

Community-Based Eco-Tourism on the Wild Coast, South Africa: The Case of the Amadiba Trail

Zolile Ntshona
Edward Lahiff



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- How do poor people gain access to and control over land, water and wild resources and through what institutional mechanisms?
- How do emerging institutional arrangements in the context of decentralisation affect poor people's access to land, water and wild resources? What institutional overlaps, complementarities and conflicts enable or limit access? What new governance arrangements are required to encourage a livelihoods approach?
- How do the livelihood concerns and contexts of poor people get represented in policy processes concerning land, water and wild resources in local, national and international arenas? What are the challenges for participation in the policy process?

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Summary

This paper investigates the origins and current operation of the Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail, a community-based initiative located on South Africa's Wild Coast. The trail project presents itself as a people-centred, designed to involve the Amadiba people in all aspects of running a project including planning, implementation, management and decision making. The benefits from the project are intended to accrue primarily to the Amadiba community. The involvement of a non-profit organisation, PondoCROP, in initiating the project, and the involvement of community representatives in operation and management, presented an alternative to large-scale investor driven development that could supplement, rather than replace, existing livelihood strategies. The key objective of this study is to investigate the actual involvement of the community in decision making processes, planning, management, control of the project, and also the kinds of benefits which accrue to the staff members, horse owners and the wider community. The evidence of this study would suggest the project has been at least partially successful in achieving its goals, but also raises questions about the model of a community-run project being applied in this case, and about the long-term economic sustainability of the project. This case study also highlights a number of key strengths and weaknesses of the community-based or bottom-up model of tourism development.



Introduction

This report investigates the origins and current operation of the Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail, a non-governmental organisation (NGO) tourism initiative located on South Africa's Wild Coast, in the Eastern Cape Province.¹ The Amadiba tribal area occupies the northernmost section of the Wild Coast in the former Transkei. It is divided into two tribal locations, known as Location 24 and Location 21. The Amadiba area is under the jurisdiction of a tribal chief, Chief Baleni. Chief Baleni is mainly in charge of Location 21 while powers and authority over Location 24 have been delegated to his relative, Headman Sigidi. Amadiba area, which forms part of the Wild Coast, is a coastal strip stretching between the mouths of the Mntavuna and Mtentu rivers, a distance of about 25 kilometres (km), and extending inland for about 20 km. The Wild Coast encapsulates the beauty and the diversity that the area, the former Transkei, has to offer. It is a rich environment, from the estuaries where the kingfisher comes to hunt to the rock pools where local people gather crayfish and oysters. Inland, the Wild Coast has countless streams and rivers with clear rock pools and waterfalls that flow into densely wooded gorges.

Along the Wild Coast the local people combine various activities to obtain a livelihood, such as arable and livestock farming and use of wild

¹ Research was carried out between July 2001 and July 2002.

resources, but also rely heavily on cash income from migrant remittances and pensions. Kepe (1997) identified several livelihood clusters that he regards as the key to people's livelihoods in the area. The first cluster consists of households receiving migrant remittances and involved in agriculture. Such households are typically headed by elderly people who receive cash from pensions and remittances and invest this in agriculture. The second cluster consists of households that rely on full-time commuter wage labour. The majority of such workers commute daily, while some commute weekly to their places of employment. These people invest their income in agriculture, but because of time constraints they rely on kin or hired labour for assistance. A third cluster consists of households with members in skilled labour and self-employment. Such people typically are involved in trades such as building, brick making and supply of animal draught power. Households in the cluster are predominantly male headed. The fourth cluster consists of households involved in brewing beer and selling groceries on a small scale. Most households in this cluster are female-headed. The fifth cluster consists of households that depend on piece jobs and kin dependency (handouts). These people depend on short-term employment offered locally, and may be paid in money or food. Their neighbours regard most of these households as poor. The sixth cluster consists of households involved in plant material trade. This cluster is dominated by women who derive their income from plant material, such as medicinal plants, thatch grass and fuelwood, which they collect from the veld and sell locally and in the town and cities.

The Amadiba Horse and Hiking trail (also known as Amadiba Adventures) is located in Mgungundlovu area, in Location 24, a cluster of eight sub-villages under the authority of Headman Sigidi. The Pondo Community Resources Optimisation Programme (PondoCROP) initiated the trail in 1997 in consultation with the Amadiba community, the elected local council and the tribal authority under Headman Sigidi, supported by a grant from Ntsika Enterprise Promotions Agency. The trail is under the overall control of the Amadiba Coastal Community Development Association (ACCODA). ACCODA is a community-based development forum that seeks to promote development in the Amadiba area. It started as the steering committee for the trail but later was changed to ACCODA because of other development projects with which it was involved.

The Amadiba trail presents itself as an ecologically sensitive community-based tourism project (more recently referred to as Amadiba Adventures business), designed to involve the Amadiba people in all aspects of the project, including planning, implementation, management and decision-making.² The benefits from the project are intended to accrue primarily to the Amadiba community. The trail began operating in June 1998.

² The trail was recently restructured. Emphasis has shifted from referring to the trail as a project but a business.

According to PondoCROP (2001), the aim of the Amadiba trail is:

to introduce a particular type of tourist to the region – someone who was genuinely interested in meeting the people and learning from them, in coming to understand the environment and history of the region, and in leaving spiritually and culturally enriched. For the local people, it creates an opportunity to participate in all aspects of tourism, from planning and implementation to operation and management. It presents an alternative to large scale investor-driven development where large resorts monopolise the benefits from the influx of tourists to their region.

Over the past two years, the Amadiba trail has been adopted as a pilot project for the Wild Coast Community Tourism Initiative (WCCTI), which is a programme that fosters participation of local communities in all aspects of tourism in the north-eastern region of the Eastern Cape. The programme aims to improve the livelihoods of one of the ‘cash-poor’ regions in South Africa through tourism in the area. The programme is funded by the European Union (EU) and it is based on the development of partnerships between local communities, the private sector and government agencies in the Eastern Cape. The programme was initiated in 2000 and has a life cycle of four years.

The key objective of this study was to investigate the involvement of community members in the Amadiba trail, and the kinds of benefits that accrue to staff members, horse owners and the wider community.

One sub-village, Mpindweni in Mgungundlovu, consisting of 86 households, was selected for detailed investigation. Mpindweni, the central village in Mgungundlovu is where one of the campsites associated with the trail is situated.

A number of methods were used to gather information. These included:

- Group interviews with members of ACCODA, horse owners and participants in various other local projects.
- Individual interviews with PondoCROP staff, members of ACCODA, staff on the trail, participants in local development projects such as Coast Care, the headman of Mgungundlovu, individuals not directly benefiting from the trail, and the owners of UFUDU fly-fishing project.
- A participatory group exercise which involved local people ranking and discussing their own sources of livelihoods.

Tourism and Rural Livelihoods

The Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail is an ecologically sensitive project that embraces the concept of pro-poor tourism. Pro-poor tourism is tourism that generates benefits for the poor (Ashley, Roe and Goodwin 2001). Benefits from pro-poor tourism can be a combination of

economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits. The aim of pro-poor tourism is to unlock opportunities for the poor rather than expanding the overall size of the sector. These opportunities include economic gain, other livelihood benefits or participation in decision making (Ashley, Goodwin and Roe 2001). Pro-poor tourism is seen as an approach to the tourism industry, rather than a distinct product or a sector of the industry. It advocates participation by a range of stakeholders, government, private sector and civil society, as well as the poor themselves as both producers and decision-makers.

Ashley, Roe and Goodwin (2001) argue that tourism's pro-poor potential derives from the fact that:

1. The tourism industry is diverse which increases the scope for participation, including that of the informal sector.
2. The customer comes to the product thus providing opportunities for linkages (for example, souvenir selling).
3. It is highly dependent on natural capital and culture that are some of the assets that the poor have even if they do not have financial resources.
4. It can be more labour intensive than manufacturing.
5. Compared to other modern sectors, higher proportions of its benefits go to women.

The concept of pro-poor tourism is different to, but overlaps with, the concept of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism focuses mostly on mainstream destinations, often in the North, while pro-poor tourism focuses where the poor are to be found, largely in the South. In sustainable tourism, environmental concerns dominate, but in pro-poor tourism, poverty is the primary goal (Ashley, Goodwin and Roe 2001).

Pro-poor tourism differs from, but overlaps with, eco-tourism and community-based tourism (Ashley, Roe, Goodwin 2001). With eco-tourism, benefits are distributed as incentives for conservation. With pro-poor tourism, the aim is to deliver net benefits as a goal in itself, and environmental concerns are just one part of the picture. With community-based tourism, the aim is to involve local people in tourism, but pro-poor tourism moves beyond community focus, aiming to unlock benefits and opportunities for the poor at various levels and scales of operation.

Strategies for pro-poor tourism focus on three areas: increased economic benefits, non-economic impacts, and policy process (ibid.).

1. Strategies focused on economic benefits include expanding business and employment opportunities for the poor. These also include benefits for the wider community.
2. Strategies focused on non-economic impacts include building of capacity of the poor and empowering them. These strategies also

include mitigating environmental impacts of tourism on the poor. This is important since at times tourism can lead to the displacement of the poor from land on which they depend. Also, these strategies address social and cultural impacts of tourism.

3. Strategies focused on reforming policy processes include building a more supportive and planned framework so that policy does not inhibit progress in pro-poor tourism. These strategies also include promoting participation of the poor in decision-making process, and bringing the private sector into partnerships that have benefits accruing to poor people.

This report will present the case study of the Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail and assess the extent to which these pro-poor elements are being achieved.

The Amadiba trail is reported in this study in two stages. The first stage involves the development of the trail from its inception until a period before it was evaluated and later restructured. This stage of the report goes up to July 2001 before the restructuring process. We outline the background to the trail, addressing the origins of the trail, the various actors involved and the trail activities, and provide information about the camps and staff members. Then we address changes in the organisation of the trail since its inception. Subsequently, we turn to the livelihood impact of the trail on the Amadiba people, staff members and horse owners, and discuss some of the problems being experienced in the trail such as poor organisation, staff misconduct, injuries to horses and the limited benefits flowing to the wider community. The next section addresses other development initiatives in the Amadiba area which include mining and a fly-fishing project.

The second stage involves briefly the evaluation of the trail (November 2000 to January 2001) and the emphasis is on the initial stages of the restructuring process until implementation. The restructuring started around August 2001 and was first implemented in December 2001. The conclusion, looks at the extent to which pro-poor tourism elements are achieved by the trail.

Background

The Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail project (or Amadiba Adventures) was initiated by an NGO, PondoCROP, in 1997. One of PondoCROP's staff members used to hike along the coast and find accommodation in the villages of the Amadiba area. On the basis of this experience, he approached his organisation with the idea of initiating a community-based tourism project in the area. Part of the plan was for Amadiba people to use assets they have, such as horses, to give them a stake in the project and provide tourists with an authentic African bush experience.

This venture was initially supposed to include the use of people's houses for accommodation of tourists, but due to reluctance on the part of community members this aspect did not materialise.

Initially the idea of a Horse and Hiking Trail was met with resistance by some people who feared that the community would lose land to the project, as had previously happened with the development of holiday cottages for white people next to Sikhombe and Mnyameni rivers. These were built with permission from the local chief, but are generally considered to be illegal, and deny local people access to certain areas along the coast.

PondoCROP held a number of meetings with the members of the Amadiba community and the local Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) committees (established by the government after 1994 to oversee development in the area) in order to ensure that they understood the concept of a community-based project and to reassure them that it would not involve the loss of any land rights. The RDP committees was established in Mnyameni and Xholobeni areas after the 1994 general elections to facilitate development of the Mgungundlovu area. The RDP committees consisted of various members from the community, including representatives of the tribal authority of Location 24. With the proposed formation of the Amadiba trail, an early priority was the formation of a selection committee that was tasked with appointing staff to each of the different areas of operation that were proposed by PondoCROP. These included tour guides, caterers, camp managers, river guides, boat owners, cleaners, tent owners, and horse organisers. After the selection committee completed its task, it was disbanded.

