



BEYOND THE GORILLAS EXPERIENCE (BGE)

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BEYOND THE GORILLAS EXPERIENCE (BGE) COMPANY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

Beyond the Gorillas Experience (BGE) is a tourism company based in vicinity of Volcanoes National Park (VNP). BGE operates in the whole country but it has the main offices in Musanze and Gakenke Districts located in the Northern Province/Rwanda.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to support community to conserve natural resources and maximize the tourism benefits by increasing the number of tourists in Rwanda towards sustainable development.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to pioneer in the promotion of communities for ecotourism using indigenous knowledge, skills and basic resources especially around tourism attractions.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1. Maximizing tourism opportunities to the benefits of VNP fringe local communities through their involvement in the community based tourism activities.
2. Designing new community based tourism products for increasing the number of tourists and their stay in Rwanda.
3. Promoting the community living standards through job creation, improved hygiene and sanitation, scholarship and training opportunities.
4. Promoting conservation awareness in primary, secondary and high learning schools.
5. Working hand in hand with tourism stakeholders to deliver professional and exceptional service to tourists who visit Rwanda (tourism information, directions and tour guiding services).

OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Through our company, we developed a unique tour package of 60 days which allow tourists to spend more days in Rwanda besides parks adventures which proves our contribution in tourism and hospitality businesses in Rwanda.

With its professional experience, our company provides to tourists remarkable experiences beyond the visits to National Parks, namely Community Based Tourism (CBT) activities such as authentic village tours, scenic walk and bird watching, booze cruise in Rwandan lakes, local hills hiking, scenic tour around VNP, home stay, umuganura tour, local beer brewery, beekeeping experience, community volunteering, agri-tourism, cultural entertainment, local project visits, night fishing, coffee tour experience, biking in village, tented camp sites and live culture interpretation, interpretation centers, both hiking and biking in Congo Nile Trail to mention but few.

In addition, BGE owns Bisoke Beer Garden located at the place known as Kwa Mukecuru Parking on the foot of Bisoke Mountain. The place provides food and beverage services, camping site, hiking and camping facilities (tents, sleeping bags, gloves, boots, first aid services, cooking facilities, packed lunches, fast food, different hot drinks and cloakroom). Having seen that about 75% of tourists visiting VNP use Kwa Mukecuru Parking for visiting Umubano, Ntambara and Amahoro Gorilla Families and other tourism activities like the visit to Dian Fossey Grave, Ngezi Trail, Bisoke and Kalisimbi Hiking, we had idea of establishing this Resto-Bar at this strategic location which responds to the needs of tourists and create job opportunities for youth and women living around that area.

Actually, our company gets its clients from different partners namely tour operators, tourist guides, travel agents, hotels, lodges, RDB and other tourism stakeholders. Concerning our marketing strategies, we use an active website, brochures, flyers, business cards, radio talks, TV shows and other social media.

As a result, BGE employs about 30 permanent young people both boys and girls. About 65 people are part-time workers with BGE and about 250 people from families living around our different working places are our direct and indirect beneficiaries (2 cultural dancing troops, 2 handcraft teams, 3 weaving associations, etc).

Furthermore, we support some students (in primary, secondary and high schools) from vulnerable families, as our intention to change lives of local people around our working place.

Normally, we give 30% of our revenues to the local communities. This amount is registered in the book of BGE contribution to the community welfare and support in

school suppliers for kids, housing for vulnerable families, materials for wood carving and weaving teams, medical insurance for poor families, etc.

So far BGE supported 92 families with mattresses, 72 families received sheep, 50 students are assisted in their studies; a small Nursery School located in Butorwa Village, Nyonirima cell in Kinigi Sector has been built. BGE has 80 m2 plot of land in Bisoke Cell, 10 binoculars, 3 bird books, 2 computers, tents, fridges, etc.

OUR PARTNERS

1. Ministry of Youth/Rwanda
2. Rwanda Development Board (RDB)
3. United Nations Development Program/UNDP-Rwanda
4. Rwanda Safari Guides Association (RWASAGA)
5. Uganda Safaris Guides Association (USAGA)
6. The Bridge International
7. Rwanda Chamber of Tourism
8. Rwanda Tours and Travel Association(RTTA)
9. Rwanda Hospitality Association
10. Cobra&Mongoose charity group
11. Local Competitive Facilities Rwanda(LCF)
12. German Cooperation(GIZ)
13. Private Sector Federation(PSF)
14. Inkomoko
15. Bank of Kigali
16. Tour Operators i.e. Primate Safaris, Thousand Hills Expeditions, Ubber Luxe Safaris, Mapendano Voyages, Amahoro Tours, Umubano Tours, Governors Camp Safaris, Terra Incognita, Gorillas Trek, Kazinga Tours Uganda, etc.
17. Rwanda Volcanoes Opportunity Association (RVOA)
18. Different hotels(Singita, Virunga Hotel, La palme Hotel, etc.)

WAY FORWARD

Our future plan is to create jobs for 500 young people through the following activities:

1. Professional trainings of tourist guides from different tourism destinations (Kigali, VNP, Karongi, Rubavu, Nyungwe and Akagera destinations) in tourism in Rwanda, in tour guiding skills & knowledge, in communication skills, in customer care, in food & safety and in first Aid.
2. Mobilization of local community around protected areas on environment awareness, entrepreneurship, good manners, hygiene and sanitation, etc.

3. Improvement of all VNP's main entrances and parking (improved tourism infrastructures i.e. safe, clean and well-equipped with basic parking facilities).
4. Upgrading and expansion of BGE's activities to new tourism destinations, for example alongside Kivu Belt and in other cultural, historical and natural sites and Kabuye community tourism and livelihood project.
5. Professional training of BGE's guides and staff in tourism management, project management, ICT, etc.

NZABONIMPA Theodore
BGE Founder & Managing Director