

**UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
PRESIDENT OFFICE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

RUVUMA REGION



NYASA DISTRICT COUNCIL



**TOURISM ATTRACTIONS AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
IN NYASA DISTRICT**

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Table of Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	LOCATION.....	1
1.2	CULTURE.....	1
1.3	CLIMATE.....	1
1.4	POPULATION.....	1
2.0	ATTRACTIONS IN NYASA.....	1
2.1	NATURAL ATTRACTIONS.....	2
3.0	ISLANDS.....	7
4.0	HILLS.....	8
5.0	LAKE NYASA.....	12
6.0	HISTORICAL ATTRACTIONS.....	14
7.0	POSSIBLE TOURISM ACTIVITIES.....	22
8.0	TOURISM FACILITIES.....	23
9.0	ACCESSIBILITY.....	25
10.0	CHALLENGES FACING TOURISM IN NYASA.....	26
11.0	WAY FORWARD.....	26

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Nyasa District is a new district announced in 23rd March 2012 and officially started in 1st July 2012. Nyasa District is located in Ruvuma region, where it is bordered by Mbinga district to the East, Republic of Mozambique to the South, Malawi to the West (separated by Lake Nyasa) and Ludewa District to the North.

1.1 LOCATION

Nyasa District lies between latitudes 10^o15"N and 11^o34'S and longitudes 34^o24'W and 35^o28'E. The District covers a total of 6790 square kilometers of which 3,811 square km of land and 2979 sqkm water.

1.2 CULTURE

The natives of Nyasa are Wanyasa, Wamatengo, Wampoto, Wamanda, Wangoni and Wayao but due to different interactions Nyasa district comprises of a mixture of different tribes from different parts of the country. The main activities are fishing, agriculture and trade. The main food consumed by the Nyasa is ugali produced from cassava with fish.

1.3 CLIMATE

Nyasa District is characterised with climate comprised with enough rain and temperature, Rain season starts from December to April/may between 800 mm and 1224mm which is conducive for agriculture. Temperature changes with time, average of 32^oc during high temperature season and 10^oc during lower seasons.

1.4 POPULATION

Population of Nyasa District according to the 2012 census report was 146,160 people among them there were 74,768 females and 71,392 males. By 2021, Nyasa District has **180,409** people of which **88,403** males and **92,006** females (NBS-2021 Population Projections).

2.0 ATTRACTIONS IN NYASA

Natural Attractions

Wildlife, Forests, Lakes, Landscapes.

Cultural Attractions

Traditional dances and songs, local dishes and drinks and cultural and religious rituals (at birth, weddings, harvesting, burial and ceremonies).

Historical Attractions

Burial Sites, War hideout caves, Religious historical sites.

2.1 NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

Nyasa District Council set aside 247.4 square kilometres of forest reserves which serves as wild life tourism and ecotourism; it has one game reserve and the rest are the normal natural forest reserves. The following are the description.

2.2 GAME RESERVES

Liparamba Game Reserve

Is a Game reserve which is located close to the Ruvuma River . It has 57,099 hectares, Three quarters of the game reserve lies in Nyasa district and the rest lies in Mbinga District. Liparamba Game Reserve was officialy gazzeted on 3rd August 2004 under The management of the Wildlife Conservation Act . The animals found at Liparamba game reserves are elephants, lion, hippo, leopard, sable antelope, greater kudu, Nsya, eland, waterbuck, duiker, baboons, monkeys, reed buck, monkey, snakes and birds like helmeted guinea fowl (kanga Kishungi) and kori bustards. A reserve is not yet used for the tourism activities but there are strategies that will enable tourists to visit such as creation of hunting blocks.



Maajabu Mbogo Game officer of Liparamba Game Reserve explains on Mtetereka Tree to Miss Tourism Ruvuma 2020 that if a tree dies and lays down for few years it turns into a stone. Tree at Nakatuta Liparamba



Miss Utalii Tanzania 2020 Ruvuma, Fidea Hilary hold on a stone tuned from Mtetereka Tree at Liparamba Game Reserve.