Many local people were sceptical of the project at the beginning and were reluctant to become involved. The idea of running a trail for tourists, and provide accommodation for them for money, was a strange idea to many people.³ People were wary that nothing positive would be gained if the community owned the trail and thought that the idea of community ownership of the project was far-fetched.⁴ Nonetheless, sufficient people were found to fill all of the available positions. Workshops were held with staff members to explain the nature of the project.

Since its inception, the organisation and structure of the trail have evolved through a number of forms. One of the most significant developments was the formation of the Amadiba Steering Committee, which became responsible for the day-to-day running of the trail. The Amadiba Steering Committee was based on the RDP committees that were already in place and was established as a way of devolving control

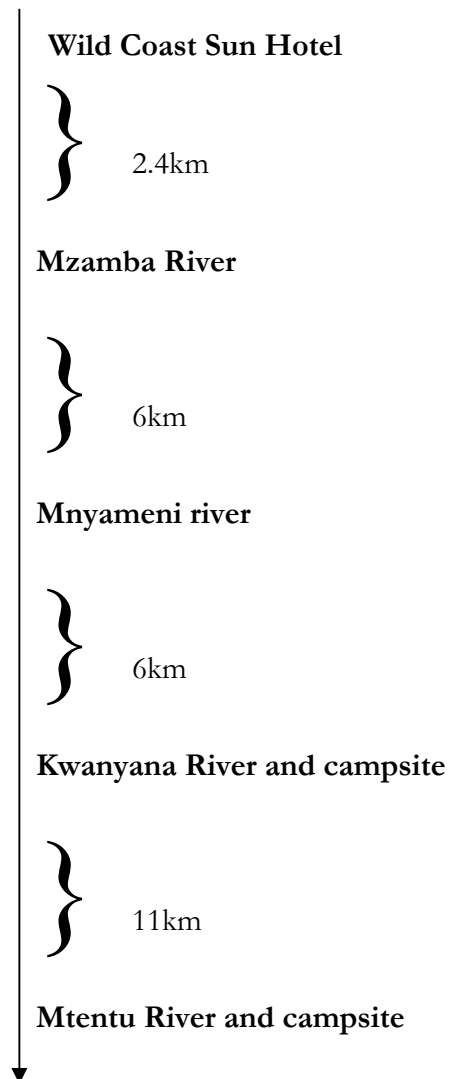
³ Interview with a member of ACCODA, Xholobeni Village 13/7/2001.

⁴ Interview with the former camp manager of Kwanyana, Kwanyana Campsite 13/7/2001.

of the trail to the community. In 2000, the Amadiba Steering Committee was reconstituted as the Amadiba Coastal Community Development Association (ACCODA), with the aim of extending its operations into further community-based projects.

The trail itself covers a distance of approximately 23 km, from Mzamba river-mouth to Mtentu river-mouth, as shown below.

Figure 1: Route of the Amadiba trail



Tourists start their trip from the Wild Coast Sun Hotel near Port Edward. The trail involves a two-day journey to Mtentu campsite, two to four days spent at Mtentu, and a two-day journey back to the beginning. The project has an arrangement with the Wild Coast Sun Hotel for tourists to park their vehicles and they do not have to pay the tariffs

charged at the entrance of the hotel. The distance between the Wild Coast Sun Hotel and the starting point of the trail is about 2.4 kilometres and tourists walk this distance accompanied by a tour guide. At the official starting point of the trail, which is across Mzamba river, they are met by tour guides with horses that take them as far as Mnyameni river, a distance of about six kilometres. The tourists cross the Mnyameni river in a small canoe. Fresh horses await them on the other side of Mnyameni river and take the tourists to the Kwanyana campsite, about six kilometres from Mnyameni river. In Kwanyana campsite, tourists enjoy their dinner, sleep overnight and take their breakfast before continuing on horseback to Mtentu campsite, a distance of about eleven kilometres.

At Mtentu there are a number of activities for tourists to enjoy. These include canoeing in Mtentu river, horse riding, hiking to Mkambati Nature Reserve and organised visits to traditional healers (*sangomas*). Tourists have to pay extra for some additional activities. Up to November 2001, the charge for the entire trip was 1,100 rand (R) per tourist for a four-day trip, and R1,380 for a six-day trip and tourists used to book with the PondoCROP office and deposit money into the Amadiba Adventures account.

Organisation of the Campsites and Staffing

Up to November 2001, the two campsites on the trail – Kwanyana and Mtentu – each had a camp manager and staff assigned to particular functions. Kwanyana is a small campsite and had fewer resources, while Mtentu has more staff and more resources, such as a deck, built kitchen, and tent platforms. Kwanyana has recently been upgraded. Now it has toilets and plans are underway to make it similar to Mtentu in terms of resources. Staff members are paid monthly, based on the number of tourists, with specific rates paid for specific tasks.

More details on staff responsibilities and payments are in Table 1. The amounts shown are what staff received after deductions, before the restructuring was implemented in 1 December 2001.

Staff members were informed in the beginning of the project that a certain amount of money would be deducted from their monthly payments in order to allow for the eventual replacement of assets such as tents and boats.⁵ Staff members assigned to a particular asset understood themselves to be the owners of those assets, and were described as such in PondoCROP literature. Given that the staff concerned did not actually pay for the assets up-front (they were in fact purchased with the grant PondoCROP received from Ntsika), it appears that staff were effectively buying the assets from PondoCROP in instalments.

⁵ Interviews, staff of Kwanyana and Mtentu campsites, July, September and October 2001; interview, staff member of PondoCROP, Mzamba 16/7/2002.

Table 1: Staff positions, responsibilities, and payments before 01/12/2001

Position	Responsibility	Payment
Camp Manager	Cleans the site, ensures staff undertake their responsibilities	R15/ day/ tourist
Caterer	Cooks, and cleans utensils	R15/ day/ tourist
Cleaner	Cleans the tent, makes the beds, ensures clean linen	R5/ day/ tourist
Tent owner	Pitches and looks after the tent, sews it when torn	R5/ day/ tourist
Ferryman	Assists tourists to cross Mnyameni river	R5/ tourist crossing
Boat owner (Mtentu)	Looks after the boat and ensures that there are no leaks	R15/ day/ tourist
River-guide	Rows with tourists on the river and shows them sights	R15/ day/ tourist
Tour guide	Accompanies tourists to the camps and other places of interest	R15/ day/ tourist
Horse Organiser	Organises horses for tourists according to the roster of horse owners	R5/ day/ tourist
Horse Owner	Hires out horses to the project and ensures their good condition	R30/ horse from Mzamba river to Mnyameni river; R20/ horse from Mnyameni river To Kwanyana; R30 from Kwanyana river to Mtentu river.

The replacement fund (commonly referred to in the project as ‘capital depreciation’) has been a source of much complaint among staff. Staff members understood the replacement fund in various ways. Some understood it to mean that they were paying for assets that would ultimately become their own property as long as they remained working on the project. Others understood it to mean that people were simply making contributions towards the replacement of assets once they wear out. Yet others believed that they were contributing to a savings scheme that would pay out in the event of a member’s death.⁶ Further confusion was created when staff were informed that the replacement fund had in fact been used to purchase the food that was provided for the tourists. PondoCROP explained that the idea of capital depreciation was to inculcate a sense of ownership and responsibility among staff of the project. Faced with cash problems, however, PondoCROP used the money that was initially budgeted for asset depreciation to attend to the immediate priorities of the trail such as purchasing tents, food and other miscellaneous expenses.⁷

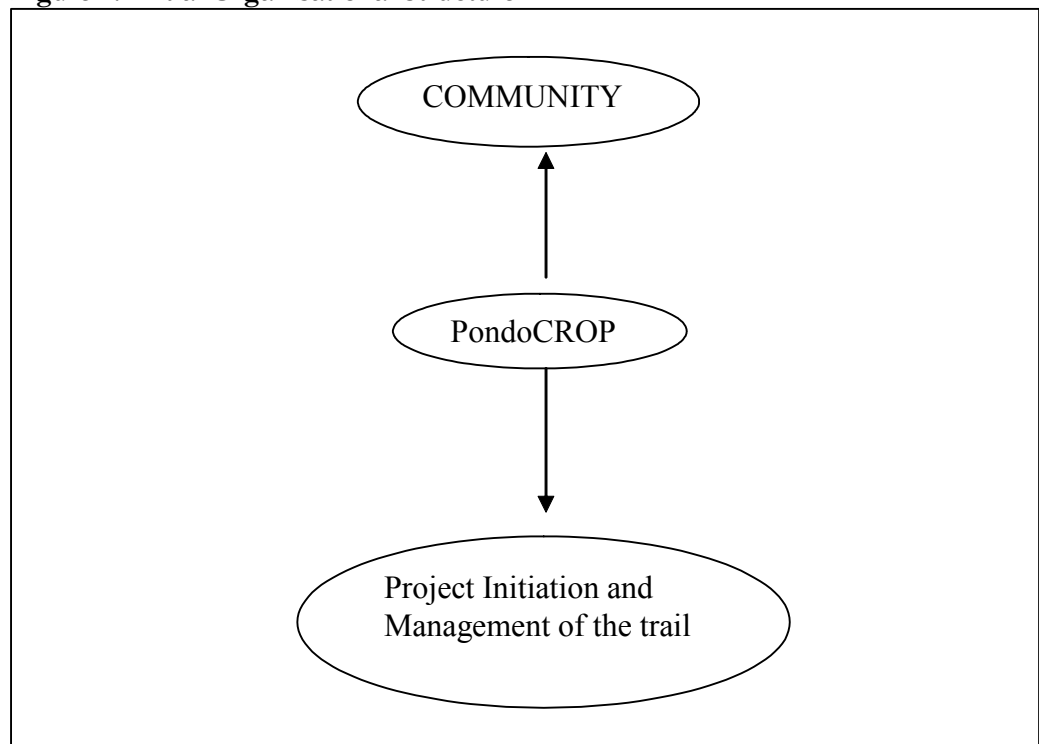
⁶ Interviews, staff of Kwanyana and Mtentu campsites, July, September and October 2001.

⁷ Interview, staff member of PondoCROP who introduced the idea of capital depreciation, Mzamba 16/7/2002.

Institutional changes since project conception

From the beginning of the project, PondoCROP worked closely with the Amadiba Tribal Authority and two local RDP committees. These were the only formal organisations in the area before PondoCROP initiated the trail. Since 1997, there have been a series of changes in the way in which the project is structured. These changes, according to PondoCROP, were intended to gradually shift the control of the project from PondoCROP to community members themselves.⁸ It was PondoCROP's intention to pull out of the project entirely by May 2002, leaving everything in the control of local people. The following figures are adapted from a PondoCROP (2001) evaluation report and show how the relationships between the institutions involved in the project have developed overtime. At the beginning, PondoCROP played the principal role in getting the project started and in day-to-day management of the operation. During this period, PondoCROP had regular meetings with members of the community and the RDP committees and investigated ways in which community members could be gradually drawn into the management of the project.

