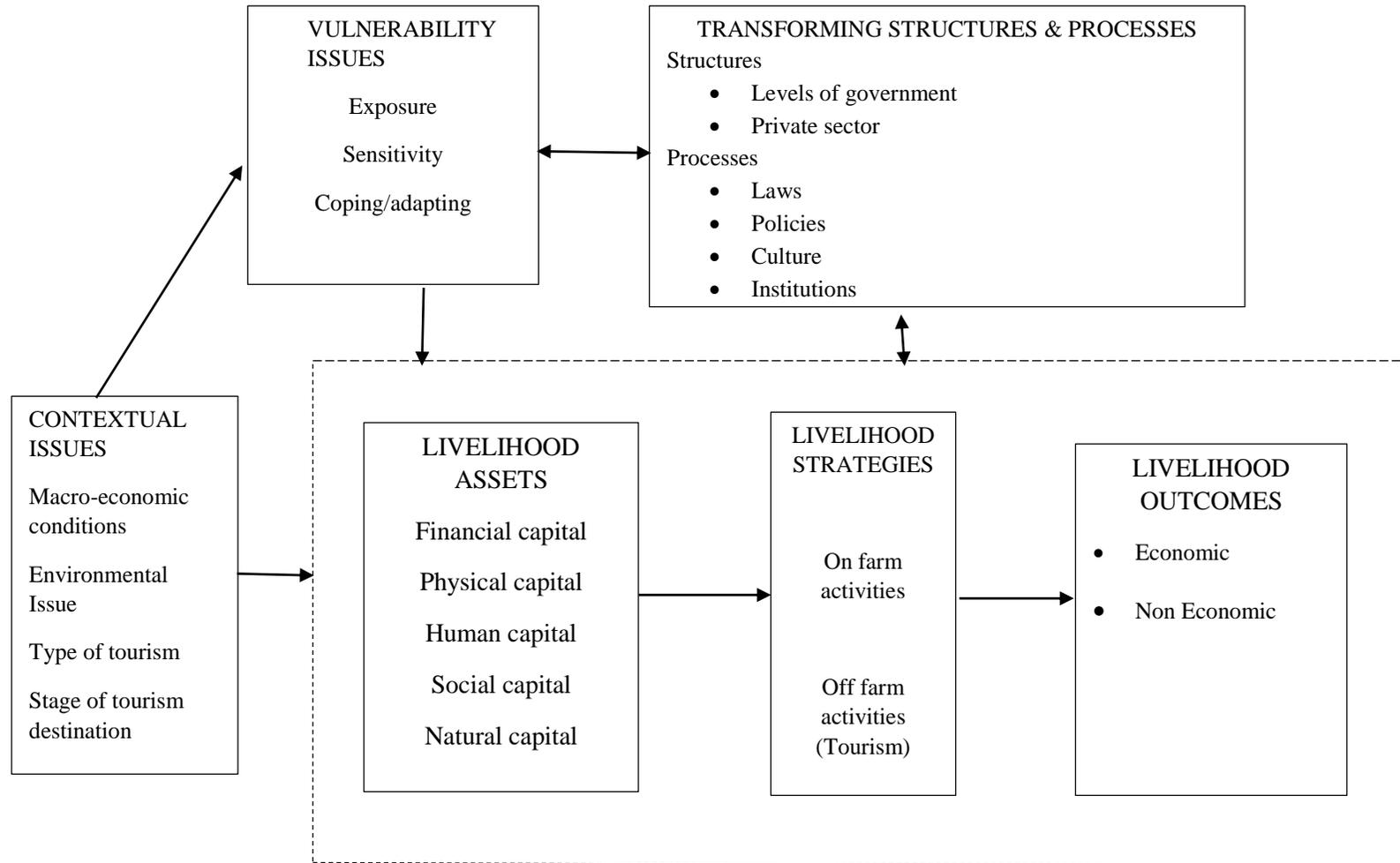
Specifically, the conceptual framework is an extension of the DFID's sustainable livelihood framework. It was broadened to also capture salient

issues raised in Scoones's (1998) SRLF and Shen's (2009) SLFT. The conceptual framework as shown in Figure 4 has been divided into six thematic zones. The first focuses on the contextual issues; the second, on livelihood assets; the third, on livelihood strategies, the fourth, on vulnerability issues; the fifth, on institutional and organisational processes and the sixth, on the livelihood outcomes. The framework and the modifications made are discussed as follows.

### Contextual Issues

This section provides a frame for the broader environment within which people leave and construct their livelihoods. It reviews the political, social, environmental, political environments within which people stay and earn their living. Within this study, the contextual issues under consideration include the type of tourism developed, the position of the destination on Tourist Area Life Cycle (TALC), global and local macro-economic, political and environmental conditions. This context affects all facets of the livelihood system.

Macroeconomic and environmental conditions have been found to impact how people construct their livelihoods (Farrington, Carney, Ashley & Thurston, 1999; Heltberg, Siegel & Jorgensen, 2009; Krantz, 2001). These conditions including inflation, globalisation, technological advancements, political stability, and climate change tend to shape the market dynamics which invariably affect tourist flows and patterns of travel. Its effect could be a blooming tourism destination with opportunities or vice versa. In the case of the latter, decreased tourist arrivals become a livelihood vulnerability issue.



**Fig 4: Conceptual Framework for the Study**

Source: Author's Construct, 2016

The type of tourism developed at the destination also has implication for the extent to which local people can build their livelihood around tourism. Shen's (2009) SLFT strongly advocates for the inclusion of the tourism context in the analysis of tourism as a livelihood strategy. Local involvement in alternative forms of tourism is higher compared to mass tourism development. Mass tourism development is often criticized for restricting local residents' involvement in the development process as well as taking advantage of the opportunities presented by tourism. In the same vein, the position of the destination on the tourist area life cycle is of much importance. Butler's tourist area life cycle is suggestive that tourism development is transitory and each particular stage reached has implications for the opportunities that are presented.

#### Livelihood Assets

Livelihood assets are conceptualised as the building block of livelihoods (Ellis, 2000). Sometimes referred to as livelihood capitals, it is these assets which are the inputs or resources (Scoones, 1998) of the livelihood system. They are what people have (both material and non-material) and use to enhance their livelihoods. According to Bebbington (1999, p. 2022), livelihood assets play three main roles: "vehicle for instrumental action (making a living), hermeneutic action (making living meaningful), emancipatory action (challenging the structures under which one makes a living)."

In the first distinct role identified, livelihood assets could be considered as a factor of production. This has been the subject of interest of scholars who have explored the relationship between livelihood assets, strategies and

outcomes. In the second and third cases, Morse and McNamara (2013) had stated that livelihood assets do equally give meaning to a person's world. It becomes a basis of power which enables people to act or be acted against, and this is determined by people's access or not to these assets. Hence, livelihood assets are a means to an end and an end in itself. Within the framework, clear relationships are shown between assets and the vulnerability context, transformation structures and processes, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes.

There is, however, a debate over what constitute livelihood assets although five main types of assets: human, social, physical, natural, and financial are commonly referred to in the literature (Scoones, 1998). In recent times, livelihood assets are being expanded to include among several others cultural capital (Tao, 2006), information capital (Odero, 2006), attraction capital (Shen, 2009), and spiritual capital (Myers, 2011). These livelihood assets complement each other and largely determine the type of livelihood activities people can engage in (Shen, 2009). Despite all these additions, this study adopts the five main livelihood assets (human, social, physical, natural, and financial). This is because, in the operationalisation of the extended versions, the descriptions still fall within the five categories. For instance, cultural, spiritual and political capitals could still be placed under social capital.

In the operationalisation and measurement of the livelihood assets, the study adopts DFID sustainable livelihood framework guidance sheet. This document defines each livelihood asset and suggests a number of questions in its assessment. Drawing from DFID's SLF, livelihood assets would be analysed in terms of their relationship with the vulnerability context, transforming

structures and processes, tourism as a livelihood strategy and its related livelihood outcomes.

#### Vulnerability Context

The issue of vulnerability in livelihood studies raises the realities of human beings' limited control over the influences of their external environment on their livelihoods. The concept as defined by Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC] (2007, p. 2), is "vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity." Drawing from this definition, it could be concluded that tourism livelihoods' vulnerability is dependent on exposure to risks, responsiveness to the risks as well as their adaptive capacity to deal with the challenges associated with these risks.

In fact, the issue of vulnerability has gained the attention of scholars, especially in the face of the increasing threats posed by shocks and stressors including natural disasters, climate change, epidemics, and conflicts to livelihoods. This interest has also manifested in the multiplicity of definitions of the concept as well as frameworks for its assessment (Bohle, 2001; Cannon, Twigg & Rowell, 2003; Cardona, 1999; Cutter, 1996; Moreno & Becken, 2009). Within the livelihood frameworks, prominence is given to vulnerability issues and their relationship with other facets of the livelihood system.

Two main viewpoints seem to exist in terms of definitions of vulnerability. McEntire (2012) categorises these into vulnerability as a liability and vulnerability as capability. In the former, the definitions suggest that vulnerability is a product of factors that make a system prone to risks. These

definitions stress on factors which increase the exposure or dispositions to risk (e.g. Cardona, 2004; Mustafa, 1998). In the latter, however, the emphasis is on the capacity of systems or people to cope, withstand or recover from shocks and stressors (e.g. Bankoff, 2007; Kelly & Adger, 2000; Wisner et al, 2004). These two perspectives are aptly captured in what Bohle (2001) describes as the double structure of vulnerability. He conceptualises vulnerability as having two sides: external and internal. While the internal side looks at the potential or capacity to anticipate, cope, withstand or recover from shocks and stressors, the external side relates more to exposure to risk. Thus, vulnerability is positioned as the product of the interactions between the internal and external sides.

In vulnerability assessment, the focus has been on examining the three main dimensions of vulnerability, namely, exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity (Bohle, 2001; Fraser, 2007; IPCC, 2001). IPCC's (2001) framework on climate change vulnerability assessment posited that exposure and sensitivity to threats create potential impacts. However, the position (state or condition) of vulnerability is contingent on the adaptation capacity of the system (people) in response to the potential impacts.

Exposure can be considered as the prevailing conditions which can make a system or people prone to risks (e.g. high dependency on tourism). In terms of sensitivity, the focus is on the responsiveness of the system to the risk. Consequently, in the case of tourism livelihoods, a destination that depends highly on tourist arrivals may be significantly affected by any slight decrease in tourist arrivals. Birkmann (2006), however, cautions that a highly exposed or sensitive livelihood strategy does not necessarily mean that it is vulnerable. This

is because neither exposure nor sensitivity accounts for the capacity of a system to adapt to threats.

Adaptive capacity involves adjustments (in both behaviour and resources) to risk, which will enable a system (people) to moderate potential negative impacts, take advantage of opportunities and cope with the consequences. The literature has, also clearly distinguished between adaptation and coping mechanisms since both operate on different time scales. Coping is often in the short term while adaptation looks at the longer term. In this study, the vulnerability context analyses will not be limited to the identification of threats, exposure, sensitivity and adaptation to these threats. Its interrelationships with the other components of the conceptual framework will be explored.

#### Transformational Structures and Processes

The importance of institutions, organisations and processes has often been underscored in the livelihood literature (Ashley et al, 2000; Ellis, 2000; Scoones, 1998). Within the three frameworks reviewed above, institutions, organizations and policies (captured under transforming structures and processes) have been captured as playing a critical role in mediating peoples' livelihood strategy choices and livelihood outcomes. In fact, these structures and processes shape or define how people are able to construct their livelihoods. According to DFID (1999), Scoones (1998) and Shen (2009), these processes have interrelationships with the vulnerability context, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes.

North (1990 as cited in Scoones, 2015) uses the phrase “the rules of the game” and the “players in the game” to define what institutions and organisations are and the relationship that exists between them. He argues that the rules which shape peoples’ access to various livelihood capitals especially within the rural context are set by institutions. For instance, the local caste system which is an institution could define whether immigrants, for example, can possess land temporally or permanently. To ensure that such a rule works is where organisations come into the picture where they offer the settings for the implementation of these rules.

In the construction of livelihoods, scholars have recognised that within each local setting, there are multiple institutions and organisations (formal or informal) which shape people’s livelihoods. The development of interventions such as tourism as a livelihood strategy or a natural resource management strategy also comes up with its own institutions and organisations (Shen, 2009). The challenge, actually, is in how these latter institutions and organisations fit into the already existing one without resulting in conflicts between multiple users (Cleaver & Franks, 2005). This, therefore, means that knowledge about these institutions and organizations, whether formal or informal, is important.

These institutions and processes also represent issues of power. Mehta (2005) and Scoones (2015) have noted that institutions and structures carry with them certain identities and meanings which affect people differently and govern access and exclusion issues in livelihoods. An analysis of the power dynamics of these institutions and organisations and their possible influence on the tourism livelihood system in Wli will be done based on the DFID’s (1999) sustainable livelihood guidance sheet document.

## Livelihood Strategy

The word 'strategy' is suggestive of a plan or a tactic towards the achievement of a set objective. This same idea is reflected in the concept of livelihood strategy which is often used to illustrate the range and combination of activities which are pursued by individuals, households, or communities towards the achievement of their basic needs and improvement of their livelihoods (Abdulai & CroleRees, 2001; DFID, 1999; Ellis, 2000). Therefore, livelihood strategies can be considered to be the medium through which livelihood outcomes are achieved.

Livelihood strategies have been explored and categorised differently by various scholars. In most cases, the strategies are grouped based on the nature of the activities underlying it. Carney (1998) for example identified three types of livelihood strategies namely natural resource-based, non-natural resource-based and migration. In a similar vein, Scoones (1998) in his publication '*Sustainable rural livelihoods: A framework for analysis*' looked at livelihood strategies from the angle of agricultural intensification/extensification, livelihood diversification and migration. He suggested that since rural livelihood activities are usually agrarian in nature, the first livelihood strategy option for most people is to either intensify or expand their agricultural activities. In the second option is the livelihood diversification strategy. Here, attention is shifted from non-agrarian based livelihoods which could either be based on natural or non-natural resources. Tourism as a livelihood strategy fits into this second category. The third option involves moving away to a different location to pursue other livelihood strategies.

In a critique of Scoones's (1998) categorisation, Ellis wondered why migration was separated from livelihood diversification. He argued that migration could be a form of livelihood diversification strategy hence needs no isolation. In effect, he classified livelihood strategies into two on-farm activities such as crop cultivation, livestock rearing, and herding, and off-farm activities such as basket weaving, retail selling, migration and tourism. This classification is adopted for this study.

One important issue in the livelihood strategy analysis is the possible trade-offs. It is worth noting that no livelihood option including tourism occurs in isolation (Shen, 2009; Tao & Wall, 2009). Tourism-related livelihood options compete with other livelihood options over the same livelihood resources. Tao and Wall (2009) have indicated three possible outcomes: complement existing livelihood activities, conflict with existing livelihoods or both. The question within the context of this study, then, is what is the situation in Wli? Against the backdrop that people rarely engage in single livelihood activities, it is important that the exchanges which occur between tourism and other livelihood options are examined.

#### Livelihood Outcomes

At the end of the livelihood framework is outcomes which is the product of the interactions between the context, livelihood resources, vulnerability context, transforming structures and processes and livelihood strategies. These livelihood outcomes could also be seen as the livelihood objectives or goals that drive people's construction of various livelihoods. Looking at outcomes as a

product of a system helps us to understand people's priorities, why they do what they do and where the major constraints lie.

There are various indicators of livelihood outcomes. In DFID's framework, expected livelihood outcomes include more income, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability, improved food security and a more sustainable use of natural resource base. For Scoones (1998), it is the increased numbers of working day created, the poverty reduced, and the well-being and capabilities improved for the individual. Under sustainability issues, the outcomes include livelihood adaptation, enhancing resilience and ensuring natural resource base sustainability. Shen (2009) calls his livelihood outcomes a reflection of the dimensions of sustainability. They are sustainable economic development, sustainable social development, sustainable environmental development and sustainable institutional development.

The livelihood outcomes enumerated in the livelihood frameworks above can be categorised into two, namely, economic and non-economic. Of these, the economic outcomes pertain to jobs and income (Ashley et al, 2000) while the non-economic outcomes cut across social, cultural and environmental dimensions. This categorisation will be employed within the context of this study.

Beyond categorisation, the operationalization and measurement of livelihood outcomes are quite challenging. Scoones (2015) has identified that over the years, both quantitative and qualitative livelihood outcomes indicators have been used. The quantitative measures have for instance employed poverty lines, household living standard surveys, human development indicators, well-being assessments, quality of life measurements, employment and decent work

as benchmarks for assessment. On the other hand, the participatory and ethnographic approaches try to understand livelihoods from lived experience perspectives and focus on perceptions.

Because the focus of this study is on assessing people's lived experiences in the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli, a participatory approach is adopted. Within this, outcomes will be measured based on local residents' perceptions of tourism-related livelihood outcomes (Belisle & Hoy, 1980; Choi & Murray, 2010; Pizam, 1978).

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented a review of concepts, theories and frameworks underpinning the study. The chapter was in three sections. The first section looked at the concepts of development, livelihoods and rurality. The second section discussed and critiqued the application of the rational choice and social constructionism theories in understanding livelihood strategy choice behaviour, highlighting the role of utility maximisation and centrality of meanings in choice behaviour. The theory of structuration was also used to attempt an explanation of the reflexive relationship between structure and agency in livelihoods' construction. Selected livelihood frameworks: Sustainable Livelihood Framework, Sustainable Rural Livelihood Framework, Sustainable Tourism Livelihood Framework used in tourism livelihood studies were also examined. The third section: the study's conceptual framework, which is a fusion of the three livelihood frameworks, was lastly presented. The next chapter reviews the extant empirical literature on the dimensions of tourism as a livelihood strategy.

## CHAPTER THREE

### DIMENSIONS OF TOURISM AS A LIVELIHOOD STRATEGY

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of empirical studies relating to livelihood issues in general and, specifically, tourism as a livelihood strategy. The review focuses on issues such as tourism's place within the local economic development discourse, tourism-related livelihood activities, linkages between livelihood assets, institutional structures and the tourism-related livelihood option, as well as the vulnerability and expected outcomes of tourism-related livelihood activities. This chapter also aims at highlighting the dynamics of tourism as a livelihood strategy as it pertains to the existing body of knowledge on the subject.

#### **Tourism and Local Economic Development**

Globally, there is a renewed interest in local economic development in theory and practice. This phenomenon has been severally perceived as a reaction to the challenges posed by globalisation as well as the failure of top-down strategies to countries' quest to develop (Nel & Rogerson, 2005; Rogerson, 2002; Swinburn, 2006). Local economic development as the name suggests essentially aims at the development of local areas or communities as against an entire country or region through public-private partnerships. From the perspective of the Swinburn, Goga and Murphy (2006, p. 1), local economic development is a process through which the economic capacities of local areas are built through collaborations between 'public, private and not-for-profit

organizations in order to stimulate local economies and improve on the quality of life for all'. Thus, this process is expected to provide local areas with a platform or avenue to improve their capacity to economically develop on their own.

McNaughton (2012) identified two broad types of local economic development strategies (exogenous and endogenous strategies) which are often utilized within the context of development. For the exogenous strategies, the focus is on attracting businesses from outside the local areas by creating a conducive environment for them to flourish through giving tax incentives and reducing trade barriers (Jones, 2008). In contrast, the endogenous strategies are geared towards supporting local small businesses and creating favourable conditions for them to grow. Local assets and partnerships are considered very vital to local economic development efforts. According to Blakely (1989), this strategy is more effective in the creation of local wealth and jobs as compared to the exogenous strategies.

Several mentions have been made of the appropriateness of tourism as an endogenous local economic development strategy in the literature. (Gokovali, 2010; Holzner, 2011; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Lee & Chang, 2008; Liu, 2006; Pratt, 2011; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015; Sharpley & Vass, 2006; Snyman, 2012). There is a general acknowledgement that tourism has the potential to achieve the dual objectives of local economic development; that is, economic growth and improvement in livelihoods (The World Bank, 2015). According to researchers such as Rickard and Carmichael (1995) and Telfer and Wall (2000), tourism presents more opportunities for forward and backward linkages throughout the local economy because of its multi-sectoral nature. For

instance, Rickard and Carmichael (1995) in their study of hotels in Jamaica, found that the hotel industry made more use of local products which were supplied to them by the indigenous small-scale enterprises. Such an initiative, consequently, led to the expansion of these local enterprises. Similarly, Telfer and Wall (2000) reported that the Indonesian hotel industry's heavy reliance on local food producers for their food supplies has contributed to the expansion of their local farming industry.

Another dimension of the tourism-led local economic development strategy relates to its application within multiple contexts. Evidence suggests that this strategy can be useful for both stimulating urban regeneration as well as regenerating rural economies (Agarwal, 1999; Higham & Ritchie, 2001; McNaughton, 2012). In New Zealand for instance, Higham and Ritchie (2001) and McNaughton (2012) reported how festivals were used to combat economic declines across selected rural communities. In Ghana, as well, there have been a number of tourism-related developments geared toward local economic development. The primary objective of the sixteen (16) community-based ecotourism projects initiated across the country was to create opportunities for rural communities to earn income and improve upon their quality of life (Netherlands Development Organization - Ghana, 2004).

Nevertheless, cases of tourism's failure to adequately drive local development have also been reported (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Stronza & Godillo, 2008). The failed cases had been attributed to a myriad of factors including poor access to credit, improper implementation of tourism plans, low tourist arrivals, unavailability of services and facilities for tourists, ineffective co-operation between all stakeholders, poor access to the attraction, the absence

of a transparent profit sharing system, inadequate capacity of local residents to manage tourism, absence of community support for tourism, poor business development and tourism product marketing (Dieke, 2005; Rogerson, 2006; Trent, 2005). This has given rise to a growing group of scholars who are questioning the efficacy of tourism as a local economic development strategy (e.g. Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Miller, 2008; Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008; Sebele, 2010; Stronza & Godillo, 2008).

Although there is an extensive existing body of knowledge relating to tourism and local economic development, one area which remains largely unexamined is tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy. Currently, the research agenda in connection with tourism-led local economic development is dominated by nine major themes; governance, community involvement, resource allocation, distribution of cost and benefits, concept of partnership, sustainability, relationship of tourism with other economic sectors, monitoring and poverty alleviation (Rogerson, 2006). Few studies which have ventured into this area (Ahebwa, 2012; Mbaiwa, 2008; Shen, 2009; Tao, 2006) have principally tackled issues of tourism livelihood trajectories.

From the above literature reviewed, tourism's potentials as a local economic development strategy have been established. Another salient point that has been highlighted is the applicability of tourism-led strategies in multiple contexts. As more communities turn to tourism development and more individuals diversify their livelihood mix to include tourism (Ashley & Roe, 1998), there is a need for critical research attention to be paid to its adoption as a livelihood strategy. This will advance the understanding of the dynamics underlying this livelihood option.

### **Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities**

Livelihood activities play an important role in people's pursuit of a living. These activities serve as a medium through which income or support is gained in order to meet people's range of needs (Abdalla, 2013; Carney, 1998; Scoones, 1998). The livelihood literature points to two main categories of livelihood activities: on-farm activities and off-farm activities (Chambers & Conway, 1992).

Tourism-related livelihood activities fall within the off-farm livelihood options and have been the subject of several studies (Ashley, 2000; Iorio & Corsale, 2010; Mbaiwa, 2008; Shen, 2009). Most of the activities reported in these studies centred on the provision of accommodation, food and beverage, guided services, entertainment, souvenir production and support services such as construction, and farming for tourism. Shen (2009), for instance, reported that local residents in selected communities in China were engaged in the provision of food, transportation and souvenirs to tourists as well as farming for tourism purposes. Similarly, Mbaiwa (2008) noted that the production and sale of crafts, the sale of local food and beverages, wage labour in the tourism industry, cultural performances, tour guiding and security services were some of the tourism-related activities of residents in Botswana.

A further examination of the empirical studies on tourism-related livelihood activities seems to point to the fact that most often, these activities are a reflection of existing traditional economic activities in the areas. This may be explained with Shen's (2009) assertion that most often it is the non-tourism related livelihood activities which are transformed into tourism-related livelihood activities especially if tourism is a later introduction into the

livelihood mix. Fabinyi (2010) reported that in the fishing community of Coron in Indonesia, most of the tourism-related livelihood activities were water related. During the tourist seasons, some of the fishermen engaged in transporting tourists with their boats on beach hopping expeditions. Others also served as assistants on dive boats and suppliers of fish to hospitality enterprises. Similarly, Shinde (2010) reported that in India, religious temple performers in Vrindavan were now hosting out of temple commercialised performances for tourists. The farm tourism enterprises studied by Torres (2003) and Das and Rainey (2010) were all built around existing farms. This phenomenon may be as a result of the ease of transfer of skills, knowledge, and capacity from the traditional economic activities to tourism (Ashley, 2000). This situation enables tourism livelihood activities to complement existing livelihood options, which is a desirable situation.

In spite of this trend, there are other tourism-related activities which are foreign to the local residents but equally meet the needs and aspirations of the intended beneficiaries. For instance, the decline in the marine resources of Newfoundland and Iceland forced these Islands to turn to tourism development to regenerate their local economies. Newfoundland went into tourism promotion based on hunting while Iceland promoted its glaciers, thermal springs and Vikings' heritage. People changed from being fishermen to tour guides in both cases (Baum, 1999). In Botswana, Mbaiwa (2008) indicates that the community-based natural resource management programme implemented in the Okavango Delta led to the modernisation of traditional livelihood activities. Many local residents abandoned their hunting and gathering related livelihood activities for paid jobs in the local tourism industry. Many of such people

indicated an improvement in their well-being after they adopted the new livelihood activities. This, therefore, is suggestive of the fact that seeking answers to whether tourism complements existing livelihood activities or not may not be enough. The focus should also be on whether individuals or communities have the capacity to fully explore tourism-related activities regardless of the form they take and whether it meets their priorities, needs and aspirations (Eder, 2008) or not.

Then there is the third scenario, where tourism activities shift attention from or conflict with existing livelihood activities. A report from Mbaiwa and Stronza (2010) on tourism activities in the Okavango Delta, Botswana indicates that the wildlife-based tourism project in the area caused a shift from the traditional livelihood activities to a cash-based economy driven by tourism. Household interviews revealed that hunting, gathering, crop and livestock farming, which were the main livelihood activities were drastically affected by tourism development.

Majanen (2007) also reported on resource use conflicts in Mabini and Tingloy in the Philippines between fishing and marine conservation. Likewise, Mbaiwa (1999) reported on resource conflicts between the Basarwa settlements and the Chone National Park and The Moremi Game reserve over access to resource use (Mbaiwa, 1999). In Ghana, such conflicts also exist between the communities surrounding the Kakum National Park and the park as well (Appiah-Opoku, 2011).