Nakatuta waterfalls of Ruvuma River in Liparamba Game Reserve



Variety of wildlife Animals in Liparamba Game Reserve



2.2 NATURAL FOREST RESERVES

Ndengere Forest Reserve

It is a reserve found within Nyasa district located at Ndengere village, it has 3200 hectares, consisting of various species of trees and birds. It is considered as forest which conserves water since there are a lot of water sources which serves as water catchment areas (Ukuli intake) to which population of Nyasa got its water through it. Dominated species found within the reserve are miombo, *lovuviacaфра* and *brideria* as well as birds.



MBAMBA HILL FOREST RESERVE

Is a natural forest reserve found around the bay of lake Nyasa; it is located between kilosa and Mbamba bay village and has a size of 400 hectors; species dominated are miombo (*brachystegia*) and others such as *mininga* (*pterocerpus*), *muanga* (*perycopsis angolencies*), grasses and shrubs which is mostly found during rainy season. A forest has got rocks occurred due to volcanoes caused by rift valley.



Mbamba Bay

Mbamba hill forest reserve

NAMSWEA LILENGALENGA FOREST RESERVE

It is a forest reserve which covers 23,043 ha and is conserved under Participatory Forestry Management (PFM) project being implemented in 14 villages, out of which 11 villages are in Nyasa district and 3 are in Mbinga District.



Namswea lilengalenga forest reserve



Livingstone Mountain Ranges

3.0 ISLANDS

Nyasa district has got two islands which are currently not used for any activities, the islands need plan for the development of tourism as one of the attractions found at the middle of the lake including investments, not only that but also the islands hold the history of the previous people who used the area, whereby they both makes them potential for tourism activities.

LUNDO

It is an island located at Lake Nyasa in Lundo village with a longitude, the island grasps the history of people who lived with leprosy disease and separated with their community to avoid spread of the diseases; and once they die were buried in the mud for the aim of burying the diseases forever. In other words, it was used as a quarantine.

MBAMBA

An island located at Lake Nyasa in Mbamba bay, the island was used by the Nyasa tribe as a place of hiding to escape the Ngoni from south Africa, since Nyasa was killed by Ngoni who used force to stay in the area during Ngoni migration; at that time Ngoni were passed the area to search for a good place to stay.



Good view of Mbamba and Lundo Islands



4.0 HILLS

MBAMBA HILL

A rocky hill which also serves as a forest reserve (Mbamba hill forest reserve). The name *Mbamba* was derived from Nyasa word with a meaning of a ‘thunder’ occurring mostly during the rainy season in the area, a hill believed to possess minerals which attracts lightning.

It has an extraordinary view of Lake Nyasa, Malawi at the western side and Mozambique at the southern side, islands as well as the view of Nyasa district with fascinating scenic rocks. Therefore, it can be developed for eco-tourism activities such as hiking.

Mbamba Hill



A hike to Mbambabay Hill



At the Peak of Mbamba Hill



At the Peak of Mbamba Hill - Good view of Lake Nyasa

TUMBI HILL

Is a hill found at Kihagara village which used as an area for conducting traditional rituals by the locals. It has an excellent view of lake Nyasa and possess an ideal spot which can be used as camping site. The species dominated are ferns.



Top of Tumbi Hill



Lake view at Tumbi Hill

5.0 LAKE NYASA

Lake Nyasa is a long, thin, deep lake lies in the sided walls of mountain ranges: the forested **Livingstone Mountains or Kipengere mountains**, which provide the magnificent view of the lake from far and the landscape for hikers and backpackers. Lake Nyasa is also among the Great Rift Valley's lakes, which shares some of the characteristics with Lake Tanganyika.