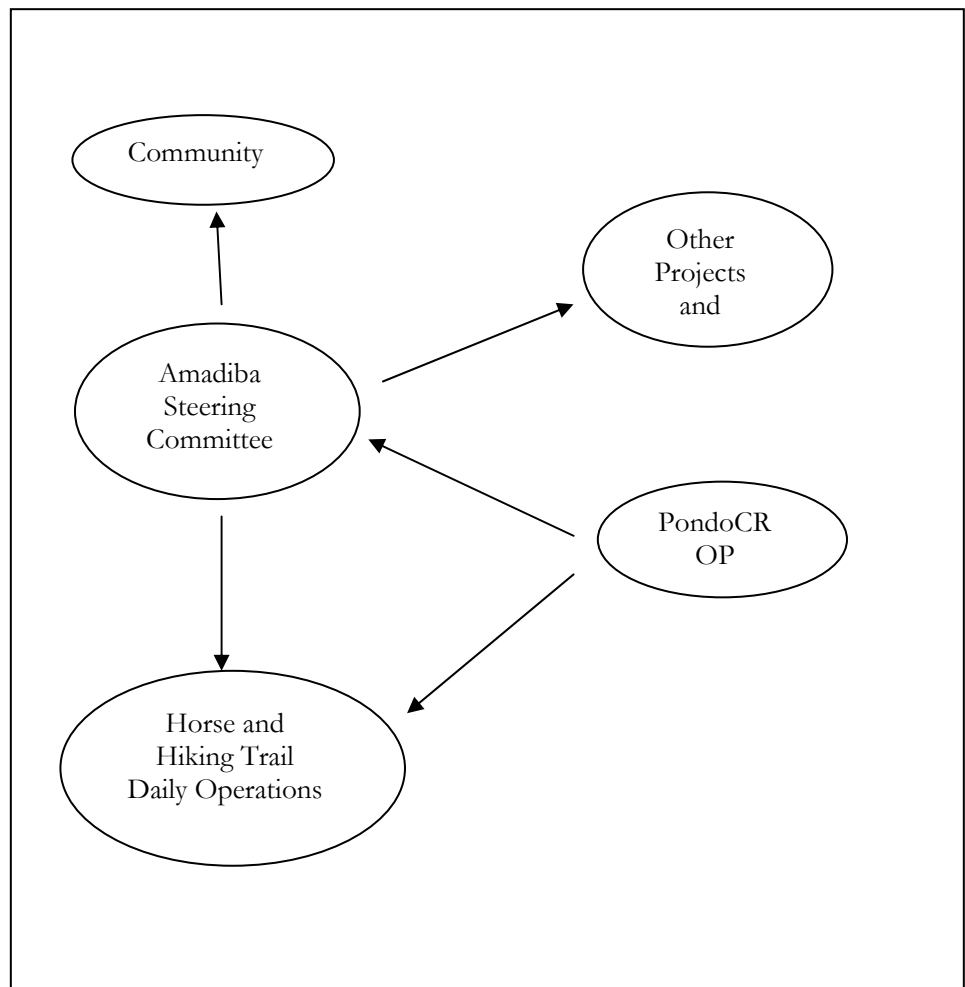
Figure 2: Initial Organisational Structure



Source: PondoCROP (2001).

⁸ Interview, Acting Director of PondoCROP, Mzamba 12/7/2001.

Figure 3: Formation of the Amadiba Steering Committee



Source: PondoCROP (2001).

PondoCROP claims that it wanted to involve the community in all aspects of the trail, from planning and implementation to operation and management (PondoCROP 2001). To this end, the Amadiba Steering Committee was established to oversee the day-to-day running of the project and to assist the shift of ownership and management of the project to the community. The early duties of the Committee included collecting details of duties carried out by staff during the month and forwarding these to PondoCROP for salary payment. The Amadiba Steering Committee consisted exclusively of members of the two RDP committees. The Steering Committee was based on the existing RDP committees in order to avoid creating additional structures in the areas and to ensure that structures already tasked with local development were fully involved in the trail from the beginning. From the point of view of PondoCROP, it made sense to work with these committees, which have already been approved by the tribal authority and on which the tribal

authority was represented.⁹ With the merger of the two RDP committees into the Amadiba Steering Committee, there was now just one committee dealing with the entire Mgungundlovu area. Making the former RDP committees responsible for the management of the trail, however, was to cause problems, as the new steering committee retained the previous responsibility of overseeing all development initiatives in the area, which meant that it could not give the trail the attention it required. Recognition of this dilemma led, in part, to the subsequent formation of ACCODA.

Over time, the Amadiba Steering Committee became involved in other projects in the area, most notably the UFUDU fly-fishing business (see below). This wider role increased the workload on the committee and meant they had to give less attention to the trail. As a result, in 1999 it was agreed between PondoCROP, staff of the trail, and the Amadiba Steering Committee that a new committee would be established that would be dedicated solely to the day-to-day running of the trail, and a Management Committee was duly created (Figure 4). A special meeting was called at which people were nominated to the Management Committee.¹⁰ The Management Committee was entirely composed of representatives of the trail staff: four tour guides, two campsite managers, two caterers and two horse organisers. The Management Committee was not given any special training at this time but was advised to use the expertise of PondoCROP when there was a need.¹¹ Staff salary claims were now to be forwarded to the chairperson of the Management Committee who would take the claims to PondoCROP for payment. PondoCROP was also responsible for informing the chairperson of the Management Committee whenever tourists were due, and the chairman would in turn pass the message to other staff members so that they necessary preparations could be made. The Management committee was expected to forward any problems encountered in the running of the trail to the Amadiba Steering Committee, which retained overall control of the project.¹²

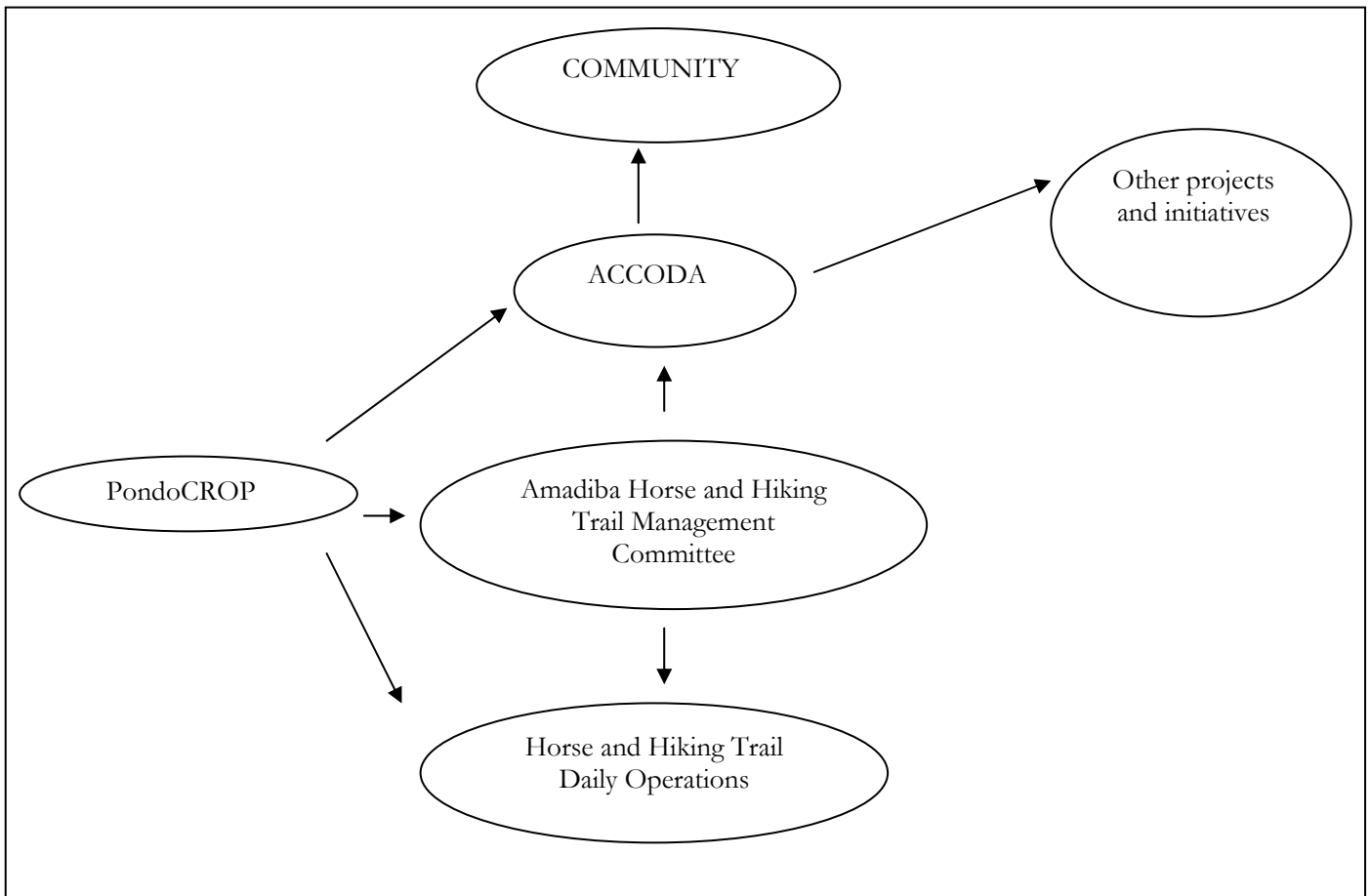
⁹ Interview, Acting Director of PondoCROP, Mzamba 12/7/2001.

¹⁰ Interview, former chairperson of the Management Committee, Mpindweni village 14/7/2001.

¹¹ Interview, former camp manager of Kwanyana campsite, Kwanyana campsite 13/7/2001.

¹² Interview, former chairperson of the Management Committee, Mpindweni village 14/7/2001.

Figure 4: Formation of the Horse and Hiking Trail Management Committee



Source: PondoCROP (2001)

After the formation of the Management Committee, the Amadiba Steering Committee began to describe itself as a development forum, and changed its name to the Amadiba Coastal Community Development Association (ACCODA) to reflect this enhanced role. According to ACCODA, its objective is to promote development in the area, encourage self-employment, work with local authorities in development planning, promote sustainable management of natural resources, and maintain close communication with the community. The activities of ACCODA gradually expanded as new projects such as Coast Care and the UFUDU fly-fishing operation began to operate in the Amadiba area.¹³

The membership of ACCODA is largely the same as that of the former Amadiba Steering Committee, except that representative of local youth have been added. Membership of ACCODA now consists of three RDP committee members from Location 24 (Mgungundlovu), two members from the Amadiba Tribal Authority, one representative of the nearby

¹³ Meeting with ACCODA, Xholobeni village 30/9/2001.



Mkambati Nature Reserve, one representative of PondoCROP, one RDP committee member from Location 21 (which is an area that has been drawn into ACCODA's area of operation), and three youths. There are plans to also include in the committee representatives of people who harvest marine resources such as oysters.

With the formation of the Management Committee and ACCODA, the trail began to be viewed more positively by staff, who felt a greater sense of ownership of the project.¹⁴ Staff described the formation of the Management Committee as leading to better working relations and greater local control over the affairs of the trail. Staff, PondoCROP, Management Committee members, and ACCODA worked together to develop policies governing various aspects of the trail. PondoCROP later realised that there were problems with the Management Committee, especially the autocratic approach of the chairman. This is one of the reasons why the Management Committee was disbanded during the restructuring of the trail December 2001 (see below).

Impact of the trail on Livelihoods

Data on the impact of the trail on livelihoods, which is presented below was collected in July 2001 before the restructuring of the trail started.

Livelihood impact for staff members and the wider community

There are two chief goals of the trail: to be an ecologically sensitive tourism project that is in keeping with the natural beauty of the Wild Coast; and to bring multiple benefits for the people of Amadiba. This section focuses on the benefits for those who work directly on the trail and for members of the wider Amadiba community. It also looks at the skills that have been imparted to people since the inception of the project. Information in this section is largely drawn from research in Mpindweni village, where the wealth ranking exercise was conducted.

Thirteen households from Mpindweni are directly involved in the trail. Table 2 shows their areas of work on the trail and the other sources of livelihoods available to them.

¹⁴ Interviews, staff of Kwanyana and Mtentu campsites, and guides, July 2001.