Within the livelihood context, people rarely rely on single livelihood options. Hence, tourism-related livelihood activities are added to the livelihood mix. Whether tourism becomes a dominant or minor livelihood option for local

residents is influenced by a myriad of factors which come down to issues of opportunities, constraints and preferences (Scoones, 1998). Tourism-related livelihood options are often adopted as a diversification strategy. Although the empirical studies on tourism-related livelihood activities did not directly address the issue of the position of tourism within the livelihood mix, it can be inferred from the findings that the aim of the diversification may determine whether or not it will be a major or minor livelihood option (Ellis, 1998).

There have been documented cases where tourism was adopted to replace declining livelihood options (Baum, 1999; Fabinyi, 2010; Flyman, 2003) or were added in order to diversify individual/household/community incomes (Ahebwa, 2012; Glavovic & Boonzaier, 2007; Sharpley & Vass, 2006; Tao, 2006). According to Baum (1999), tourism served as an alternative to the declining fishing industry in Iceland and Newfoundland, forcing local residents to turn to tour guiding around the Viking Island and theatrical and musical representations of the Vikings. On the other hand, Sharpley and Vass (2006) reported that farmers embarking on farm tourism in north-eastern England were doing so because of the extra income that could be gained from it. This implies that, depending on how crucial ensuring financial earnings from tourism is to the farmers, tourism becomes either a major or minor livelihood option.

The review of empirical findings in the area of tourism-related livelihood activities has presented one key area which requires further studies. That is the position of tourism vis-à-vis other livelihood activities in the livelihood mix of individuals.

### **Livelihood Assets and Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities**

Livelihood assets have been described as the building blocks of livelihood strategies (DFID, 1999). In other words, they are the resources (tangible and intangible) which people use to construct their livelihoods. There is a debate over what the constituents of the livelihood assets should be. Nevertheless, the five types commonly referred to in the literature are human, social, physical, natural, and financial resources (Scoones, 1998). Other authors are of the view that, these five assets should be expanded to include attraction capital (Shen, 2009), cultural capital (Tao, 2006), information capital (Odero, 2006), and spiritual capital (Myers, 2011).

Two important domains key to livelihood assets are the issues of availability and access. In the area of tourism livelihood research, some empirical studies have established that the relationship between livelihood assets and tourism activities is not unidimensional (Ashley, 2000, Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). That is to say, that though the availability and access to livelihood assets influence the type of tourism-related livelihood activities that individuals can construct, the process of tourism development also influences the availability and access to these livelihood assets negatively or positively.

The most explored livelihood asset within the tourism context is the social capital. Social capital is based on relationships or associations and has three main thrusts: trust, reciprocity and cooperation (Flora, 2004). Empirical studies regarding this asset have looked at it from two main perspectives; bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Putman (1993) describes the bonding social capital as networks and relationships that occur internally

especially within communities while the bridging social capital refers to relationships with groups and institutions outside the community.

In India, the growth in tourism-related enterprises was underlined by a form of bridging social capital between the main stakeholders. Traditional temple performers were selected based on their relationships with the spiritual heads of the temples (Shinde, 2010). In another vein, Jones (2005) reported that in Tumani Tenda in the Gambia, the camp's affiliations with external organisations such as livestock services and association of small-scale enterprises represented a form of bridging social capital that led to the improvement in the well-being of the camp. Thus, it is argued that in the context of tourism as a local economic development, where partnerships are considered highly important for the achievement of its desired goals, there must be a balance between both bonding and bridging social capitals available to the stakeholders (Flora, 2004; Okazaki, 2008). On the other hand, Ashley (2000) asserts that the refusal of four families within the Salambala Conservancy in Namibia to move out of the protected tourism area led to conflicts with other members of the community who had moved out of the area. This destroyed whatever bridging social capital those four families enjoyed with the rest of their community.

The natural capital is often considered as an economic resource upon which the tourism industry strives (Butcher, 2006). It is made up of the natural resources on which livelihoods can be built. Most of the tourism-conservation discussions are underlined by issues relating to this asset. In rural areas especially, livelihoods are highly dependent on natural capital. However, the introduction of tourism into such areas can restrict local residents' access to this

important asset. In the early 1990s when the national parks in Kenya were established, the Maasai people were not permitted to allow their livestock to graze in the Maasai Mara and Samburu reserves (Zeppel, 2006). The creation of the Kakum National Park in Ghana also had a similar effect on the surrounding communities since restrictions were placed on wood-gathering and hunting activities within the protected area (Akyeampong, 2011; Eshun, 2011), therefore threatening their livelihoods in the process.

Human capital is represented by the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies. For most people, it is their available skills and knowledge that influences the kind of activities they can embark on. Tosun (1999) attributed communities' inability to actively participate in tourism development to their lacking of adequate skills to do so. People can only do what their skills and knowledge permit them to do. For fishermen in the Philippines, their resolve to only engage in fishing-related tourism activities is due to their existing knowledge in the fishing industry (Fabinyi, 2010). Tourism has also contributed to people's human capital through training programmes and workshops. Moeketse's (2006) study in Lesotho revealed that locals who worked at the tourist lodge and handicraft shop in Malealea received training which covered literacy and numeracy, tourism, business skills, natural resource management and degradation. This was a boost to their human capital.

The physical capital represents the infrastructure which supports livelihoods. In tourism, the physical capital provides an enabling environment for the tourism industry and livelihoods. The physical capital may be publicly or privately owned and can be channelled into income generating activities.

Shen (2009) identified that vehicles were the most important tool in the mountainous Guanxing, China. Due to tourism, people modified or developed their tri-cars to carry passengers. In Romania, a number of families converted their family properties or rooms into homestays to accommodate tourists (Iorio & Corsale, 2010).

In terms of tourism's influence on physical capital, Ross and Wall's (1999) investigation in Bogani and Tangkoko; remote local communities near protected areas in Indonesia, revealed that these local communities have seen an improvement in their transportation and communication infrastructure. Similarly, in Brazil, some of the eco-lodges had phones, radios, canoes, boats and vehicles which local residents were permitted to use during emergencies. Operators of the eco-lodges frequently transported locally produced foodstuffs to the market for the local residents and in addition provided electricity from their generators to the communities for at least a few hours each day (Stronza, 2007).

The financial capital, another livelihood asset, is valued in terms of savings, loans, remittances, bank deposits, cash and physical assets which can be transformed into financial capital when needed. This asset is very crucial to all other assets and largely determines what kind of tourism-related livelihood activities people can invest in. In the case of Tafi Atome, Ghana, those who had access to financial assets were able to provide goods and services such as local crafts and consumables to the tourists (Afenyo, 2011). The others are motivated to engage in tourism in order to build this important capital asset. A typical example of this is seen in Sharpley and Vass's (2006) study in north-eastern

England where farmers were diversifying to tourism in order to earn more income and build their financial capital.

### **Transformation Structures/Processes and Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities**

Institutional structures at the macro and micro levels of the society largely influence how livelihoods are constructed. These structures are represented by organisations, policies and legislation. According to DFID (1999) and Hobley and Shields (2000), these structures mainly regulate access to assets and invariably affect livelihood outcomes.

Empirical studies on institutional structures and its implication for tourism-related livelihoods abound (e.g. Ahebwa, 2012; Glavovic & Boonzaier, 2007; Hall, 2005; Hobley & Shields, 2000) and are often situated within the structure-agency debate. The concentrations of findings have been on the effects of these institutions on access to assets and their ultimate effect on livelihood constructions and outcomes. To Hobley and Shields (2000), the livelihood opportunities available to individuals are highly conditioned by the institutional environment in which they operate.

First of all, a number of studies have shown how institutional structures open up or restrict access to livelihood assets. At the macro level, Telfer and Sharpley (2008) recognise the state, represented by government ministries, agencies and corporations, as an essential actor in tourism development. To Hall (2005), it is the policies and regulations of this actor that shape the economic and regulatory structure of the tourism industry. Telfer and Sharpley (2008) reported that the Mexican government had instituted a national tourism

development fund. Since it was the government's policy to embark upon resort developments, a bulk of the funds was available to foreign private investors. This was because the local investors were not considered to have the kind of capacity needed for the project. Therefore, this financial capital was largely out of reach to local developers.

In another study in India, EQUATION (2010) reported how government directives on tourism development had undermined the protection of the fundamental human rights of local communities. Stating the example of Goa to illustrate their point, they indicated that the state (government) amended the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification of 1991 to decrease the size of the protected zone and permit foreign investors to put up resorts along the coast area. Many coastal communities whose livelihoods depended on the coastal resources, lost access to beaches to the tourism industry. Similarly, in Lavasa, a governmental agency in charge of tourism development in the area forcefully and cheaply acquired the lands of about 18 villages for their project. This led to the loss of livelihoods of the villagers. Other similar cases were reported in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

At the micro or community level, there are institutional structures, traditions and values which provide some sort of policy and legislative framework that shape the construction of people's livelihoods. Tao (2006) provided contrasting evidence from two Taiwanese communities on how community-level institutional structure can open or restrict access to livelihood assets within the context of tourism development. The Cou community had a tradition known as the spirit of sharing which emphasised strong community cohesion. This influenced the development of tourism as a common property

resource accessible to all but owned by none. However, in the Chauhan community, where this tradition did not exist, tourism development was controlled by a few people within the community, maximising their individual interests to the detriment of the whole community.

Ahebwa (2012) who did an assessment of tourism-related policy interventions at the Bwindi Impenetrable National Park in Uganda stated that the manner in which resources were deployed and utilised within the park were all fashioned around the rules enshrined in the Buhoma-Mukono Community Development Association constitution. A similar scenario was also noted in Tafi Atome where the sharing of benefits was stipulated in the community's tourism project constitution (Afenyo, 2011).

Given the above review, the influence of institutional structures (formal and informal policies, procedures, organizational structures, traditions, values, and customs) in the construction of livelihoods cannot be underestimated. Irrespective of where these structures exist, be it at the macro or micro level of the society, the review has shown that they shape people's access to livelihood assets, choice of livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. Based on this, tourism requires a strong positive institutional support if it is to make an impact as a livelihood strategy. Where the support exists on paper, much focus must be placed on its effective implementation.

One major drawback in the existing literature is the skewness of empirical evidence which only shows the influence of these transformational structures and processes on tourism livelihoods. What about the power of agency to shape and reconstitute these structures and processes and, hence, modify their effect on tourism livelihoods?

### **Vulnerability Issues and Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities**

Baker and Coulter (2007, p. 249) describe tourism as ‘a risky strategy, prone to fluctuations, often with the minimum of warning’. Their assertion has been buttressed by several documented evidences of tourism’s vulnerability to a wide range of shocks and stressors (health scares, natural disasters, terrorism, economic recession, climate change, seasonality) which can and do threaten the sustainability of tourism livelihoods (e.g. Baker & Coulter, 2007; Baum & Hagen, 1999; Moreno & Becken, 2009; Nyaupane & Chhetri, 2009; Wall, 2007). While the stressors are more predictable, the shocks are not.

For instance, Baker and Coulter (2007) cited the 2002 Bali bombing as an example to illustrate the vulnerability of tourism to terrorism. The event led to many tourists leaving the country. Consequently, accommodation occupancy rates fell from 75% to 14% as major tour operators withdrew their tour programmes from Bali. Local residents who were mainly into beach vending experienced a sharp decline in their incomes, and soon after, many of them were rendered jobless. Similarly, Pratt (2003) reported that the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the twin towers in the United States of America negatively affected inbound tourism to Jamaica and the Bahamas. As hotel occupancy rates fell drastically, most accommodation facilities were forced to lay off a significant number of their employees.

In terms of health scares, the foot and mouth disease outbreak in the United Kingdom led to the cancellation of a number of farm-based rural leisure activities. According to Baxter and Bowen (2004), government’s restriction of access to rural areas where the outbreak was most severe, negatively affected the income and jobs in the country’s accommodation, food and beverage and

transportation sub-sectors'. In another instance, Mason, Grabowski and Du (2005) looked at the risk posed by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome to tourism. They reported a decline in inbound travels to affected areas such as the Guangdong province of China, Hong Kong and Thailand. Many tour operators withdrew their clients from China as trade fairs were cancelled. Hotel occupancy rates fell as low as 10% in Hong Kong and Thailand lost over 70% of its tourism businesses.

Natural disasters also pose substantial risks to tourism livelihoods. In Calgaro and Lloyd's (2008) study of the effects of the 2004 tsunami disaster on the Khao Lak community in Thailand, it was revealed that the tsunami destroyed about 90% of all hotel rooms in the country. Workers who survived the disaster were left without an alternative source of income. Sharpley (2005) in a similar study found that the disaster had led to a total destruction of the city of Banda Aceh in Sumatra. In another instance, Huan, Beaman and Shelby (2004) recounted that Taiwan's frequent earthquakes have become a constant reminder of how vulnerable tourism livelihoods are to natural disasters. The enormous earthquake which occurred in 1999 led to the collapse of many tourism infrastructures and it negatively affected several tourism-related livelihood activities.

Studies including Belle and Bramwell (2005), Nyaupane and Chhetri (2009) and Richardson and Witkowski (2010) have documented the threats of climate change, especially to nature-based tourism. Other risks that have been explored within the tourism context include conflicts (Clements & Georgiou, 1998; Fletcher & Morakabati, 2008; Ioannides & Apostolopoulos, 1999), economic recessions (Sheldon & Dwyer, 2010; Smeral, 2009; Song & Lin,

2010) and seasonality (Baum & Hagen, 1999; Dieke, 2005; Getz & Nilsson, 2004).

Another aspect of the tourism-vulnerability discourse which has been the focus of a significant amount of empirical studies is people's responses to these livelihood shocks and stresses. Ellis (1998) and Helmore and Singh (2001) have asserted that in times of livelihood crises, people adopt diverse response strategies depending upon their capacity, availability of livelihood assets needed to cope or adapt, institutional support, diversity of individual or community skills, contemporary knowledge and technology. Most often, people adopt either coping strategies which are short-term in nature or opt for an adaptive mechanism which is long-term in nature. At other times, they combine both strategies (Ellis, 1998; Getz & Nilsson; 2004; Kareithi, 2003; Tao, 2006). The examples cited below are not conclusive on the range of response strategies adopted in dealing with tourism vulnerabilities.

In Bali, beach vendors whose livelihoods were destroyed as a result of the 2002 bombings resorted to working for other tourism-related enterprises for a commission. Others went into new tourism-related ventures such as 'tourism transport' where they used their motorbikes to transport tourists around town (Baker & Coulter, 2007). In another instance, the decline of tourism in the Narok district of Kenya led to local residents adopting different strategies depending on the severity of the effect of the decline on their livelihoods. In effect, many small-scale artefact producers merged their businesses. Through the mergers, they were able to raise money for production and export of their products to larger tourism centres, something individual businesses could not

have afforded. Others also abandoned tourism totally and took to alternative livelihood activities such as livestock rearing, farming and carpentry.

Temporary closure of tourism businesses during the lean season as a coping strategy has also been severally identified in the literature. Getz and Nilsson (2004) for example, explored the coping strategies of family businesses to seasonality in tourist demand in Bornholm, Denmark. They reported that during the lean season when many tourism-related family businesses close down, people shifted to their non-tourism-related activities for survival. Similar trends were also reported in the Gambia by Dieke (1993). During the rainy season, most hotel partially close down and lay off their casual workers.

In another study on adaptive strategies in the tourism industry, Scott, de Freitas and Matzarakis (2008) using the skiing industry as an example, reported that some ski resorts were using technologies such as snowmaking systems, slope development and cloud seeding to adapt to the effect of climate change on snow productions which is this industry's vital natural resource. These technologies produced more snow and created good quality slopes for skiing.

In the same vein, Green (2008) also reported on preservation of natural ecosystems as an adaptation strategy against natural disasters. After the 2004 Asian tsunami, it was reported that countries such as Sri Lanka which had depleted their mangroves and coral reefs were badly affected by the disaster. The Maldives islands, however, were less affected by the disaster because their natural coastal protective layers were largely intact. Consequently, countries in this sub-region are now working towards the preservation of their natural ecosystems.

Product diversification as a coping or adaptive strategy is also common. Scott, de Freitas and Matzarakis (2008) stated that the Thailand Tourism Authority had developed two main types of attraction for the tourist season. During the peak season, climate-related attractions are promoted. But in the lean season, the focus is shifted to non-climate related attractions such as health and wellness spa, Thai culture and indoor entertainment.

In all, empirical studies on tourism livelihood vulnerabilities have looked at the phenomenon from two main perspectives. This is reflected in the findings which mainly look at the type and effects of shocks and stressors on tourism livelihoods as well as people's (individuals, communities, governments) responses to these threats. The review has also shown that although people have limited or no control over the occurrences of these shocks and stressors, they can control its effects on their livelihoods through the kind of coping or adaptive strategies they adopt to deal with them. Thus, attention needs to be focused on improving the capacity of people (individuals, households, communities, regions) towards making tourism-related livelihoods more resilient to shocks and stressors.

### **Tourism-Related Livelihood Outcomes**

Livelihood outcomes play an important role in aiding our understanding of why people pursue specific livelihood strategies. They may be regarded as the results, achievements or outputs of livelihood strategies (DFID, 1999). To Shen (2009), livelihood outcomes may also be seen as measurement indicators of livelihood's effectiveness and efficiency. Throughout the available literature, livelihood outcomes have been categorised similarly although the wordings are

different. Drawing from DFID (1999), Scoones (1998) and Shen (2009) conceptualisation of livelihood outcomes, the outcomes can be categorised into economically related and non-economically related outcomes.

#### Economically Related Livelihood Outcomes

The generation of cash income has been severally linked to people's livelihood priorities and livelihood outcomes. According to Ashley (2000), tourism generates four types of income; wages from direct tourism employment, income from indirect tourism employment, profit from individually owned tourism enterprises and income from community-based tourism enterprises.

Liu (2006) reported that transforming existing residences into home-stay facilities is a common strategy for generating extra household income for rural dwellers in Malaysia. By the end of the year 2000, there were 612 homestay operators registered in 31 Malay villages. Similarly, Akyeampong (2011) noted that local residents around the Kakum National Park in Ghana made money by being members of the bamboo orchestra or by producing and selling local crafts. Sebele (2010) equally reported that in Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust of Botswana, income opportunities were created for small-scale informal sector operators to grow through the sourcing of locally available goods and services. Services sourced included welding, thatching grass, roofing poles, petrol and food. In the Gambia, a number of hotels sourced fresh fruits and vegetables from local groups of women (Bah & Goodwin, 2003).

Apart from income, support to livelihoods achieved through infrastructural development has also been identified. Wallace and Pierce's (1996) investigation in Amazonas, Brazil revealed that some of the eco-lodges

had phones, radios, canoes, boats and vehicles which local residents were permitted to use during emergencies. Operators of the eco-lodges frequently transported locally produced foodstuffs to the market for the local residents and in addition provided electricity from their generators to the communities for at least a few hours each day. Shen (2009) as well reported on improvements of public infrastructure especially roads due to tourism development in Guanxing, China. The footpath which was the access route to the community had been replaced with a tarred road as water supply and sanitary conditions had also seen an improvement.

#### Non-Economically Related Livelihood Outcomes

Ashley et al (2000) have cautioned that livelihood outcome assessments should not only concentrate on economic outcomes such as income and jobs to the detriment of the non-economic outcomes. Non-economic livelihood outcomes according to Jamieson, Goodwin and Edmunds (2004) could take the form of capacity building, improvement in general well-being, community pride and status as well as reduction in the vulnerability of livelihoods.

In Almeyda, Broadbent, Wyman and Durham (2010) work in the Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica, improvement in well-being was one major livelihood outcome reported by households who were engaged in tourism development. The households interviewed reported that there has been an improvement in their well-being through making new friends and expanding their circles of network, seeing themselves as productive household members, and having broader experience in managing people.

Again, the empowerment of local residents, and the democratisation of the tourism development process were the tourism-related livelihood outcomes reported by local residents of Okavango Delta in Botswana (Mbaiwa & Stronza, 2010). In fact, the ability of people in the three villages to agree in meetings on how to use the income they generate from tourism development was considered a great stride. Again, local residents felt empowered through the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills. This translated into the strengthening of their social and human capitals. The outcome was that local residents had more control over their lives and the development in their communities.

Regarding the environmentally-related livelihood outcomes, the emphasis is on the sustainability of the natural resource base in the midst of its use as a base of a livelihood option. This has been explored from two main perspectives. The first is from the point of view of the protection of the natural resource for future use and the second, the perception and attitude of users (local residents) towards the natural resource (Afenyo, 2011; Amuquandoh, 2010; Stronza & Pegas, 2008).

Tourism has contributed to the conservation and preservation of natural areas, plants and animal species (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). In East and South Africa, more than 207, 200 km<sup>2</sup> of forest land, having one of the largest wildlife populations in the world, have been set aside as national parks (Mathieson & Wall, 1982). A number of plant and animal species have, consequently, been conserved. Other example are the sea turtle conservation ongoing in Brazil (Stronza & Pêgas, 2008) and whale shark conservation in Seychelles (Rowat & Engelhardt, 2007). In Ghana, some fauna have been protected through a number of ecotourism projects. Examples are the hippopotamus, mona monkeys,

western Sitatunga, white-necked rockfowl and manatee (Nature Conservation and Research Centre, 2006).

Again, institutional reforms to regulate attitude towards natural resources have also been documented. According to Wunder (2000), local residents in Zabalo in Ecuador acknowledged that overhunting of certain mammals was a threat not only to the traditional resource base but also to tourism. Hence a communal zoning scheme was adopted which set monthly hunting quotas. A similar thing was identified by Afenyo (2011) within a community-based ecotourism project in Ghana (Tafi Atome) where the local community had put measures in place to protect their natural resource base. To illustrate their commitment to protecting their environment, the community formulated bye-laws to regulate residents' behaviour. Some of these include no hunting in the forest, no bush burning, no defecating in the forest, no littering in the community, no cutting down of trees in the forest and no dumping of rubbish in the forest.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented a review of the empirical findings on the various dimension of tourism as a livelihood strategy. The review started with a discussion on the role of tourism in local economic development. This was followed by a review of findings relating to the nature of tourism-related livelihood activities, the relationship between livelihood assets and the tourism-related livelihood option, the role of transformational structures and processes in shaping the tourism-related livelihood option, vulnerability issues and tourism livelihoods, and tourism-related livelihood outcomes. The next chapter

looks at the methodology adopted for this study. It addresses issues of the study context, study design, sampling procedures, data collection, data processing and analysis and ethical issues.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter presents a description of the research design and methods employed in conducting the study. Issues specifically addressed include a profile of the study area, research philosophy, study design, data and sources, target population, sampling procedures, methods of data collection, research instruments, fieldwork issues, data processing and analysis and ethical considerations.

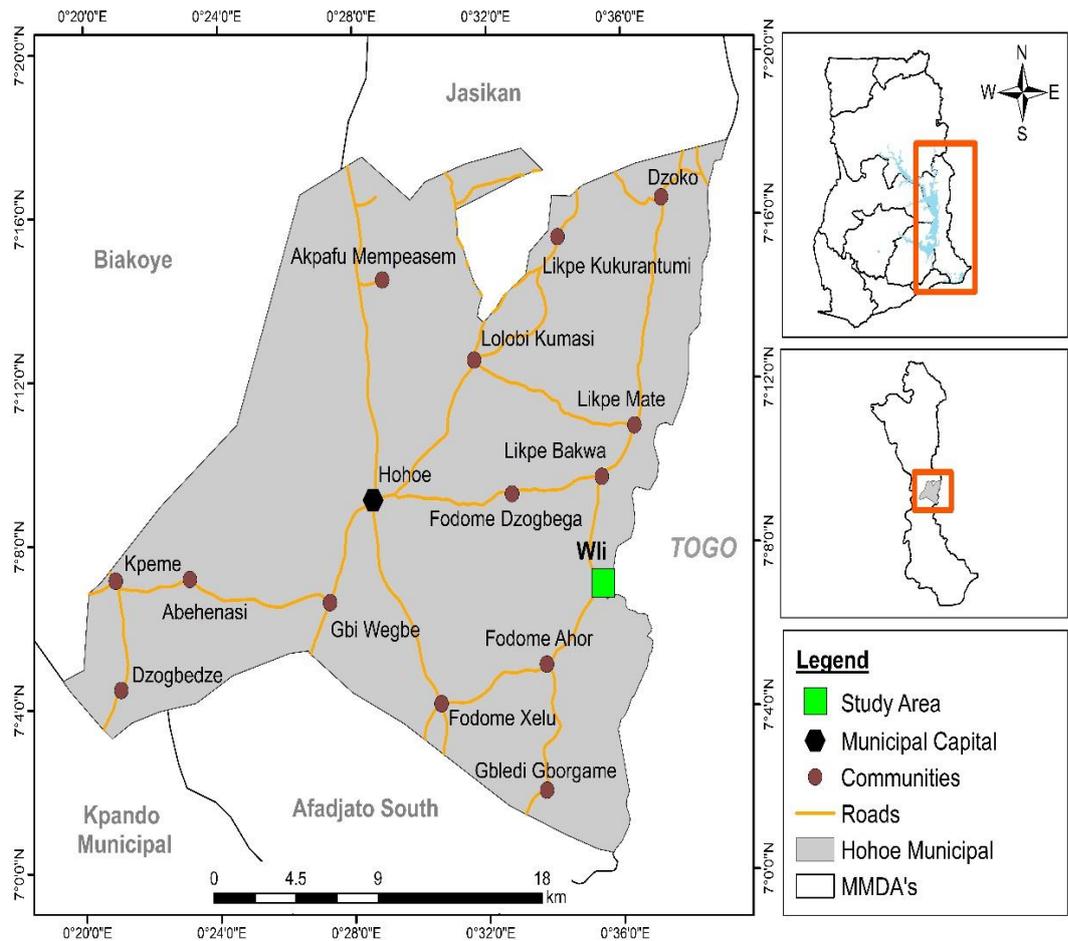
#### Profile of Study Area

##### Location and Physical Features

The study area, Wli, is located within the Hohoe Municipality of Ghana. The municipality shares borders with the Kpando Municipality to the southwest, Afadjato South District to the southeast, Biakoye District to the northeast, the Jasikan District to the north and the Republic of Togo to the east. Wli is one of the communities on the Ghana–Togo border with an immigration post. Its close proximity to Togo has made it an important post for cross-border trading and transitions. In terms of distance, the community is approximately 213 kilometres from Accra and 78 kilometres from Ho the national capital and regional capitals respectively. It is situated between latitudes 6°94'N and 7°20'N and longitudes 0°20'E and 0°35'.E.

The area (Figure 5) is within the wet semi-equatorial climatic zone with annual rainfall ranging between 1.016 mm and 1.210 mm with quite

unpredictable rainy seasons. A number of streams flow through the community. Some are perennial and others are not. River Agumatsa is the largest of all the water bodies in the community and it is also the main source of water for the community as well as the Wli waterfall.



