



Focus on Fair Trade in Tourism

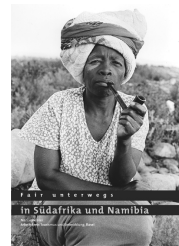
For more than 30 years, arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung has been actively contributing to raising awareness among Swiss consumers for responsible tourism. With a long-term project to develop Fair Trade in tourism, the organisation has since 1997 been preparing the ground for a demand for Fair Trade travel packages in Switzerland. From our practical experience in the field of awareness raising and campaigns, we can indeed confirm the assumption that there is a growing demand for environmentally friendly and socially responsible, fair travel:

- The unique non-profit travel portal www.fairunterwegs.org, launched in autumn 2006 by arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung under the banner of developing Fair Trade in tourism, is now recording 22,000 to 32,000 visitors a month, who are collecting information on the impacts of tourism and on new sustainable initiatives for Fair Trade in tourism. Never before in its history had arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung been able to reach such a large number of people who enjoy travelling.
- In as early as 2003, a first broad-based awareness campaign on Fair Trade in tourism was conducted by arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung. Within a few weeks, more than 1,000 visitors expressed their interest in Fair Trade in tourism by signing a post card to support a postcard campaign at tourism trade fairs in the German speaking part of Switzerland. At the same time, they called upon tour operators to develop and market products declared accordingly.

arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung is the only development-related specialised NGO on tourism in Switzerland. Due to our limited financial resources and staff capacities (with a staff of 5 persons, resp. 2.5 full-time equivalents), we can only address the various challenges associated with the fast growing tourism sector in a very limited manner. However, we work in close cooperation with partner organisations in the destinations and other important tourist sending countries, but also with relevant actors in the field of Fair Trade in Switzerland, and our continuous efforts to introduce Fair Trade in tourism obviously seem to have an impact.

Major steps taken by arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung to introduce Fair Trade in tourism:

- 1997: Launch of the long term programme "Fair Trade on Holiday" with a conference on the perspectives and threats of tourism for the development of the "new" South Africa and Southern Africa in cooperation with NGOs of the Swiss anti-apartheid movement (in German and English)
- 1999: Publication of the booklet "Fair reisen in Palästina/Israel" in cooperation with the protestant churches of Berne (OeME) and other partners in Switzerland (in German and French)
- 1999-2001: Member of the Fair Trade in Tourism network initiated by Tourism Concern, London
- 2002: Publication of the booklet "Fair Trade on Holiday in South Africa and Namibia" by Marianne Frei, after extensive research on new tourism initiatives (in German, draft in English for consultation)
- 2003: First awareness raising campaign on Fair Trade in Tourism at Swiss travel fairs (in German): The visitors of Swiss holiday fairs showed great interest in Fair Trade on Holiday



- 2004: Publication of the educational kit "FAIR HANDELN – auch im Tourismus" in cooperation with EED-Tourism Watch, Bonn, and respect, Vienna (in German)
- 2004: Agreement on the "Cornerstones" for Fair Trade in Tourism (and the "Network of Actors") in the Tourism European/ Ecumenical Network (TEN) (publication in English and French)
- 2004-2005: Active promotion of Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa in Switzerland and among Swiss tour operators in cooperation with the South African Embassy, Berne, and the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO)



www.fairunterwegs.org

2006: Launch of the new website www.fairunterwegs.org for tourists with the aim of increasing the demand for fairly traded tourism services (in German)

- 2006-2007: Active campaigning at Swiss and German travel fairs for Fair Trade in Tourism
- 2006-2009: Member of the Tourism Advisory Board to Fair Trade Labelling Organisations International (FLO) for the elaboration of Fair Trade labelling in tourism
- 2007: Publication of the booklet "Fair unterwegs in Kerala/Indien" in cooperation with KABANI- the other direction, India (in German)
- 2009: Member of the Programme Management Group of the pilot project of Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa (FTTSA) aimed at developing first Fair Trade travel packages to South Africa

In addition to continuous awareness raising and education, arbeitskreis tourismus & entwicklung in cooperation with partners in the South and North is also actively involved in lobbying decision makers in business and politics to introduce Corporate Social Responsibility measures in the companies and to develop equitable economic and trade policies at the international level. The idea of Fair Trade in tourism is gaining acceptance among companies and authorities in Switzerland and at the international level also in the UN World Tourism Organization...



... but also among local organisations, for example in South India.