Table 2: Livelihood sources of households involved in the trail (Mpindweni Village)

H'Hold	Area of Operation	Other Livelihood Sources
1	Cleaner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension, Remittances
2	Tent Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension, Remittances
3	Security Guard	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats
4	Camp Manager	Cultivation, Cattle, Pension, <i>spaza</i> ¹⁵ shop
5	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension x3, Remittances x2
6	2 Horse Owners	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension x2, Remittances x3
7	Caterer	Cultivation, Cattle, Remittances
8	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension x2
9	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Remittances
10	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension x2, Remittances, <i>Spaza</i>
11	Tour Guide	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension, Remittances x2
12	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension, Remittances
13	Horse Owner	Cultivation, Cattle, Goats, Pension

As may be seen from the above listing, all households concerned are involved in small-scale cultivation of crops and livestock farming, and nearly all households receive a cash income from a pension or migrant remittances. Other, occasional, livelihood sources for people in Mpindweni are fishing, handicrafts and short-term employment in the locality, such as building of houses. One household was said to be selling marijuana. Another source of livelihood mentioned in the exercise was membership in ACCODA, which pays R20 to its members for each monthly meeting and R10 for special meetings. Five people from Mpindweni village are members of ACCODA.

The trail is perceived by many staff members as a good income base that supports other livelihood activities that are high in people's priorities, such as cultivation and livestock. Many staff members, see the project as the only available source of income that does not interfere with other essential livelihood activities, because tourists do not come everyday and extended families make it possible for agricultural tasks to be carried out even when tourists are around:

¹⁵A *spaza* shop sells basic necessities like matches, maize meal, sugar, salt, etc. These commodities are usually small in size as opposed to supermarkets where selection of an item is wider because of the different sizes.

*The tourism project has provided my family with money which enables me to buy fertiliser and maize seeds. It supports the main source of my survival, which is cultivation.*¹⁶

Staff members from other villages also prioritised cultivation and livestock production, and this appears to be the case for young and old alike. The elderly people are said to exert pressure on the youth to continue with the livelihood activities that people of the area have pursued in the past.¹⁷ For example, if a young man in the area returns from migrant work with a bicycle he is looked down upon because people would expect him to buy a cow instead. People seldom sell their produce. In all the households visited, the produce is almost entirely used for household consumption. The case below (Box 1) is another example of people who perceive cultivation to contribute more than other livelihood sources.

Box 1: Making a livelihood at Mpindweni

Makhuba is a cook on the trail and had never been formally employed before her involvement in the project. In the past she tried selling blankets but that failed because people were not prompt in paying her. She later sold flour but the competition from a nearby *spaza* was tough and put her out of business.

In ranking her livelihood sources, Makhuba felt that crop cultivation contributes the most. She admits that it is hard work but it is worth it as it provides the food for her household. She ploughs her field when there are no tourists visiting. After cropping, the next most important source of her livelihood are the remittances that were sent by her husband when he was still working, and then her work in the project.

She mainly uses the money she earns from the project to buy food and clothes for her children and husband. Once she bought a goat with the money. She earns R15 per day per tourist visiting.

People who were perceived by the participants of the wealth ranking exercise to have gone up or down in wealth over time were mainly those who acquired or lost livestock, especially cattle. The horse owners in Mpindweni are seen as people who were already better off before the establishment of the trail. In one notable case, a household used its earnings from the trail to acquire an income generating business, a *spaza* shop, that allowed it to move up the wealth ranking (see Box 2).

As the example in Box 2 shows, the trail has not replaced other, older, livelihood sources, but has rather increased the range of livelihood sources without impacting negatively on any. The box shows how Ndlela

¹⁶ Interview, former camp manager, Mtentu campsite 29/9/2001.

¹⁷ Interview, caterer in Kwanyana, Kwanyana campsite 15/7/2001.

Box 2: A household that has gone up the wealth rank because of the trail

Ndlela worked for 25 years in Tongaat (KwaZulu Natal) for a sugar cane company. He did not enjoy his job because it forced him to be away from his parents for long periods of time, but circumstances forced him to continue with the job. After losing his job, he was unemployed for a long time before becoming involved in the trail. He initially got involved as a builder and was given training in building skills. He helped build two *rondavels* in the Kwanyana campsite. One of the *rondavels* is used as a storeroom and the other is not yet complete.

His appointment as camp manager at Kwanyana has, he says, changed his life completely. The fact that the trail is local means that he does not have to budget for transport costs and has ample time to spend with his family. He used his earnings from the trail to start his own business, a *spaza* shop. His family helps in the *spaza* when he is involved in the trail. When there are no tourists he finds time to attend to the shop and to other activities such as cultivation of crops. He uses part of his earnings to buy clothes for his family, to pay school fees and to buy food. He earns R15 per day per tourist visiting. He earned the following amounts starting from December 2000:

• December 2000	R300
• January	R700
• February	R300
• March	R200+
• April	R400+
• May	(no tourists)
• June	R400+
• July	R500+
• August	R670
• September	R800

Other livelihood sources for Ndlela's household are crop cultivation, cattle and handicrafts. He is less impressed with the benefits derived from cropping. His concerns are over things he has to pay for, like fertiliser, pesticide spray, labourers for weeding, food for people who assist in the fields and cattle for ploughing. For cattle, he was concerned with the cost of vaccines. Fishing also has its disadvantages: 'People either catch something or the fish eats the bait and nothing is caught'. Crafts, which his wife makes, are sold to tourists although this trade is very slow. His feeling is that everything needs a reliable cash income and that the trail has created such an opportunity for him.

can be involved in the project and still pursue his other livelihood strategies. An important factor in his case is the large household size, nine people in all. When he is involved in the trail, there is always someone in his household to take care of other matters. The box also shows that local employment is much preferred to migration because it allows people to be involved in their household activities, particularly agriculture, on a regular basis. This issue was raised repeatedly throughout the interviews as one of the major benefits of the trail.



Box 3 shows other people who have gone up or down the wealth ranking, based on the exercise carried out in Mpindweni.

Box 3: Reasons for people to go up or down the wealth ranking

1. Boso has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - He lost his parents.
 - Has had irregular employment and was retrenched.
 - He sold his livestock.
 - Of poor cultivation due to loss of livestock.
2. Khawu has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - She lost her livestock.
 - Her husband passed away.
 - Of poor cultivation caused by loss of livestock.
3. Spili has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - He lost his parents.
 - He lost his livestock.
 - He has been unemployed for a long time.
4. Shwa has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - He was retrenched from his job.
 - He lost his livestock.
5. Thwelu has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - He lost his livestock.
6. Kumkani has gone down the wealth rank because:
 - Of poor cultivation.
 - He lost his livestock.
7. Shumi has gone down the wealth ranking because:
 - He was retrenched, leading to loss of his house because he could not afford to maintain it.
8. Kofu has gone up the wealth ranking because:
 - He recently found employment.
 - And used his earnings to buy livestock.
9. Ndlela has gone up the wealth ranking because:
 - He secure a job as a camp manager after being unemployed.
 - He managed to open a spaza shop.
10. Hoff has gone up the wealth ranking because:
 - He secured work on the Coast Care project after being unemployed.

Most people in the village who have gone up in the wealth ranking have used wage income to acquire something else that is perceived as beneficial and that brings with it a long-term return – in one case a *spaza* shop, in most other cases cattle. Hoff has gone up the wealth ranking through his work for the Coast Care project (see below), following a long period of unemployment. Only one person from Mpindweni who is involved in the trail was considered to have gone down the wealth ranking, although this cannot be attributed to the trail. Kumkani, a horse owner involved in the project, is losing his cattle because of diseases and through the sale of animals to meet his day-to-day cash needs.

The trail was designed not only to benefit staff members but the wider community. During the initial stages of the trail, it was decided that a sum of R5 per tourist would be allocated to a trust fund for community projects. Up to December 2001, however, no money from the trail had actually been distributed to the wider community. The only benefit that accrued to the community came from a fly-fishing project (UFUDU) in the area, which was set up as a partnership between the private operator (UFUDU) and ACCODA (see below). UFUDU pays a levy to ACCODA for each tourist visiting the fly-fishing operation. In addition, UFUDU has an arrangement to lease the campsite in Mtentu from ACCODA for three months every year (October to December). In 1999, which was their first year in the area, UFUDU operated for only two months, paying R15,000 to ACCODA; in 2000 it paid R39,000 for three months. Box 4 shows how ACCODA distributed the money it received from UFUDU.

Box 4: Distribution of funds

ACCODA used the R15,000 from UFUDU in 1999 to upgrade the campsite in Mtentu, building a storeroom, a kitchen and a large deck.

The R39,000, which ACCODA received in 2000 was allocated as follow:

- R5,000 for a new school in Mtentu.
- R2,000 for dipping chemicals to control ticks in livestock.
- R6,000 to build new classrooms in four local schools (R1,500 per school).
- R6,000 to buy soccer kit for two clubs and balls for two other soccer clubs.

Although the following was not mentioned by ACCODA, reports by different individuals suggest that:

- R600 was allocated to the chief headman of the Amadiba area for him to visit the King of Pondoland.
- R14,000 was used to hire a helicopter to transport the King of Pondoland when the chief headman of Mgungundlovu was being installed.
- An undisclosed amount of money was allocated to the Queen of Pondoland to attend a wedding in Swaziland.

The only amount that could not be confirmed was the R14,000 allegedly spent on the helicopter. PondoCROP confirmed the amount allocated to the Queen of Pondoland, and a member of ACCODA confirmed the R600 for the headman.¹⁸

There were also reports that the decision on how to distribute the money was taken by ACCODA alone without consulting community members. A number of staff members questioned the allocations, saying that other pressing needs in the community were being overlooked. Many households visited during the study mentioned a clinic as their main priority, followed by roads and clean water. Although there are concerns among the trail staff about the allocation of funds, the fact remains that a substantial amount of money has accrued to ACCODA as a result of its relationship with UFUDU, and that most or all of this money has been spent on local causes. PondoCROP maintains that the benefits from UFUDU, although separate from the trail, can be seen as a spin-off from the effort that has gone into the setting-up of the trail and the organisation of the community in structures such as ACCODA, which led directly to the establishment of the UFUDU project in the area.¹⁹

Financial management in the office

Before the restructuring was properly implemented in January 2002, the income from tourists was, in most cases, only sufficient to cover staff salaries, and staff members occasionally waited more than a month for their salaries to be paid.²⁰ These financial problems arose as a result of late payment by tourists (deposit was not demanded up-front) and poor financial management at the central office.²¹

Table 3 shows how the income for one tourist was broken down into payments for various services. For a six-day adventure, one tourist paid R1,380 and for a four-day adventure, R1,100 was paid. The following figures are for all the standard services offered on the trail, but exclude the purchase of food for the tourists' meals. Additional activities, such as visits to a local *sangoma*, are paid for separately by the tourists.

¹⁸ On the issue of the Queen of the Pundos, the Acting Director of PondoCROP confirmed the claim 3/12/2001. A member of ACCODA reported the issue of the R600 for the headman 16/7/2001.

¹⁹ Interview, Acting Director of PondoCROP, Port Edward 28/9/2001.

²⁰ The restructuring started in August 2001 and was implemented in December 2001. There were still problems with its implementation in December 2001. According to Amadiba Adventures, it was properly implemented in January 2002.

²¹ Interview, consultant who was commissioned to evaluate and restructure the trail, Mzamba 16/7/2002.