**Figure 5: Map of the Study Area**

Source: Cartography and Remote Sensing Unit of the Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast (2017)

The area is also within the forest-savannah transitional ecological zone; a zone abundant in various natural resources suitable for tourism development. On the north-eastern side of the study area is the Akwapim Togo range which

extends to Western Nigeria. This range has the highest altitude in the country and is home to Mt. Afadja, the highest point in Ghana (880.3 meters above sea level) and the Wli waterfalls which is the highest waterfall (about 80 meters) in West Africa. The terrain of the area is generally undulating (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014; Hohoe Municipal Assembly, 2004).

#### Population Size, Composition and Literacy Rate

According to the 2010 population and housing census, Wli has a total population of about 3,057 with a sex distribution of males constituting 48.6% of the population and the females accounting for the remaining 51.4% (Ghana Statistical Services, 2014). The majority of the population (87.07%) are below 60 years. This implies that the community has a potentially large economically active population and tourism can serve as an alternative livelihood activity for them.

The 2010 population and housing census report further indicated that literacy rate is high (88.3%) in the Hohoe municipality. About 70.5 percent of the total population can speak, read and write both English and Ghanaian languages (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014).

#### Governance and Social Structure

Traditionally, the Wli area is made up of three (3) indigenous communities (Afegame, Agorviefe and Todzi) and three (3) settler communities (Dzogbega, Todome and Sorhefiakope). In this study, the entire area is referred to as Wli but the focus is on Afegame and Agorviefe because these are the places

where the tourism activities are concentrated. Politically, the Hohoe Municipal Assembly has the administrative oversight over the area.

Traditionally, the chieftaincy institution is the highest level of traditional authority in Wli. The three indigenous communities of Wli constitute an autonomous traditional area governed by a set of traditional rules and regulations, administered by the Chiefs and other traditional leaders. The hierarchy of chiefs is headed by the occupant of the paramount stool. Apart from the paramount chief and two divisional chiefs, each of the three townships has a hierarchy of traditional sub-chiefs. There is a queen mother as the leader of the women in each town. Each of the settler communities has a leader who is answerable to the paramount chief. The chiefs are the custodians of the communal lands and resources found on them. This governance structure could provide opportunities and limitations for the construction of livelihood activities around tourism in Wli.

The people of Wli are patrilineal. This means, children born to a family belongs to the father's family. Inheritance also follows the same order. In addition, social cohesion is an important feature of their traditional way of life. This, they exhibit, through communal living, the extended family system and traditional ceremonies such as festivals and rites of passage (Mwakikagile, 2017). This social cohesion could be a good avenue for harnessing social capital for livelihood pursuits such as tourism. Although the people of Wli are patrilineal, women play a major role in providing for their families. It is a common phenomenon to see women engaged in different kinds of economic activities in the community. Tourism may therefore provide them with more

opportunities for economic empowerment in order to effectively provide for their families.

#### Economic Activities

Wli is, largely, an agrarian community well noted for the cultivation of tree crops such as cocoa, coffee and oil palm in addition to other crops such as maize, plantain, banana, cassava and cocoyam. Livestock rearing is also popular in the community. The main non-agriculture activity in the area is stone cracking and sand mining. Others are also engaged in petty trading and carting goods across the border to and from Togo. The popularity of the Wli waterfalls and Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary as tourism attractions has led to the emergence of tourism-related economic activities such as guiding services, accommodation services, and food and beverage operations in the community.

Butler (1980) developed the tourist area life cycle which recognizes that tourist areas go through an evolution. Each stage has implications for the form tourism takes, as well as the opportunities and challenges it presents. Wli is currently at the involvement stage. A tourist season has emerged in the community. In addition, there is high involvement of local residents in providing services primarily for tourists as well as the existence of some level of tourism organisation in the community (Butler, 1980).

The choice of Wli as the case study area was premised on three criteria: it is a rural tourist destination, it has evidence of multiple tourism-related livelihood activities and researcher's familiarity with the local language spoken in the area. The tourist attractions in Wli (Wli waterfalls, Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary, Akwapim Togo range) are very popular among domestic and

international tourists. In fact, this perennial waterfall is the most visited attraction in the Volta region of Ghana and is open to visitors all year round (Ministry of Tourism, 2013). Tourist arrivals to the area for the period January to November, 2016 as presented in Table 2 further attest to the popularity of the waterfall. The fall has an estimated height of 800 meters (Forestry Commission of Ghana, 2009) and consists of two parts, the lower fall which is easily accessible and a much higher difficult to access upper fall.

Table 2 – *Tourist Arrivals to Wli (January - November, 2016)*

| Month      | Arrivals |
|------------|----------|
| January*   | 1,429    |
| February   | 1310     |
| March*     | 3627     |
| April*     | 1909     |
| May*       | 1555     |
| June       | 1789     |
| July*      | 4179     |
| August     | 2697     |
| September* | 1180     |
| October    | 1336     |
| November   | 1081     |

\*Figure excludes tourist arrivals on public holidays

Source: Field survey, Afenyo (2016)

Aside the waterfall, the Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary, which covers an estimated area of about 3km<sup>2</sup>, is home to about 220 bird species, 400 butterfly species as well as straw-coloured fruit bats, monkeys and antelopes. The approximately one hour hike to the falls through the wildlife sanctuary offers

visitors the opportunity to enjoy nature (Forestry Commission of Ghana, 2009; Hohoe Municipal Assembly, 2006).

In addition, there have been conscious efforts on the part of the community to develop tourism and this has resulted in the emergence of a recognisable local tourism industry. Over time, some local residents have taken advantage of the opportunities presented by this industry and have diversified their livelihood activities to include tourism activities. Currently, local residents are engaged in accommodation and food and beverage operations, souvenir trade and guiding services. This, therefore, presents a unique case for the assessment of local residents' experiences with tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy.

Finally, the researcher's familiarity with the local language spoken in the area influenced the selection of the area for the study. This was to enable the researcher personally collect and interpret the field data without relying on a third person (party) which potentially could affect the nature and quality of the data needed for the study.

### **Research Philosophy**

The social constructivist paradigm was adopted for the study. This paradigm lays emphasis on the subjectivity of knowledge. It has the basic assumption that people, in their search for an understanding of their world, develop subjective meanings about objects and things out of their social interactions (Andrews, 2012; Burr, 2003). According to Creswell (2008, p. 8), the meanings derived from such interactions are "varied and multiple leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing

meanings into a few categories or ideas” in order to make some sense out of them.

The research focus under this paradigm gave precedence to study participants’ views of the phenomenon under investigation and the study context (Creswell, 2008). Qualitative research designs underline this philosophy. The focus of qualitative research is on participants’ perceptions and experiences and the way they make sense of their lives (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2010). The attempt is therefore to understand not one but multiple realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The study was situated within this paradigm because of its focus on exploring the experiences of persons engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli and its implication for the advancement of tourism as a livelihood strategy in the community. The study aimed at capturing the varied meanings study participants associate with tourism due to their experiences and their resultant actions towards it. The philosophical assumptions of social constructivist paradigm provided a valuable frame to guide the achievement of the study’s objectives. Furthermore, the choice of the social constructivist paradigm was consistent with previous studies which have looked at experiences associated with the tourism phenomenon (Hiamey, 2017; Ryan & Gu, 2010; Wang, 1999).

### **Study Design**

In keeping with the research paradigm (social constructivism) and the qualitative research approach guiding the study, the case study design was employed in this study. Specifically, the study employed the embedded single

case design (Yin, 2003). This was because the study focused on a single community (Wli) but with two units of analysis (individuals engaged in tier 1 tourism businesses and representatives of institutions and organisations).

The case study design according to Creswell (2008, p. 73) involves “the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system. Yin (2003, p.2), also defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. This means it is very useful when contextual conditions must be covered under the assumptions that they are highly pertinent to the phenomenon under study. According to Yin (2003), the case study design is a more preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed.

The case study design was considered appropriate for this study because it enabled the inclusion of different data collection methods in order to explore the contextual issues shaping tourism and livelihoods in Wli. This is necessary because the study leans towards the argument that livelihood and tourism issues are best understood within contexts (Mihalic, 2015; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015).

### **Data and Sources**

Data for the study was gotten from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained from In-Depth Interviews (IDIs), and observations conducted in Wli. In addition, a Ghana wildlife society report on the proposed community forest conservation project in Fodome Ahor and Wli traditional areas was relied on as secondary data. It was used to validate information regarding the establishment and management of tourism in the community.

### **Target Population**

The target population for the study was persons 18 years old and above who were engaged in Tier one tourism businesses in Wli as well as representatives of recognizable institutions and organisations associated directly and indirectly with tourism development in the area. Tier one tourism businesses derive about 90 per cent of their income from tourism. Attention was given to this category of businesses because they represented the visible manifestation of tourism-related livelihood activities.

Again, the choice of representatives of institutions and organisations was premised on the fact that institutions largely influence how livelihoods were constructed as they often mediate people's access to livelihood assets, livelihood opportunities and outcomes (Ahebwa, 2012; DFID, 1999; Hobley & Shields, 2000). Finally, the focus on these two categories of people enabled the relationship between structure and agency as suggested in the structuration theory (Giddens, 1984) and the study's conceptual framework to be examined.

### **Sampling Procedures**

Snowballing was utilized in selecting participants for the study. A snowballing procedure was used to identify all Tier one tourism enterprises as well as individuals engaged in these enterprises in the community. This was due to the absence of a list or information on these enterprises. The enterprises were then categorised based on the similarity of their operations. Individuals within the various categories of businesses who were identified through referrals were interviewed based on their availability and willingness to partake in the study. No sample size was assigned apriori. The data collection ended when saturation

was met. In qualitative research, saturation is reached when no new themes or responses emerge which are significantly different from earlier responses or themes (Griffin, 2000). At the end of the data collection, twenty-seven (27) persons engaged in these enterprises were interviewed (See Appendix A for the list).

On the other hand, representatives of identified institutions and organisations were purposively selected. These representatives were considered to be privy to information about how their institutions and organisations shape livelihoods within the Hohoe municipality as a whole and in Wli specifically. Similarly, no sample size was predetermined for this category of participants. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to partake in the interviews. In all, eleven (11) individuals representing Ghana Tourism Authority, Hohoe Municipal Assembly, Wli traditional authority, Wli Tourism Management Team, and Association of Landowners in Wli were selected to be part of the study (See Appendix A for the list).

### **Methods of Data Collection**

In-Depth Interview (IDI) and participant observation were employed for the data collection. These methods were in consonance with the study's focus which sought to have an in-depth exploration of people's experiences with tourism as a livelihood strategy. A number of studies relating to personal experiences in tourism livelihood issues (e.g. Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Dedeke, 2017; Ngoasong & Kimbu, 2016; Seifu & Beyene, 2014) have also justified the appropriateness of these methods in capturing such necessary data.

The IDI is a face to face method for data collection which allows for in-depth information to be collected. One main advantage of this method, which made it very suitable for this study was that it created a platform for people (study participants) to interpret the world they live in and express how they felt about issues from their personal point of view (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This fitted into the social constructivism paradigm guiding the study. Again, it was in line with the central aim of the study which sought to explore people's experiences in the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. Nevertheless, this method has disadvantages of being time-consuming and open to interviewer bias (Sarantakos, 2005).

The rationale of the study was explained to every interviewee. Their verbal consent was sought and a time agreed upon for the actual interview. The interviews were guided by the IDI guides prepared by the researcher. The researcher kept a field notebook for writing notes and observations to complement data from the interviews. The discussions were conducted in a conversation-like manner. The researcher guided the discussion in order to limit interviewees deviating so much from the themes being explored. The interviews lasted an average of 50 minutes. Most of the interviews were tape-recorded. For study participants who declined the recording of the interviews, the discussions were manually written in the field notebook.

The second method of data collection used was participant observation. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 396) describe it as a method for collecting "live data in its natural occurring social setting". It involves gathering data through vision and is very useful for taking note of non-verbal behaviour. Observation as a method has advantages of providing first-hand information. It

also provides data that participants might otherwise be unwilling or unable to provide (Sarantakos, 2005). The researcher spent time with the study participants at their workplaces, patronised products and services owned by study participants and engaged in communal activities and informal discussions. This was to help the researcher gain more insight into the community and livelihood dynamics in the Wli. All happenings of interest were noted down at the end of each day. Some tangibles were photographed where necessary and permitted. These included the waterfall, camping sites, signage, accommodation facilities, stone quarrying or sand mining sites.

### **Research Instruments**

Two qualitative research instruments were employed to collect data for this study. This was in line with the social constructivist paradigm, qualitative research approach and the data collection methods underpinning the study. These instruments were semi-structured In-Depth Interview (IDI) guides and an observation checklist. The instruments were developed based on the study's focus and research questions. Due to the structure-agency debate underlying the study and the conceptual framework, two separate IDI guides were used in the field. Although both IDI guides were in the English language, they were administered either in the English or Ewe languages depending on the preference of the interviewee.

The first IDI guide was administered to individuals engaged in tier one tourism businesses. This guide dealt with six themes. The first section explored background issues of the study participants including their socio-demographic data and a description of the tourism-related activities engaged in (including

time duration and place of activity). The second section examined study participants' livelihood portfolio. Questions asked under this section were related to the livelihood mix of the study participants, the position (major and minor/ most preferred and least preferred) of the activities within the livelihood mix and changes to the livelihood mix over the years. Study participants were, also, asked about their understanding of tourism as a phenomenon and as a business, who introduced them to it, and whether or not it fits into their existing livelihood mix.

The third section delved into livelihood assets and their influence on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The questions were based on which livelihood assets were mostly used in particular tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli, their availability and actual use by study participants, the conditions of these assets and the nature of access and control over these assets. The fourth section examined the influence of institutional/organisational structures on local residents' adoption of tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. Emphasis was placed on the type of institution or organisational structure, their level of operations and influence over tourism businesses (how they mediate access to assets, opportunities and outcomes), and their accessibility to study participants. In addition, the identities and meanings these organization/institutions carry for different study participants were also explored.

Section five looked at the vulnerability (to stress, shocks, and seasonality) of tourism-related activities in Wli. This theme was explored from three main perspectives: exposure to risks, sensitivity to risks and coping/adapting strategies. The final section assessed study participants'

perspectives on tourism-related livelihood as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. This section looked at two main issues: livelihood outcomes and sustainability of tourism as a livelihood strategy. With regard to the former, the issues were based on the nature of tourism-related livelihood outcomes and their ability to meet or satisfy livelihood objectives. Under the latter, attention was given to how tourism as a livelihood activity can be made sustainable in Wli.

The IDI guide for institutional representatives covered three main sections. The first section focused on the nature of the organization/institution, their relationship with other related institutions/organizations, as well as their roles, responsibilities and actual activities in Wli. The second section examined the position of these institutions/organizations on tourism and tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. The final section explored the linkages between the activities of the institutions/organizations and tourism enterprises' access to livelihood assets and tourism-related livelihood activities. The linkages were also examined in the area of livelihood vulnerability, outcome and sustainability issues.

The observation checklist was semi-structured. It focused primarily on the tangible aspects of the attractions (Waterfall and the Agumatsa Wildlife sanctuary), the tourism enterprises (physical structures, location, activities, and employees) and livelihood assets (nature, location, condition, pattern of use).

### **Pre -Testing of Research Instruments**

The research instruments were pretested in Liate Wote in the Volta Region of Ghana in September, 2016. Liate Wote is a rural tourism community within the Afadjato South District with similar characteristics as Wli. The

community boasts of the Tagbo falls and Mountain Afadja. These attractions were managed by a locally selected management team. It had a visitor receptive centre, some homestay facilities and souvenir shops which served tourists. The essence of this pre-testing was to gain insights into the feasibility of administering the research instruments, the clarity of questions, translation of words and phrases from English to the Ewe and any other challenges that may arise during the field work. After the pre-testing, necessary modifications were made to the instrument; for example, words and phrases were better translated into the Ewe language and their mode of administration reviewed before the actual field work commenced. The time for the administration of the IDI guide was estimated. Some questions were deleted from the IDI guides while others were modified. In all, seven (7) participants took part in the pretesting. Five (5) of them were engaged in tourism-related activities while the other two (2) were institutional representatives. The interviews were all tape-recorded. The observation checklist was also revised.

### **Community Entry**

A reconnaissance survey was conducted in June, 2016 to make enquires about tourism enterprises present in the community. An introductory letter from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Cape Coast was presented to the Assemblyman. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November, the assemblyman led the researcher to seek permission from the divisional chiefs of Wli to enter the community for the study. The chiefs were briefed on the rationale of the study and the likely questions that would be posed to the

residents. Drinks were presented to facilitate the process. The researcher was also introduced to the local residents at a community meeting on the same day.

### **Actual Fieldwork**

Data collection for the study was conducted between 3<sup>rd</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2016. All the interviews were conducted by the researcher. To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of study participants, their real names were replaced with codes. Recruitment of study participants for the first category of interviews (individuals engaged in tier one businesses) was based mainly on the number of years of being engaged in the business (at least a year) and willingness to participate in the study. The researcher approached potential study participants one after the other and explained the rationale of the study, the themes to be explored in the interviews and the rights of the interviewee to them. Once the individual agreed to participate, a time and venue convenient for the interviewee was set for the interview to be conducted.

Before each interview commenced, the researcher sought a verbal consent from the participant to engage in the study. The researcher then reminded the participant of his/her rights as far as the interview was concerned and the need to tape-record the interview. For study participants who declined to have the interviews taped, the researcher recorded the responses in the field notebook. A total of twenty-seven (27) persons engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli were interviewed. The interviews averaged 50 minutes.

For the second category of study participants, the heads or the deputies of the institutions/organisations of interest to the study were engaged. The

interviews were done at their convenience. Most of them read through the interview guide before consenting to partake in the study. Their verbal consents were equally obtained. Similar to the case of some study participants in the first category, some of the representatives declined to have the interviews taped. Hence the researcher took notes of those discussions in the field notebook. In all, eleven (11) institutional representatives were interviewed (see appendix A). The average time spent on each interview was about 70 minutes.

There was some flexibility in the questioning in order to allow study participants to comment on issues which were not directly related to the themes under discussion but could provide some valuable insight into the study. The researcher however made sure to control the digressions by gently bringing the discussions back to the main themes. The researcher also made use of probes in conducting the interviews. Each main theme in the semi-structured IDI guide had a set of probing questions to elicit more information from the interviewees. The interviews ended with the researcher thanking the study participants for their time and reassuring them that their responses would be treated with confidentiality.

For the observation aspect of the data collection, the researcher consciously patronised the services of some of these tourism enterprises in order to obtain information on the nature of their operations. The researcher stayed in a homestay facility throughout the data collection period, and bought food and souvenirs from various food and craft vendors in the community. Engagement in communal activities in the community such as cleanups and volunteered in the preparation of documents for the Komabu festival (an annual festival) was done in order to have an appreciation of the social and cultural dynamics in the

community. Furthermore, some farm visits and a tour of the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary and Wli waterfall was embarked upon. Pictures were taken of some tangibles and events relevant to the study where necessary and permitted.

### **Fieldwork Challenges**

During the course of the data collection, some challenges came up. Study participants were unwilling to make disclosures on issues of finances. Although they were told that information would be treated confidentially, they were still hesitant to speak up. Hence, in most instances, participants were convinced to give their average incomes during peak and lean days, which some did.

In addition, verbatim note taking for some interviews prolonged the interview time. This was especially in the case of the study participants who did not want their interviews recorded. The researcher apologized for the extra time taken for the interview but explained that it was necessary in order to capture the salient issues from the interview.

Meeting key members of the local tourism management team was challenging because the majority of them lived outside the community. Therefore, the researcher had to follow up to interview one of them in Hohoe and another in Accra. Again, there was difficulty in accessing documentary information on tourism in Wli. The researcher was told only the Chairman of the local tourism management team could authorise the release of the project's constitution and financial reports. The Chairman, who resides in Accra, was, however, unreachable throughout the data collection period. Also, due to poor record keeping, information on tourist arrivals could not be easily obtained.

Hence, the researcher could not make many references to financial issues pertaining to tourism in Wli. But in terms of tourist arrivals, the researcher was given access to the tourist arrivals book to personally compile the arrival data for the period 2016.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

Data processing and analysis began immediately the data collection commenced. After each interview, the tape recordings were replayed and reviewed to look out for new emergent issues. The researcher's personal reflections and observations on each interview were also written down in the field notebook. These emergent issues and reflections were further explored in subsequent interviews. This was done in order to ensure the depth of data collected. After the data collection process, a verbatim transcription of all tape-recorded interviews was done. The transcripts were printed and read through over and over again in order to enable the researcher to familiarise herself with the data. Necessary references were also made to the field notes and observations captured during the data collection process.

Attride-Stirling's (2001) thematic network technique was adopted in analysing the data. This technique seeks to explore the understanding of underlying issues. Studies including Higham and Cohen, 2011, Paiva, 2008 and Walters, 2016 which have employed this technique recommend it based on its practicality and effectiveness in conducting a structured qualitative analysis. This technique advocates for extracting themes in a text at three different levels: basic, organizing and global themes. The first level themes are the basic themes

which are regrouped into organizing themes and further re-categorized into the global themes.

Coding of the data was done both inductively and deductively. The inductive coding was done on the basis of the key issues which emerged from the transcripts while the deductive coding was based on the themes underlying the study's conceptual frameworks and theoretical assumptions. Recurrent codes from the text were first grouped under basic themes. The basic themes were further explored to unearth bigger issues which connected them. This then became the organizing theme from which the global themes were finally deduced. At each level, the researcher looked out for patterns, trends, and contradictions between the codes. Interpretation of the data was done in this light and within the context of the written reflections of the researcher as well as observations made. Finally, a narrative approach was adopted in the presentation of the results and discussion. Direct quotations from the transcripts and photographs which were relevant to the findings were used to support the findings.

### **Validity and Reliability Considerations**

In social science research, the issue of validity and reliability are very important. Irrespective of the research paradigm, every social research is concerned with the quality and dependability of its results. In quantitative and qualitative research approaches, there are different perspectives on what these two critical concepts mean and how they are ensured.

In quantitative research, validity looks at the “ability of research to produce findings that are in agreement with theoretical and conceptual values”

(Sarantakos, 1998, p.78). However, in qualitative research, validity is seen as the trustworthiness, accuracy, and credibility of findings (Creswell, 2008; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). With regards to reliability, the quantitative research looks at the consistency of findings (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 2012). But in qualitative research, the emphasis is on the replicability and transferability of research procedures across different projects (Gibbs, 2007 as cited in Creswell, 2009).

Within the context of this study, a number of strategies (Table 3) were adopted to ensure the validity and reliability of the entire research process as well as its findings. Regarding the data collection, two data collection methods were combined in order to gain evidence from more than a source. Through this, the evidence was cross-checked against each other in order to arrive at findings which reflect the situation.

Pattern matching was employed during the data analysis stage to compare the data to the existing literature in order to establish, confirm or refute patterns of evidence. Expert and peer reviews were also heavily relied on in the entire process for objective assessments of the methods adopted, the research instruments employed as well as the findings and conclusions drawn from the study. Finally, the researcher kept a field notebook which contained a detailed description of all processes undertaken in the conduct of the study as well as a record of observations and insights. These notes offered a validation to the study's findings.

Table 3 - *Validity and Reliability Strategies for the Study*

| Issue       | Qualitative alternative          | Strategies                          | Phase of work                          |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Validity    | Credibility                      | Use of multiple sources of evidence | Data collection                        |
|             | Trustworthiness                  | Pattern matching                    | Data analysis                          |
|             |                                  | Expert /peer review                 | Research instrument design             |
|             |                                  |                                     | Data analysis                          |
|             |                                  |                                     | Draft case study report                |
|             |                                  |                                     | Entire research process                |
| Reliability | Replicability<br>Transferability | Detailed descriptions of issues     | Data analysis, entire research process |

Source: Author's Construct (2016)

### **Ethical Issues**

In order for the study not to infringe on the privacy and rights of any individual or the community, the following ethical issues were adhered to: Community entry: With the aid of an introductory letter and drinks, permission was sought from the traditional leadership of Wli to enter the community to undertake the study. The traditional leadership were duly informed about the rationale and implications of the study. All other necessary permissions were sought before the study commenced.

**Informed consent:** All participants were informed of the purpose of the study as well as their expected role in the successful completion of the study. After that, their verbal consent to engage in the study was sought. Participants who wished to withdraw from participating in the study were permitted to do so.

**Right to privacy:** Conscious efforts were made to respect the privacy of all participants. The degree of intrusion into the private lives of all participants was guided by the objectives of the study. Participants were not coerced to respond to questions they were not comfortable with.

**Anonymity:** The identity of all study participants was protected, and they made certain of that. To achieve this, real names and specific location information were deliberately omitted from the research report and final thesis. Codes and some bio-data were used to label the responses for the sake of analysis.

**Confidentiality:** All participants were assured that all information given in response to questions posed during the study would be strictly used for the intended purposes. The information will be kept private and will not be handed over to a third-party under any condition.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter focused on the study's methodology. Specifically, the issues discussed were on the choice and justification of the study area. The research philosophy (social constructivist paradigm) and study design (embedded single case design), target population, sampling procedures, methods of data collection and the research instruments were also discussed.

The chapter also looked at fieldwork issues, and data preparation and analysis issues. Specifically, the IDI data was analysed using a thematic network technique and a narrative approach was adopted in presenting the findings. Lastly, validity, reliability and ethical issues were presented. The next chapter begins the results and discussion section. In it is presented the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### TOURISM-RELATED LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES IN WLI

#### **Introduction**

The relationship between tourism and rural livelihoods has been one of interest to tourism researchers over the decades (Scoones, 2015). Views on this relationship have varied considerably over time in the face of emerging perspectives and empirical evidence. The conceptual framework guiding this study proffers a more holistic approach to understanding how tourism shapes rural livelihoods. Thus, this chapter explores tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli, tourism-related activities by the background characteristics of the study participants, study participants' construction of tourism as a livelihood activity and the extent to which tourism fit into their livelihood portfolio.

#### **Tourism Enterprises and Related Livelihood Activities in Wli**

Tourism enterprises and related livelihood activities within the context of this study included all businesses and/or income generating activities which were directly related to and/or dependent on tourism (Cooper et al, 1993). The study found evidence that tourism is a livelihood activity in Wli. It emerged that some residents owned small enterprises in accommodation, guiding, food and beverage, and souvenir trade while others sought employment in these enterprises. The existence of these tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli reinforces the assertions by tourism advocates that tourism creates opportunities for livelihood diversification (Ashley, 2000; Dolezal, 2015; Tao & Wall, 2009; UNWTO, 2015). Typical of rural tourism enterprises (Getz & Nilsson, 2004;

Lai, Morrison-Saunders & Grimstad, 2017; Prince & Ioannides, 2017; Sharpley, 2002), all tourism enterprises in Wli with the exception of the visitor centre were privately owned by both indigenes and non-indigenes, operated on a small scale, and supplied a highly seasonal market.