It is a great lake which is found at the southern part of Tanzania in Nyasa district, it is a **ninth largest lake** in the world, **the third largest** and the second deepest lake in Africa. It is habitat of varieties species of fishes of more than 600 species including ornamental fishes (cichlids), Nyasatroun's (Mbebele), NyasaSolomon (Mbaso) etc. A lake has beautiful beaches for swimming which function as a recreational activity.

Cichlids of Lake Nyasa





Ornamental Fishes

Cichlids which are found in all colours combinations of Black, Blue, Yellow and Green.

BEACHES

Unlike most Lakes and Seas, Nyasa has **beautiful brown sand beaches** with clear water knocking the banks of its shores.



Mkwakwa Beach



Muhalo Beach - beautiful brown sand beaches

6.0 HISTORICAL ATTRACTIONS

Natural Caves and Stones

Pomonda Diving Stone

A diving stone found in *Liuli* village where a harbour is found, it is located 1km from the coast. The stone has human head like shape with its chin. The name *Pomonda* was derived from the sound of the ship. In old days the area where Pomonda is located, was used as a ship docking area for a ship known as *Mv. Jinja*, at the top of the stone there was a light used to give sign that it was close to reach *Liuli*. Under the stone there is a big cave that was used for hiding during war. The cave can accommodate almost 100 people and can be used to carry out celebration activities.



Pomonda Diving Stone

POGHOUWAKA STONE

It is a stone located within Ndengere forest reserve in Ndengere village, the stone obtained its name from a woman who lived there. She was well known for her magic powers which were associated with predicting future events. It was used by the army leader of chief Ndomondo during his administration. The main leader used a stone as a ladder and stood at the top of it to watch over German soldiers.

NDOMONDO CAVES

A cave found at Ndengere forest reserve near Poghouwaka stone, a cave lived chief Ndomondo with his brother Matula during approaching of Germans. It is a big cave which held the remains of their past stuffs like pots, beds etc.



Inside the Ndomondo cave

CHUMA SEMICAVE

It is a cave found near St. Vincent hotel, a cave lived an old witch known as Chuma, who died in 1941. His belongings which included objects he used while conducting his rituals, pots among others were later on removed by the witch guru from Malawi known as Mchapi. The reasons as to why Mchapi had to remove them is because there were rituals connected to placing of the objects. Later on Chindambe and Batholomeo who were local villagers took the place and used it as cattle shed.



Outside Chuma cave



A tree where rituals were conducted

MUHALO CAVE

A cave found around Muhalo beach near St. Vincent hotel, it was used as a hiding place by Ngoni tribe during Ngoni and Matengo war. The name *Muhalo* was derived from the Nyasa word *Luhalo* which means **fine sand**. It was also a place used by women who mixed up medication then use the mixture as a means of catching lot of fishes.



Inside of Muhalo cave

MATOKE CAVE

A word *matoke* is used to mean banana and the reason as to why the cave was so named is due to the fact that the area was dominated by banana plants grown around the area. It is found in **Njambe village at Kihagara ward**, it was used by Wampoto tribe as a hiding place during spears war, the time of initiating administrations and tribes. The cave has different rooms which were used for different activities.



Entrance of Matoke cave



Area where Matoke was grown

LILIVAPORI CAVE

It is a cave found at *Njambe* village which was used by old people as a living and hiding place before the discovery of house as well as during the war against Portuguese. It

was also home for animals such as leopard and crocodile; people used fire to scare them away.



Entrance of Lilivapori Cave



Inside Lilivapori Cave

KATAMBARA CAVE

It is a cave located in Zambia village at Mbamba bay ward within Mbamba hill, it holds the history of old person known as Katambala who inhabited the cave before the discovery of houses in 1918. It was used as a hiding place but also traditional rituals. Moreover, it was also used by Germans as a hiding place during the war with the local people. It has animals such as hyrax and can be seen during evening and early in the morning. An area which would serve as an ideal picnic site is also found inside.