Table 3: Distribution of money for services in the trail before December 2001

Service	Detail	Fee per worker/ horse (R)	Total (R)
Day 1			
Horses x 2	Mzamba to Mnyameni	30	60
Canoe	To cross Mnyameni	5	5
Horses x 2	Mnyameni to Kwanyana	20	40
Camp Manager	Kwanyana	15	15
Caterer	Kwanyana	15	15
Tent Owner	Kwanyana	5	5
Cleaner	Kwanyana	5	5
Horse Organiser	Mzamba to Kwanyana	R10 for two horses at R5 per horse	10
Tour guide	Mzamba to Kwanyana	15	15
Day 2			
Horses x 2	Kwanyana to Mtentu	30	60
Tour guide	Kwanyana to Mtentu	15	15
Camp Manager	Mtentu	15	15
Caterer	Mtentu	15	15
Horse Organiser	Kwanyana to Mtentu	R10 for the two horses at R5 per horse	10
Tent Owner	Mtentu	5	5
Cleaner	Mtentu	5	5
Day 3			
Boat Owner	Mtentu	15	15
River Guide	Mtentu	15	15
Camp Manager	Mtentu	15	15
Caterer	Mtentu	15	15
Cleaner	Mtentu	5	5
Tent Owner	Mtentu	5	5
Day 4			
Boat Owner	Mtentu	15	15
River Guide	Mtentu	15	15
Camp Manager	Mtentu	15	15
Caterer	Mtentu	15	15
Cleaner	Mtentu	5	5
Tent Owner	Mtentu	5	5
Day 5			
Horses x 2	Mtentu to Kwanyana	30	60
Tour guide	Mtentu to Kwanyana	15	15
Camp Manager	Kwanyana	15	15
Caterer	Kwanyana	15	15
Horse Organiser	Mtentu to Kwanyana	R10 for two horses at R5 per horse	10
Tent Owner	Kwanyana	5	5
Cleaner	Kwanyana	5	5
Day 6			
Horses x 2	Kwanyana to Mnyameni	20	40
Horse Organiser	Kwanyana to Mzamba	R10 for two horses at R5 per horse	10
Canoe	To cross Mnyameni	5	5
Horses x 2	Mnyameni to Mzamba	30	60
Tour guide	Kwanyana to Mzamba	15	15
Total			685

Table 3 shows a four-day trip for which a tourist would pay R1,100. After all the necessary payments have been made to staff, a total of R415 should be left over to meet other expenses such as food for the tourist, the contribution to the community trust and the expenses of the PondoCROP office associated with the trail (such as general office overheads and marketing of the project). Although the money should be enough to cover all expenses, ACCODA experienced problems in getting the R5 per tourist per day that was supposed to be paid to the community trust fund. This led ACCODA to suspect that there were problems in the day-to-day running of the project. It was these financial concerns, among others, which led to the restructuring of the project in 2001.

Unauthorised activities

Before December 2001, there were problems of unauthorised activities especially in the Mtentu campsite. Some staff members used visits of tourists not known by the booking office (PondoCROP office) to create money for themselves sometimes at the expense of other staff members and the wider community. In addition to the tourists that pay to come on the trail, Mtentu campsite frequently received hikers or other people coming to fish in the Mtentu estuary. The Mtentu campsite is visible to passers-by since it has been upgraded with a kitchen, toilets and a deck. Tourists tended not to notice Kwanyana campsite because its two *rondavels* look like typical rural houses and until recently there were no additional facilities provided. Staff in the Mtentu campsite used to accommodate these unexpected tourists and collect money from them, but generally did not report this to the booking office (PondoCROP office) or to the Management Committee. This caused problems when salaries had to be paid because the staff members who accommodated the unexpected tourists would claim their payment although they had already collected money from the tourists. This led to some staff members being paid twice for the same duties.

Livelihood impact on horse owners

Horse owners see the project differently to other staff involved in the trail, particularly as they are the only group contributing their own assets to the project. Horse owners believe that tourists cause strain, sores and other injuries to their horses, partly caused by riding along the coast. They claim that the sea salt rubs against the skin of the horses and riding on the sand causes strain and fatigue to the horses. According to PondoCROP, 'horses are ridden along the coast in many areas in South Africa without incidents', and therefore complaints by horse owners are not justifiable. Horse owners have complained about the lack of rest given to their horses, the vaccinations for which they have to pay from their own pockets, and the little money they get for the long hours their horses spend on the trail. They are paid for the distance travelled but the time their horses spend waiting for tourists can be extremely long.

Concerning the amount paid to horse owners, PondoCROP claims that horse owners agreed to the amounts paid to them and the fact that horses sometimes have to wait for tourists was explained to horse owners before they offered their services to the project. It appears also that certain promises were made by PondoCROP, such as, if a horse dies and the death is attributed to its services in the project, a loan of R500 will be advanced to the owner to help replace the horse. The money will be deducted from the payments that the owner gets until the loan is paid off. PondoCROP denies making any promises and claims that no horses have died as a result of the project.

There was a problem of children missing school days because of the attitudes of some horse owners. Before December 2001, horses were taken to the beginning of the trail on the day the tourists were visiting, which is some distance from the village where the horse owners live. Horse owners were reluctant to do this because they often have to wait half the day for tourists to arrive. Once tourists arrive, horse owners had to walk back to the village. This made the horse owners feel foolish, which is why they sent the horses with the children: '*Andinakuthbeng'ibashe ugqiba ndililandele ngeenyawo*' ('I cannot buy a horse and follow it on foot'). This affected children's school attendance significantly. Young boys missed up to three days of school depending on the schedule of the tourist.

The benefits obtained from the project were rated very low by horse owners compared to other livelihood sources. To them, the costs of maintaining the horses are higher than the benefits from the trail. Some were contemplating dropping out of the project because the money they receive is lower than expected.²² However, there are reasons why horse owners continue being involved in the trail despite their complaints. PondoCROP has organised veterinarian services to be rendered to people's horses in their own village. Also, the horse owners are now able to generate income from their horses, which is something that did not happen before. They also do not want to pull out completely from the project because they see that other people in the community depend on the trail and without the horses the project would collapse:

Imali ikhona yona kodwa incinci. Sesibambelele nje kule projekti kuba iyeyasekuhlaleni. Siyancedakala nangolutofo lwamahashe ethu (*We get payments but we are not satisfied. We don't want to pull out of the project because it is a community project. We also appreciate the veterinary service which we receive for our horses*).²³

²² Meeting with horse owners, Xholobeni village October 2001.

²³ Ibid.

On the issue of costs, PondoCROP claims that their horses will cost just as much to maintain even if they are not used in the project, so the owners have little grounds for complaint.

There have, however, been problems with the condition of horses especially in winter which have negatively impacted the livelihoods of owners (see Box 5).

Box 5: Problems with horses

On one occasion, a group of foreign tourists refused to pay for the horses they were using because the horses had sores on their backs. This was discovered when the tourists changed horses at Mnyameni river and the saddles were removed. Staff and ACCODA allege that, as a result of complaints by the tourists about mistreatment of the horses, PondoCROP decided not to charge the tourists for any of the trip. This meant that the salaries of staff members and other service providers such as horse owners had to be reduced accordingly. There were concerns from the staff members about this loss of income and about the way PondoCROP took the decision without consulting any of them. Also, staff members were of the impression that even if the condition of horses was not acceptable to tourists, they should have at least paid for other services.

The poor condition of horses in winter has been threatening the future of the trail since it leads to poor service and dissatisfaction among tourists. On a number of occasions, horse owners have been told in vain that they should not send horses with sores or ticks on the trail. Recently, during the restructuring of the trail, it has been agreed by all staff that horses owners who send horses in a bad condition will be fined since their bad condition threatens the health of horses and makes tourists unhappy. Also, the project is planning on planting high protein grass for horses for the winter season. They still have to decide whether they request a piece of land from the community that all can use or to plant the grass in the fields of individuals for those individuals to sell to the horse owners.

Staff misconduct

On occasions, staff disciplinary matters have gone beyond misappropriation of project funds. Alleged drunkenness has led to the suspension of one staff member from his duties after he quarrelled with another staff member in front of tourists. According to the rules and regulations agreed to by staff members, PondoCROP and the Management Committee, quarrelling in front of tourist is strictly prohibited.

Staff members and members of the Management Committee are proud of these rules because they were involved in their making. All staff

members and service provider agreed to the rules that related to their areas of operation.

Other development projects in the Amadiba area

There are other development projects that are running concurrently with the Amadiba trail. PondoCROP facilitated the existence of these projects in the area in consultation with ACCODA.

Coast care

Coast Care is a national programme that employs local people in the eradication of alien plants and the collection of litter along the coast. The project also clears alien vegetation around the campsites. The programme is funded by the Directorate of Marine and Coastal Management, part of the national Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). The Coast Care project at Amadiba started on a one-year basis in May 2001 and there was a likelihood that it will be renewed for a further year. PondoCROP sees the Coast Care project as contributing to the attractiveness of the area, which can have positive benefit for the trail.²⁴ PondoCROP was instrumental in persuading the Directorate of Marine and Coastal Management to base the project in the area. ACCODA was appointed as the co-ordinator of the project and was involved in setting up the project, recruiting staff, and appointing a local supervisor who reports to ACCODA.

UFUDU fly-fishing

UFUDU is a saltwater non-consumptive fly-fishing enterprise, a private company owned by a couple who operate a similar scheme in KwaZulu Natal. It is one of the major contributors to the cash economy of the area because of the levies it pays to ACCODA and the salaries paid to its staff members. The project is based on the environmentally sensitive 'catch and release' form of fishing. UFUDU is run separately to the trail, does its own marketing, and has its own clients. UFUDU clients do not use the trail to reach the Mtentu campsite.

UFUDU was invited to visit the area in 1997 by PondoCROP, on behalf of ACCODA (then the Amadiba Steering Committee), to investigate the possibilities of a non-consumptive fly-fishing operation in Mtentu estuary. After visiting the area, the owners were keen to operate in the area. At the time they were not aware that the Mtentu estuary had been declared a Marine Reserve since 1991, and that all forms of fishing were prohibited. Obtaining the necessary exemption from the authorities was a lengthy process. Throughout 1998, PondoCROP and UFUDU had intense negotiations with the Eastern Cape Nature Conservation and the Marine Coastal Management services. It was eventually decided that an

²⁴ Interview, Acting Director of PondoCROP, Port Edward 28/9/2001.

experiment should be conducted to ascertain the viability of the 'catch and release' project in the area. The experimental period was from the end of October to December 1999 and was generally agreed to be a success. This led to UFUDU being granted a renewable three-year permit running from October 2000 to December 2003. As part of its application to Marine and Coastal Management, UFUDU spelt out the benefits that will flow to the community in terms of direct employment and contributions to the coffers of ACCODA. The benefits are in the form of salaries to their contract staff during the period of the operation in the area and a levy that accrues to the community.

UFUDU has an arrangement with ACCODA to pitch its tents at Mtentu campsite during the three months that the scheme operates. During this time, tourists on the trail are either accommodated in local houses or, weather permitting, in tents adjacent to the Mtentu campsite. There are plans to create a separate campsite for the trail to avoid finding a different spot when UFUDU is operating for the three months.

UFUDU employs eight people in the area for three months and pays a levy of R100 per day per tourist to ACCODA. ACCODA received R15,000 in 1999, R39,000 in 2000, and about R43,000 in 2001. UFUDU also sells crafts produced by local people to visitors, which further increases the revenue flowing to the community. In 2000, the entire contribution from UFUDU, in terms of salaries, money to ACCODA and income from crafts, amounted to R85,000 over a period of three months.

Workers were recruited on behalf of UFUDU by ACCODA. UFUDU involved itself only in the recruitment of prospective river guides because they were to receive special training. ACCODA has employed three people to work with UFUDU to mediate disputes between UFUDU, staff and members of the community, such as theft of food or equipment. They also patrol along the estuary to prevent unauthorised fishing, since UFUDU are the only ones allowed to fish within a five km stretch upstream. Salaries of the three people are paid by ACCODA out of the funds received from UFUDU.