#### Accommodation Establishments

Three (3) categories of commercial accommodation for tourists were found in Wli, namely, hotel/guest houses (Plate 1), homestays and camping sites. There were two (2) 1-star hotels with a total number of rooms being forty-one (41). Their rates were between GHC 50 to GHC 250 per night depending on the amenities in the room.



*Left and right: A guesthouse and a 1-star hotel in Wli*

#### **Plate 1: Hotels/Guest Houses in Wli**

Source: Field survey, Afenyo (2016)

There were also two (2) guest houses which had eight (8) and six (6) rooms each and charged between GHC 50 and GHC 120. All these facilities operated 24 hours throughout the week. Two (2) new guesthouses were under construction during the data collection period. One of the hotels and guesthouses was owner-managed while the rest had supervisors who managed the facilities for the owners. Combined, these facilities employed about thirty-two (32) people as full-time workers from the community.

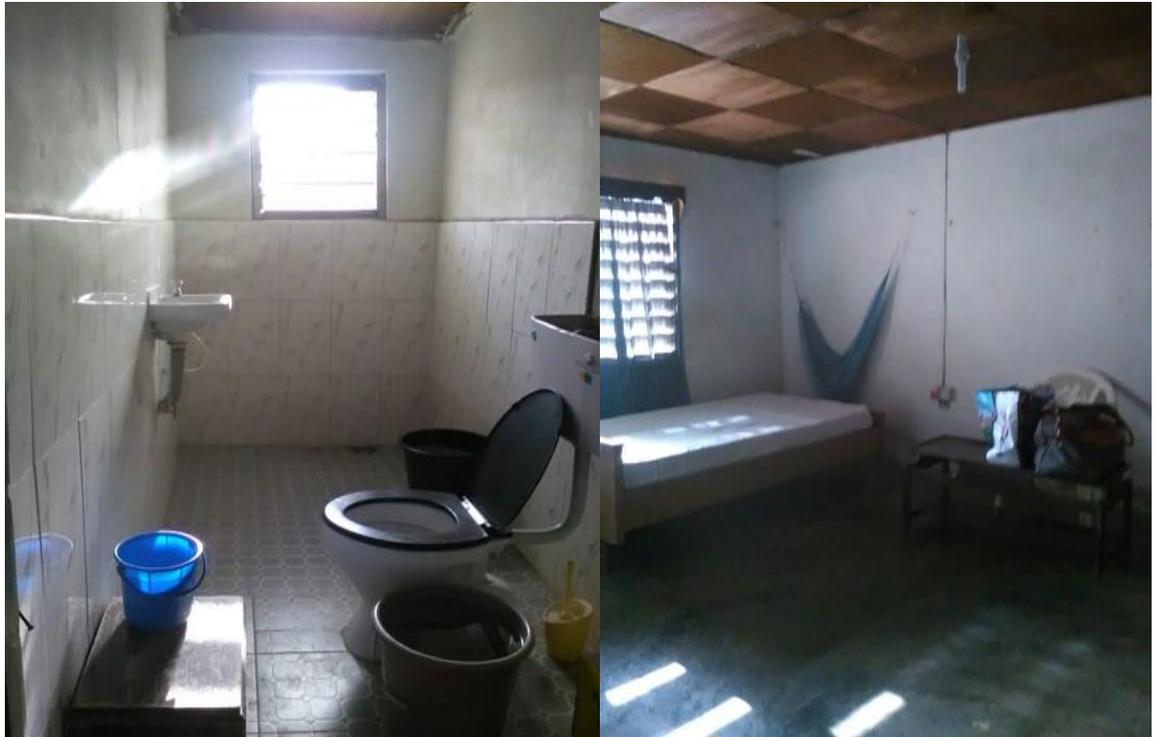
It emerged from the interviews that the hotels and guesthouses did not employ people to specific positions; rather, employees were tasked to perform multiple functions. One participant remarked that:

*What we do is that when there is work somewhere, we all go and do it. So if it is cleaning the rooms, we all go, when it is weeding we all do it. Yesterday I helped the ladies in the kitchen to cook, today I'm a receptionist. (A19, a 23-year-old male hotel employee)*

Drawing from the quote above, this arrangement may create an enabling environment for skills development for interested persons in the community, given that in most rural tourism destinations, financial resources, educational levels and skills are low (Getz, Carlsen & Morrison, 2004; Smith, 1998). In the long term, this kind of arrangement may contribute to enhancing the overall capacity of the community to sustainably engage in tourism (Wu & Tsai, 2016).

Homestays, the second category of accommodation, were available for tourists who wanted to live with families in any of the suburbs of Wli. This type of accommodation offered more opportunities for social, economic and cultural

contacts between tourists and their hosts (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013). The rates of these homestays ranged between GHC 30 – GHC 50 depending on whether meals were inclusive or not. Most of the operators offered basic amenities such as a bed, mattress, chairs and a table (as seen in Plate 2 in the guest rooms). In most cases, the guest and family bathrooms and toilets were separated. The cleaning of the rooms and fetching of water for use were done by the operators of the facilities; however, guests could do so if they desired.



**Plate 2: A Homestay Room in Wli**

Source: Field survey, Afenyo (2016)

A classic example of how these homestays operated is captured in the quote below:

*I host tourists at my house regularly. I have two rooms and when they (tourists) are many, I hire student mattress for*

*them and they manage it. Some people like TV but for others, they do not really mind. My bathrooms and environment are clean and the place is generally quiet. When they (tourists) come, I take half of the money to cater for their feeding and I take the rest before they go... Some of them too will give you all the money at once...I have created a receipt book so I issue (to those who want) receipt when I collect the money. (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay operator)*

The third form of accommodation identified was camping sites. Their targets were individuals who were in “*for adventure and want a close interaction with nature*” (A25, a 31-year-old male campsite owner). Two types of camping sites were available. The first one was on the premises of the hotels:

*Aside our rooms, if the guest comes and wants to camp outside on our premise, we allow. Some of the tourists come with their own tents and others hire from us. Whether they are sleeping in the rooms or in their tents, they still have access to all facilities in the lodge (A18, a 63-year-old male guesthouse owner/manager)*

On the other hand, camping sites were also available around the base of the waterfall in the Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary (Plate 3). These sites are privately owned by individuals in the community. When asked about the

attractiveness of camping in Wli to tourists, one campsite owner commented that:

*You see some of these tourists are interesting...They come and say they want to sleep by the waterfall. I go camping often because they (tourists) like it. I take them there and stay with them, at times 2 days or 3 days. I have everything there: tents, cooking utensils... (A19, a 31-year-old male campsite owner/operator)*



**Plate 3: A Camping Site at the Base of Wli Waterfalls**

Source: Field survey, Interview Participant (2016)

The amount charged for camping was dependent on the number of tourists in the travel party and whether the tourists came with their own camping equipment or would rely on the service provider for them. The campsites were operated all year round but their patronage usually peaked during the tourist seasons of April to September. The campsite owners usually acted as guides and cooks for the tourists.

### Guiding Services

Guiding was another common tourism-related activity in Wli. There were tour guides who worked permanently with the visitor centre and usually guide tourists to the lower and upper falls. These tour guides also kept the trails and the base of the waterfall tidy. Aside these, there were other individuals in the community who offered guiding services to visitors interested in hiking in the Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary or visiting other attractions in surrounding communities. There was also a local travel information agency in the community (Plate 4).



**Plate 4: Signage of Agumatsato Tourism Info Agency**

Source: Field survey, Afenyo (2016)

This agency was a private enterprise, which provided information on transportation fares, routes and accommodation to tourists at no cost. They however charge when they make transportation and tour guide arrangements for tourists. In addition, they offered hiking and camping guiding services. This office operated through-out the week. According to the owner, the motivation for setting up such an enterprise was to fill a gap that existed in the community.

He further explained that:

*At times, tourists seek more information on where they can get a car or how to reach other attraction sites but such information is not available at the visitor centre. Hence, I took it upon myself to start this information centre. I sometimes accompany them (tourists) and negotiate prices on their behalf with the motor riders. (A10, a 28-year-old male travel information centre owner)*

#### Souvenir Trade

Some persons were also engaged in the production and/or sale of souvenirs in the community. The craft shops which were about seven (7) in number clustered around the visitor centre as their target was tourists. These shops were opened from Monday to Sunday all year round. The shops were opened for longer periods during the weekends because visitor arrivals were usually high during the weekends. The crafts sold in these shops were not only indigenous to the area. Some of the traders sold crafts like footwear, bags, jewellery and carvings from other parts of the country, as well as some other

African countries such as Togo and Kenya. One of the participants indicated that:

*We get our goods from Accra, Krobo, Lome, and the north and other places like Kenya...(A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

#### Food and Beverage Establishments

Different food and beverage establishments targeting tourists were in existence in Wli. There were three (3) snack shops along the street that led to the visitor centre and two (3) local foodservice establishments popularly referred to as “chop bars” that served a variety of indigenous dishes. Also available were restaurants in the hotels and guesthouses, which served a combination of indigenous and continental dishes. These eateries were opened every day of the week. The main targets of the “chop bars” were the local residents and domestic tourists who were familiar with the local cuisine and could afford their meals. The restaurants, on the other hand, targeted tourists as their prices were above what the locals could afford. This was stressed by one participant that:

*It's the tourists who are our customers. They can afford our food. Look, a plate of banku and tilapia is GHC 15. The people in this community cannot buy it. We are not cooking for them (locals)...(A19, a 23-year-old male hotel employee)*

## **Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities by Background Characteristics of Study Participants**

This section explores the tourism-related livelihood activities pursued in Wli by the background characteristics of the study participants. This is in consonance with related studies which have reported patterns between background characteristics of rural dwellers and their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Lück & Higham, 2007; Mbaiwa, 2004; Su, Wall & Jin, 2016). From the transcripts, certain patterns emerged in relation to the sex, native status, and educational level of the participants and their engagement in certain tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli.

With respect to the sex of the participants, tour guiding was the preserve of the males in the community. No female had ever been recruited as a tour guide by the visitor centre or acted in the capacity of an independent tour guide in the community. One senior tour guide, however, stated that one female had applied to be hired as a tour guide but no decision had yet been taken on her at the time of the study. From the interviews, it came up that females were perceived as “soft” and “weak” to work as tour guides. Tour guiding in Wli was opined to be a physically demanding and debilitating job due to the mountainous terrain of the Agumatsa wildlife reserve. Hence, a lot of physical strength was needed to take tourists up on a daily basis. This opinion was shared by all the participants engaged in this activity. To them, it was not an appropriate job for females. To elaborate on the issue, a male participant stated that:

*This is not a job for a woman. They cannot do it. It's hard work. Can you imagine a woman having to take tourists to*

*the upper fall? It is about 3 hours walk in and 3 hours walk back. They cannot. They do not have the strength to do that. They are too soft. We the men are not finding it easy, how about the women. This work is not easy ooo and as you age, it comes more difficult...I do not think women can do it but if they want to try it, no one stops them (A2, a 54-year-old male tour guide)*

Some female participants who were engaged in other tourism-related livelihood activities shared similar views. One of them indicated that:

*That work involves climbing that mountain. You will be climbing that mountain from morning to evening...the men should do it Eeii...tour guiding...no...It's a difficult job. You need the strength to be climbing especially the upper falls...The lower falls is not the problem but when you grow, you may find it difficult to climb the lower fall too.*  
(A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)

The accommodation sub-sector in Wli was however dominated by females. All the homestays were operated by females. Also, the majority of the employees in the hotels and guesthouses and food and beverage establishments were females. These observed pattern is in line with Garcia-Ramon, Canoves and Valdovinos's (1995) argument that tourism jobs in rural settings often reinforce fundamental gender norms in patriarchal societies whereby females undertake jobs that fit into their responsibilities as homemakers while the males

engage in more strenuous activities as the breadwinners for the home (Lück & Higham, 2007). This view was affirmed by a female participant who remarked that:

*Cooking is the woman's responsibility so it is easy to do.*

*You don't have to go and now learn how to cook. This is*

*what we always do. (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay*

*operator)*

With respect to native status, in exception of tour guiding and revenue collection at the visitor centre, it was the non-natives who were found to be mostly engaged in tourism enterprises in Wli. This was contrary to expectations (Addinsall, Weiler, Scherrer & Glencross, 2017; Afenyo, 2011; Campbell, 1999 Wu & Pearce, 2014) that the natives will dominate the tourism businesses in Wli given that it was a community-based ecotourism destination.

Tour guiding and revenue collection in Wli were undertaken by only the natives as stipulated in the community's tourism bye-laws (S4, personal communication, 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2016). This may be to ensure that the natives were in control over tourism in the community. Besides, tour guiding was considered to be very central to tourism so such jobs should be taken up by the natives. This point was further elucidated by one participant who stressed that:

*The waterfall is for the community so the direct jobs in it must*

*be done by the natives. We cannot open that to other people.*

*Others are free to come and do any business here but when it*

*comes to the visitor centre and all works over there, they must*

*be natives. The whole community has agreed to that. (A7, a 65-year-old male tour guide/opinion leader)*

Words such as “lazy” and not “interested” were frequently used to explain the low presence of the natives in other tourism enterprises in the community. Some participants shared the following views on the matter:

*The natives of Wli appear not to be interested in learning how to make the local crafts ...why I do not know... Some of them will come around and admire what you are doing but after some time, you do not see them again. (A15, a 39-year-old male craft shop owner)*

*I do not know what their problems are. They are lazy, they are not ready to do hard work, I employed some of the natives but they did not last long, they left. (A22, a 48-year-old female hotel owner)*

Drawing from the interviews conducted, disinterest in tourism on the part of the natives may be due to their construction of tourism as a livelihood activity. Because Wli is a cross-border town, it presents several trade opportunities such as carting of goods across the border which may have quick cash returns than tourism and farming. Kabeer (2000) and Start and Johnson (2004) in explaining livelihood choice behaviour have reiterated that people as rational beings, at any point in time given same resources and constraints, will

choose livelihood activities they consider most maximising to them. Therefore there may be other livelihood activities more profiting than tourism.

In fact, the allusion made earlier by one of the participants (Participant A2) that they (natives) want “quick cash” further goes to buttress the point that tourism as a livelihood activity may be seen as not generating quick returns as compared to some other livelihood activities. The dominance of non-natives in tourism enterprises in Wli could also be attributed to their past experiences, interactions and understanding of the tourism phenomenon (Pernecky, 2012), which was not the case of most of the natives. Most of the non-native participants gave indications of ever engaging in some tourism-related business before moving to Wli. This is aptly captured in the quote below:

*I was at Cape Coast but after 2 years, I decided to move down here to be closer to my mum. I knew tourists like these kinds of things because I was selling these things in Cape Coast... I produce so I decided to come and work near the tourist centre so I can continue with my trade.*

(A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)

Finally, participants’ educational level was important in their participation in tourism enterprises in Wli. Ability to speak English language was used by participants as a proxy to measure educational level. From the transcripts, it appeared that ability to communicate in English was a key requirement for jobs in tour guiding and the accommodation sub-sector in Wli. Some participants shared the following views:

*Part of the problem has to do with education. Most of the white tourists who come here cannot speak Ewe, and some of the natives have not really gone to school so they cannot communicate with the tourists in English. That is why most people cannot work in this sector. (A14, a 48-year-old male guest house supervisor)*

*Hotels in Wli, for instance, do not necessarily require someone who is very fluent in English. It must not be so bad too but once you can communicate with the guests and they actually understand you that will be enough. There are some who cannot speak it (English) at all and others who can speak the pidgin. That is a bother to the employer because they cannot employ such people. There are some people who are very competent but because of the challenge with English, they cannot work here. (A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)*

This situation is expected in rural tourism communities where the residents are not native English speakers (Hashimoto, 2015). The case in Wli was further exacerbated by the fact that educational attainments of residents were generally low as the few who had progressed to the Senior High School rarely return to the community after completion. Since Ghana is an Anglophone country, international tourists to Wli will continue to use English as a common language to interact with the local residents. One possible solution lies in

Hashimoto's (2015) suggestion that those who serve or are interested in the tourism industry or related businesses have to learn to communicate in basic English.

### **Constructions of Tourism as a Livelihood Activity**

This section seeks to extend the understanding of why people choose tourism as a livelihood activity. It explores the meanings participants attributed to tourism as a livelihood activity in Wli. This is underpinned by the theoretical argument that the tourism phenomenon is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Hannam & Knox, 2010; Pernecky, 2012) and the meanings that persons attach to tourism (and anything related to it) may serve as a good pointer to their attitude towards it (Amuquandoh, 2010). By focusing on these meanings, an additional perspective may emerge to explain why tourism is a chosen livelihood activity in Wli.

Two broad themes emerged when participants were asked to explain or give reasons why they chose tourism as a livelihood activity. On one hand, tourism was perceived as a means to an end and on the other, it was considered an end in itself.

#### **Tourism as a Means to an End**

Participants who leaned towards this perspective saw tourism as a means to save money to pursue other livelihood activities. Tourism represented a quicker and more regular cash earning opportunity as compared to farming and other livelihood activities in the community. Hence, this group of people

considered their engagement in tourism businesses as transitory. Some of the participants had this to say:

*I realised that when I engage in the tour guiding I will generate some income and use to purchase my tools. I can farm but I would first have to invest money into the farming before generating anything to buy the needed tools. But with working here, you can get some money early enough to buy the tools right away. (A13, a 27-year-old male tour guide)*

*I will want to go back to school, training college or nursing training. So I am saving part of the money I am earning here. (A1, a 23-year-old female revenue collector)*

Because those who subscribed to this perspective did not plan to build their livelihoods around tourism in the long term or possibly did not have the money to do so, none of them owned any tourism enterprise. They were all employees of tourism enterprises in Wli. Again, they rated tourism as a major livelihood activity in their livelihood portfolio only in the short term and indicated that it would change to a minor one once they are able to accumulate enough cash to pursue other livelihood activities. One participant noted that:

*For now, I am doing this work because that is what is available. But my bigger dream is to set up a computer school in Hohoe. I am saving towards it. I will also want to have a business centre attached to the computer school*

*where printing, photocopies, money transfer will be done.*

*I do not see myself doing this job for a long time. (A20, a 21-year-old male hotel employee)*

Livelihood security was the underlying reason for the participants who leaned towards this line of thinking. Aside the fact that the incomes were low, tourism jobs were not seen as having a guaranteed pension upon retirement. Therefore, they considered it risky to engage in tourism for an extended period of time. This was further emphasised by a participant who said:

*This job is not something you can do to look after your family and take your children through school. They pay us about GHC100 a month in cash, that is all, no allowance or something that when we become old, we can be relying on like those who work in factories. There is nothing hidden somewhere for you for the future...we cannot continue like this...and we have families to feed...so I will continue with this until I am able to save enough money and move on to do something else... I want to set up my own tour company. For me, it's because of the salary. You know you will be getting something on regular basis so that can help me save. (A4, a 21-year-old male tour guide, native)*

The concerns raised by participants about low incomes and unavailability of a pension scheme is not typical of Wli. Similar findings are

replete in the tourism literature (e.g. Lacher & Oh, 2012; Truong, Hall & Garry, 2014; Walmsley, 2004). These factors have been cited as contributing to high labour turnovers in the industry (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2009) and unattractiveness of tourism jobs (Jiang & Tribe, 2009; Walmsley, 2004).

In sum, participants' conceptualisation of tourism as a means to an end is consistent with the existing literature. While admitting that tourism creates generally low-income jobs regardless of its setting, these jobs are still valuable. This is because they build the capacity of the people involved for future careers (Lee & Kang, 1998).

#### Tourism as an End in Itself

The other meaning participants associated with tourism as a livelihood strategy was "tourism as an end in itself". For them, tourism was for subsistence. They showed more understanding of the phenomenon and were more prepared to engage in it for a longer period of time. The majority of the participants whose construction of tourism fell under this category were tourism enterprise owners. They rated tourism as a major activity within their livelihood portfolio. These were what some of the participants had to say:

*We were staying outside this country initially. When we returned to Ghana, we decided to establish a business here since my husband comes from this town. We noted that tourists were coming here but there was no decent accommodation for them. So that was how our hotel business started. Now it's the main work I do, managing*

*the two facilities we have. (A22, a 48-year-old female hotel owner)*

*This is the main work I do. I have a workshop here and another one in Togo. I have apprentices. I have been in this work for 12 years now and I will say it is lucrative...Business can be good and bad sometimes but this is what I do mainly for a living...I do not think I will change this job. I will rather expand the business. (A15, a 39-year-old carver/craft shop owner)*

A review of the transcripts showed that those who perceived tourism as a source of subsistence had a more positive perspective towards tourism. They were more hopeful in tourism's ability to enable them meet their livelihood goals both in the short and long term. Their high optimism may be a reflection of their entrepreneurial traits which make them hopeful and resilient (Baron, Franklin & Hmieleski, 2016) since most of them were tourism enterprise owners. An interviewee noted:

*This our job, you need patience. When the season is right, you will make good sales. There are days in the peak season, you can sell things worth over GHC1200 in the day. Those who are new to the business do not know this. But with experience, you will get to know. You see everything in this shop, their buyers will come. When the time is right, they will come so we do not worry. So that is*

*what we do in this trade. There is nothing like your money is locked up. When the time for the thing to be bought is up, it will be bought and you will make your money...* (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)

The findings from this section affirm the social constructionism theory's proposition that people construct meanings about things through their on-going interactions with others and their environment and live out the implications of those meanings (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Within the context of this study, the two constructed meanings of tourism as a livelihood activity emanated from interviewees' interactions with other existing livelihood activities, their own goals and aspirations and the prevailing livelihood conditions in Wli. These meanings, in effect, shaped how they acted towards tourism either as employees engaged in a transitory job or as enterprise owners seeking for subsistence through tourism.

### **Tourism's Fit within the Existing Livelihood Activities of Study Participants**

Tourism has long been considered a catalyst for rural livelihood diversification (Ashley, 2000; Fabinyi, 2010; Sharpley, 2002). Lately, within the livelihood discourse, attention is being drawn to how this new rural activity is combined with existing livelihood activities (Ashley, 2000). Tao and Wall (2009) have noted that often, tourism either complements or conflicts with existing livelihoods. They added that both scenarios are possible within the same setting. The question then is what is the situation in Wli?

The study found out that in Wli, the introduction of tourism has both complemented and conflicted with individuals' existing livelihood activities. This section examines both scenarios in Wli.

#### Tourism in a Complementary Position

Investments of tourism earnings in other activities were evident in Wli, where the majority of the participants (both employees and enterprise owners) testified that they used part of their earnings from their tourism-related livelihood activities to support other ventures they were engaged in. This is consistent with Ashley's (2000) assertion that one essential way by which tourism complements existing livelihood activities is by providing cash for investment in those activities (Ashley, 2000). Two classic examples of this are stated below:

*I know that my work involves farming so I get up early in the morning to work on the farm until around 8 am then I come back home to prepare and come to the store. I have assistance on the farm. When I work here, I use part of the money to hire labour to work on my farm. So I will say that this work is good once it is solving part of my problems.*

(A15, a 39-year-old male craft shop owner)

*The initial plan was to save money and continue my education but after working for a while, I changed my mind and opened a shop so I invest the money I make from the shop...one day when I am weak and cannot work here,*

*I can quit and manage my own shop.* (A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)

Tourism also complemented existing activities in Wli by diversifying on-farm activities. Some participants who owned farms promoted farm-based activities especially sowing and harvesting of crops for tourists who were interested. One participant remarked that:

*Tourists come and say they want to see maize or cassava farm, I have my own farm so I take them. If it is someone's farm, the person will think that you are charging the person a lot and giving him just something small. Because of that if someone comes to me, I take them to my own farm and I sell some of the produce to the tourists if they request for it...I only charge them something small.* (A10, a 32-year-old male local travel agency owner)

Although this did not happen often, which is very typical of farm-based tourism activities (Fleischer & Pizam, 1997), it, at least, brings in extra income for those farmers anytime it occurred. Again, the existence of these activities, although in its embryonic stage, may be a pointer to the potential of a new form of tourism (Farm-tourism/agritourism) in Wli which could lead to the diversification of the tourism products on offer in the community. The above observations confirms Sharpley and Vass (2006)'s assertion that tourism in rural areas has the potential to lead to on-farm activities diversifications for some farmers as a source of additional income. Although the income may be criticised

as being little and seasonal (Oppermann, 1996), it adds to the income pool of the individuals involved.

#### Tourism in Conflict

In Wli, the main cause of conflict between tourism and other livelihood activities was competition over time, money and land. Some interviewees recounted how tourism activities had put so much demand on their time and money, making it difficult for them to engage in other livelihood activities. These sentiments were the same, irrespective of whether the participant was an employee or a tourism enterprise owner. For the employees, long hours of work throughout the week with only one off-day made it difficult for them to get sufficient time to effectively pursue other livelihood activities. For the tourism enterprise owners, time and monetary resources had to be invested to grow the businesses. A participant remarked:

*I am not into farming because my work will not permit me.*

*I just started my restaurant business and I need to invest time and money into it to grow. I do not have any other source of income now. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Regarding restrictions on access to natural resources, an interviewee narrated how the creation of the wildlife reserve for tourism limited their access to their farmlands that were within the reserve:

*The land from the first bridge that is the left side of the waterfall belongs to us. It is our family land but because*

*of this tourism, they say we cannot go there. People have their cocoa farms there but they cannot go and farm. We do not have any other land anywhere too to farm on... and they are not giving us any money from the tourism too. Is it fair?* (A25, a 31-year-old male campsite owner)

Another participant raised the issue of destruction of their farm produce along the route to the waterfall by tour guides and curious tourists. She said:

*No, we are no longer into farming... you know where our lands are, if you have time, I will show it to you. It's the land that leads you to the waterfall. It has become a tourism land. When you plant something...cassava or maize, it will all be stolen because of tourism. The tour guides will pluck or uproot the foodstuffs to show to the tourists. I planted yam, they took it; I planted cocoyam, the same thing happened. So when you waste your time farming, you will not get anything from it. Even when you grow plantain, they will go after it. These tourism people have become owners of everything we own on our lands...our cocoa... It is all those who ply that road that really worry us.* (A3, a 52-year-old female craft shop owner)

Tourism's conflict with existing livelihoods has been extensively documented in the literature (e.g. Akyeampong, 2011; Ashley, 2000; Mbaiwa,

2017; Stone & Nyaupane, 2016), and it continues to be a growing concern. One possible outcome of these conflicts is a reduction in the income and livelihood sources of participants. As tourism conflicts with existing livelihood activities, people may concentrate more efforts on tourism to the detriment of other livelihood activities in their livelihood portfolio as was seen in the cases above. This, however, is a risky venture because of the seasonality of tourism (Sharpley, 2002). The other possible consequence may be individuals' withdrawal from tourism to concentrate on their existing livelihood activities which would also narrow their livelihood portfolios.

