

India

GROWTH STRATEGY FOR ORISSA, SECTOR STUDY AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development

Stand alone initiative

Task Manager: Marina Wes

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Commitments: USD 7,815

The present study aims at assessing the tourism potential of the State of Orissa, and defining the related enabling policies, through:

- a) the analysis of the consistency, nature, and territorial distribution of its cultural assets (physical and intangible patrimony) and of the issues related to their protection, conservation and social and economic valorization; and
- b) the definition of adequate scenarios/projections and appropriate supporting policies for their tourism exploitation. This will eventually contribute to the development of components for the protection, conservation, and valorization of Orissa's cultural patrimony in a future lending operation that will support this State's economic growth.

In addition to the study, the initial request for ITFCSD funding also included the organization of a 3 day workshop on the findings of the assessment, aimed at informing and sensitizing government officials and other public and private stakeholders on the above topic.

A team of Italian experts specialized in the institutional, legal, managerial, technical, social and economic aspects related to the protection, preservation and valorization of the cultural patrimony and in tourism development, carried out an identification mission in November 2003. A draft report was delivered in December 2003, which identified two projects concerning immediate measures for cultural heritage protection and promotion. These are:

- a) a pilot program to monitor and guide community activities in the historic and monumental area of the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar; and
- b) the production of multimedia material for the promotion of cultural tourism in Orissa.

The reaction of the Orissa Government authorities to the first outcomes and the issues raised by the draft report have been delayed by the national elections, held in May 2004. Immediately after, they have communicated their interest in implementing the mentioned programs, benefiting from support from the ITFCSD.

Meanwhile, the opportunity of organizing the workshop is still under consideration and the final draft of the report is near completion.