UFUDU expressed concerns that the relationship with ACCODA, particularly that the payment of levies and the way in which the money is managed by ACCODA are not widely understood in the community. UFUDU is concerned that, if ACCODA is not seen to be collecting and distributing funds in a transparent manner, UFUDU could be seen as not contributing sufficiently to the community and its claim to work in partnership with the community could be undermined.²⁵

²⁵ Interview, owner of UFUDU, Mtentu campsite 13/10/2001.

Restructuring process

Origins and objectives of the restructuring

In 2000, PondoCROP negotiated with the European Union-funded Support to Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative Programme (EU) to fund the extension of the Amadiba trail into what was to be called the Wild Coast trail (under the Wild Coast Community Tourism Initiative programme), with the Amadiba trail as a model for the extended trail.

The EU accepted PondoCROP's proposal, which led PondoCROP to initiate a process of documenting and evaluating all the activities of the Amadiba trail. This process was considered necessary if similar projects were to be implemented along the Wild Coast. According to PondoCROP, it also created an opportunity to deal with various problems that it had already identified on the trail, such as poor management and poor financial controls.

A private consultant was employed to evaluate the trail and to make recommendations, but there is confusion as to who invited the consultant. According to the consultant himself, the request for the evaluation and the restructuring of the trail was 'from PondoCROP and ACCODA'. ACCODA claims that PondoCROP introduced the consultant to them in order to change the 'project' into a 'business'.²⁶ PondoCROP, on the other hand, claimed that they invited the consultant on behalf of ACCODA.²⁷

The terms of reference given to the consultant were to critically evaluate the management and operational environment of the trail, and make recommendations for changes where necessary. The evaluation looked at the organisational and management structures, business processes, roles and responsibilities of staff, communications and disciplinary procedures. The evaluation process involved the documentation of the various activities of the trail and consultation with all stakeholders.

The key recommendations arising from the evaluation process were as follows:

- The Management Committee should be disbanded because of poor leadership.
- The campsites, guides, and horse organisers would function as interdependent profit generating centres, with staff taking collective responsibility for day-to-day matters and reporting to ACCODA.

²⁶ Interview, members of ACCODA, Xholobeni village October 2001.

²⁷ Interview, Acting Director of PondoCROP, Port Edward 28/9/2001.

- The various profit centres would each have a flat management structure – teams of equals would replace the former hierarchical structure.
- There should be a central booking office that would concentrate on financial management, bookings and marketing of the entire Wild Coast trail to the outside world. This office – known as the Agency – was also seen as a future reservation office for the greater Wild Coast trail.
- There should be an internal administration office for the Amadiba trail, which reports to the central booking office and ACCODA, dealing with the day-to-day administration of the Amadiba trail.
- All aspects of the trail would be run along strict business lines, which would balance the need for greater efficiency with the need to maximise employment and the distribution of benefits to the wider community.

In order to sustain employment and a steady revenue stream to the wider community, it was proposed that strict business principles would have to be followed in the running of the trail, and that the management system would have to be thoroughly overhauled. According to the consultant, the new business approach tries to sustain the business by increasing efficiency (based on business principles) without impacting negatively on employment or the ‘community-based’ character of the trail. This involved creating a new structure to handle all the financial affairs of the trail and increasing prices charged to tourists to more realistic, market-related levels.

Based on the recommendation outlined above, PondoCROP proceeded to restructure the trail into a venture that can be replicated along the coast. The aim of the restructuring was to change the organisational structure of the trail and improve its efficiency. It also aimed ‘to move away from a hand-out mentality towards creating a sustainable business that will generate revenue long after the EU funding has ceased.’²⁸

Initial process of the restructuring

The restructuring process started in August 2001 and ran until May 2002. The restructuring was conducted under a special restructuring team consisting of eight staff members, and headed by the same consultant who conducted the evaluation of the trail. The initial process involved consultation with all the stakeholders in the trail and explanation of the various changes that were going to be implemented. The consultant and a member of PondoCROP who is also a member of ACCODA conducted the consultation process. According to PondoCROP, the stakeholders agreed to all the changes that were going to be implemented.

²⁸ Interview, the consultant, Mzamba 16/7/2002.

The process of consultation was followed by re-interviewing all the staff members prior to confirming them in their positions. According to ACCODA, the interviews were aimed at informing staff about their new duties, providing job descriptions, and signing new contracts.

The re-interviewing process was not well received by staff. Some attempts were made by ACCODA to retain the controversial deductions from staff payments ('capital depreciation'), but this was never implemented. The re-interviewing process and the signing of new contracts made staff unsure about the new direction of the trail, and their place in it. According to staff members, ACCODA gave the appearance that they were doing people a favour by re-hiring them, and told them that, if they were not happy with the process, ACCODA could easily advertise the jobs to outsiders.²⁹ Staff further alleged that the new contracts and job descriptions were not very different to the ones they had before. The major difference, in their opinion, was that the previous agreements had been drafted collectively by all the stakeholders, whereas the new ones were being imposed on staff by management. They felt that the whole process of re-interviewing and signing new contract was just ACCODA's way of asserting its newly-enhanced power over the project, and signalling to staff that the old ways of participatory management were over. Staff came away from the interviews believing that the trail was no longer a community-based project and had become similar to any private company which employs and fires people as it pleases: *'Inqesho ijikela emva kwendlu'* ('employment is coming from behind the house'), said one worker, implying that employment decisions are being imposed from outside, and are no longer something that they control.

The organisational structure of the trail up to July 2001 was inclusive of the different stakeholders. The meeting in 1999 between ACCODA (then the steering committee), PondoCROP, and staff – in which the Management Committee was formed and rules that governed the trail were set – marks a significant event in the life of the trail. The initial confusion among staff around the restructuring reveals a lack of consultation by those driving the changes. Although the restructuring appears to have brought many improvements in the operation of trail, the process that was followed in establishing the new system is questionable from a pro-poor perspective because it appears to have been carried out in a top-down manner with considerable powers delegated to a private consultant.

Changes implemented during the restructuring

During restructuring, staff implemented the recommendations that were made during the evaluation of the trail, beginning in December 2001. Implementation of the recommendations gave rise to various problems,

²⁹ *'Sinenzela nje ufefe ngezi interviews, besinokuxhoma amaphepha sibize abantu kwezinye iilali'*.

as staff had to become familiar with new technology, such as cell phones, new systems for managing finances and reservations, and new ways of organising services such as horses and campsites. According to Amadiba Adventures, these problems were overcome by January 2002.

The restructuring programme, which ended in May 2002, was concluded with the transfer of official ownership of the trail to ACCODA, on behalf of the wider Amadiba community. Although this transfer was PondoCROP's intention even before the evaluation and restructuring, it was only implemented after systems were put in place to deal with the problems that were discovered before and during the evaluation. ACCODA, as the new owner of the business, handles the bank account and relies on the Agency (see below) for support with financial management. Up to November 2001, the bank account was in the name of PondoCROP and PondoCROP members were the only signatories. Following the restructuring in December 2001, ACCODA owns the bank account and its members are the only signatories. ACCODA now owns all the assets of the business, such as tents and canoes (but not horses), and is responsible for strategic decisions, attending to staff complaints and problems, and enforcing rules. A summary of the changes that were implemented during the restructuring is presented in Table 5 (p. 37).

The changes that were implemented during the restructuring range from creation of a central administration office to changes in management approaches and creation of new positions along the trail. Two central management offices were created. The first office, known as the Agency, deals with the bookings, financial management, and marketing, both for the Amadiba trail and for other proposed ventures along the Wild Coast as part of the EU-funded WCCTI. Prior to December 2001 there was no proper booking system in place. Bookings were taken by different people and written on pieces of papers. This led to overbooking or bookings being lost, thus creating chaos. Once the Wild Coast trail is fully operating, the Agency will offer technical support to the different 'business units' of the various trails. The second office is the Amadiba Adventures office. The office has an administrator who is employed by ACCODA and is paid from the Amadiba Adventures business. The administrator is from the Amadiba community. The administrator is responsible for attending ACCODA's monthly meetings to report on the progress of the business and any staff concerns, and handling of day-to-day administration of the Amadiba trail, particularly co-ordination of staff and all activities relating to tourists once they join the trail. Guides, horse organisers, and campsites now have cellphones, which makes communications along the trail much more effective.

Another major change arising from the restructuring was the disbanding of the Management Committee, reportedly because of poor leadership. The Management Committee was originally set up because ACCODA (then the Amadiba Steering Committee) could not give full attention to

the day-to-day running of the trail. The main problem reported with the Management Committee was the autocratic approach of the chairperson. This, according to PondoCROP, caused other committee members to feel marginalised from decision-making. It also appears that there was little confidence in the chairperson on the part of the wider community. ACCODA also had serious concerns with the Management Committee and supported the decision to disband it.

*We disbanded the Management Committee because it is disrespectful to us as ACCODA and we do not know what they are doing down there [along the coast]. There are always shortages in the funds of the project because of what they do.*³⁰

Following the disbanding of the Management Committee, the consultant created a flat management structure in the campsites. Camp managers were re-designated as camp keepers and work as equals with the former cleaners and former tent owners, with equal pay. Under the restructuring, the various service providers – Kwanyana and Mtentu campsites, the tour guides, and the horse organisers – act as interdependent profit centres. According to the consultant, his aim was to blend PondoCROP's concept of participatory management with conventional business principles. He reported that the structure of the former Management Committee and the way it was managed allowed for almost no participation on the part of members of the teams. Staff constantly complained about being 'bossed' around by the chairman of the committee. Subsequent to the restructuring programme, the three teams (Kwanyana, Mtentu, and the transport team) became responsible for managing their own affairs. 'Never before had service providers been given this level of autonomy and decision making powers.'³¹ Each of the teams reports to ACCODA, as the central co-ordinating body, but it was clearly stated that everyday management decisions are the responsibility of the teams themselves. Therefore, while moving towards a more orthodox business structure, increased participation has been achieved, albeit at a relatively low level in the organisational structure.³²

No evidence could be found that the previous structure, with each campsite under a camp manager, was not properly working. Workers in the campsites say they were happy with the camp managers and relied on them to give leadership and keep other staff members in line. The new flat structure has, however, brought some benefits for women workers, as under the new flat structure they are equal to the male former managers and take decision together with them.

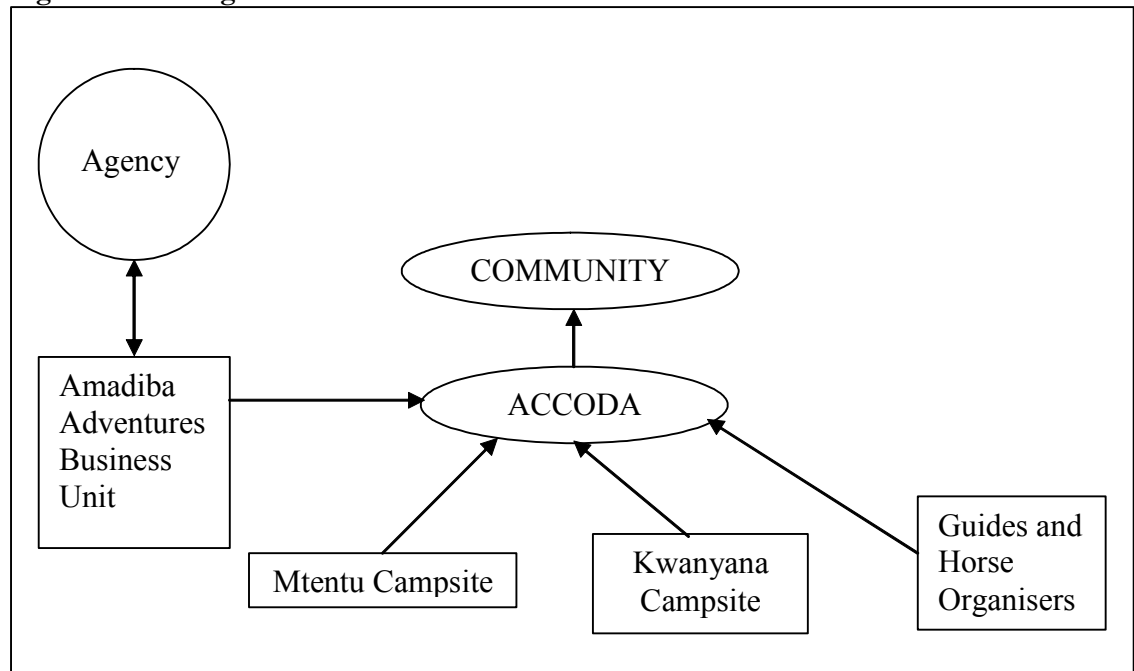
³⁰ A member of ACCODA giving reasons why the Management Committee was disbanded, Xholobeni village.

