

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OF TOURS AND TRAVEL AGENTS AND  
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA  
A CASE STUDY OF RWANDA TOURS AND TRAVEL ASSOCIATION  
(RTTA)**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is entitled “The strategic partnership of tours and travel agents in tourism development in Rwanda. A Case study of Rwanda Tours and Travel Association (RTTA)” intends to assess the role of strategic partnership between those commercial enterprises in the development of tourism industry. The specific objectives are as follow: To identify the strategic partnership between tours and travel agents in Rwanda; to examine how the strategic partnership between tours and travel agents meaningfully contributed to the success of tourism sector in Rwanda. Concerning methodology, comparative, historical and system approaches were used. The researcher also used an interview and a survey by questionnaire techniques in order to collect primary data towards the members of RTTA. The secondary data were obtained using documentation technique where the textbooks, annual reports, as well as the Internet sources related with the topic were consulted. The data processing tools such as SPSS and Excel were used and editing, coding and tabulation were done for analysis of the data collected. The study has revealed that 20% of the respondents asserted that RTTA does nothing to improve the investment climate in tourism sector while 80% of the respondents recognized that RTTA develops mechanisms for unification and loyalty of tour operators and travel agent’s interests in dynamic and effective way. Forty percent of the respondents agreed that RTTA puts in place amicable conflicts settlement and arbitration as well as assistance to the development of good and coherent business atmosphere and 60% of the respondents agreed that RTTA ensures the representation of the tour operators and travel agents in the partnership between private, public sectors as well as NGOs. However, only 20% of the respondents are sure that RTTA helps in improvement of member business knowledge and understanding and subsequent professional performance. Indeed, RTTA plays an important role in improving the investment climate in tourism sector though it is more focused on profit-oriented development. Consequently, the revenue from tourism increased tremendously from US\$ 153 million in 2007 to US\$ 202 million in 2008. From 2008 to 2011, there was a moderate increase, respectively from US\$ 202 million, US\$ 208 million and US\$ 212 million to reach 215.3 million US Dollars. Tourism continues to perform way above average for Rwandan economy, with a reported 6 percent rise in revenues generated for 2012, up from the previous year by nearly 13 million US Dollars to 228.3 million US Dollars. However, 40% of the respondents argued that strategic partnership raised questions concerning intellectual property ownership while 80% of the respondents asserted that it raised questions concerning exclusivity and competition. Concerning rights to business opportunities created in the course of the partnership and splitting of profits and

expenses, 60% of the respondents found out that strategic partnership is a problem to them. To overcome those constraints, recommendations have been addressed to the Government of Rwanda, tour operators and travel agents, members of RTTA.