Outside Katambara Cave



A site in the cave ideal for picnics

NDOMONDO CEMETERY

Ndomondo was the name of a great chief, a son of chief *Tarau* who fought the Germans. Chief *Ndomondo* died in 1890s and buried with the live person as the signal that they could protect him and live peaceful and happy; not only that but they believed that burying a person while in a sitting position could help them stand up fast to receive the judgment! A visit to the sacred place where the grave of the chief lies is made easier by a ritual conducted by the elders by asking for permission from the elders. They carry with them cassava flour as offering to the elders.



Burial Sites: *Ndengere* place where chiefs were buried accompanied by a living person to escort him. The site is already preserved by government as a historical site with some buildings and an office for tour guides.

TRADITIONAL DANCES

Nyasa also have got different traditional dances which are performed at different seasons of the year especially after harvest season, the basic ones include *Kioda* (performed by women ONLY) and *Muganda* (performed by men ONLY: dressed in white shorts, white long sleeves shirts with neck ties), *Liindeku* (performed by both men and women) is another type of dance but not commonly performed.



Muganda



Kioda

Traditional Foods

Local food i.e. Likungu, Cassava Stiff Porridge, Togwa



Local Food Likungu



Preparation of Cassava Ugali



Ugali ready to be eaten

Others Attractions

Bafu is a Swahili word with a **meaning of bathroom**. An area around the beach found at **Njambe** surrounded with stones whereby people used to get bath. They call it **Bafu** because of stones which acts like wall, when people bath they are not seen by others, this is to say the privacy is equivalent to the one with modern bathrooms.



Bafu

7.0 POSSIBLE TOURISM ACTIVITIES

Possible Tourism Activities

Attraction/site	Possible Activities
Lake Nyasa	Swimming, snorkelling, camping, adventure jumping, canoeing, boat safari, spot fishing, rock climbing, sunny bathing, picnicking, sand bathing, bird watching. Scuba diving.
Liparamba Game Reserve	<i>Game drive, walking safari, bird watching, nature adventure, camping, picnicking,</i>
Living stone Mountain	Hiking, bird watching, camping, picnicking
Cultural Tourism	Practicing tradition dance, local feeding, traditional wear.
Forest Reserves	Animal viewing, Such as Baboons And Birds; Visit to Water Catchment Area, cultural tourism, flowers and trees viewing, and api tourism
Caves	Rituals, photograph, picnicking
Hills	Hiking, bird watching, picnicking, camping, firming, photographing

Historical site of Ndomondo Cemetery	history of a chief, and performing ritual
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8.0 TOURISM FACILITIES

At any destination accommodation service plays a very big part in facilitating tourism activities in a destination. Accommodation services in Nyasa are mostly lodges and guest houses with affordable price and good quality, while there is one tourist hotel and few camping sites.

Best areas that serve as a tourist's accommodation in Nyasa are owned by private investors including Hotels, Lodges and Camps mostly built at the shore of Lake Nyasa; such as St. Vincent Hotel, Muhalo Beach Lodge, Rachel Lodge; **Bio Camp** neighbour Ndengere village Mbambabay, Bagamoyo camp site and other more Lodges and Hotels are constructed.



St. Vincent Hotel



Bio Camp

Bagamoyo Seafood Bar and Campsite



Bagamoyo campsite at Mbambaby shore



Camp site



Tourism Activities at Bagamoyo Campsite Mbambabay

Availability of some facilities and conveniences in a tourism location also makes a tourism complete such as toilets, shops, parking facilities, banks, post offices, hotels and restaurants, guides, local conveyance, telecommunication, food and beverage, medical services etc.

All of these have direct approach in destination and tourism in particular. In line with that, Nyasa district have got several amenities mostly found at its small town known as Mbamba bay such as shops and banks, other financial Institutions, food and beverage; and some are initiated in the rest of the places. However, inadequate of the significant facilities that are useful in tourism activities such as restaurants, tour guides, tour operators and others.