³¹ Interview with the consultant, Mzamba 16/7/2002.

³² Ibid.

The overall structure of the Amadiba trail now consists of ACCODA as owners of the business, the three profit generating centres (Kwanyana campsite, Mtentu campsites, and the guides and horse organisers) which report to ACCODA, and Amadiba Adventures office which also reports to ACCODA. Amadiba Adventures office also reports to the Agency. Figure 5 shows the new organisational structure of the Amadiba trail.

Figure 5: New organisational structure of the trail



Source: PondoCROP staff member (Pers. Comm. July 2002).

There were also changes in the terms used to describe aspects of the trail. Since the restructuring, Amadiba Adventures is no longer referred to by those involved as a ‘project’, but as a ‘business’. The consultant emphasised the need to take a ‘businesslike’ approach to the running of the trail in order to distinguish it from government projects, such as poultry and piggery projects, which have a high rate of failure in the area. The consultant wanted staff and members of ACCODA to view the trail differently to other donor-funded initiatives and to perceive it as a private business where time, proper administration, good management, and profitability are important for success. The Agency was specifically created to foster this new approach. Another change is the reference to staff as ‘service providers’. According to the consultant, Amadiba Adventures business buys services from service providers and pays for those services.

The changes from ‘project’ to ‘business’, and from ‘employees’ to ‘service providers’ are relatively superficial and it is unclear as to why these terms are emphasised. Staff are offering the same services as before when they

were called employees, and cannot be seen as independent of the trail. All staff outside the central office were, under the old system, effectively piece workers, paid according to the number of tourists they cater for, and this remains the case today.

Finance and administration

As indicated above, all the financial matters, bookings and marketing are handled by the Agency. After a booking is received by the Agency, it is forwarded to the administrator in the Amadiba Adventures office, who then contacts all the relevant people who will be needed for the trail with all the necessary information about the tourist. Names of service providers who will be working on the trail are then accessed through an automated roster system that selects tour guides, horses, and the camp keepers and caterers on a rotational basis. In Kwanyana, they have three camp keepers who work in turns, whereas the team in Mtentu decided that rotation system should not apply to them. All the necessary information about the tourist is given to staff who will be working on the trail (for example, whether a tourist is a vegetarian) by the administrator in the Amadiba Adventures office.

During the tour, tour guides carry a file with purchase invoices for all the service providers that will be working on the trail to sign, evaluation forms for the tourists to complete at the end of the trail, first aid kit, cellphone and binoculars. Payments for all services provided are made at the end of every month by the Agency against signed copies of the purchase invoices, which tour guide takes back to the office after each tour. Since December 2001, monthly financial reports are compiled by the Agency. Before that, there were no proper accounting and financial systems in place. The Agency also consolidates the information received from the evaluation reports.

In each campsite, money for consumables is allocated monthly by the Agency to the caterers. This is based on the estimated amount that each campsite will use depending on the number of bookings received by the Agency. The caterers manage the money for consumables and monthly reports are sent back to the Agency.

Rates charged for the trail have increased. Table 4 shows the current domestic rates. A range of options is shown in the table; these include a full trail option, which was discussed in Figure 1, a drive-in option, a hiking option and a one-day trail option.

Table 4: Rates since December 2001 (per day per tourist)³³

Type of Trail	Domestic	Domestic
	Low Season ³⁴	High Season ³⁵
Full trail	R355	R408
Drive In (G+CK+C) ³⁶	R185	R213
Drive In (G+CK)	R140	R161
Hiking (Own Tents+G)	R70	R81
One Day Trails (Mz – Mn)	R150	R173
One Day Trails (Mz – Mt)	R230	R265

Operation of the trail

The full trail, as before, involves a two-day journey to Mtentu campsite, two to four days spent at Mtentu, and a two-day journey back to the beginning. The main changes in the operation of the trail are the creation of new positions for horse minding, ferrying, and security.

An attempt was made during the restructuring programme to build paddocks to keep horses closer to the embarkation points but horse owners could not agree where they wanted the paddocks or who they wanted to care for their horses. It was therefore proposed that there should be horse minders (also known as horse keepers) who will look after the horses at night before the arrival of tourists. According to PondoCROP, it has been a struggle to prevent horse owners from using their children to look after the horses. As part of the restructuring programme, it was agreed that no children should be used in the project for any reason. Horses are now delivered to horse keepers the night before the trail in order to care for them overnight and deliver them on time to the embarkation point. Horse keepers have to make sure that horses are fed and that they are fit to go on the trail (for example, without sores). There are now four horse keepers, one in each of in the four departure points – Mzamba, Mnyameni, Kwanyana, and Mtentu. This prevents horses from travelling long distances, gives them a chance to rest before going on the trail, and also avoids the problem of children missing school.

Another change is the introduction of a ferryman and a reserve ferryman at Mzamba river. Previously, tourists often have had to cross Mzamba river by foot as the canoe at Mzamba river was stolen during the initial

³³ International rates are higher than domestic rates; rates for NGO's are lower than domestic rates.

³⁴ 21 January to 22 March; 8 April to 21 June; and 22 July to 6 December.

³⁵ 23 March to 7 April; 22 June to 21 July; and 27 December to 19 January.

³⁶ Tourists requiring G – Guiding; CK – Camp Keeping; C – Catering. Tourists travelling from Mz – Mn (from Mzamba to Mnyameni); Mz – Mt (Mzamba to Mtentu).

stages of the project. A reserve ferryman has also been introduced to assist the ferryman at Mnyameni river.

Benefits to service providers and the wider community

Under the new system, as indicated above, there are new positions such as horse keepers, reserve ferrymen, a ferryman in Mzamba and a security guard in Mtentu, providing additional employment for community members. Camp manager, tent owners, and cleaners have now been re-designated as camp keepers. Box 6 shows the various ‘service providers’ on the trail as of December 2001 (excluding horse owners).

Box 6: Number of staff from December 2001	
Kwanyana Campsite	No
Camp Keepers	3
Caterers	2
Security Guard	1
Horse Keeper	1
Mtentu Campsite	
Camp Keepers	2
Reserve Camp Keeper	1
Caterers	4
Security Guard	1
Horse Keeper	1
Ferryman	1
Reserve Ferryman	1
Tour guides	10
Horse Organisers	2
Ferryman in Mnyameni	1
Reserve Ferryman in Mnyameni	1
Horse Keeper in Mnyameni	1
Ferryman in Mzamba	1
Reserve Ferryman in Mzamba	1
Horse Keeper in Mzamba	1
Total	36

Service providers have been encouraged to open bank accounts where their money can be deposited electronically. The so-called ‘capital depreciation’ (that is, deductions from payments), which was a matter of major concern to staff, was abolished as part of the restructuring.

Various changes have been made in the rates paid to staff. Up to November 2001 cleaners and tent owners (now re-designated as camp keepers) received R5 per tourist per day, but now they receive R15. Camp managers received R15 before, and under the restructuring they have effectively been demoted to camp keepers and therefore receive the same amount as other staff, R15 per tourist per day. Tour guides received R15 before, now they receive R20. Thus, the former tent owners, cleaners, and tour guides are better off than before, whilst there is no change for the former camp managers in terms of payments. Box 7 shows the adjustment in payments of service providers.

Box 7: New payments rates of service providers	
Horse Keeping	
Horse care – per tourist per night	R3
Saddle care – per tourist per night	R2
Horse Rental	
Mzamba to Mnyameni	R30
Mnyameni to Kwanyana	R20
Kwanyana to Mtentu	R30
Saddle Hire – per day	R10
Horse Organising	
Per tourist per day	R5
Guiding	
Per tourist per day	R20
Per tourist per day – Mtentu (boat ride)	R15
Per tourist per night	R5
Ferrying	
Per tourist crossing	R5
Camp Keeping	
Per tourist per night	R15
Catering – Food	
Supper	R15
Breakfast	R10
Lunch	R5
Catering – Staff	
Supper	R7
Breakfast	R5
Lunch	R3
<i>Source: PondoCROP (2002).</i>	

Direct financial benefits to the wider community have started to flow from the trail since the restructuring. From 21 December 2001 to 20 June 2002, R9,981 has been transferred to the community trust fund, representing five percent of all income from the trail. Between October 2001 and 20 June 2002, the community trust fund received more than R50,000 in total; R9,981 from the trail and the R43,000 from UFUDU.

The total income that was received by the trail from 21 December 2001 to 20 June 2002 was R199,637, and total direct expenditure was R150,471.11. Nearly half of all revenue (45%) was from international tourists. Once indirect costs – such as marketing, office overheads, insurance, and capital equipment – had been met, along with the allocation to the community trust fund, the trail showed a loss for the period of R9,072.94. 40% of the income goes to the service providers. Before the trail was restructured, the order of allocation was 60% for the service providers. The 40% that goes to the service providers was achieved through the increase in the rates charged, without decreasing the number of service providers.

Table 5 summarises the situation on the trail before and during the restructuring, based on information provided by the Amadiba Adventures office.

Table 5: Situation on the Trail up to November 2001 and from December 2001

	Inception of the trail up to November 2001	From December 2001
Asset Management	No asset management system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Assets are numbered b) Assets are kept on a register and there is a monthly stock count c) Computerised asset tracking system developed and implemented d) Human resources system develop to track appointments, skills, education levels, training, training schedules etc.
Communication	Rudimentary, utilising telephone calls to local schools and messages delivered by children about tours	A cellphone-based system has been developed ensuring that staff receives all messages. All guides, horse organisers and one person from each of the two campsites now have cell phones. This enables a two-way communication between the office and staff
Horse Care and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) No veterinary service 2) Old saddles and tack, mostly in disrepair 3) Horses delivered were often tick-infested, with saddle and girth wounds 4) Late arrivals or no arrival of horses 5) Horses often tired by the time they were delivered to tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Implemented a veterinary service (dipping and vaccination) for the horses used on the trail and those of the broader community b) Implemented a paddock system whereby horses are delivered the night-before to paddocks located near to the tourist embarkation points c) Plans to plant protected areas with high protein yield grass for horse consumption in winter months when the local grass yield drops



	Inception of the trail up to November 2001	From December 2001
Operational Information	Information in the field about a touring party was that which had been remembered from the message sent via the rudimentary communication system	Implemented a tour log that travels with the tour group. The log contains, tourists personal details, their riding and swimming capabilities, their eating preferences, their emergency numbers, horses the tourists will be riding, saddles that will be used, projected weather and natural hazard report, casualty evacuation and emergency procedures, first aid procedures and personalised tourist feedback form.
Reservation	Elementary paper booking system divided between the Durban and Mzamba offices and largely in the mind of one individual who was often unavailable due to time spent in the field	Implemented an electronic booking system and personnel to attend to all the bookings and communicate those to staff
Safety and Security	Nothing in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) First aid kits at campsites and carried by guides at all times b) Implemented casualty evacuation system utilising government and private sector providers who operate 24 hours a day and seven days a week c) Implemented a risk management system.
Administration and Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Bank account managed by PondoCROP 2) Payments to service providers (staff) in cash 3) No financial tracking system 4) No reports 5) No financial and administrative monitoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Developed a financial viability model programme (dynamic costing, break-even analysis and pricing) b) All finances of the business are managed by the community c) Bank account with community signatories d) Financial audit and management system using PASTAL e) Monthly financial and management reports f) Electronic payment of service providers (staff) g) Debtor control system
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Disharmony as a result of unclear organisational structure 2) Poor leadership 3) Dependency mentality of staff on PondoCROP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Developed a self-led team enhancing capacity building of all individuals in the business b) Facilitated the evolution of staff dependency mindset to an independent mindset c) Ongoing mentoring and support
Management of Human Resources	Ad Hoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Selection criteria and process b) Service level agreements c) Service provision contracts d) Code of conduct e) Disciplinary procedure f) Self-led team formation g) Training system h) Bonus incentive scheme.