The issue of restriction of access to the wildlife sanctuary for farming purposes brings to the fore the subject of the nature of regulations governing tourism development in Wli. How consciously or unconsciously supportive are they or not of other livelihood activities? These and other factors that will be discussed in the subsequent chapters may have repercussions for tourism as a rural livelihood strategy in Wli.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter focused on tourism-related enterprises in Wli. It first described the main tourism-related enterprises found in Wli. These enterprises were in four categories, namely, accommodation, catering, guiding and souvenir trade. Secondly, participants' engagement in these enterprises was explored by their background characteristics. It emerged that sex, native status and educational level shaped participants' participation in specific enterprises in Wli.

The third section sought to extend our understanding of why people choose tourism as a livelihood activity. It emerged that the participants perceived tourism either as a means to an end or an end in itself. The meanings behind such perceptions influenced how participants approached tourism as a livelihood activity in Wli. The findings confirmed the proposition of the social constructionism theory that people act towards things based on the meanings it holds for them. Finally, tourism's fit into participants' existing livelihood portfolios was examined. Both complementary and conflicting cases were reported. The next chapter examines how livelihood assets shape tourism as a livelihood activity in Wli.

**CHAPTER SIX**  
**LIVELIHOOD ASSETS AND TOURISM-RELATED LIVELIHOOD**  
**ACTIVITIES IN WLI**

**Introduction**

The preceding chapter explored the nature of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. In accordance with the conceptual framework guiding the study, this chapter examines the role of livelihood assets in the construction of tourism as a sustainable livelihood activity in Wli. Livelihood assets are the building blocks of livelihood activities (Ashley, 2000; Scoones, 1998). This is because their availability, condition as well as access largely shape the livelihood activities people engage in (DFID, 1999). The questions this chapter seeks to answer are a) what livelihood assets are mostly employed in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli? b) how do these assets influence peoples' engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli? c) are there variations in how tourism employees and tourism enterprise owners perceive and use these assets? The chapter centres on the five assets (natural, social, physical, human and financial capitals) presented in the study's conceptual framework.

**Natural Capital**

Natural capital, as defined by DFID (1999, p. 11) and used in this study, are the “natural resource stocks including all natural resource flows and services from which livelihoods are derived.” The waterfalls and the mountainous landscape were specifically considered (by both tourism enterprise owners and

employees) as the core of tourism-related livelihood activities in the community (Participants A2; A19). These assets were found to have formed the basis of tourism products, experiences and livelihood activities in the community. Tourist demand for the services in Wli was seen as an outcome of the general demand for the tourist attractions in the community. Some of the interviewees expressed the following:

*It is because of the waterfall that is why I have a job here.*

*If it was not, people will not have been visiting this place for me to also work as a tour guide. So once the waterfall continue to flow, this job will also continue to exist (A4, a 21-year old male tour guide)*

*Operation of a camping site is my main source of income.*

*If tomorrow there is a problem with the waterfall and tourists do not visit, it will affect my business. (A19, a 31-year-old male campsite owner/operator)*

Key tourist attractions in Wli include the waterfalls and the mountains surrounding the community. Without these attractions, tourism activities and livelihoods dependent upon it would have been non-existent in the community. Participants' acknowledgement of this fact may have culminated in their admission that these resources are necessary to their livelihood activities.

Study participants' recognition of the dependence of their tourism-related livelihood activities on their landscape supports Garrod, Wornell and Youell's (2006) postulations that rural tourism enterprises' viability is

dependent, in part, on the quality and attractiveness of their rural landscape. This finding further emphasises the importance of natural capital in the construction of rural tourism-related livelihood activities. Nevertheless, when the study participants were asked how they could contribute towards the protection and/or maintenance of these natural capital assets, they mostly assigned that responsibility to the chiefs and the TMT. An interviewee noted:

*The TMT should be responsible for cleaning and maintaining the routes and the surroundings of the waterfall. They receive the entrance fees that the tourists pay so they should be ready to keep the attractions in a good state. (A11, a 38-year-old male craft trader)*

Others did not assign that responsibility to anyone but they did not also see themselves doing anything about the situation:

*It is important that a stop is put to the logging in the reserve. It is destroying the forest cover...I cannot do anything about it and I cannot pinpoint anyone who should be in charge of that. (A17, a 54-year-old female hotel worker)*

The natural capital assets in question were communally owned and accessible to all. However, the study participants' were seemingly detached from the protection and maintenance of these assets. Perhaps participants' attitudes may be different if these assets were privately owned. This is because they may have more control over their use and hence, feel more responsible for

them. The current stance of the participants has long-term implications for the sustenance of these resources and the progress of tourism in the community. As succinctly put by Hardin (1968), heavy reliance on resources for individual benefits without individual or collective action to maintain them could lead to the deterioration of the resources eventually, leading to the tragedy of the commons. If care is not taken and this occurs in Wli, the draw of their tourist attractions could be affected. If these tourism enterprises get involved in protecting and maintaining their product base, they eventually get to benefit from it.

#### Land

Land emerged as an essential natural capital but exclusively for tourism enterprise owners. This may probably be due to the fact that the businesses they were engaged in were land-based or that land was a key factor of production in their businesses. The land was often acquired either through renting or outright purchase and it provided support or a base for the physical structures within which their businesses were transacted. A participant noted that:

*My business requires a store where I can display my wares. So when I came to Wli to start the business, I had to look for land so that I can put up the store. I rented this land through the help of one of the craft traders. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

For some tourism enterprise owners, land also provided an avenue for additional income generation. In one particular case, the participant narrated

how she made extra income through renting of spaces to tourism service providers around the visitor centre. Sometimes, she reinvested this indirect income from tourism into her business (provision shop):

*For me, land is very important. If you do not have a land, where do you put your store? I own this piece of land I am selling on. I rented part of the land to all these people with stores (craft shops) here (around the visitor centre). They pay something small to me monthly. (A5, a 63-year-old female provision shop owner)*

Land as a natural capital in Wli provided tourism enterprise owners with a flow of services such as revenue and a base for shops which supported their tourism-related livelihood activities. The services obtained from this capital supports the findings of previous related studies (e.g. Kemkes, 2015) and affirms the conceptual frameworks' assertions that livelihood assets generate multiple benefits.

### **Social Capital**

Social capital basically looks at the value embedded in social networks and relationships available to individuals or social units which enable coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits (Jones, 2005; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Putnam, 1993). There are two types of social capital. These are bonding and bridging social capitals. Putman (1993) describes the bonding social capital as networks and relationships that occur internally, especially within communities while the bridging social capital refers to relationships with

groups and institutions outside the community. The study found out that the participants mostly employed bonding social capital in their tourism-related livelihood activities. Furthermore, variations were observed in how tourism enterprise owners and their employers viewed and engaged this bonding social capital.

Participants who were employed in tourism enterprises considered social capital as being basically important in securing jobs. This was because most of them got their current employment through the recommendation of relatives or friends. As some participants put it:

*I once worked in another hotel in this town. I was there with another friend who moved here. She informed me of the vacancy here so I came and she recommended me so I was taken. (A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)*

*My uncle knew the hotel owner here. So when I was looking for a job, he spoke to the hotel owner and I was called to come and start the job. (A19, a 23-year-old male hotel employee)*

For tourism enterprise owners, this capital seemed to have broadened their access to other capitals. Family ties and friendships were cited as valuable in acquiring assets such as land (natural capital), credit (financial capital) and mutual help to support businesses. For example, a participant recounted how he got a prime location to start his business only because he was related by marriage to the landowner:

*It is really difficult to get land that is by the roadside these days in this community. People are not willing to sell it or rent it. They will tell you they are keeping it for their children. This land belongs to my wife's family and they rented it to me. If it had been someone else, I do not think they would have given the place out but because of the kind of relationship that exists between us, they gave the land to me. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

For another participant, she got part of her start-up capital (financial capital) for her tourism-related business and marketing support for her products from her family. She narrated:

*In raising capital for my business, my family supported me. My nephew studied marketing at Ho Polytechnic so he introduced me to the internet and online marketing. At the end of every year, he asks what I have for the next year and gives me suggestions as to what to add. He manages my online accounts for me. I only send him the pictures of my products. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

Some participants also spoke of the mutual help they received through friendships established with other tourism service providers in the community:

*Those of us selling here, we try to live like a family and see how we can be of help to each other. We sell different*

*souvenirs so when someone comes to my shop to buy things, after selling to them, I encourage them to go through the other shops...that is a way of promoting each other's business. If I open the shop but step out, I know my shop is secured because they will keep an eye on the place for me. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

*Sometimes when we have a full house, we contact the house opposite us. They are into homestay so we send some of the guests to them to host. (A14, a 48-year-old male guest house supervisor)*

Two observations can be made from the findings so far. Firstly, the quotes above seemed to suggest that the participants depended on bonding social capital which is available at the individual level (i.e family and friends) and not at the community level (i.e social groups). It was noticed during the participant observation that social groups at the community level (e.g women's group, youth group) do not provide support for the businesses of their members. The nature of their assistance was primarily in the form of labour for communal projects or funerals of members and their families. This may plausibly account for participants' non-dependence on them in the pursuit of their tourism-related livelihood activities. To further buttress the issue, a participant who is a member of a women's group had this to say:

*Our women group meetings are mostly towards communal labour in the community. Also, when someone is beavered,*

*we offer support to the person by contributing GHC 1, firewood, water and assisting in cooking... The group (women) does not get involved in any way with members' individual enterprises. (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay operator)*

Secondly, the networks and associations discussed above appeared to provide support principally at the start-up phase of these livelihood activities (Participants A9, A12). Although this is a good starting point, it may not be enough to ensure growth and sustainability of the tourism enterprises. Trade-related networks have been found to be very important to the entrepreneurial process (Haugh, 2007). For Brüderl and Preisendörfer (1998), these networks provide a platform through which enterprises can gain key resources, knowledge, information and experience.

Even though the majority of tourism enterprise owners were not members of such networks, they were equally not oblivious of the benefits associated with them. Access to credit, external support, exchange of ideas and marketing of products were highlighted as benefits of joining such networks:

*If we belong to a union and we are united, we can have regular contributions and with that, we can secure loans from the bank or any financial institution. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

*I think that if we have an association, we can all agree to team up with the TMT office and they can advertise us to*

*the tourists and that will help promote everyone's business. (A10, a 32 years old male local travel agency owner)*

Despite these perceived benefits, participants were not enthusiastic about the formation of such networks in Wli. They raised concerns about disunity, internal conflicts and mistrust, all emanating from competition to justify their positions:

*People should ask you about how you are running your business? Or come so that you will exchange ideas on how to run this business? No! No one does that here. You will know about their trade secrets. (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay operator)*

*It is just like a market and everyone is selling so there is a lot of competition. It is difficult for the association to happen because there is no collaboration. Everyone is fighting against the other because of competition in the business. The competition between the sellers is so much. When you are talking to a client, everyone is smiling but deep inside them, they are not happy. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

The issues emanating from the negative competition existing between the tourism enterprise owners obviously bridles any synergy formation thoughts

and efforts. This may have negative repercussions for the growth and sustainability of these enterprises with a long-term effect on the livelihoods dependent on it.

### **Financial Capital**

Financial capital assets are financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives (DFID, 1999). Indicators of financial capital employed in this study were income, savings, and credit. This capital was cited only by tourism enterprise owners probably because it constituted a very important factor in the operation of their enterprises. It emerged from the data that the tourism enterprise owners depended on three types of financial resources to support their tourism-related livelihood activities. These were income from tourism-related livelihood activities, savings accumulated from other livelihood activities and credit facilities.

Although all participants declined or were not able to state how much income or savings they were able to accumulate, they claimed it was “meagre”, “not too much” or “just enough”. Their unwillingness to make such financial disclosures may be due to fear that the information might be used for tax purposes.

Access to credit was limited for many of the tourism enterprise owners irrespective of the activities they were involved in. The main bottlenecks identified were high-interest rates and the small-scale nature of tourism enterprises with an unreliable revenue stream. Regarding the interest rates, participants complained of high-interest rates on loans given by money lenders, and savings and loan companies. For instance, a participant said:

*The interest rates are so high and if you take the loan from them (financial institutions), you will realise that you are just working to pay them. Because of that, I cannot take any loan from them. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

In relation to the small nature of tourism businesses and their unreliable revenue streams, this participant intimated that:

*Some of these savings and loans companies groups prefer lending money to salaried workers because their income is guaranteed at the end of every month. But for some of us, see our businesses, sometimes you make money, other times you do not make much so if you approach some of the savings and loans companies, they are not willing to give you the money. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

The availability of a microfinance cooperative group in Wli to provide credit to persons engaged in small-scale businesses appeared to have had its own challenges such as its loan repayment arrangement as shown in the ensuing narrative:

*I used to save with a microfinance company in this community. They come to this community every Wednesday and some of us joined. We save money with them and we are able to borrow from them. If you are not a member of the group, you cannot borrow money and if*

*any member of the group defaults until the person pays fully, you cannot access your savings with them. Somebody defaulted in our group and now we cannot access our savings until the person says. (A5, a 63-year-old female provision shop owner)*

Due to the challenges in accessing adequate financial capital, some participants lamented that their businesses were not expanding as they wished:

*Because I am supporting this business from my personal savings, things are not moving very fast. I have a lot of food items on my menu but I do not prepare all of them because I do not have the money to buy the ingredients. I need a freezer for my business but for now, I cannot afford it. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Another participant commented that:

*I am into retailing of crafts and I buy them from different places. Sometimes I run out of products but getting money to buy new stock in bulk can be difficult. The crafts are really expensive. Sometimes people come and ask for things that I should have in my store, but I do not have it because of money issues. (A3, a 54 years old female craft trader)*

The findings from this section lend support to earlier studies' assertion that access to financial assets has always had a constraining effect on rural

tourism enterprises (Ashley, Boyd, Goodwin, 2000; Seraphin, Butler & Vanessa, 2013; Tosun, 1999). Participants appeared to have limited options both internally and externally to access and accumulate this capital asset. This has implications for the growth of these enterprises which can potentially provide employment opportunities for non-employed local residents. Beyond that, stagnation in the growth of these existing tourism enterprises may also affect Wli as a tourism destination. This is because the enterprises may be limited by the quality and range of services they could provide.

### **Human Capital**

Human capital denotes the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that enable people to pursue livelihood strategies in order to achieve their livelihood objectives (DFID, 1999). Human capital was examined by exploring participants' existing skills and knowledge which enabled their involvement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The findings revealed that different skills and knowledge were employed in the four categories of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. With regard to souvenir trade, the activities engaged in by the participants reflected their artisanal skills acquired through informal training as carvers, bead makers and painters. Most of the craft traders sold their own self-produced crafts.

Participants engaged in food and beverage operations made use of cookery skills acquired through both formal and informal training. One participant indicated she transferred the skills for cooking for her household to the operation of her chop bar. By this, the domestic skills acquired in hosting

and serving guests and family relations have been transferred to commercial hospitality through the provision of food for cash:

*I did not go anywhere to learn how to cook. As a woman, I can cook so the same way I cook for my house, I just use that knowledge to cook here for sale. I only sell Banku and Fufu. (A26, a 36-year-old female catering establishment owner)*

Another participant received practical formal training in cookery which he relied on in the operation of an eatery that offered continental dishes to tourists. He said:

*I developed an interest in cooking so I went to a cookery school in Accra for two years. Specifically, the Opportunities Industrialization Centre is at East Legon, Accra. I completed in 2012. That was where I learnt how to prepare the continental dishes I serve in my restaurant. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

With respect to the accommodation and guiding services sub-sectors, language skill (ability to speak English language) was a very important human capital and a key requirement for employment. This stemmed from international tourists' usage of English as a common language to interact with the local residents in Wli. Hence, individuals interested in working in these sub-sectors were expected to possess basic proficiency in English. Some participants explained that:

*... Most of the international tourists who come here cannot speak Ewe; they speak English, and some of the local residents have not attended school beyond the primary level so they cannot communicate with the tourists in English. That is the problem with some of them (local residents). We cannot employ such people to work in this industry. (A14, a 48-year-old male guest house supervisor)*

*We need tour guides who can express themselves in the English language so they can communicate well with the international tourists who cannot speak our language. Language barrier should not be a problem for the tour guide. (A2, a 54-year-old male tour guide)*

It can be deduced from the narratives above that the human capital demands of the tourism enterprises in Wli were basic. This may be due to the quantity and quality of the human capital available in the community (Liu, 2006; Morrison, Rimmington & Williams, 1999). First of all, there are limited formal education institutions in the community. The community just like its surrounding neighbours, had one basic school which was up to the Junior High level. Many of the local residents did not have post middle school/junior high education (Interview with S11). The background characteristics of the study participants confirmed this, as only twelve (12) out of the twenty-seven (27) participants had gone to school beyond the middle school/junior high level.

According to the 2010 PHC, only 11.3% of the total population of the Hohoe municipality was enrolled in post basic level of education.

Secondly, non-formal educational institutions were also limited in the community. It was observed that apprenticeship opportunities in the community were mainly in hairdressing and dressmaking. Hence most of the young people relocate to other communities to learn other trades such as carpentry, and masonry (Interview with S11) and most of these young people rarely return to the community to ply their trade.

On a positive note, however, the nature of the tourism-related activities allowed participants to transfer and apply existing skills and knowledge in their tourism-related livelihood activities. This plausibly makes it easier for the local residents to engage in tourism as a livelihood activity. However, these skills and knowledge must be augmented regularly in order to enhance the delivery of services and possibly maximise the returns from these activities.

Reuber and Fischer (1999 as cited in Rey-Martí, Ribeiro-Soriano, & Palacios-Marqués, 2016) have opined that education and training programmes augment skills, however, in Wli, very little opportunities existed for skills training and capacity development for tourism. A one-time training programme was reportedly organised for the community by Hotel Tourism and Catering Training Institute (HOTCATT) under the auspices of Ghana Tourism Authority and Hohoe Municipal Assembly:

*When tourism started in Wli, they (Ghana Tourism Authority) mounted a training session for us here so that we will be trained in hotel work and how to receive visitors. The training was done by HOTCATT. They came*

*from Accra. It was the tourism board and the district assembly that brought them. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

A number of participants indicated partaking in that training programme and for some that marked the beginning of their involvement in tourism-related livelihood activities in the community:

*When HOTCATT did the training, they advised us to employ ourselves and stop travelling to other places in search of work... so whatever you think you can do for yourself in terms of business, you do that.... I realised that because the tourism office is far away from the town when the visitors want to buy water or banana or anything, they have to move back to the town to get those things. So I decided that I have to come and sell those things (consumables) here for them and later I expanded the shop and started trading in local crafts. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

*The community got some of us trained as tour guides and I was employed to work at the visitor centre. (A23, a 51-year-old male tour guide)*

Since the time that the training programme was held, none but one of the participants tried to find an alternative skill development avenue. She

explored the internet to learn new skills to improve her products. This was possible for her because she had a relative (social capital) who was knowledgeable in this and assisted her periodically:

*I go online to see what other designs people are making. I learn it and I modify it to suit what I am doing here. It is my nephew who introduced it (internet) to me and he helps me out with it. (A12, a 29 years old female craft trader)*

The rest of the participants offered no justification as to why they had not pursued or planned to pursue any form of skills or capacity development to aid in the running of their businesses or related activities.

Participants' ambivalence in seeking for skill training and capacity development could be attributed to their priorities regarding their involvement in these tourism-related livelihood activities, which in this case, may be survival over growth (Bensemman, 2011 as cited in Brooker & Joppe, 2014). Such ambivalence implies that participants may be content with their present set of skills and knowledge once it is enough to help them meet their livelihood outcomes. Although this perspective is typical of rural enterprises (Brooker & Joppe, 2014), it must be changed through capacity building if tourism is expected to contribute meaningfully to sustaining rural livelihoods.

### **Physical Capital**

Physical capital represents the basic infrastructure which provides an enabling environment for the livelihoods (DFID, 1999). This capital could be publically or privately owned. Within the context of this study, the focus was

on participants' privately owned physical capitals which were channelled into tourism-related livelihood activities. An analysis of the transcripts showed that the physical capital assets made mention of by the participants were mainly in the form of built assets such as houses and stores.

Prior to tourism development, houses were used only for living purposes. However, with the introduction of tourism, houses which had decent places of convenience were converted with ease into homestay facilities for tourists from which extra incomes were generated. A homestay operator commented that:

*This house is my father's house. We have two extra rooms in the house that no one was occupying so I use them to host tourists. Each of the rooms has a comfortable bed and washroom.* (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay operator)

Stores used by souvenir traders and food and beverage operators were also identified as important physical assets. All these assets supported the provision of services and income generation for participants who owned it (DFID, 1999). For example "*my business requires a store where I can display my wares*" (Participant A12).

Since these physical capital assets are privately owned, they can be transformed into financial capital for the participants. This is possible when they are used as collateral to secure financial assistance to aid the growth of these tourism-related enterprises (Kareithi, 2003; Tao, 2006).

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined the role of livelihood capitals in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The focus was on the five livelihood capitals proposed by DFID (1999). First of all, it emerged that the need and use of livelihood assets varied depending on participants' level of involvement (employees and enterprise owners) in the tourism-related activities in Wli. Secondly, findings from this chapter supported the study's conceptual framework presumptions that livelihood assets have a deterministic effect on the construction of livelihood activities. Thirdly, the assertion that livelihood assets have multiple benefits was affirmed in this chapter. The next chapter examines the institutional environment of tourism in Wli and its possible implication for tourism as a livelihood strategy.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### TOURISM INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND TOURISM-RELATED LIVELIHOOD ACTIVITIES IN WLI

#### **Introduction**

Institutions/organisations play a critical role in how livelihoods are constructed. They define livelihood opportunities and constraints and mediate people's access to livelihood resources (Scoones, 2015). Using Giddens's (1984) structuration theory as a theoretical basis, this chapter focuses on the institutions associated with tourism development in Wli with the view of understanding their influence over tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in the community.

This chapter draws on the interviews with representatives of identifiable institutions/organisations related to tourism development in Wli as well as persons engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The issues in this chapter are presented in two sections. The first section provides an overview of the institutional/organisational arrangements regarding tourism in Wli while the second section looks at the interactions between the institutions/organisations and the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli.

#### **Tourism Institutional Arrangements in Wli**

The term 'institutions' as used in this study encompass organizations, policies and processes (Norman & Townsley, 2003) which influence livelihoods. Scoones (1998, p.12) described institutions as "regularised practices (or patterns of behaviour) structured by rules and norms of society

which have persistent and widespread use". Within the rural tourism livelihood literature, the role of institutions in livelihood construction has been well documented (e.g Hobley & Shields, 2000; Ahebwa, 2012; Qian, Sasaki, Shivakoti & Zhang, 2016). Hobley and Shields (2000) and Scoones (2015) opined that institutional environments largely define livelihood opportunities and constraints for individuals and this is one of the postulations of the conceptual framework guiding this study.

Two levels of institutional arrangements were identified with regards to tourism organisation in Wli. These existed at the micro and macro levels. The micro-level institutions were at the community level while governmental organisations with oversight responsibility for tourism development constituted the macro level institutions. An overview of the profile, responsibilities and interrelationships between these institutions are discussed below.

#### Governmental Institutions

There has been some form of governmental involvement in tourism development in the community. In the early 1970s, the Government of Ghana through the Game and Wildlife Department of Forestry Commission was responsible for the protection and management of the Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary. Their main responsibilities were to patrol and clear the boundary lines of the sanctuary, create foot trails to the waterfalls, provide information to tourists and act as tour guides when the need arose (Gayi, 2000).

Around the mid-1990s, the community benefited from the community-based ecotourism development programme which spanned 1996 to 2005. The programme was a collaboration between Nature Conservation Research Centre

(NCRC), United States Peace Corps – Ghana, Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Hohoe Municipal Assembly and Netherlands Development Organisation (Ghana), with funding assistance from United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The objective of the programme was “to develop environmentally and culturally sensitive locations in rural Ghana as tourism destinations in order to create opportunities for rural communities to earn income through the conservation of local ecosystems and culture” (Netherlands Development Organisation - Ghana, 2004, p. 1).

Hohoe Municipal Assembly and the Ministry of Tourism through Ghana Tourism Authority had the responsibility of enacting tourism bye-laws for the community, training and capacity development of the local people to manage tourism and marketing and promotion of Wli as a tourist destination. This was confirmed by a participant who stated that:

*When tourism started in Wli, they (Ghana Tourism Authority) conducted a training session for us here so that we will be trained in hotel work and how to receive visitors. The training was done by HOTCATT. They came from Accra. It was the tourism board and the district assembly that brought them. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

The Hohoe Municipal Assembly, also, established a tourism desk at the assembly to market all fourteen (14) ecotourism sites within its jurisdiction of which Wli is included. In addition, the Assembly funded the construction of the

current visitor centre shown in plate 5. The visitor centre has a visitor receptive area, changing room for tourists, offices for the tour guides and a souvenir shop.



**Plate 5: Wli Agumatsa Waterfalls Visitor Centre**

Source: Amedzofe Village-Tourism Traveling Ghana (2016)

#### Community Level Institutions

Since the late 1990s, the Wli community has adopted a community-based approach to the development and management of the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary. This was as a result of two main issues: the first being a rise in the community's consciousness of the value of their natural environment for tourism and the second, the community's dissatisfaction with Government's non-payment of compensation to landowners of the sanctuary. Coupled with that, the community was not receiving any part of the revenue generated from the sanctuary. Hence, the community requested that the Game and Wildlife

Department, the governmental agency spearheading the protection of the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary, hands over the management of the sanctuary to them (Gayi, 2000).

The community's claim over the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary stems from the fact that the sanctuary had not been acquired and/or gazetted by the government, hence, it remained the legal property of the landowners and, by extension the community. One of the landowners explained that:

*Long ago, during the time that our fathers were alive, the issue came up that landowners will be compensated for the land. They said Nkrumah (Ghana's first president) came here and said he wanted to develop the place. So they created footpaths to the waterfall. During the creation of the footpaths, all those whose coffee and cocoa farms were destroyed, their names were written so that they will be compensated but that never happened before Nkrumah was overthrown. So one of my uncles wrote to the government for compensation and followed it up several times but nothing came out of it before they died. And until now, no compensation has been paid for the lands. So now nobody can come and tell me not to do as I please with my land. It is still my land. (S10, a representative of landowners)*

Therefore, the community has maintained a high degree of control over the development and promotion of Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary and the Wli

waterfalls for tourism. As at the time of data collection for the study, tourism governance was mainly organised around the local institutions in the community. The Wli community operated a local tourism management structure that had the chieftaincy institution (Chiefs and Elders) at the apex as the highest decision makers. This was because the chieftaincy institution is the highest level of traditional authority in Wli and thus, superintends over issues within its jurisdiction.