9.0 ACCESSIBILITY

For tourism activities to be complete there should be a means to reach an area where attractions are located, it includes good roads network as well as availability of transportation modes like roads, airstrips (Kilosa, Liuli) and water allow tourists to experience the intended tourism activities.

Currently, Nyasa district is accessible by TARMAC road from Songea via Mbinga and gravel road via Lituhi to Liuli then Mbambabay. There are two air strips of Kilosa and Liuli. This means all attractions are accessible.



Tarmac Mbinga to Mbambabay 66km

10.0 CHALLENGES FACING TOURISM IN NYASA

Underdeveloped Tourism Sector in Nyasa, In spite of ample natural and historical sites for tourism. There is no data on the numbers of Tanzanians and Foreigners who visited Tourist attractions in Nyasa. Also, contribution of tourism sector in Nyasa to District and National's economy is not well identified.

Inappropriately unveiled and familiar; The tourism attractions in Nyasa are inappropriately unveiled and familiar to the community in the district, region and in the country as well as internationally

Inadequate number of tourism professionals; the quality of service in tourism industry requires qualified personnel Service provision, in turn, requires that someone qualified provide that service, hence in Nyasa district there is a few number of tourism personnel who can manage and coordinates with others in developing the destinations.

Shortage of amenities to hold Tourists; i.e. accommodation and amenities which includes quality tourist hotels and lodges, restaurants and other important services that act as amenities in any tourism destinations.

Infrastructure; means to reach destinations like roads, trails among others are still underdeveloped posing a challenge to growth of tourism.

Poor Perceptions of Community; Traditional beliefs; cultural issues of the community including superstition are connected to some areas of attraction hence create fears and no freedom of travel.

11.0 WAY FORWARD

There are **two** categories of interventions to the development of tourism industry in Nyasa;-

a) short term Interventions

b) Strategic interventions – involves District, Regional Administration and Ministry of Tourism and Natural resources.

Short term Interventions by District

Advertisement of District tourism attractions on District council's Website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

The Commemoration of Nyasa Tourism Festival, which was conducted in 2018, 2019 and 2020. In the these days the Ruvuma region government, personnel from ministry of tourism and natural resources and other stakeholders were involved. In 2018, the festival was inaugurated by Prime Minister of United Republic of Tanzania Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa; In 2020, attended by Hon. Dr Kijazi the permanent secretary of Ministry of Tourism and Natural resources.

The District Council prepare the Nyasa Investment Profile 2019/2020 to publicize the attractions, opportunities and potentials for investments. The booklet describes why people should come to invest in Nyasa and plenty resources available.

Develop skills training Programmes

There is lack of appropriate knowledge and skills on how to operate community cultural groups; training is needed in areas such as product development, marketing, customer care, environmental protection and tour guiding.

Initiation of Zoological Gardens

There were several initiatives on the placement of **Para** at Mbamba Hill and **Birds** at Mbamba and Lundo Islands. This was coordinated by the regional administration to be invested by tourism stakeholders from Songea. This will be associated with the erect of temporary camps at islands to create good destination for tourists.

Identify, demarcate and protect historical sites and evidence

There are some historical sites in the districts that need to fenced off to protect them from human activity interference; and some artifacts that have to be properly preserved and housed or packaged.

Improve infrastructure, particularly rural road

There is need to improve access through rural roads to many of the important historical sites. That will make it easy for tourist to reach such areas.

Improve communication

Communication is regarded as an important tool because it provides an avenue for community-based cultural groups to share common problems as well as means to solving them as well as enabling community members to easily communicate with foreign tourists.

Improve benefit sharing mechanisms among key stakeholders

There has been resource ownership conflict among resource stakeholders, contributing to weak benefit sharing mechanisms. There is need to put in place local communities' proper and effective strategies to capture tourism benefits.