EU programme and the expansion of the trail

During 2000, PondoCROP negotiated with the European Union-funded Support to the Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative Programme for the extension of the existing trail. This forms part of the EU support to Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative (a state-led investment strategy) which aims to increase the level of income and employment of previously disadvantaged communities through their improved participation in the tourism industry in the Wild Coast area. The EU Support to the Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative Pilot Programme has a budget of R80 million with an initial life cycle of four years. A central component of the programme will be the extension of the Amadiba Horse and trail along the entire coast length of the Wild Coast from Mzamba river to Kei Mouth river, a distance of about 280km.

Specific objectives of the programme are to:

- Increase income levels and job opportunities of local communities by assisting them to participate in responsible tourism.
- Improve the level of skills of community members.
- Improve the business capacity in the local communities.
- Improve environmental awareness.
- Improve capacity of local, regional and provincial government structures to continue of the process of community based tourism development after the EU programme ends.
- To establish a management structure and policies for the natural areas which need to be protected for conservation and tourism development reasons.

The EU programme is concentrated in five 'development nodes', namely Mzamba, Magwa/Mbotyi, Port St Johns, Dwesa-Cwebe and Khobonqaba/Nxaxo/Cebe (Wavecrest area). The programme seeks to promote a wide range of tourism related activities, including accommodation facilities, horse and hiking trails, tour guiding, non-consumptive fly-fishing, and production of crafts and agricultural produce for use in tourist activities.

The implementation of the programme on the Wild Coast is the responsibility of three NGOs, namely PondoCROP, Triple Trust Organisation, and the World Wide Fund for Nature – South Africa (WWF). A Programme Management Unit (PMU) has been established that is responsible for the co-ordination of efforts between the NGOs. The PMU acts as the administrative office for the programme, and co-ordinates a marketing campaign together with the East Cape Tourism Board and South African Tourism (SATOUR), aimed at promoting both the region and the products established through the programme.

The three organisations have already started their work. Triple Trust organisation has promised to create 300 business enterprises, and local people have already received training in leatherwork and sewing. PondoCROP has recruited an officer for each node, and WWF has run one training course in nature conservation.

PondoCROP are planning to use EU funding to other developments in the Amadiba area. These include upgrading Kwanyana campsite, establishing a lodge at Mphahlane River and a camp or lodge at Mnyameni River, providing facilities for fishermen at Sikhombe River and creating a campsite at Salmon Rock. The campsite at Salmon Rock will be used by tourists on the horse and hiking trail when the Mtentu campsite is leased to UFUDU for the three summer months (Ashley and Ntshona 2003). Funding for the upgrading of Kwanyana and building of Salmon Rock will come from a prize of R500,000 that ACCODA won recently as the best community forum in the region.

The Amadiba model of community-based tourism has generated considerable interest nationally and even internationally and is being used as a model for the extension of the trail along the length of the Wild Coast (ibid.). The EU funded programme has identified 25 hiking trail sites and 12 other campsites along this stretch for potential development by communities themselves or in partnership with commercial operators. Given the institutional complexities and intensive inputs needed in the Amadiba model, however, the programme is planning to stimulate multiple individual entrepreneurs running discreet projects rather than large multi-faceted community enterprises. Plans include day trips from hotels rather than a long trail that requires close co-ordination between community operators. The trail expansion faces institutional challenges in many spheres. Trail expansion will require various agreements regarding environmental procedures, land tenure agreements, and permission to use land, and hence will involve negotiating with the Departments of Land Affairs, Environment and Tourism, and Marine and Coastal Management, as well as with various provincial and local government structures. A lack of clarity around land ownership along the Wild Coast and lack of a feasibility study for tourism have been identified as potential obstacles to the expansion of the trail.

The Agency, which has recently been formed, will not only support the Amadiba Trail, but other trails that will be developed under the EU programme. Each of the different trails in the different nodes will have their own administrator, as is the case with the Amadiba Trail. Node 1 is commonly known as Mzamba (Mzamba to Mkambati) where the Amadiba Trail is located; node 2 is Magwa/ Mbotyi (Msikaba to Port St Johns); node 3 is Port St Johns (Port St Johns to Coffee Bay); node 4 is Dwesa/ Cwebe; and node 5 is Wavecrest. The trail in each of these nodes will be owned by a trust, as is the case with the trail in node 1, which is owned by ACCODA. The plan is to have an association of trusts, which will have overall control of the Agency and the Wild Coast

Trail. When the Wild Coast trail is complete, the association of trusts will control the Agency, and all the 'business units' (such as the Amadiba Trail) will report to the Agency and through it to the association of trusts.

Conclusion

The Amadiba Trail has undergone considerable internal changes in the course of its brief history. While the product – a horse and hiking trail that brings tourists into close contact with the world of the Amadiba people – remains largely unchanged, the manner in which the enterprise is organised and run has evolved through a number of forms. It is still too early to say what impact these changes will have on the trail's 'pro-poor' credentials, but the broad directions of change are evident. These can be summarised as an increasingly 'commercial' (or 'businesslike') approach in the way the trail relates to its staff and to the wider world, and reduced scope for participation in higher-level decision-making. These changes hold out the promise of a more efficiently-run (and thus more marketable and more profitable) enterprise, with enhanced benefits for staff and the wider community. Such potential, however, must be set against the increasing centralisation and managerialism that have occurred as part of the restructuring process, which runs the risk of endangering the genuinely participatory and uniquely local qualities that have characterised the trail to date.

It is important to note that the recent restructuring of the trail has come about not as a response to the concerns of those most directly involved in its day-to-day operation, or to the demands of its clients, but under the influence of external developments, in the form of very substantial EU funding. The focus of attention on the Amadiba Trail, as an anchor project for the development of the tourism sector along the length of the Wild Coast, may turn out to be a mixed blessing. While the supply of additional funds and expertise can certainly assist the Amadiba trail in meeting its objectives, including provision of benefits for poor members of the community, it has also put pressure on the trail to conform to certain standards, drawn largely from the world of private business. Moreover, it requires the trail to integrate certain activities into a wider network of tourism projects planned for the entire Wild Coast. Whether this level of external attention ultimately works to the benefit of the trail – and particularly to the benefit of poor communities along its length – remains to be seen. The purpose of establishing the Amadiba Horse and Hiking Trail was to create opportunities for the people of Amadiba to participate in and benefit a form of tourism that capitalises on the unspoilt natural beauty of the Wild Coast and the hitherto under-valued skills and resources of the local people. The involvement of a non-profit organisation, PondoCROP, in initiating the project, and the involvement of community representatives in operation and management, presented an alternative to large-scale investor driven development, an alternative

that could supplement, rather than replace, existing livelihood strategies. With many more actors now looking to the Amadiba trail to provide a 'success story', there appears to be a real danger that the values that made it such a rare example of a successful community-based tourism project may be overlooked in the drive for efficiency and growth.

Some of the recent changes within the trail are largely symbolic, as in the switch from 'staff' to 'service providers', and from 'project' to 'business', reflecting a change in attitude rather than in substance. Others, such as the disbanding of the Management Committee and the creation of centralised and professionalised structures for administration and management, represent a move away from the participatory approach that characterised the trail in its earlier phase. The top-down manner in which the restructuring process was initiated and implemented adds weight to the opinions of 'service providers' that they now work for a conventional business over which they have little control. Nonetheless, the withdrawal of PondoCROP from formal 'ownership' of the trail, and its transfer to ACCODA, suggests that the trail is becoming more independent, and more genuinely 'local'.

Substantial benefits have flowed from the trail to those working on it and, as this study has shown, in ways that compliment rather than replace existing livelihood strategies. This is undoubtedly one of the major successes of the project and gives strong support to the argument for community-based tourism. The additional benefits that were expected to flow from the trail to the wider community have also started to flow following the restructuring of the trail.

Other benefits that have flowed to the community have come from additional projects, most notably the UFUDU fly-fishing operation. This privately-run company pays a substantial part of its revenues directly to ACCODA, as well as providing seasonal employment and a market for local crafts. While the claim that UFUDU has only come to the Amadiba area because of the hiking trail is not entirely convincing – the fly-fishing operation serves a separate clientele and operates largely independently of the trail – there would appear to be merit in the argument that well-organised community structures (with external support from the likes of PondoCROP) are in a position to attract private operators and to negotiate favourable terms with them. This is further borne out by the success of these structures in attracting additional projects such as Coast Care. The procedures for distribution of income by ACCODA leave room for improvement, however, and serve to highlight the challenges of ensuring accountability, transparency, and democracy within so-called community structures. The distribution of funds needs to be more closely linked to the priorities of the community in order to boost the confidence of the community in the trail and the UFUDU project.

This case study highlights a number of key strengths and weaknesses of the community-based or pro-poor model of tourism development:

- There is market demand for ‘alternative’ tourist experiences, but operators must ensure that the service they offer is of consistent quality and meets the expectations of tourists.
- Poor rural people can combine work in the formal sector with ‘traditional’ local livelihood activities, but require appropriate (and ongoing) training, supervision, and reward structures.
- Local organisations can play a key role in the initiation and operation of tourism ventures, and mobilisation of local resources, but do not necessarily share the same interests as employees, and can become self-serving, especially as income begins to flow.
- ‘Community’ control does not necessarily translate into participatory or egalitarian organisations, as the growing centralisation of the Amadiba Trail demonstrates.
- External agents have a crucial role to play in the identification and initiation of community-based projects, and NGOs would appear to be well suited to this role due to the open-ended nature of the relationship with the community and the uncertainty of financial returns. It is the quality and the duration of this relationship that is key, rather than the amount of funding available. This suggests that neither private interests nor donor organisations can adequately fill this role, and may even jeopardise the process with excessively tight deadlines and expectations of measurable returns.
- Trial-and-error, and evolutionary development, are integral to bottom-up initiatives. Nonetheless, there is a need for all parties concerned to be as clear as possible at each stage in the process about the aims of the project and the organisational form that it will take.
- While much can be achieved through participatory methods of organisation, it is not possible to dispense with professional management and administrative skills, including, in this case, some specialist knowledge of the tourism market. Such skills may be developed within the project over time, or sourced externally, or some combination of the two. The differential skilling of staff over time is likely to lead to tensions within the project, and impose real limitations to participatory forms of management.
- Experience and structures arising from one development project can increase the chances of attracting additional initiatives to an area. Projects do not necessarily need to be closely integrated and can serve different social groups within a community.
- Direct, personal benefits (for example, wages) are probably preferable to indirect ‘community’ benefits distributed through local structures. General funds placed in the hands of local structures are liable to be misused or spent on prestige goods, in ways that may not enhance the livelihoods of local people. Control of such funds may also become the basis for intense local debate and rivalry, with potentially disruptive consequences for the projects that generate them.



- External donor funding can help community-based organisation to grow, but also brings with it new requirements that have the potential to change the character of local projects. Expansion of organisational overheads on the basis of donor funding, rather than self-generated revenues, may distort organic growth and jeopardise sustainability in the longer term.

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