The local Tourism Management Team (TMT) acted as the tourism implementing agency of the chieftaincy institution. This institution was formed in 1998 due to the community's resolution to self-manage the sanctuary and attractions within it. The institution has a four-year rotational tenure and is made up of representatives from the nine (9) clans in the Wli traditional area, representatives of landowners who owned over 3 km sq. of farmlands which were converted into the Agumasta Wildlife sanctuary and the Assembly man of the Wli.

Based on a Ghana Wildlife Society report on the sanctuary cited during the course of the study (Gayi, 2000), TMT is mandated to formulate policies to govern the operations and management of the sanctuary, develop a long-term tourism development plan for the community and manage any income derived from the sanctuary. The TMT is also tasked to render quarterly accounts of their activities to the Chiefs and the entire community. The operations of the TMT is stipulated in the community's local tourism constitution. Because the researcher was not permitted to have access to the tourism constitution, a detailed analysis of the document could not be done.

## Institutional Relationships and Challenges

### *Governmental Institutions - Community Level Institutions*

It emerged from the interviews that the relationship between the governmental institutions and the community level institutions has deteriorated over the years. This was as a result of the community level institutions' decision to suspend sharing the tourism revenue with them (governmental institutions). A community leader explained that the decision was to enable the community to commit all the revenue into some development projects in the community. Even though he stated that the suspension was temporal, he could not indicate when the suspension will be lifted or whether it would be reversed:

*We have decided to suspend sharing the revenue between the various stakeholders so that we can complete some projects that we have in this community like extending potable water to all households in Afegame and Agorviefe and raise funds for the celebration of Komabu. (S1, a representative of TMT)*

Consequently, the Hohoe Municipal Assembly and Ghana Tourism Agency have both reduced their support to any tourism-related issues in Wli. Their regular visitations to the community to monitor tourism activities have ceased. One of the government institutional representatives explained their resolution by stating that:

*Tourism in Wli is community owned so what we do basically now is to provide some guidance to them when they ask for it. We are not taking a pesewa from them and*

*even the assembly as we speak is not getting a share of the revenue so the question at times is why should we (institutions) go and continue investing in the attraction when we (institutions) are not getting anything from it?*  
(S5, a representative of Ghana Tourism Authority)

Tourism development always involves multiple stakeholders with different strengths and interests which can be harnessed through effective collaboration (Jamal & Getz, 1999; Okazaki, 2008). However, the evident friction between the community and government institutions is undermining such efforts. The community's claim over the Agumatsa Wildlife Sanctuary made them the main power brokers in matters concerning tourism in the area. Thus, the community institutions in Wli had become the policy makers, implementers and regulators of their tourism, relegating the government institutions to the margins. Hardy and Phillips (1998) have suggested that unequal power relations could block effective collaboration between stakeholders and this may be accounting for the situation in Wli.

Although the community-based approach to tourism development argues for community control of the tourism development process, there is documented evidence (e.g Tosun, 2000; Afenyo, 2011) that local communities lack the capacity to solely develop tourism on a sustainable basis. Therefore, the community needs the assistance (collaboration) of other institutions (including government) to sustainably develop tourism.

Again, the governmental institutions' decision to withdraw their support for tourism on the basis of revenue sharing issues is problematic. This is because

they have a responsibility to the Wli community because it is within their jurisdiction. The Wli community may also not be justified in expecting government support despite their unwillingness to pay part of their revenue into government coffers which could be used in providing them with the needed infrastructure. The entrenched positions taken by the institutions (community and government) may thwart the achievement of sustainability of tourism development in Wli.

#### *Community Level Institutions*

At the community level, the TMT has not been without its own challenges. Some participants expressed concern about the membership composition of the TMT. Although all members of the TMT were natives of Wli, the participants complained that majority of them do not reside in the community and some returned to the community only after retirement so do not properly understand the needs of the community. One participant elucidated that:

*The TMT chairman lives in Accra, and some members of the TMT live and work outside Wli. How will they understand what we are going through in this community when they only visit once in a while? Even those members of TMT who are currently in this community are retirees who have relocated to Wli. What do they know about what we want as a community? Why not have people who are living in the community and better understand the situations here? (A21, a 38-year-old male tour guide)*

The dominance of “non-resident Wli natives” and retirees in the TMT may be explained by the fact that due to their exposure and work experience in urban areas, they may possess relevant experience and business managerial skills (Stone & Nyaupane, 2016) which could be helpful to their community’s tourism development. However, the discontent expressed by the participants brings to the fore issues of identity and power relations that may exist between those who have stayed in the community for an extended period of time and the perceived “non-residents and returnees.”

Possibly, persons who have stayed in the community for a longer period of time may consider themselves more knowledgeable in existing situations and structures in the community than the “returnees” (Cassarino, 2004; Simard, Guimond & Vezina, 2018). Hence they may be apathetic or antagonistic towards the leadership of persons who they perceive as “newcomers”.

Furthermore, the activities of TMT were expected to be guided by a tourism constitution but this is not being followed through. One participant complained that:

*The tourism constitution over the years has not been entirely respected by all. Various TMTs choose the aspects of the constitution that suits them. If it favourable, they quickly quote from it. If it is not, they call it obsolete that the constitution is old and that now things have changed.*

(S4, a representative of the Chieftaincy institution)

The partial disregard of the local tourism constitution was confirmed by a TMT member who admitted that:

*In fact, when we were selected, the outgone team did not tell us anything about how this work is done so we are just using our own minds and taking decisions to see how we can help develop tourism in the community. We did not receive any handing over notes from anyone. Sometimes, we consult the constitution, other times, we make our own decisions.* (S1, a representative of TMT)

A possible consequence of the situation reported above is that the process can easily be hijacked by individuals who will run the tourism project based on their personal ideologies and sentiments in order to advance their personal interest. That can become a source of conflict between the tourism stakeholders, consequently affecting the influence of this institution.

### **Institutions and Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities in Wli**

This section examines the interactions between the institutions and tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. Like related studies (e.g. Leach, Mearns & Scoones, 1999; Sikor & Lund, 2010), the discussions are situated within the wider structure-agency debate. The issue of institutional support and hindrances for tourism-related livelihood activities is explored from two perspectives: the institutions and persons engaged in these activities.

#### **Institutional Views on Support for Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities**

The institutional representatives expressed divergent opinions when asked about their views on institutional support for privately owned tourism-

related livelihood enterprises in the community. The community level institutions stated that it was not within their mandate as those were persons engaging in their private businesses. One TMT member explained that:

*It is not part of our mandate to do anything for these businesses. If you want to start any business in the community, you are free to do so. You just have to find a land and start whatever you want to do. Since we took over as TMT, it was said that we will have a meeting with all these business operators but we have not done that and I do not know when we will. (S1, a representative of TMT)*

The government institutions, on the other hand, agreed that tourism-related enterprises needed some support in order to improve upon their services. They noted, however, that they made earlier attempts at this but had to revert to their traditional mandates because of the community's refusal to continue with the payment of revenues to them. One participant from HMA commented that:

*The Wli community expects a lot from the assembly and they always claim that the assembly has not done this and has not done that. Yet, they do not want to pay anything to the assembly but we need resources to continue meeting their needs. (S8, a representative of Hohoe Municipal Assembly)*

## Institutional Influences on Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities in Wli

Following up on these views, this section explored participants' experiences regarding institutional influences on their tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. Three issues emerged: policies, regulations and direct support for tourism-related livelihood activities. These themes are discussed below.

### *Policies*

Two issues were raised regarding existing policies and their implication for tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The first issue centred on restrictions on non-natives and the second the lifting of taboos. On the first issue, participants indicated that unlike some rural communities where native status was a necessary requirement for engaging in tourism-related activities, Wli had limited restrictions. In exception of tour guiding which was solely reserved for natives of Wli, individuals, regardless of their native status, could get involved in any tourism-related livelihood activity in the community. To further exemplify the issue of fewer restrictions, a participant commented that:

*I did not have any problem when I came here to start my business. I only had to look for land for my store. It does not matter whether you are from this community or not. I come from the next town but I work here. You can start any business you want, nobody will prevent you. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

This was confirmed by a representative of TMT who explained that:

*Our culture does not permit discriminations so if you are a visitor and you want to start a business, you can go ahead. No interference.* (S3, a representative of TMT)

This situation has made it possible for non-natives to take advantage of opportunities presented by tourism in Wli to start up various businesses or take up employment in the existing ones.

Regarding the second issue, participants identified the lifting of taboos on the waterfall as favouring their businesses. Prior to the introduction of tourism, there were taboos which restricted access to the waterfall but these conditions were relaxed to encourage tourist visitation to the attraction. A traditional leader explained that:

*Formerly, there were some taboos concerning the waterfall but now that we have decided to go into tourism, the taboos do not exist again. You cannot wash your utensils in the water, you could not bath with soap in the water. Secondly, sexual activities were not permitted around the waterfall but now it is all happening around the waterfalls. We also had a particular time that nobody could go to the waterfall but now it is open to everyone all year round. We have realised that it is now a tourist attraction so if we keep those taboos, it will not be good for the people who are coming.* (S6, a representative of the Chieftaincy institution).

For some participants, this development was very important as the viability of their businesses depended on tourists' unrestricted access to the waterfall and other attractions around it. One said:

*It is because of the waterfall that I have a job here. If the waterfall was not there, people would not have been visiting this place for me to also work as a tour guide. So once the waterfall continue to exist, my job will also continue to exist (A4, a 21-year-old male tour guide)*

#### *Regulation of Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities*

A number of participants used the term “free zone” to describe the regulatory environment within which they pursued their tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. What this meant is that there were limited, and in some cases, no form of regulation pertaining to tourism-related livelihood activities in the community.

In the accommodation sector, only hotels and guesthouses obtained permits from GTA, HMA, and Ghana fire service in order to operate their facilities in Wli. There was no regulation for homestay facilities in the community. An accommodation owner explained that:

*There are a lot of homestay facilities coming up in this community. Nobody is making sure that they are doing the right thing. They charge lower rates than we do in the hotels and guest houses so they are getting a lot of patronage. We have reported to GTA a number of times*

*but nothing is being done about them. (A22, a 48-year-old female hotel owner)*

This was confirmed by one homestay owner who indicated that she did not seek any permission from anyone before commencing her operations:

*We had an empty room in the house so that was how I began this business. I have not obtained any permission from anyone and no one has ever come to inspect what I do here or ask that I pay any money (A6, a 35-year-old female homestay operator)*

Employees of the hotels and guesthouses in the community also indicated that they were required by their employers to undertake periodic medical exams in order to continue working with the facilities. They, however, could not tell whether these medical reports were forwarded to any governmental institution or regulatory body.

Those in the catering establishments had a slightly different story. One of them commented that:

*Yes, I went to Hohoe assembly or council I have forgotten their names, those who come and conduct medical exams for those who want to sell cooked food that is the only place I went to. They came to inspect my place to see how I was handling the place and my immediate surroundings. They mostly come unannounced. If I get the hint they are coming and I know my place is not right, I just close up.*

*They are the only people who come round for inspection....they have been in the community only once this year. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Like the homestay facilities, those within the souvenir trade and camping business operated on their own terms. Typical examples are presented below:

*When I wanted to start my business, all I needed to do was get a land from the landlord. There was no need for me to seek permission from anyone. Since I started this business about 12 years ago, I have not had anyone come here to check on how my business is going... (A15, a 39-year-old carver/craft shop owner)*

*The camping site is on my own land so why do I have to ask permission from anyone to do my own business on my own property? (A19, a 31-year-old male campsite owner/operator)*

#### *Direct Support for Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities*

In exception of participants who took part in the training programme organised for the community by the Ministry of Tourism through GTA, HOTCATT and HMA, most participants revealed they had never received any form of support from any institution in the pursuant of their activities. This

finding is a confirmation of the earlier observations made about the apathetic position of the institutions towards tourism-related livelihood activities in the community.

The TMT claimed that they had a credit facility for tourism-related enterprises in Wli. A representative indicated that:

*If anyone needs a loan for his or her business, the person can write a letter requesting for that help from the TMT. The TMT will decide whether or not the person can repay it and based on that the money will be given out... but no one has ever asked and so we have also never given anyone... (S1, a representative of TMT)*

But persons engaged in these livelihood activities denied any knowledge of such a provision and doubted whether they would even be able to access this facility since most of the TMT members did not reside in the community and rarely met. One of them noted:

*Apart from the financial institutions, I do not know of any other institution I can access credit from in order to boost my business....the TMT?, I am not sure they lend or would lend, not to even talk about HMA...I just do not know and I have never tried too....Even if they do, I do not know how to go about it. (A5, a 63 years old female provision shop owner)*

The findings from this section have shown that the influence of the institutions over tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli is weak. This may probably be because tourism-related livelihood activities were not of priority to the institutions. Although structuralists (e.g. Imbroscio, 1999) and the study's conceptual framework opine that the structure has a deterministic effect on actors in society, findings from this chapter rather suggest the contrary. Evidence from this chapter points to the fact that the influence of the structure over the agent may only be strong if the activities of the agent are of interest to the structure.

Secondly, the complementarity characteristic of the tourism product calls for the weak influence of the institutions over tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli to be checked. This is because the actions and inaction of persons engaged in these activities also shape the tourist experience. This is another reason why institutional support (financial and non-financial) to such businesses is important. It would help improve the quality of services delivered and the image of the destination (Hall, 2004).

Thirdly, the influence of the institutions on mediating access to livelihood assets, opportunities and challenges as postulated by the conceptual framework guiding the study were found to be mixed. This may probably be because the resources around which these tourism-related livelihood activities are constructed are privately owned and controlled. On a positive note, however, these institutions, probably unknowingly, provided an unrestrictive environment which boosted individuals' engagement in tourism-related enterprises.

Finally, it appeared that the interest and focus of the institutions were skewed towards the community-owned tourism enterprise (the Agumasta Wildlife Sanctuary). While this community-owned enterprise provided revenue for the community as a whole, it had limited opportunities for local residents to diversify their livelihood activities as compared to the privately owned tourism-related enterprises in the community. According to Robert and Hall (2001) and Hall (2004), locally owned tourism-related enterprises are pivotal in sustaining rural tourism. Besides, they are more likely to have linkages throughout the local economy because of their dependence on local resources and labour. Hence, there is a need for the institutions to shift their attention to these enterprises as important stakeholders in the development of tourism as a rural livelihood diversification strategy in Wli.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined the institutional environment of tourism in Wli and its possible influence on tourism-related livelihood activities in the community. It emerged that the institutional environment of tourism in Wli was bedevilled with unequal power relations which undermine effective collaboration between the various institutions. The second part of the discussion looked at the influence of these institutions over tourism activities. It came out that institutional influence over tourism-related activities in Wli was weak as the institutions and the tourism enterprises seem to have parallel operations. The discussion continues in the next chapter by examining vulnerability issues and tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli.

**CHAPTER EIGHT**  
**VULNERABILITY ISSUES AND TOURISM-RELATED LIVELIHOOD**  
**ACTIVITIES IN WLI**

**Introduction**

There is documented evidence of tourism's susceptibility to a wide range of shocks and stressors which can threaten its sustainability (e.g Baker & Coulter, 2007; Moreno & Becken, 2009; Nyaupane & Chhetri, 2009). It is against this backdrop that this chapter examines vulnerability issues regarding tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli.

Issues presented in this chapter are underpinned by the parameters of vulnerability: exposure, sensitivity and adaptive capacity (Adger, 2006; Smit & Wandel, 2006). Accordingly, the chapter addresses three main issues namely, the threats that tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli have been exposed to, study participants' perspectives on the effects of these threats on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli and finally, coping and/or adaptive strategies employed by study participants to deal with the identified threats.

**Threats to Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities in Wli**

According to DFID (1999), the external environment within which people live is affected by shocks and stressors over which they have limited or no control. Yet, these threats have a direct impact on people's livelihood assets and the options that are open to them in the pursuance of their livelihood activities. Chambers and Conway (1992) describe stressors in the external

environment as threats which are continuous, predictable and distressing while shocks are sudden, unpredictable and traumatic threats.

From the transcripts, five threats: seasonality, domestic tourists' purchasing behaviour, Ebola health scare and political electioneering activities in the country emerged as the threats to tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. These were categorised into stressors and shocks and discussed subsequently. While seasonality and domestic tourists' purchasing behaviour were found to be cyclical threats (stressors), the Ebola health scare and the political electioneering activities were one-time occurrences (Shocks).

#### Stressors

##### *Seasonal Variation of Tourist Demand*

All the participants mentioned seasonality as the main bane of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. They pointed to the existence of peak and lean tourist seasons in Wli to buttress this view and further explained that international tourists' arrivals were not evenly spread throughout the year. The peak period identified coincided with the summer season (June to August) and Easter season (March/April). September through to May minus the public holidays (Christmas, New Year, Independence Day, Easter) were regarded as the lean tourist season. Participants noted that the peak season was longer than the lean season. Some participants described the nature of seasonality in Wli saying:

*The whites (international tourists) mostly visit this community between June and August. Apart from that, we are mostly busy during the Christmas and Easter seasons.*

*During these periods, we have guests in all our rooms. Then in the other months, our rooms are mostly almost empty. But the good thing is that the slow (lean) season is not as long as the busy (peak) season). (A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)*

*The business is not all year round. I get busy with my guests between June and August when we have a lot of international tourists visiting Wli and sometimes during the Easter celebrations. Beyond that, the place is mostly quiet. There are even some months that I do not get any guest... that is how this business is. (A6, 35-year-old female homestay owner)*

Seasonality is one of the most cited threats facing tourism in the literature. The phenomenon is characterized by distinct variations in tourist demand caused by both natural and institutional factors which result in the creation of peak and lean tourist seasons (Butler, 2001; Get & Nilsson, 2004). This threat is not exclusive to any particular form of tourism or destination and mostly negatively impacts the operations of the tourism sector (Baum & Hagen, 1999; Butler, 2001).

#### *Domestic Tourists' Purchasing Behaviour*

Participants also conceived the weak purchasing behaviour of domestic tourists as a threat to their tourism-related livelihood activities. Although they

acknowledged that domestic tourist demand was relatively evenly spread throughout the year in Wli, they were discontent with their purchasing behaviour. Some of the reservations expressed are captured below:

*During the lean tourist season, the foreigners (international tourists) do not come around but we have a lot of Ghanaians visiting the attraction. When they come, they do not buy anything. They just admire and complain about every price you quote. Even if a Ghanaian and a foreigner (international tourist) come around and you quote a price for the white person, the Ghanaian would tell you it is too expensive. Instead of saying it in Ewe or any local language, they say it in English for the tourist to understand. They really spoil business for us. (A12, a 29-year-old female shop owner)*

*A lot of school and church groups come here throughout the year for excursions. Several buses at times and the whole place can be full of people. But the problem is that they bring everything that they will eat with them...food, drinks, water...so they do not buy from us. Sometimes, they even bring big pots and stove to complete the food here (near the visitor centre) while the group goes to the waterfall. By the time they return, their food is ready...it is really terrible. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Two observations can be made from the findings presented above. First of all, participants' perception of the seasonality of tourism demand as a challenge to their tourism-related activities is consistent with previous studies (Commons & Page, 2001; Banki, Ismail & Muhammad, 2016) which have also arrived at the same conclusion.

Secondly, while it was expected that domestic tourists' patronage of the Wli waterfall could serve as a buffer for tourism enterprises especially during the lean tourist season (Walpole, Goodwin & Ward, 2001), the opposite was found to be the case. A possible explanation for this situation may be due to the nature of product and service offerings in Wli. This is because Carr (2002) and Yuksel (2004) have intimated that domestic tourists rarely engaged in hedonistic behaviour when they are in an environment which is similar or familiar to their place of origin. Hence, if the products are similar to what the domestic tourists are already used to, they will buy less of it. Moreover, domestic tourists are known to have smaller travel budgets than international tourists so they tend to be more price sensitive (Alegre & Sard, 2015; Yuksel, 2004).

#### Shocks

Beyond the cyclical threats, participants recounted a number of unexpected events (2014 Ebola health epidemic, the 2012 election petition and 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections) which indirectly affected their tourism-related livelihood activities.

*Ebola Epidemic*

In 2014, there was an outbreak of a viral disease known as Ebola in West Africa. Since the discovery of this disease in 1976, the 2014-2015 outbreak in West Africa was the deadliest. The World Health Organisation (WHO) described the situation as “a public health emergency of international concern” (Hawkes, 2014:1). Five countries: Guinea, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria were affected with total estimated deaths of about 11, 310 (World Health Organisation [WHO] Ebola Response Team, 2014). The epidemic attracted wide media coverage. In addition, it witnessed travel warnings and restrictions to the West African sub-region in order to limit the spread of the disease (Poletto et al, 2014; The Guardian, 2014).

Although Ghana did not record any infection, participants indicated that the epidemic affected tourist arrivals to Wli:

*The Ebola period was very hard for us. Tourists were not visiting...not even during the peak tourism season. Because the news said Ebola is in West Africa, international tourists thought Ghana was also affected. Even the number of Ghanaians visiting this place also reduced...I think it was because of fear. Once in a while, you will get some schools coming round for excursion. That was all. (A7, a 65-year-old male tour guide)*

*During the time of Ebola, a lot of tourists did not visit. It was very difficult because our businesses are dependent on*

*the visitors to the waterfall...*(A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)

Due to poor record and book keeping of these tourism enterprises, it was not possible to get actual figures on tourist arrivals and patronage in Wli prior, during and post-Ebola. However, both the Africa Report (2014) and Africa Tourism Monitor (2015) confirmed that the epidemic had a negative economic impact even on countries within the sub-region which were not affected. The entire African continent suffered from the image of fear that was associated with the epidemic.

#### *Political Electioneering Activities*

Some political events in the country were also thought to have had indirect effects on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The two events identified by the participants were the 2012 presidential election petition and the 2016 presidential and parliamentary elections. According to some participants, the uncertainties associated with the outcomes of those political events negatively affected international tourists' arrivals to the country and consequently Wli:

*... the NDC and NPP presidential election results court case, tourists were scared something will happen in the country so they were not coming. Now that election (2016) is approaching, tourists are not sure what will happen in the country...The tension in the campaigning is too much so they (tourists) are not coming. I know when the*

*elections are over and Ghana is peaceful, tourists will begin to come again. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft shop owner)*

*Tourists are not really coming these days but it is because of the upcoming elections (2016). Tourists do not want to be in the country during this time. If there is a political turmoil because of the elections, they will be trapped in the country. (A10, a 32-year-old male local travel agency owner)*

The literature is replete with evidence of unexpected events in the macro environment which impact upon tourism and its operations (Baxter & Bowen, 2004; Nyaupane & Chhetri, 2009; Pratt, 2003; Song & Lin, 2010). Although none of these events reported above occurred in Wli, they affected tourism activities in the community indirectly. In sum, the findings above have affirmed the influence of events (stressors and shocks) within the external environment on tourism-related livelihood activities (Lai, Morrison-Saunders & Grimstad, 2017).

### **Perceived Effects of Threats on Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities in Wli**

This section focuses on examining the effects of the identified threats on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The discussions centre on what participants engaged in these activities perceived to be the effects of these

threats on their activities. Generally, responses of the interviewees suggest that the threats negatively affected their tourism-related livelihood activities. Below are the discussions on the themes that emerged from the analysis:

#### Reduced Tourism Demand

Reduced tourism demand was one major effect all participants associated with the identified threats. Some explained that whether the threat was a stressor or a shock, the first outcome was a reduction in tourist arrivals to the community:

*...the tension in the campaigning is too much so they (tourists) are not coming. I know when the elections are over and Ghana is peaceful, tourists will begin to come again. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft shop owner)*

*The time of Ebola, a lot of tourists did not visit. It was very difficult because our businesses are dependent on the visitors to the waterfall...it is a similar as thing during the lean tourism season...the tourist numbers reduce. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Again, participants attributed the irregularity in the operations of tourism-related activities in the community to the seasonality of tourist demands. They indicated that during the peak tourist season, they engaged in their tourism-related activities for longer hours throughout the week but it would be a “waste of time” to do same during the lean tourist season. This

confirmed an observation made during the data collection period (which participants stated was the lean tourist season) that most of the tourism enterprises were active during the latter part of the week (Thursdays to Sunday) when groups on excursions normally visit the waterfall. One tourism enterprise owner stated that:

*I do not open my shop early these days because the tourists are not coming. This is not the season (peak season). So I stay at home and finish other tasks that I have before I come here. It is a waste of time to come early to open the place and stay here all day when you know that nobody will come. When the season (peak season) comes, I open for longer hours. There are times I close after 10 pm.*

(A12, a 29-year-old female craft shop owner)

This issue was reinforced by an employee in the accommodation sub-sector who indicated that:

*During the peak tourist season, we do not close from work early. I report early in the morning and work until late in the evening. But during the lean season, I get more off days because there is not much to do around here. Sometimes, you come to work and sit idle the whole day, nothing really to do. It can get boring.* (A20, a 21-year-old male hotel employee)

Participants noted that the reduced tourism demand and irregularity of their operations have negative implications on the tourism-related activities they were pursuing. While for the tourism enterprise owners the effects were felt more in terms of low sales, higher costs of operation and pressure on savings, employees complained only about pressure on savings.

#### Low Sales

Low sales was an issue of concern to tourism enterprise owners. They all complained about the gap in their sales during the peak and lean tourist seasons. They indicated that they made very low sales during the lean tourist season. Some participants compared their sales during the peak and lean tourist seasons:

*Business is not good at this time. It is very slow. Few tourists visit the waterfall at this time of the year. During the peak season, we can make sales of more than GHC 1000 a day. But can you imagine the whole of this week, I have not even sold things to the tune of GHC 20? There are even days I do not sell anything. (A3, 52-year-old female craft shop owner)*

*The peak season, several whites come on vacation. You can sell about GHC 1,500; 2,000 or 3,000 worth of items in less than 30 minutes depending on the kind of artefacts you have in stock. Nothing much happens here during the other months. You can come to work for a week or even a*

*whole month and make no sale at all. (A11, a 38-year-old male craft shop owner).*

#### High Cost of Operation

High cost of operation was another effect of concern to tourism enterprise owners. Participants within the accommodation subsector in Wli particularly noted that this higher cost emanated from the fact that they tried to remain open all year round despite the variations in tourists' demand. Regardless of visitor numbers, there were fixed costs such as utility bills, taxes, and employee salaries that had to be paid. One accommodation owner explained the dilemma they often found themselves in:

*We keep the hotel open all year round and that is not easy to do. In the peak season, most of our rooms are booked and the place is all busy. But during the lean season, sometimes for a whole week, our occupancy is zero. While you are not making any sales, you still have bills to pay. The utility companies and tax organisations do not care whether you are making sales or not. Then you have salaries to pay because you have workers coming to work. So at the end of the day, you will realise that you are spending more than you are gaining. There have been times I had to use my personal money to pay bills because there was inadequate money in the hotel's coffers. (A22, 48-year-old-female hotel owner)*

Similar sentiments were expressed by those within the catering sub-sector. Their challenge was with buying food produce in bits during the lean tourist season as compared to bulk purchasing which was considered cheaper.

One catering establishment owner had this to say:

*For my restaurant, I focus more on continental than local dishes. And the ingredients that I need to cook most of these foods are not sold here. I have to go to Hohoe or Ho before I can get things like fresh fish, chicken, potatoes and vegetables to buy. Now when I buy these things in bulk and the tourists do not come, the things go bad and I lose money. Also, I cannot be travelling to Hohoe and Ho to buy things in bits. It is more expensive that way. That is the problem I find myself in. I cannot close the place down too.*

(A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)

### Pressure on Savings

The effect of pressure on savings was shared by both tourism enterprise owners and employees. Tourism enterprise owners, on one hand, explained that often times, they were able to save during the peak tourist seasons because of good sales. However, during the lean tourist seasons, they channelled those savings into the business to keep them running. One participant remarked:

*During the lean season, it is all about managing. Often times, it is the money I save during the peak season that I use during the lean season. So it has become cyclical: save and use it up during the lean season. It does not really help*

*in saving money for other needs. If you do not do it like that too, you will close down your shop when the tourists are not coming. (A11, a 38-year-old male craft shop owner)*

Participants, who were employees in the tourism enterprises on the other hand, had a slightly different story to share. In an attempt to deal with the effect of seasonality on their businesses, the accommodation facilities especially introduce shift systems during the lean season for their employees. Through that, they reduce the remuneration paid to their employees. The employees complained it affects their saving ability during the lean period. An employee remarked:

*When the tourists are not coming, all of us do not come to work at the same time. We get more off days and our salaries are reduced. But when the tourists start coming again then things go back to normal. All you can do is to manage with whatever you receive around that time. Because you have needs and the money coming in is reduced, you cannot save. You end up spending all the money. (A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)*

The discussions on the effects of the threats on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli have revealed some consistencies with the existing literature. Some previous studies (e.g. Banki, Ismail, Muhammed, 2016; Butler, 2001; Getz, Carlsen & Morrison, 2004; Henderson, 2007; Lai, Morrison,

Grimstad, 2017) have also identified similar effects of tourism's exposure to risk on tourism-related activities in rural destinations. Getz, Carlsen and Morrison (2004) summed the effects up as personal and financial stress on individuals and businesses engaged in tourism. This finding also substantiates the conceptual framework's assumptions that vulnerability issues can affect people's livelihood activities.

Secondly, it appeared that participants viewed the effects of the threats mainly from an economic perspective. This is because all the effects identified had an economic undertone. This could probably be explained by the fact that the main lure of tourism to many people is its economic incentives (Briedenham & Wickens, 2004; Iorio & Corsale, 2010). Hence any threats to these economic incentives will be a cause for concern.

Thirdly, the narratives showed that there were slight differences in the perspectives of the tourism enterprise owners and employees on the effects of these threats. Tourism enterprise owners appeared to be more impacted by the threats than the employees. This may probably be due to the fact that enterprise owners make more investments to establish and sustain these enterprises than employees do to taking up employment in them.

Finally, the financial capital stock of the participants was most affected by the threats. This manifested in their concerns about pressure on savings, lower sales and the higher cost of operations. In the long run, these effects can ultimately affect the cash flow and overall profitability (Baum, 1998; Butler, 2001) of these enterprises and threaten their viability and sustainability. This finding supports one of the propositions of the study's conceptual framework

that risks from the external environment can affect individuals' livelihood capital stock.

### **Coping Strategies of Study Participants in Wli**

The third parameter of vulnerability focuses on a system's coping/adapting abilities to the threats and their associated effects (Adger, 2006). Chambers and Conway (1992) have noted that the sustainability of any livelihood activity is highly contingent upon its ability to avoid, withstand or recover from risks. Likewise, the viability of small tourism enterprises and other related livelihoods depends on how they are able to deal effectively with the risks associated with tourism.

From the analysis of the data, it came up that the participants had adopted various strategies to cope with the effects of the threats posed to their tourism-related livelihood activities. It was noted that tourism enterprise owners had more varied coping strategies than the employees. This may probably be due to the fact that they were most affected by the threats discussed in the previous sections. The strategies adopted by the participants are discussed below.

#### **Diversification of Livelihood Activities**

Diversification of livelihood activities was the common coping strategy adopted by both tourism enterprise owners and employees. As earlier noted in chapter four, almost all the participants rarely engaged in a single livelihood activity. Hence, during the lean tourist season, most of the participants shifted their attention to other non-tourism related livelihood activities within their

livelihood portfolio in order to continue to meet their livelihood needs. This strategy, they stated acts as a “cushion” for them anytime one livelihood activity was not doing well. Some participants further explained that:

*It is because of times like this (lean tourist season) that is why one needs to engage in some farming and other activities apart from tourism. I have a farm which I spend more time on during the lean tourist season. The farm is not very big but at least I am able to feed myself. (A11, a 38-year-old male craft shop owner)*

*The lean tourist seasons are hard. The tourists are not coming as they used to so the tips we get reduce. You have yourself and a family to look after. There is no money, you need to survive. My farm always comes handy at such times. Sometimes too I turn to construction work to make ends meet. I have tried that in Wli and outside Wli. As a man, you must hustle to take care of yourself so that you can survive and not steal. (A4, a 21-year-old male tour guide)*

The use of livelihood diversification as a coping strategy by rural tourism enterprises is not new in the tourism literature (Banki et al, 2016; Shen, 2009; Tao, 2006). Participants’ reliance on this strategy to accumulate some income during the lean tourist season to cater for their livelihood needs substantiates Ellis (1998) assertions about the advantages of diversifying

livelihood activities to rural dwellers. This is especially important since tourism is a risky venture (Baker & Coulter, 2007) which requires being tactful to engage in it as a single livelihood strategy (Tao & Wall, 2009).

In addition to diversifying their livelihood activities, participants who were tourism enterprise owners adopted other coping strategies. This was mainly to ensure that they remained open throughout the year. While rural tourism enterprises often adopted temporal closure to cope with the threats of seasonality and shocks (Andriotis, 2005; Getz & Nilsson, 2004), that was not an option for businesses in Wli. This may be indicative of their high dependence on tourism as a livelihood activity. In order to ensure their continuous operations, strategies including stocking shops with daily consumables, using the lean tourist season to prepare for the peak season and managing the human resource demands of the enterprises were adopted.

#### Product Expansion

It came up from the interviews that some of the souvenir and catering enterprise owners had added some basic daily consumables to the range of products they sold. These products include water, call credits, and cold beverages which could easily be patronised by visitors and even the local residents. They relied on the sales from those consumables to meet their needs.

One participant explained that:

*I do not close my store because regardless of how slow the business is, you will surely make some money. This is the main work that I do now. It may be small though but it is something. In addition to the souvenirs I sell, I have now*

*added water, biscuits, drinks and call credit. So even if the tourists do not buy the souvenirs, someone may ask for water or credit. So I make something from there too. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

#### Preparation for Peak Tourist Season

Another strategy that some participants adopted in dealing with variations in tourist arrivals was using the lean season to prepare for the peak season. Participants involved in the souvenir trade produced most of the products they sold. During the lean season, they made use of the time available to prepare new products to stock their shops for the peak season. Similarly, in the accommodation and catering sub-sectors, participants indicated they used the period to clean up and do necessary renovations on their facilities. This strategy they stated, helped them make maximum use of the time available during the lean tourist season. Some participants described how they used the lean season period:

*When the tourists are not coming, I use that period to carve or polish some of the products to get them ready for the peak season. That helps me just to keep the shop open and not waste the time available. By keeping the store open, at times you get people buying one or two things. (A15, a 39-year-old male craft shop owner)*

*We clean up when there are no guests. We remove cobwebs and clean all the louvres. We scrub the whole*

*place. As we are in the harmattan season now, we clean up as often because of the dust. This is the time our manager brings people around to repair whatever is spoilt in the hotel. (A16, a 25-years old female hotel employee)*

### Managing Human Resource Needs

The institution of employee shift system during the lean tourist season was commonly used by most of the tourism enterprises in order to manage their human resource needs. This was in direct response to the challenge of dealing with human resource costs during the lean season when sales were low. A quote from one of the tourism enterprise owners succinctly captures the rationale behind this strategy:

*We try to stay open all year round. We do not close down. But it is not easy to stay open during the lean season when the tourists are not coming and your sales are low yet you have bills to pay. So what we do here is that we introduce a shift system for our employees. We give them more off days but when we need all of them, we call them. That makes it a bit easier on our finances. We always explain the situation to them. At the end of the day, it is a win-win situation for all of us. So the employees are not laid off and the hotel also stays open. (A22, a 48-year-old female hotel owner)*

The coping strategies adopted by the participants fitted into a range of strategies employed by rural tourism enterprises in dealing with tourism's vulnerability (Kareithi, 2003; Shen, 2009; Twining-Ward & Twining-Ward, 1996). In most of these cases, the strategies are employed to minimise the effect of the threats on the enterprises as well as the livelihood outcomes of individuals dependent on them. For most of the participants, the coping strategies adopted had been effective. One participant who had stocked her souvenir shops with daily consumables as a coping strategy noted that:

*Even when the international tourists are not coming, the domestic tourists and local residents buy the sachet water, biscuits and drinks I have added to the things I sell. So we are managing like that...at least I do not go hungry. (A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)*

Other participants shared similar views on the effectiveness of their coping strategies:

*That is why I have added farming and animal rearing to my carving work. So that when one is not doing well, the other can support me. If it had not been for the farming I am doing, I would have suffered a lot especially financially when the tourists are not coming. (A15, a 39-year-old male craft trader)*

*I turn to construction work to make ends meet when the tourists are not coming. I have tried that in Wli and outside*

*Wli. As a man, you must hustle to take care of yourself so that you can survive and do not steal. It has worked for me.*

(A4, a 21-year-old male tour guide)

Nevertheless, it was observed that the strategies adopted by the participants were in direct response to the threats they were already exposed to. When they were asked if they had any plans in place to deal with unknown threats in the future, almost all of them responded in the negative. It was only the hotels that had insured their properties and had marketing plans. The other participants hoped to find ways of dealing with the threats when they emerge. The non-availability of such future plans may just be a reflection of the skills and capacity of rural tourism enterprise owners and employees to deal with tourism's vulnerability. Irvine and Anderson (2004) have intimated that many rural tourism enterprise operators are self-employed and lack the skills, resources and expertise needed to make and implement such plans. The reactive rather than proactive posture of these participants to tourism's vulnerability may affect the growth and expansion of their tourism-related livelihood activities.

Again, the coping strategies employed may be influenced by the livelihood asset stock of the participants as presumed in the study's conceptual framework. Most of the strategies employed reflected the livelihood assets the participants possessed. Two key ingredients necessary for tourism-related livelihood activities to cope with tourism's vulnerability: institutional support (Fang et al, 2014; Seifu & Beyene, 2014) and social capital (Banki et al, 2016; Zhao, Ritchie & Echtner, 2011) were conspicuously absent from the narratives. This may be as a result of the inadequate institutional support and challenges

associated with social capital for tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli as noted in the earlier chapters. This might have limited the range of coping strategies available to the participants.

In sum, within the current scheme of things, tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli could be considered resilient to tourism's vulnerabilities. From the above discussions, it could be deduced that participants had been able to find effective responses to the threats that their tourism-related livelihood activities have been exposed to. This may be due to the cyclical nature of the threats which made it possible to envisage possible effects and react to it. Nonetheless, this resilience may be tested in the event of occurrence of unfamiliar threats. This could have dire consequences for tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli.

With respect to the study's conceptual framework, the findings have shown that the vulnerability context of livelihoods can affect the individuals' livelihood asset stock. It has also revealed that there is a linkage between an individual's livelihood asset stock and the kind of coping strategies they can adopt.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter assessed the vulnerability issues regarding tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli based on the three parameters of vulnerability; exposure, effects and coping ability. The main findings of this chapter are that the threats facing tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli are a combination of shocks and stressors. Secondly, the resultant effect of these threats on tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli were reduced tourist demand, the

irregular operation of enterprises, low sales, higher cost of operation, and pressure on savings. Consequently, participants adopted a variety of coping strategies to deal with these threats and their effects. These coping strategies included livelihood diversification, product diversification, preparation for peak seasons and management of human resource needs of tourism enterprises. Findings from this chapter have confirmed the study's conceptual framework propositions that vulnerability issues influence livelihood assets as well as the construction of livelihood activities. The next chapter examines participants' perspectives on tourism-related livelihood outcomes and sustainability of tourism as a livelihood strategy.

**CHAPTER NINE**  
**TOURISM-RELATED LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES AND**  
**SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES IN WLI**

**Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the final research question guiding the study. This question seeks to examine study participants' overall perspectives on tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. It is expected that the findings may provide answers to the question of whether the choice of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli is a rational one. This may extend our understanding of the study participants' livelihood choice behaviour

The findings emerging from the transcripts are discussed under two main sections: tourism-related livelihood outcomes and tourism-related livelihood activities' sustainability in Wli. The chapter draws on the views expressed by the two categories of study participants engaged in this study.

**Tourism-Related Livelihood Outcomes in Wli**

Livelihood outcomes have been conceptualised as a product of the interactions between the various facets of livelihoods or the output of livelihood strategies. More importantly, some livelihood researchers have suggested that these outcomes may be indicative of the objectives that drive people's construction of various livelihoods (DFID, 1999; Mbaiwa, 2008).

In line with the above reasoning, study participants were asked how their engagement in tourism-related activities had contributed to the achievement of their livelihood goals/objectives. An analysis of the accompanying responses

revealed three main issues; increment in income, diversification of livelihood activities and cross-cultural interactions.

#### Increment in Income

All the study participants mentioned that their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli has led to an increase in their income. This supposedly additional income came in the form of wages earned by employees of tourism-related establishments and profits made by tourism enterprise owners. In further support of this assertion, some participants commented that:

*The business is very profitable when you handle it well.*

*There are times I get more orders than I can even handle.*

*It comes with good money.* (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)

*Yes, I get money from working here (hotel). The salary that we are paid is a good source of income for me. So now I earn double, I get my salary from my hotel job and I also get some money from the provision shop I am operating.*

(A16, a 25-year-old female hotel employee)

In fact, most of the participants indicated that it was financial benefits such as the cash income associated with tourism which endeared them to engage in it. For some of these participants, the cash income was not only an end in itself but it also contributed towards the fulfilment of other livelihood needs

such as supporting the needs of family members, capital stock for tourism enterprises and other livelihood activities:

*I started this business because I wanted to earn some money to cater for my family and children. I was able to see one of my nephews through to the university. All these have been made possible because of this business. That gives me a lot of fulfilment. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

*We are a family of 6, including my parents. I'm the eldest. My main aim here is to raise money and help my parents look after my junior sister through SHS and we are able to do that. My junior sister is now in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in SHS. (A19, a 23-year-old male hotel employee)*

*The money I make from selling these carvings is used to partly support my farming and animal rearing activities. Now I rear pigs, chickens and goats. (A15, a 39-year-old male craft trader)*

#### Diversification of Livelihood Portfolio

Livelihood diversification also emerged from the interviews as an important tourism-related livelihood outcome in Wli. Participants who identified with this outcome noted that tourism had led to an expansion of their

livelihood portfolios. A participant described it as “*putting your eggs into different baskets*”. He further explained that:

*I do not have to depend only on my tiling or painting job to make ends meet. Even that, it is not always that you get a contract to execute. So I am using this tour guiding job to also support myself. Even if I do not do any tiling job, at least I know I will get some money from this tour guiding thing at the end of the month. This is putting your eggs into different baskets instead of one. (A13, a 27-year-old male tour guide)*

The issue of livelihood diversification was also linked to reduced livelihood vulnerability. In the interviews, a number of participants shared that the introduction of tourism into their livelihood portfolios had reduced their dependency on a single livelihood activity. This, therefore, has spread the risks to their livelihood portfolio thereby reducing their livelihood vulnerability. In sharing her experience, a participant intimated that:

*This tourism business is an additional business for me. It is not advisable to have only one business. When it is more than one, when one fails, you can rely on the others to survive. You can even take some money from one business and when things improve, you can replace that money. That is how I survive. Now, my mind is at peace because I know I have multiple sources of income. For instance, during the last dry season, part of my cocoa farm got*

*destroyed by bushfire but my tourism business kept me going (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

#### Cross-Cultural Interaction

Three (3) study participants considered their interaction with people from other cultural settings as a livelihood outcome. For one of such participants, the interactions were purely for socialisation and offered her the opportunity to understand other cultures and establish friendships:

*When you are engaged in the homestay business, you get to meet different people. I have been able to establish contacts with a lot of people. All those foreigners that came to lodge at my place, I have kept their contact. At times, we chat. The friendship is enough for me. (A6, a-35 year-old female homestay operator)*

In addition to friendship, another participant mentioned philanthropic gestures extended by some tourists through these interactions which can enhance one's livelihood. He narrated one of such assistance he received from a tourist:

*Some of the tourists acknowledge your toil in guiding them to the waterfall and actually show their appreciation by giving you a little token. I find it quite pleasing. I once took someone from Germany on a tour. During our conversation, he got to know that I lay tiles. He promised to get me a tile cutter so when his friends were coming*

*down later, he sent it through them. (A13, a 27 years old male tour guide)*

*Recommendation of Tourism as a Livelihood Strategy*

Based on the livelihood outcomes they attained from tourism, participants were asked whether they would recommend livelihood activities based on tourism to others. The responses were mixed. The majority of the participants responded in the affirmative and cited the livelihood outcomes they had attained from their engagement in it to buttress their point. In addition, some participants expressed the view that once the waterfall continues to exist, tourism and its associated opportunities in Wli will remain. To them, not even a surge in human activities in and around the Agumatsa wildlife reserve is expected to affect or have an adverse effect on the waterfall and tourism in the long run since the waterfall has survived several generations:

*Once the resource base (waterfall) is still there, they (tourists) would come. (A12, a 29-year-old female craft trader)*

*It is not possible that the waterfall can dry up because of tree cutting or farming activities. This waterfall has been there since the time of our grandfathers and their fathers. There is a reduction in the volume of water (of the waterfall) during the dry season but the waterfall cannot dry up, so tourism can never come to an end in this community. (A2, a 54-year-old male tour guide)*

However, some participants indicated that an understanding of the tourism businesses rudiments is needed if one wants to have a profitable enterprise or job around tourism:

*You need to know that the tourism business is not the same all year round. So during the peak season, you save towards the lean season. If you do not do that, you will end up spending all your capital during the lean season. There is nothing like making quick money with this our business. You need to have patience for the business to grow before you start spending. A lot of people are not ready for that.*  
(A3, a 54-year-old female craft trader)

Participants who held contrasting views cited issues of low income associated with the jobs, age restrictions and no guaranteed pension to support their position. An example relating to low income and pension is stated below:

*I will not recommend tourism-related jobs to anyone in Wli especially if the person wants to take it as a permanent job. This job is not something you can do to look after your family and take your children through school. There is no allowance or pension for you when you become old. There is nothing hidden anywhere for you for the future.* (A14, a 48-year-old male guest house supervisor)

Previous studies including Akyeampong (2011), Ashley (2000), Jamieson, Goodwin and Edmunds (2004) and Liu (2006) have all shown that

income, improved well-being, and reduced livelihood vulnerability are livelihood outcomes which drive rural dwellers' engagement with tourism. These outcomes are also captured in the conceptual framework guiding the study. Therefore, the tourism-related livelihood outcomes reported by the study participants are within the range of outcomes desired by rural dwellers.

The willingness of the majority of participants to recommend tourism to others as a livelihood strategy may be an indication that tourism as a livelihood activity in Wli regardless of its shortcomings, is positively contributing towards the achievement of some livelihood objectives/goals of individuals engaged in it.

Furthermore, it can be observed that the outcomes reported were economically skewed. Perhaps, that may be explained by the fact that economic outcomes are mostly direct and clearly observed hence making it easier for the study participants to relate to them (Ashley, 2000).

Participants' acknowledgement of cash income as a prime motivation for their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities is not contrary to the extant literature (e.g. Ashley, 2000; Sharpley & Telfer, 2015). For a rural community like Wli where cash earning opportunities are limited, it is vital that tourism has emerged as an additional source of income for the residents. Yet still, the acknowledgement of a non-economic related livelihood outcome such as friendships from cross-cultural interactions goes to support DFID's (1999) assertions that pursuance of livelihood strategies are not only driven by economically-related livelihood objectives/goals.

In sum, the findings above confirm the main argument of the rational choice theory that people often make a choice that meets their optimal utility

(Green, 2002; Start & Johnson, 2004). In the case of this study, it can be deduced that the choice of tourism as a livelihood strategy for the study participants was a rational one.

### **Sustainability of Tourism-Related Livelihood Activities in Wli**

Tao (2006) has asserted that if tourism development is to be a viable force in transforming rural livelihoods, the issue of sustainability cannot be overlooked. Sustainability connotes some sense of continuity or long-term use and has three main facets; economic, environmental and social (Morse & McNamara, 2013).

From the literature, a livelihood is said to be sustainable when it “*can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation*” (Chambers & Conway, 1992, p. 6). UNEP & UNWTO (2005) also noted that tourism which is sustainable must among other things ensure viable, long-term economic operations, conserve environmental resources that form the base of tourism development and guarantee respect for the social-cultural lives of the host residents.

Considering the position of Wli as a destination on the Tourist Area Life Cycle (involvement stage), the study has found substantial evidence to support the position that tourism is a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. Study participants’ livelihood assets were able to support their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities. In addition, the tourism-related livelihood activities had exhibited some level of resilience to shocks and stressors as well as contributed positively towards the achievement of participants’ livelihood

objectives. Furthermore, study participants' desire to grow and expand their businesses could be an indicator of the viability of such enterprises.

Participants associated sustainability with growth and viability. When they were asked what could be done to ensure the sustainability of tourism and the livelihoods dependent on it in Wli, they mentioned five key areas that attention must be given to. These are infrastructural improvement, human resource development, product diversification and marketing, financial support for tourism enterprises and education.

#### Tourism Infrastructural Development

Almost all the participants asserted that an improvement in the road leading to Wli would ensure the sustainability of tourism in the community as well as livelihoods dependent on it. The road network connecting Wli to Hohoe and Gbledi as at the time of the study was in a deplorable state. Visitors to the community have severally complained about it. Some participants believe that tourist arrivals to the community will increase once the road becomes more accessible:

*Tourism has a future in this town. The only challenge in my view is our road. I strongly believe that if the road gets tarred, more visitors will come to this community and businesses will grow. (A19, a 23-year-old male hotel employee)*

The need for an improvement in the visitor receptive facilities provided for tourists in the community was also highlighted. Several participants

bemoaned the lack of rest places for visitors along the route to the waterfall and the current state of the visitor centre. “*It portrays a very negative image of the community and the level of seriousness it attaches to tourism development in the community*” one participant stated. Others noted that:

*The visitor centre must be very presentable. There should be comfortable chairs and neat changing rooms for the tourists. Just take a look at our visitor centre, the seats are in a bad shape; they are all torn and tourists keep on complaining whenever they visit. They (tourists) do not understand why our office is in such a state while we have the highest waterfall in West Africa. (A23, a 51-year-old male tour guide)*

*TMT should put chairs or create resting places for tourists especially the elderly tourists along the route to the waterfall. Some of the bridges you have to cross are in need of repair. We need a toilet at the waterfall so people do not just defecate anywhere. (A5, a 63-year-old female provision shop owner)*

#### Human Resource Development

A participant related the issue of perceived lack of seriousness of the community in relation to tourism development to the challenge of inadequate knowledgeable people in the management of tourism in the community. He further explained that:

*I can confidently say that those of us who work here as tour guides and the TMT do not have adequate knowledge about tourism. I also do not know much about it. We do not have what it takes to expand and improve the place. We need someone who is knowledgeable and have adequate working experience in this field to come and help us for a few months. The person should advise us on the way to go and help us implement the suggestions. (A7, a 65-year-old male tour guide)*

The need for human resource development was not limited to the tour guides and the TMT. Tourism enterprise owners also admitted their need for training and capacity building in order to enhance their activities. One participant had this to say:

*People are establishing more guesthouses and it is an indication that there is a future for tourism businesses in Wli. But we need someone to come and talk to us and teach us how to handle our businesses well...I would want training on how to market my business, book keeping and things like that. (A10, a 32-year-old male local travel agency owner)*

### Product Diversification and Marketing

The issue of tourism product diversification and marketing also came up as being critical to the sustainability of tourism and livelihoods dependent on it.

The views expressed were in relation to the tourism product offerings in Wli as well the activities of service providers in the community. Regarding the main product, some participants commented that:

*Tourists get tired of watching the waterfall in just about a few minutes. TMT will have to introduce other things that will attract more tourists and investors. Tourists keep suggesting over the years that we do a canopy walk to the upper falls since it is difficult getting there. (A7, a 65 years old male tour guide)*

*The upper fall is quite difficult to access. We can get some investors to use rail cars to transport tourists to the upper falls. Tourists will not have to hike for several hours before reaching the upper fall and a lot more people can visit that fall. (S3, representative of TMT)*

In terms of marketing, some participants were of the view that the TMT must embark on aggressive marketing of tourism in Wli by using modern mediums of technology. For example:

*There is a need for TMT to invest in advertising tourism in Wli. There are people who do not know that this waterfall exists here....brochures must be developed, now everything is on Facebook...that medium can also be used...we need to be visible in order to attract more*

*tourists.* (A10, a 32-year-old male local travel agency owner)

This marketing issue was not limited to the tourism offerings of Wli only but also to the service providers in the community:

*The tourism businesses must advertise themselves because actually, they don't. Most people do not know about the businesses here so unless someone comes here or a friend tells them about the place... I think advertisement will help boost the business.* (A13, a 27-year-old male tour guide)

#### Education

The issue of education was highlighted mainly by the institutional representatives. They called for the education of the local residents on their role in sustaining tourism in two specific areas. The first is the creation of a conducive environment for tourism and the other, the protection of tourism's natural resource base in the community. These are further captured in the views below:

*There has to be some sensitisation for the local residents. They need to understand that tourism is not only about the attraction. They equally have to create a very welcoming environment for the tourists. They (local residents) must not be hostile to the tourists. The area around the visitor centre and the route to the waterfall must be kept clean. It is only when the tourists stay that the locals can make some*

*extra money from tourism. (S5, a representative of Ghana Tourism Authority)*

*We need to educate the locals and enforce the laws regarding the protection of the Agumatsa wildlife sanctuary. A lot of the tall trees that used to be in the forest are all gone now due to lawlessness. People are logging in the forest. The forest cover is being destroyed and some of the animal species which existed in the forest can no longer be seen. The forest is part of the tourist attraction and we are destroying it. (S2, a representative of TMT)*

#### Financial Support for Tourism Enterprises

Finally, some tourism enterprise owners called for financial support from the government for their businesses. This suggestion was premised on their inability to access financial assistance from financial institutions due to the small-scale nature and unreliable stream of income from their businesses. The enterprise owners also felt that they played an important role in the tourism space of Wli and must be supported to survive in order to continue providing the needed support to tourists. Some interviewees commented that:

*We cannot talk about tourism in Wli without mentioning the businesses here. If we are not there, the tourists will not enjoy their visit. So some attention should be given to us to grow our business. Financial packages should be given to us by the government to expand our businesses. I*

*do not think the TMT can be of help but the government should be able to do something for us. (A11, a 38-year-old male craft shop owner).*

*If it is even loans that government will give us, we will appreciate it. We need money to grow our businesses otherwise we will fold up. (A9, a 25-year-old male catering establishment owner)*

Participants' desire to see improvement in these areas in order to ensure the sustainability of their tourism-related livelihood activities is not contrary to existing views expressed by local residents in the literature with regards to tourism in rural areas (Dodds & Ko, 2016; George, Mair & Reid, 2009; UNEP & UNWTO, 2005).

Furthermore, it can be deduced from the above suggestions that sustainability of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli is hinged on the destination's attractiveness to tourists, economic viability of tourism enterprises, and protection of tourism's natural resource base in the community. Throughout the analysis of the data for the study, these seem to be recurrent themes underlying issues raised by the participants. Hence, it may be possible to conclude that they could be the bane of tourism development in Wli.

It is expected that adequate attention to human resource development and protection of the tourism resource base in the community will enhance the capabilities and assets needed for tourism development in the community (Bebbington, 1999; Stone & Nyaupane, 2016). Also, an increase in the

resilience of tourism-related livelihood activities to vulnerability will be possible when local enterprises become more viable (Lai, Morrison-Saunders & Grimstad, 2017). Finally, when attention is given to enhancing the destination's attractiveness to tourists, Wli as a tourism destination will develop and more tourism-related livelihood opportunities would be created for the current and next generation.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter examined study participants' overall views on tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli. Two main issues were discussed. The first issue looked at tourism-related livelihood outcomes in Wli while the second issue focused on the sustainability of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The findings from this chapter are as follows. First of all, the tourism-related livelihood outcomes in Wli are increased income, diversified livelihood portfolios and cross-cultural interactions. Based on these livelihood outcomes, the majority of the participants are willing to recommend tourism to others as a livelihood activity. Those who declined to recommend it cited low income, age restrictions and no guaranteed pension associated with tourism jobs to support their position.

Secondly, participants were of the view that the sustainability of tourism-related activities in Wli is dependent on tourism infrastructural development, human resource development, product diversification and marketing, financial support for tourism enterprises and education. Findings from the chapter reflect the extant literature on tourism-related livelihood outcomes and sustainability. It also supports the rational choice theory and the

conceptual framework's prepositions. The next chapter is the concluding chapter of the study.

## CHAPTER TEN

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of the study. It presents a summary of the study's methodology, main findings, conclusions and recommendations. The chapter also discusses the study's contributions to knowledge.

#### Summary of the Study

To date, there is a dearth of information on rural dwellers' experiences in the adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy and its incorporation into their existing livelihood activities within the Ghanaian context. Consequently, the study sought to assess local residents' experiences with tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. In order to achieve this aim, the study specifically:

- explored the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli;
- explored the influence of local residents' livelihood assets on their engagement in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli;
- examined the influence of institutional/organisational structures on local residents' adoption of tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli;
- examined the vulnerability (to stress, shocks, seasonality) of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli; and
- examined local residents' perspectives on tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli.

The conceptual framework which guided the study was based on DFID's (1999) Sustainable Livelihood Framework, Scoones's (1998) Sustainable Rural

Livelihood Framework and Shen's (2009) Sustainable Livelihood Framework for Tourism. It was also underpinned by the rational choice, structuration and social constructionism theories. The study was situated within the social constructionist paradigm. Accordingly, a qualitative research approach with an embedded single case design was adopted for the study. IDI and participant observation were the data collection methods used. With the aid of two separate IDI guides, data was collected from a total of 38 study participants. Out of this number, 27 of them were individuals engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli and the remaining 11 were representatives of institutions/organizations involved in tourism administration in Wli. Participant observation was also employed to gather and validate information gotten from the IDIs.

Pretesting of the research instruments was done in Liate Wote in September, 2016. This was followed up with the actual data collection in Wli from the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November to the 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2016. The IDIs were transcribed verbatim and the text analysed based on the guidelines outlined in thematic network analysis technique (Attride- Stirling, 2001). The interpretation of the findings was done within the context of field notes, observations and personal reflections of the researcher during the data collection period. The findings were presented using a narrative approach. This involved the use of direct quotations from the text to support findings and discussions. Pictures from the participant observations were also used where necessary.

### **Major Findings of the Study**

The following is a summary of the major findings of this study:

With respect to the first objective, it was found that there were four main categories of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. These are accommodation operations, food and beverage operations, guiding services and souvenir trade. Background characteristics such as sex, native status and educational level influenced the local residents' engagement in these activities. In many cases, these activities complemented the existing livelihood activities of the local residents. However, there were instances where conflicts were reported. Additionally, local residents' construction of tourism shaped their choice of a livelihood strategy based on it and its position in their livelihood portfolio.

With regards to the second objective, the study found that the perception and use of livelihood assets varied depending on one's level of involvement in tourism activities in Wli. While the tourism enterprise owners engaged with all five capital assets, tourism employees were more concerned with the natural, social and human capitals. It also emerged that the nature of tourism-related livelihood activities encouraged the transfer of basic skills set (human capital). However, unhealthy competition, mistrust and non-cooperation between the tourism enterprise owners negatively affected the availability and their use of social capital. In the same vein, high-interest rates, unreliable revenue stream and the small-scale nature of tourism enterprises limited their access to credit.

The study further revealed in relation to objective three that there was an unequal power relation among the institutions/organisations involved in tourism in Wli. This undermined effective collaboration between them. It also emerged that institutional influence over tourism-related activities in Wli was weak since the institutions and tourism enterprises had parallel operations.

In terms of objective four, the study revealed that seasonality of tourist demand, domestic tourists' purchasing behaviour, Ebola epidemic and political electioneering activities were the main threats to tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. These threats had varied perceived effects on these activities. The perceived effects included reduced tourist demand, irregular operations of enterprises, low sales, higher cost of operation, and pressure on savings. Participants' coping strategies to deal with these threats were livelihood diversification, product diversification, preparation for peak seasons and management of human resource needs of tourism enterprises.

Regarding objective five, the study found that there were three main livelihood outcomes associated with tourism-related activities in Wli. These outcomes were increased income, diversification of livelihood portfolio and cross-cultural interaction. The majority of the participants appeared satisfied with these outcomes and thus, were willing to recommend tourism to others as a livelihood activity. Those who held contrary views cited low income, no guaranteed pension and age restrictions associated with tourism jobs to back their position.

Finally, on the issue of ensuring the sustainability of tourism-related activities in Wli, five main suggestions emerged. These were infrastructural development, human resource development, product diversification and marketing, financial support for tourism enterprises and education.

### **The Study's Conceptual Framework**

The study's conceptual framework provided a useful guide for assessing tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli, Ghana. The framework was

a fusion of livelihood frameworks from Scoones (1998), DFID (1999) and Shen (2010). The various components of these frameworks constituted the major themes explored in the study. The framework enabled tourism to be studied as part of a set of livelihood activities engaged in by the study participants.

The contextual component of the framework highlighted the external environment within which tourism and its associated livelihood activities were constructed in Wli. It also provided a basis for the exploration of participants' livelihood portfolio and the identification of two sub-categories of individuals engaged in tourism-related livelihood activities. These were tourism enterprise owners and tourism employees.

The livelihood assets were assessed as factors of production in the construction of tourism-related livelihood activities. These factors of production were also explored in terms of their relation to livelihood outcomes and vulnerability issues. From the interviews, it emerged that there was a relationship between the livelihood assets and the construction of tourism-related livelihood activities. The availability and use of the assets varied based on one's level of involvement in the tourism-related activities.

A relationship was also found between the livelihood assets and the vulnerability context. The livelihood assets available to the local residents influenced the range of coping strategies they adopted in dealing with threats to their tourism-related livelihood activities. The experienced threats further negatively affected the livelihood asset stock of the local residents.

The influence of the transforming structures and processes component on mediating access to livelihood assets, opportunities and vulnerability were found to be mixed. Although structuralists (e.g. Imbroscio, 1999) opine that

structures and processes have a deterministic effect on actors in society, findings from this study revealed the contrary. Findings from the study suggest that the influence of the structure over the agent may only be strong if the activities of the agent are of interest to the structure.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the objectives and the ensuing findings from the study, it can be concluded that the presence of tourism-related livelihood activities as part of the livelihood portfolio of local residents in Wli attests to the fact that tourism provides livelihood diversification opportunities for rural dwellers. Local residents were found to be engaged in four main categories of tourism-related livelihood activities; accommodation, food and beverage, guiding and souvenir trade, either as a major or a minor livelihood activity.

Secondly, local residents' construction of tourism influenced their choice of a livelihood strategy based on it. It was evident from the study that the transitory and subsistence perspectives that local residents had about tourism shaped their interest in either taking up tourism employment or establishing tourism enterprises in Wli. It also influenced their positioning of tourism either as a major or a minor activity within their livelihood portfolio and the nature of investment they were committed to making towards it.

Thirdly, livelihood assets had a deterministic effect on the construction of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli. The availability and condition of these assets influenced how the participants' employed them in the various tourism-related livelihood activities they were engaged in.

Fourthly, the influence of the tourism-related institutions/organisations over tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli is weak. This was premised on the apparent lack of interest of these institution/organization and their unwillingness to supervise and support the activities of private tourism enterprises in the community. Hence tourism-related livelihood activities were carried out within an unregulated environment in the community.

Fifthly, tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli have become less vulnerable to cyclical threats. The seasonal variation in tourist demands and the purchasing behaviour of domestic tourists have become predictable overtime. Hence, participants' responses to these threats have become reactive rather than proactive. Therefore in the event of the occurrence of unfamiliar threats, this resilience would be tested.

Again, participants' choice of tourism as a livelihood strategy is a rational one. The achievement of varied livelihood objectives/outcomes such as increased income, diversification of livelihood portfolio and cross-cultural interactions has endeared local residents in Wli to include tourism into their livelihood portfolio.

Lastly, the sustainability of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli is dependent on five key issues. These are infrastructural development, human resource development, product diversification and marketing, financial support for tourism enterprises and education of community members.

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Based on the main findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations for policy and practice are made to ensure the

efficacy of tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli specifically and rural Ghana as a whole.

Drawing from the weak institutional/organisational presence in matters of tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli, this study recommends that the Hohoe Municipal Assembly, the Ghana Tourism Authority and the local Tourism Management Team in Wli get more involved in supervising the activities of these tourism enterprises. The tourist product is complementary in nature. The actions and inactions of persons engaged in these tourism-related livelihood activities also shape the tourist experience. With effective regulation, the enterprises can improve the quality of their services and enhance the image of the destination.

Since there is a limited access to credit for tourism enterprises in Wli, provision should be made under the Hohoe Municipal's small-scale enterprise development programme, the Ghana Tourism levy and the National Board for Small Scale Industries' entrepreneurship programme to provide financial assistance to these enterprises. Furthermore, the steps in accessing such facilities should be clearly communicated to the enterprise owners. These will help in the growth of these enterprises and enable them to provide more rural employment opportunities.

Given that the tourism offerings of Wli are limited, there is a need for further tourism product development in order to increase visitor arrivals and prolong tourists' length of stay in the community. Findings from the study have pointed to the potential of farm tourism/agritourism in Wli. Conscious efforts can be made by the TMT and GTA to properly develop this. Since Wli is a farming community, this form of tourism will fit more easily into the farmers'

existing livelihood portfolio. This, in turn, would lead to the diversification of the community's tourism product offerings as well as income sources for the local residents.

The study has demonstrated that the unhealthy competition and mistrust among tourism enterprises was hampering collaborative efforts. It is therefore recommended that a neutral external agency such as the GTA or HMA or any development agency come in and help the enterprise owners build capacity towards achieving co-operation. These capacity building activities could take the form of training and workshops. Through this, formidable synergies may be formed among these enterprises which will positively affect their growth and sustainability in the long run.

Although the nature of the tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli encourages the transfer of existing skills and knowledge (human capital), these skill sets must be augmented regularly in order to enhance the delivery of services and possibly maximise the returns from these tourism-related livelihood activities. GTA, National Board of Small Scale Industries, NGOs involved in rural and capacity development and educational institutions such as the Ho Technical University and the University of Cape Coast should organise regular training programmes for the local residents to expand their skill set. This will ensure that tourism meaningfully contributes to sustaining these rural livelihoods.

Since there are misgivings about the composition and membership of the local Tourism Management Team, it is recommended that there should be a balance in the selection of retirees, non-resident natives and resident natives.

This will ensure that those living in the community will identify more with the team and be less apathetic towards their leadership and authority.

The findings of the study underscore the need for development practitioners and the academia to understand the livelihood choice behaviour of rural dwellers within particular contexts before introducing interventions such as tourism to them. This is because rural dwellers' construction of tourism as a livelihood activity will shape their attitude towards it. The abundance of tourism resources or attractions at a destination may not necessarily guarantee that tourism could act effectively as a rural livelihood diversification strategy.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This study aimed at assessing tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli. Although insightful findings emerged from the study, the following areas need to be further explored in future researches.

The study focused on individuals who have adopted tourism as part of their livelihood portfolio. Findings from the study have indicated that how tourism is socially constructed can influence people's attitude toward tourism. Further studies should, therefore, explore this from the perspectives of those who have never adopted and/or are no longer engaged in tourism as a livelihood activity to unearth the meanings they associate with tourism and its related activities.

It will also be important that a longitudinal study is conducted to look at perceptions and attitudes of rural dwellers towards tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy over time. This is because perceptions and attitudes change

over time and destinations also go through an evolution. Such information will aid our understanding of the factors that account for such changes.

The phenomenon of migrant tourism entrepreneurship was observed in Wli. In most rural communities in Ghana, engagement in tourism-based activities are reserved for natives but the case of Wli was unique in that such cultural restrictions were limited. This made it possible for non-natives to take up employment or own tourism enterprises in the community. It will be important to explore how such a phenomenon can aid in rural tourism development in areas where it is permitted.

### **Contributions to Knowledge**

This study is one of its kind to have adopted a broader perspective in assessing tourism's contributions to rural livelihoods within the Ghanaian setting. It employed the livelihood approach in exploring the experiences of rural dwellers who have adopted tourism as a livelihood strategy in Ghana. The conceptual framework based on this approach offered a more holistic perspective on the issue of tourism's contributions to people's livelihoods. This study has brought to the fore the fact that tourism's impacts are the outcome of a set of interrelated factors. In order to understand tourism's impacts, there is the need to understand the role of the multiplicity of factors which produce them and the context within which they were occurring.

Secondly, this study employs the social constructionist theory to shed light on rural dwellers' tourism livelihood choice behaviour. Most studies on tourism-related livelihood strategies have not looked at the meanings rural dwellers ascribe to the tourism phenomenon and how that affects their actions

towards it. However, this study has provided empirical evidence to that effect, hence filling that literature gap.

Thirdly, the study also makes a contribution to knowledge by highlighting the influence of tourism institutional arrangements on the tourism development process and outcome. In this study, the relevance of the nature, arrangement, capacity and strength of tourism institutions to transform tourism into economic gains were brought to fore.

This study finally provides a baseline data for monitoring progress of the rural tourism enterprises in Wli.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

## Profile of Interviewees/ Study Participants

## A. Persons Engaged in Tier One Tourism Enterprises

| Code | Sex | Age | Tourism-related livelihood jobs | Years engaged | Other livelihood activities | Marital status | Educational level | Native status |
|------|-----|-----|---------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| A1   | F   | 23  | Revenue collector               | 1             | -                           | S              | SHS               | N             |
| A2   | M   | 54  | Tour guide                      | 16            | Farming                     | M              | MS                | N             |
| A3   | F   | 52  | Craft shop owner                | 10            | Farming                     | M              | MS                | NN            |
| A4   | M   | 21  | Tour guide                      | 3             | Farming                     | M              | JHS               | N             |
| A5   | F   | 63  | Provision shop owner            | 20            | -                           | W              | MS                | NN            |
| A6   | F   | 35  | Homestay owner                  | 4             | Medicine vending            | S              | VOC               | N             |
| A7   | M   | 65  | Tour guide                      | 17            | Farming                     | M              | MS                | N             |
| A8   | M   | 58  | Tour guide                      | 15            | Farming                     | M              | MS                | N             |
| A9   | M   | 25  | Restaurant owner                | 2             | -                           | M              | VOC               | N             |
| A10  | M   | 32  | Local travel agent              | 5             | Farming                     | S              | SHS               | N             |
| A11  | M   | 38  | Craft shop owner                | 18            | Farming                     | D              | VOC               | NN            |
| A12  | F   | 29  | Craft shop owner                | 11            | Farming                     | M              | VOC               | NN            |
| A13  | M   | 27  | Tour guide                      | 3             | Painting/ tiling            | S              | SHS               | N             |

|     |   |    |                        |    |                              |   |     |    |
|-----|---|----|------------------------|----|------------------------------|---|-----|----|
| A14 | M | 48 | Guest house supervisor | 6  | Lumbering/<br>farming        | M | MS  | N  |
| A15 | M | 39 | Craft shop owner       | 39 |                              | M | JHS | NN |
| A16 | F | 25 | Hotel employee         | 3  | Petty trading                | S | SHS | NN |
| A17 | F | 49 | Hotel employee         | 4  | Petty trading                | M | MS  | NN |
| A18 | M | 63 | Hotel owner            | 14 | -                            | M | T   | NN |
| A19 | M | 23 | Hotel employee         | 2  | Photography                  | S | SHS | NN |
| A20 | M | 21 | Hotel employee         | 1  | Call credit vending          | S | SHS | NN |
| A21 | M | 38 | Tour guide             | 5  | Farming, charcoal<br>burning | M | JHS | N  |
| A22 | F | 48 | Hotel owner            | 15 | Nursing                      | M | T   | NN |
| A23 | M | 52 | Tour guide             | 7  | Farming                      | M | MS  | N  |
| A24 | F | 45 | Chop bar operator      | 5  | -                            | M | JHS | N  |
| A25 | M | 32 | Camp site owner        | 6  | Farming                      | S | SHS | NN |
| A26 | F | 25 | Street food vendor     | 2  | Petty trading                | M | JHS | NN |
| A27 | F | 36 | Street food vendor     | 1  | Stone cracking               | M | JHS | NN |

Source: Field survey (Afenyo, 2016)

Sex: F= Female, M= Male. Educational Level: JHS = Junior High School, MS = Middle School, SHS = Senior High School, VOC= Vocational/Artisanal training, T = Tertiary. Marital status: M= married, S = Single, D = Divorced, W = Widowed. Native status: N = native, NN = Non Native

**B. Institutional/Organisational Representatives**

| Code | Sex    | Institution/Organisation       | Level of Institution/Organisation |
|------|--------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| S1   | Male   | Tourism Management Team        | Community                         |
| S2   | Male   | Tourism Management Team        | Community                         |
| S3   | Male   | Tourism Management Team        | Community                         |
| S4   | Male   | Chieftaincy Institution in Wli | Community                         |
| S5   | Male   | Ghana Tourism Authority        | Government                        |
| S6   | Female | Chieftaincy Institution in Wli | Community                         |
| S7   | Male   | Hohoe Municipal Assembly       | Government                        |
| S8   | Male   | Hohoe Municipal Assembly       | Government                        |
| S9   | Male   | Land Owners Association        | Community                         |
| S10  | Female | Land Owners Association        | Community                         |
| S11  | Male   | Chieftaincy Institution in Wli | Community                         |

Source: Field survey (Afenyo, 2016)

## APPENDIX B

### In-Depth Interview Guide

#### Persons Engaged In Tier One Tourism Enterprises

Dear Sir/Madam.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could offer your time to participate in a research on the topic “**Assessing tourism as a livelihood strategy in Wli, Ghana**”. This study is being undertaken by a PhD candidate in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a PhD degree in Tourism Management (Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Cape Coast, Ghana). The findings from this study would be used solely for academic purposes. Your anonymity and confidentiality is assured. However, you are permitted to withdraw from the interaction at any point in time if you so desire.

Thank You.

Ewoenam Afenyo (PhD Candidate)

- Code of Interviewee: Date of interview: Place of Interview:
- Bio-data of Interviewee (Sex, age, marital status, educational level, livelihood activities, native status, livelihood activities)
- Nature of tourism-related livelihood activity (Including time and place of activity)

#### **Issue One: Tourism as part of the livelihood mix for local residents in Wli**

- What activities do you engage in for a living? (major/minor-most preferable/least preferable)
- Have there been changes over the years (where dominant activities have become minor, and vice versa) what accounted for these changes?
- When did you start this tourism-related business? And why?
- Who introduced you to it?
- What was your understanding of tourism when you started the business? Has it changed over the years (if Yes/No, why)

- How has tourism fitted or otherwise into your existing livelihood mix? Are there areas where it is complementing existing livelihood activities? What about conflicts? (Shrunk, expanded or stagnant? what has changed if any and why)?
- How do you see tourism relative to your livelihood mix?

**Issue Two: Livelihood assets and tourism-related livelihood activities in Wli**

- Which livelihood assets (social, physical, natural, financial, human) are mostly used (or are considered valuable) for which type of tourism-related livelihood activity? Their availability and actual use by the local residents? Explore the socio-demographic dynamics.
- What is the nature of access to/control over these livelihood assets? (Both at the individual and community levels) and how does it shape individuals' engagement in tourism as a livelihood activity? Explore the socio-demographic dynamics.
- What is the condition of these livelihood assets? How does it shape individuals' construction of tourism-related livelihood activities?

**Issue Three: Influence of institutional/organizational structures on local residents' adoption of tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli**

- Are there associations/institutions here that have any influence or control over your business? (Tourism/non-tourism related/formal and informal?) Traditional authority? Institutions? Municipal assembly? Trade associations? Informal social groupings?
- How accessible are they to you? (Member of any of them?)
- At what level do they operate (family, community, professional group, national)
- How will you rate their influence on you and why?
- How do they regulate your business/activities? (Mediate access to livelihood assets, livelihood opportunities and outcomes?)
- How do they engage you in decision making (if they do?)

\*In addition, explore:

- a) The identities and meanings these organisations/institutions carry for different people (Power and exclusion)? Who are those affected by the actions/inactions of these institutions/organizations and how?
- b) The power of agency to shape and reconstitute these structures and processes in order to modify their effects on their livelihoods?

**Issue Four: Vulnerability (to stress, shocks) of tourism-related activities in Wli**

- Exposure
  - What kind of threats have you encountered in your tourism-related business since you started (shocks, stressors?)  
When, what led to it, nature and duration of the event?
- Sensitivity
  - How does/did it affect your tourism business/activity?  
Tourism-related livelihood assets? Livelihood outcomes?
- Coping/Adapting Strategies
  - What strategies do/did you employ in the short term/long term to deal with the situation? Has it led to any changes in the nature of your tourism-related business/activities?
  - What livelihood assets are/were very important in coping with vulnerability? What about in adapting?
  - What are/were the challenges in coping/adapting as far as your tourism-related business/activities are concerned?
  - Does/did coping/adapting strategies conflict with other livelihood activities in the livelihood mix?

**Issue Five: Local residents' perspectives on tourism-related livelihood as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli**

- What were your expectations before adopting tourism as a livelihood strategy?

- Are those expectations being met? If yes how? If no why? How do you feel about it?
- Are the tourism-related outcomes meeting/satisfying your livelihood objectives? If yes, how. If no, why?
- Will you encourage others to adopt tourism as a livelihood strategy? If yes/no why?
- Where do you see this business/activity within the next 2 years, 5 years, 10 years? Why?
- What do you think will ensure the continuity/growth of your business/activity?
- Do you think tourism-related businesses have a future on this community?
- When we talk about sustainability of tourism businesses, what comes into mind? (economic, social, environmental dimensions of sustainability)
- Do you think tourism in this community could be a sustainable livelihood strategy for you and others as compared to other activities in your livelihood mix?

Thank You

**APPENDIX C**  
**In-Depth Interview Guide**  
**Institutional/Organisational Representatives**

Dear Sir/Madam.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could offer your time to participate in a research on the topic “**Assessing tourism as a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli, Ghana**”. This study is being undertaken by a PhD candidate in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a PhD degree in Tourism Management (Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, University of Cape Coast, Ghana). The findings from this study would be used solely for academic purposes. Your anonymity and confidentiality is assured. However, you are permitted to withdraw from the interaction at any point in time if you so desire.

Thank You.

Ewoenam Afenyo (PhD Candidate)

- Name of Interviewer:    Date of interview:    Place of Interview:
- Code for Interviewee:
- Organization/Institution:

**Issues for Discussion**

1. Organization/institution (Formal or informal, tourism or non-tourism related) (nature, location, roles and responsibilities, actual activities in Wli)
2. What are the mechanisms through which you communicate with the local community? (do they differ by sex, social and economic groups) (Methods, Frequency, Handling of feedbacks)
3. How are policies, rules and regulations framed? How are local interests represented? Who is included and excluded?
4. Probe for linkages between the activities of these institutions/organizations and the following:

- Access to livelihood assets (rules that may pertain to acquisition and use of livelihood assets)
  - Influence on livelihood activities (who may be permitted to engage in what activity in what proportion)
  - Influence on livelihood outcomes (nature and distribution of outcomes)
  - Influence on tourism livelihood vulnerability issues (minimize and/exacerbate vulnerable situations)
  - Influence on achieving tourism livelihood sustainability; economic, social, environmental.
5. How is your relationship with other institutions/organizations in the community?
  6. What is your perception about people's choice of tourism as a livelihood strategy?
  7. Do you think tourism can be a sustainable livelihood strategy in Wli?

## APPENDIX D

### Participant Observation Checklist

- Wli as a tourism destination
  - Access, accommodation, attraction, ancillary services, signage...
- Tourism-related livelihood activities
  - Type of activities (a description of it)
  - Patterns (when it takes place- time of day/season)
  - Set up of tourism facilities
- Livelihood assets
  - Nature (for the physical ones)
  - Location
  - Condition
  - Pattern of use
- Other livelihood activities in the community
  - Types
  - Nature
  - Location
  - Patterns of operation